

Here are some ways you can help your family process tragedy:

1. Focus on your children over the week following the tragedy. If they are experiencing anxiety, try to help them understand what has happened, keeping in mind their developmental level.
2. Stay close to your children. Your physical presence will reassure them and allow you to monitor their reaction.
3. Limit your child's viewing of these events. If they must watch, watch with them briefly; then turn the tv off. Do not rewatch the same events over and over again.
4. Maintain a "normal" routine. Children may have difficulty concentrating on schoolwork or falling asleep at night. To the extent possible, stick to your family's regular routine for dinner, homework, chores, bedtime, etc., but do not be inflexible.
5. Spend extra time reading or playing quiet games with your children before bed. These activities are calming, foster a sense of closeness and security, and reinforce a sense of normalcy.
6. Safeguard your children's physical health. Stress can take a physical toll on children as well as adults. Make sure your children get appropriate sleep, exercise, and nutrition.