

How to support your child after trauma (newborn to 2 years)

You may notice that your child:

- May act clingy or want to be held more than normal.
- Does not want to be away from caregivers or adults they know. They may show more distress when apart from them.
- May have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep through the night. They may also have nightmares.
- May be more irritable, fussier, and harder to soothe.
- May be scared or startle more easily than before.
- May withdraw by playing or talking less than normal.
- Has changes in their eating skills and/or appetite.
- Has changes in milestones like crawling instead of walking or using less words. It may seem like they have slipped back (regressed) or act younger.

Ways you can support your child

- Try to be patient with these temporary changes.
- Keep your child's routine as much as possible.
- Give your child items that are comforting to them such as their favorite toys or blankets.
- Find, accept and increase support for yourself to help manage your own shock and feelings.
- Be mindful when talking with other adults around your child - remember your child pays attention to what you say and do.
- If other caregivers are needed, choose caregivers who are familiar and comforting to your child. Avoid separating them from important caregivers when possible.
- If needed, be willing to stay in your child's room while they are going to sleep to provide feelings of safety and comfort.
- Spend time with your child. Give them your full attention by reducing distractions such as being on your phone or watching TV.

This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.