



# Supporting children and young people who have experienced trauma

Your school or early learning service can support children and young people in their recovery from a traumatic event.

## What can you do to help?

**Experiencing trauma can have a great impact on how children and young people relate to others in their lives.**

In such instances, they may have difficulty trusting other people, making and sustaining friendships and sustaining relationships with adults in their life (including their educators). To recover well, children and young people need consistent, reliable adults in their life who will stick with them through tough times and help them develop trusting, safe relationships.

**Educators are well placed to model appropriate, secure relationships.**

Here are some ideas.

- Build an early learning service or school culture that provides safety, security and support for children and young people through a predictable environment, positive relationships with adults, consistent routines and structure.

- Let children, young people and families know they can talk to you or another educator about trauma, if and when they feel comfortable to do so. Promote the learning community as a place that families can come to seek parenting resources or information about trauma.
- Promote the development of social and emotional skills in the learning community. Children and young people who have experienced trauma may also have problems managing difficult emotions, getting along with others, making decisions, and taking others' feelings into consideration.
- Learn more about the cultural aspects of trauma. For example, in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, the community doesn't see images or hear recordings of a person who has passed away. Understanding how different cultures manage traumatic situations may help you recognise the signs of trauma within that group.

- Be mindful of the impact of hearing about other people's trauma. Take time to [look after yourself](#) and your colleagues. It also means they need to take care of other children or young people who may have been supporting a friend who has been traumatised.
- Establish links with community agencies or trauma experts who can assist children, young people and families.

**With help, children and young people can recover from the harmful effects of trauma.**

To do so, they need predictable, warm and stable environments. Most importantly, they need the adults in their lives to understand and respond to their needs.

**Be You Professional Learning**

Critical incidents affecting the learning community can also be traumatic for children and young people. Learn about the impacts of critical incidents and how learning communities can prepare and be responsive in times of crisis in the [Responding Together](#) domain.

**References**

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**External links**

Australian Child & Adolescent Trauma, Loss & Grief Network – [Schools and trauma](#)

Blue Knot Foundation – [Trauma-informed care and practice](#)

Emerging Minds – [Trauma and the child](#)

Raising Children Network – [Trauma support for children](#) / [Trauma: first response to help children](#)