

1. Remain Calm & Reassuring

In order to care for youth, adults can:

- **Be compassionate with ourselves and our families** as we process this stressful situation.
- **Keep close & connected**; try not to isolate.
- **Engage in cultural practices that are meaningful to you** such as **Pule** and **Hi'uwai**.
- **Lean on your spiritual community & beliefs.**
- **Try to limit:** TV, social media, alcohol & drugs.
- **Schedule:** Try to create/keep a daily schedule.
- **Sleep:** Children & adults may have difficulty sleeping after experiencing these events. We all might need extra hugs. Kids & teens might want to sleep close to their parents & want a small light..
- ***Nightmares:** Kids might like small flashlights, &/or dreamcatchers. Try to create happy or empowered endings to nightmares before going back to sleep. These can be magical endings with super heroes. This helps adults too.
- **Try to think Helpful Thoughts:** Our minds may go to unsettling images, but helpful thoughts & images will help us get through this: "We did everything we could at the time." "It's ok to cry." "It was scary and we are brave." "People care & are doing their best to help now." "I can rest."
- **Try to eat healthy food when hungry.**
- **Movement:** Walk on 'āina and/or near the ocean/play/dance/swim (safely, as possible).
- **Mindfulness:** Stay present; Can you hear a bird chirping now? Can you find 3 green things around you? Can you feel a breeze? Take slow deep breaths.
- **Enjoy Music & Funny movies that lift your spirits.**
- **Gratitude:** Name 5 things you appreciate now.
- **Art & Crafts:** Draw, doodle, color, create.

Following Traumatic Events:

Adults can help children and teens by:

1. **Remaining Calm & Reassuring**
2. **Communicating helpful info**
3. **Practicing Coping strategies**
4. **Limiting News & Social Media**
5. **Trying to keep a schedule (if possible)**
6. **Spending time together (we are in this together)**

2. Communicate Helpful Information

Tell children/teens:

1. **This was scary; we are here for you and will continue to keep you safe.**
Community helpers (Fire Fighters, Doctors, & others) are here to help.
2. Provide simple, matter-of-fact, age-appropriate facts that don't scare kids/teens. NOTE: Repeating details of the event is not helpful & can be traumatizing. Listen, allow time to process the event while reminding youth of **all the helpers.**
3. **This is not your fault; we are all doing our best.** This is important for everyone to hear:
"We are doing everything we can."
4. **This is what is happening today.** (keep schedules, if possible).
5. **Listen, answer questions and concerns.**

Note: Behavior & Emotions will vary. It may be hard to focus & remember things, Be patient. .

3. Coping Strategies

Help youth brainstorm positive coping strategies. Examples:

- a. Hold a stuffed animal
- b. Play, walk, sing, dance
- c. Talk to friends, family
- d. Help others
- e. Watch a funny video
- f. Listen to music that helps
- g. Ask for a hug from _____
- h. List all the helpers
- i. Draw, color, create

Let it be okay to be sad, angry, confused.

4. Monitor/Limit News & Social Media

Try to limit exposure of repeated pictures and videos of the event to kids/teens. The media may have unfiltered details & opinions that are unhelpful. It's best to talk with our kids/teens about what they know and want to know. Let them know, "I am here to answer questions & listen to you if you want to talk." If they are not interested at the time, remain available.

5. Provide Consistency (as possible)

If possible, try to create or maintain a schedule, while being attuned to emotional needs.

6. We're in this together.

-Offer reassuring hugs. It's okay to cry together. Normalize tears as healing for all.
-Don't leave kids/teens alone following crisis.

It is normal to be anxious, sad & confused, and this can resolve with connection, understanding and time. There is no right way to heal. If there is an immediate need, call **911** or contact the Hawai'i Cares Crisis hotline via **Text 988** or by calling: **808-832-3100**.