

10 Tips for Parents (Preschool) Facing Violence

1. Provide reassurance and comfort (touch and hold your children).
2. Reassure them that they are safe and you will make sure they are alright.
3. Keep things as normal as possible (keep them calm and settled).
4. Avoid under-reacting by assuming they are too young to understand that a tragedy has occurred.
5. Talk slowly and calmly with them about why you are sad.
6. Tell them that the people who were upset are being helped.
7. Do not put ideas in their minds that would make them overreact (too many details of the tragedy).
8. Ask them to share their feelings about what they would do to help people who were upset.
9. Refrain from dwelling too much on the tragedy or having your children hear too much news about the event.
10. Create an atmosphere at home of peace and gentle thoughts (especially at bedtime) and ask your pre-school or childcare agency what they are doing to help the children cope during the day.

Note: There is some evidence to suggest that talking about events with friends or loved ones is actually helpful for many people; however, this should not be forced upon your child. Let your kids talk about what happened if they want to, but don't force them to do so. Most kids will come to it in their own due time if they sense receptiveness on your end. Let them talk if they want but don't make them talk if they are not ready or willing.

10 Tips for Parents (Elementary) Facing Violence

1. Provide reassurance and emphasize their safety.
2. Reassure them that they are safe and that you believe everything is safe now.
3. Keep things as normal as possible (keep them calm and settled).
4. Give them a hug and sit with them. Ask them if and what they know about what happened.
5. Talk slowly and calmly with them about why you are sad about the events.
6. Tell them how you first responded when you found out about the situation.
7. Do not put ideas in their minds that would make them overreact (too many details of the tragedy).
8. Ask them how they feel and help them to find words to share their feelings.
9. Refrain from dwelling too much on the tragedy or having your children hear too much about the event.
10. Find out each day how they are doing and if they are still upset or more upset about what occurred (especially at bedtime if they can't sleep). Ask them if anyone else at school is upset and what they could do to help the other children.

Note: There is some evidence to suggest that talking about events with friends or loved ones is actually helpful for many people; however, this should not be forced upon your child. Let your kids talk about what happened if they want to, but don't force them to do so. Most kids will come to it in their own due time if they sense receptiveness on your end. Let them talk if they want but don't make them talk if they are not ready or willing.

10 Tips for Parents (Middle School) Facing Violence

1. Provide reassurance and emphasize their safety.
2. Reassure them that everyone in the community is currently all right, that you believe the recent events are now over, and that now people just need healing.
3. Give them a hug and sit with them. Ask them if and what they know about what happened and how they heard about it.
4. Ask them how their friends or teachers responded to it.
5. Tell them how you first responded when you found out about the situation.
6. Mention how your friends/co-workers responded (should have responded).
7. Do not put ideas in their minds that would make them overreact (too many details of the tragedy). If they are really curious tell them that if there is more information you will tell them but it doesn't help to get too upset.
8. Find out how they feel and help them to find words to share their feelings.
9. Refrain from dwelling too much on the tragedy or having your children hear too much about the event.
10. If the subjects of death and dying , suicide, or violence come up in your conversations, spend time sharing your thoughts about these subjects and how most people learn to cope with these issues over time.

Note: There is some evidence to suggest that talking about events with friends or loved ones is actually helpful for many people; however, this should not be forced upon your child. Let your kids talk about what happened if they want to, but don't force them to do so. Most kids will come to it in their own due time if they sense receptiveness on your end. Let them talk if they want but don't make them talk if they are not ready or willing.

10 Tips for Parents (High School) Facing Violence

1. Provide reassurance and emphasize their safety.
2. Reassure them that everyone in the community is currently all right, that you believe the recent events are now over, and that now people just need healing.
3. Ask them what they know about what happened and how they heard about it. (not too much if that is not your normal behavior – instead maybe at dinner or early evening)
4. Find out how their friends or teachers responded to it. If they are reluctant to share, ask them to please help you by sharing so you know that they are alright in handling this.
5. Tell them how you first responded when you found out about the situation.
6. Suggest that if they are really curious, you will tell them if you learn more details. Remind them that it doesn't help to get immersed in upsetting details.
7. Talk to them about how they feel (they may not feel anything).
8. Don't force them to share if they are not ready or if they want their privacy to think it through, but encourage them to open up when they are ready.
9. Don't under-react by assuming that they are adults and will not be as highly affected. Ask them each day how they are doing and if they are able to deal with their fears, sadness, grief, or confusion regarding the event.
10. If the subjects of death and dying, suicide or violence come up in your conversations, spend time sharing your thoughts about these subjects and how most people learn to cope with these issues over time.

Note: There is some evidence to suggest that talking about events with friends or loved ones is actually helpful for many people; however, this should not be forced upon your child. Let your kids talk about what happened if they want to, but don't force them to do so. Most kids will come to it in their own due time if they sense receptiveness on your end. Let them talk if they want but don't make them talk if they are not ready or willing.