



MAN-MADE DISASTERS



Families play a critical role in helping to reestablish a sense of normalcy and safety for a child before, during and after a disaster occurs. Please take a moment to read through these suggestions on how to support your child.

▶ [Look for links to more activities and facts on our website](#)



DEVELOPMENTAL EXPLANATION



How to Explain Man Made Disasters to Children

Be honest with children and keep explanations simple. Encourage children to ask questions and lead the discussion. A man-made disaster is when people do something on purpose to cause harm to others or it can be an accident when something harmful happens by mistake. ▶ [More About Man-Made Disasters](#)

PREPARATION



Helping Children Prepare for Man Made Disasters

You can't prepare for man-made disasters but you can practice tools that can help you cope better with adversity. Talk with your children when not under stress, think about and practice tools that help them feel safe, calm, and comfortable. This will help them to utilize those tools when they feel nervous, anxious or scared. ▶ [Ways to Practice](#)

COPING



All Feelings Are Okay

Using the following ▶ [Tools for Caregivers](#) will help children to feel safe, calm and relaxed. After a man-made disaster children may feel concern for themselves and for their loved ones. They may experience emotional swings and outbursts or become quiet and introverted. Knowing how children respond to traumatic events helps caregivers better understand children's reactions and responses.

▶ [How to Cope After Something Horrible Has Happened](#)

PLAY



Play It Out

Play is how children understand their world and learn to process difficult experiences. Children may re-enact what they have experienced or seen on the news or on social media. Provide loose parts materials and space for children to engage in play. Children may play the same scene repeatedly or change the outcome of the event in order to gain mastery and control of what happened or what they witnessed.

EXPRESSIVE ART



Express Yourself

Children need opportunities to express themselves. Encourage your child to express emotions through movement, play, art or talking with a trusted adult. Man-made disasters are unpredictable and can cause chaos for affected families and communities. Provide spaces for children to create art from chaos. Hanging large scroll paper or sheets of newsprint for splatter art murals and using brushes, sponges or even their hands to throw paint can offer children a way to release energy, anxiety and create order from chaos. ▶ [Create a Mural Painting](#)