

## COMMON REACTIONS TO TRAGEDY

### FEELINGS AND THOUGHTS YOU MAY EXPERIENCE

- ⊃ **FEAR**: You may feel unsafe. You may be afraid to be alone or around strangers.
- ⊃ **SLEEP**: You may have trouble falling asleep. You may have bad dreams or a change in sleep patterns.
- ⊃ **BAD MOOD**: You may feel on edge, or bothered by small things.
- ⊃ **CONCENTRATION**: You may forget things because of stress.
- ⊃ **GUILT**: You may feel you could have done something to keep this from happening.
- ⊃ **MORE EASILY HURT**: You may become more sensitive and open to emotional hurt.
- ⊃ **ANXIOUS**: You may be jumpy about noises, voices, and sudden movements.
- ⊃ **THINKING CONSTANTLY ABOUT THE INCIDENT**: You may play the tragedy over and over again or have flashbacks.
- ⊃ **ANGER**: You may feel overwhelmed with different feelings all at once. Anger may be directed at self or others.
- ⊃ **DENIAL**: You may be in shock and have difficulty accepting the incident really happened.
- ⊃ **SADNESS**: You may feel “waves of sadness”.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ⊃ **TALK TO OTHERS**: Talk about the incident and feelings as much as you need to with your family and friends.
- ⊃ **TAKE IT EASY**: It is important to know that you may not be able to get back to your regular schedule right away.
- ⊃ **TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF**: Get exercise, plenty of sleep, and eat healthy foods. It is unhealthy to turn to alcohol or drugs to cope.
- ⊃ **SEEK MORE HELP**: Additional help is available from your school counselor at

\_\_\_\_\_ or call us.

Counselor's Phone Number

### YES to YOUTH Montgomery County Youth Services

- |  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| * Conroe (936) 756-8682                                    | * Splendora (281) 354-2654 |
| * The Woodlands (281) 292-6471                             | * Magnolia (281) 259-0440  |
| * BridgeWay Youth Shelter (936) 890-1132 or (866) 892-1132 |                            |

# WAYS YOU CAN HELP YOUR CHILD

## WHAT PARENTS CAN DO



### ***BE UNDERSTANDING***

- ⊃ Be available to listen. Your child may act in ways you have never seen before (withdrawn, angry, sad, fearful, out of control).
- ⊃ A child's behavior is okay if it does not hurt him/her or others.



### ***BE PATIENT***

- ⊃ Tragedy shakes a child's sense of safety and security. Give your child time to feel safe again.
- ⊃ Allow your child to retell their story as many times as they want.



### ***BE NURTURING***

- ⊃ Whatever the age, any tragedy needs to be followed by a lot of nurturing (listening, hugging, caring).
- ⊃ Spend more time with your child the first several weeks.
- ⊃ Pay attention to your child's needs.



### ***KEEP IT SIMPLE***

- ⊃ It may be hard for your child to concentrate and remember even the simplest things.
- ⊃ Make your routines easy and simple.



### ***GET BACK TO NORMAL***

- ⊃ Help your child understand his/her feelings are a normal reaction.
- ⊃ Let your child play (outdoor play, exercise, listen to music, talking or being with a friend, drawing).
- ⊃ You may see a change in your child's behavior. If your child's behavior upsets you, talk with your school counselor at \_\_\_\_\_ or call us.

Counselor's Phone #

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