

Talking to Kids About Tragedy

Many parents' first instinct is to shield their children from tragic events, whether natural disasters or acts of violence. Studies have shown that not talking to children about tragic events does more harm than good. To help parents with these difficult conversations, **Dr. Gail Beck**, director of Youth Outpatient and Outreach Psychiatry at The Royal Mental Health Centre in Ottawa, Canada has some advice for parents.

Talk to your kids about how the events make you feel using age appropriate language + ask them how the events make them feel.

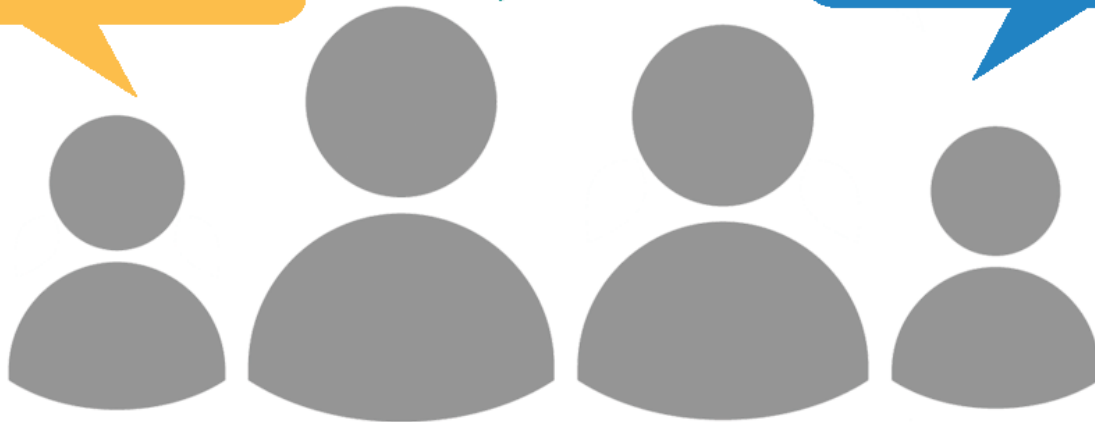
Turn off the news if you feel the images or details are too graphic, but explain to your child why you're doing so.

Reassure them it's normal to feel sad or upset about a tragic event + encourage them to talk to you.

Be honest about what happened, in an age appropriate way, avoiding the use of flowery metaphors or fairy tales.

If your child asks a question to which you don't have an answer it's OK to say, "I don't know."

If teens or older children say they need to watch the news coverage, watch it with them + talk through their emotions.



Read More at: <http://bit.ly/TSPKidsTragedy>



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