



Advice for Parents

- It is wise for you to monitor your child's exposure to television coverage, print media and social media.
- Some children and young people will want to talk about the tragic events and try to make sense of what they have both seen and heard.
- Other children will avoid any discussion around the events and will be reassured by routine and normality.
- Remember the importance of routine, sleep, exercise and healthy eating.

There is a range of things you can do to assist your child during events such as this, including:

- Acknowledge that the event was distressing
- Reassure children that they are safe
- Look for signs of distress (e.g. some children/young people might be scared)
- Normalise responses - typical response will range from anger to general upset or sadness
- Maintain a normal routine - keeping the structure at home or at school in place
- Allow children to express feelings as they arise
- Telling stories about how people manage during difficult times can be helpful.
- Separate fact from fiction e.g. children may express fears about unrelated events.
- Plan relaxing activities before bed – talk your child through a gentle relaxation, this might include using soothing music and talking them through relaxing tension in their body or simply reading something to them that induces relaxation (i.e. a favourite book).
- Speak in hopeful terms – children and young people will often take their cues from their parents' reactions; if you are honest, calm, compassionate and open they will be much more able to trust that they will be okay.
- Always remember the value of doing something with children that they like to do such as playing, exercising, being outdoors - have a time during your day to share time with your child.