



Kids and Earthquakes

How to Cope when Something Horrible has Happened

Have you recently been affected by an earthquake? If so, there are normal reactions to something abnormal.

Here are some of them:

- Feeling shocked, angry, or scared about the safety of people you love
- Feeling scared that it will happen again
- Feeling headaches, or stomach aches, or even aches in arms and legs
- Feeling like you don't want to do school work anymore or can't pay attention
- Feeling like you have a lot of energy and want to move around fast
- Feeling tired or wanting to move slowly
- Having trouble falling asleep or staying asleep at night. Sometimes having nightmares.
- Seeing images of the event in your mind or imagining the event at times when you don't want to. Sometimes seeing other violent images in your head.
- Feeling like you want to do things that you know you shouldn't do or things that might be risky
- Feeling sad and not wanting to be around others
- Feeling like you need to be very close to people you love and need to be touching them
- Feeling lots of feelings that don't fit together, like wanting to laugh and cry at the same time

What you can do:

- Talk to an adult you trust about how you are feeling
- Ask questions to an adult about what happened so that you can get all the answers you need. Even if those questions are something you worry might make the adult sad or cry, it is important to ask your questions
- It's good to limit how much TV and internet news you watch and try to watch with an adult you trust so you can ask questions.
- Do your best to eat well, drink lots of water, and try to get enough sleep
- Remember that adults are feeling a lot of the same feelings you are and you can work together to take good care of yourselves
- Draw pictures or write about the event
- Create a picture or doodle that you can draw whenever you are feeling lots of feelings and need a way to get those feelings out.
- Create a symbol with your hands or a secret hand-shake that you have with someone you trust so that they know what you are thinking about if you don't want to say any words.
- Ask an adult if there are other kids who you can play with who have experienced the same thing. Sometimes, just playing with other kids who understand can help a lot.
- You might like to find a way to help others or your community.
- Try to do some normal activities that you enjoy. It's ok to have fun.