

## **Coping with a frightening, bad or an unusual situation**

You might have recently been involved in an accident or something bad or frightening may have happened to someone in your family. Your life might be feeling upset, scared or out of control and the adults around you might also be acting as if they are not coping very well. This is a difficult situation for everyone and you may be wondering what is happening to you, your family or your friends.

This leaflet has been written to give you some support, guidance and information about things which may help you.

After a bad experience, everyone including adults, young people and children all have lots of different feelings and emotions. It can feel like your normal, ordinary life has disappeared and been replaced with lots of uncertainty and distress. It can be hard for young people to see adults not coping as usually they are in control and able to take charge of situations. You may also find it difficult to talk about or share the feelings you are going through if you are worried that it will upset the adults even more.

Sometimes because the adults have a lot of other things to think about, they can forget that children and young people

might be feeling upset and frightened. It is very important that you get the help, support and attention you need for yourself.

## **SPEAK UP! TELL ADULTS HOW YOU ARE FEELING. SAY WHAT YOU NEED AND ASK FOR HELP**

### **Feelings, emotions and body reactions**

You might find you experience lots of different things in your body or feelings. Often these include:

- Not being able to sleep properly, having bad dreams and nightmares.
- Shutting your eyes and still seeing pictures of the frightening thing that happened.
- Feeling on edge and “jumpy”.
- Not being able to concentrate on school work.
- Not being able to enjoy going out with friends.
- Feeling angry and tearful.

- Feeling sick, dizzy, breathless or panicky or detached from yourself or others.

All these things are normal reactions which can happen to everyone. They may be feelings you have not had before the bad event, but they are part of what has happened to you.

### **Things you might find helpful**

#### **DO**

- Try to do some ordinary everyday things that you enjoy.
- Eat, sleep and take some exercise if you can.
- Talk to people about how you are feeling and what you need.
- Ask if your school has a counsellor – this is a good person to talk to.
- Get your friends to support. Talk to them about how you feel.
- Ask for information if there are things you need to know.
- Go to your doctor for advice, or ask an adult to come with you.

## DON'T

- Bottle your feelings up and pretend everything is alright.
- Stop talking to your family and shut yourself in your room.
- Drink alcohol or take drugs.
- Expect everything to get back to normal overnight.

## REMEMBER: THINGS WILL GET BETTER BUT IT TAKES TIME

### Where to get help

Your doctor – ask an adult for the phone number

#### Mental Health Matters

0800 107 0160

(Available 24 hours a day 7 days a week offering confidential emotional support & Guidance for the people of Kent).

#### Samaritans

[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

Tel: 08457 90 90 90

#### CRUSE

[www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk](http://www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk)

Day by Day Helpline Tel: 0844 477 9400

Email: [helpline@cruse.org.uk](mailto:helpline@cruse.org.uk)

#### NHS Direct

[www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)

Tel: 0845 4647

#### Victim Support

[www.victimsupport.org.uk](http://www.victimsupport.org.uk)

0845 30 30 900

#### Disaster Action

[www.disasteraction.org.uk](http://www.disasteraction.org.uk)

01483 799066

#### Young Minds

[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)

020 7089 5050

#### Childline

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

0800 1111

Use this space to write down some useful names and numbers

## COPING WITH CRISIS

### A GUIDE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Reading this leaflet may help you to understand some of your feelings and, just as important, understand what others around you may be feeling as well

Please read the leaflet carefully and keep it in a safe place

### Kent Resilience Forum



PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES IN KENT AND MEDWAY