



# Gateway to Success Parents' Newsletter

## Helping your Teen Deal with Trauma



Although emergencies, deaths, natural disasters, etc. seem to occur sporadically, it is still important to think about how your child might deal and cope with trauma. Here are some things you might want to take into consideration if your teen and family are dealing with a traumatic experience.

- Reassure your teen. Provide supportive and encouraging statements as well as many hugs and kisses. Although, teens may shy away from this display of affection, teens may need more of it during the tough times.
- Help your teen express their feelings. Give them many opportunities to talk to you. Don't forget to remind them that they can always come to you to talk or ask questions.
- Answer their questions truthfully. Try not to emphasize the traumatic details because it can re-traumatize them.
- Maintain your normal family routine to the best of your ability. This provides structure which helps teens feel safe.
- Build your teen's resiliency and coping skills. Help them identify the things that they and others have already done to deal with the trauma. Help them identify heroes and the good things that come out of a tragedy like families and communities coming together.
- Review your emergency plan and practice it. Think about where your family will meet, who they will call and what they would take if an emergency were to arise. Make sure you update and review your plan yearly with your family.
- If you find your teen having a difficult time coping and his or her mood is low, irritable, angry, that their sleeping and eating habits have changed, that they are disruptive and act out, that they feel helpless and guilty, consult a mental health professional. There's a counselor on every AUSD campus.

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For more information contact the Director of Pupil Services (626) 943-3410

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