



# How to talk to kids about scary events and news

The **'Help Kids Navigate Distressing Events'** collection in the Smiling Mind App brings together guided practices and reflections to support children, parents, carers and educators through these moments.

To find the collection, search for it, by its name, in the 'Explore' section of the Smiling Mind App.

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## Acknowledge Feelings

Let children know it's okay to feel scared, sad, confused or worried. Listening matters more than fixing.

You might like to use the Help Kids Navigate Distressing Events collection to pause and check in with how everyone is feeling.

## Share Age-appropriate Facts

If children ask questions, keep answers simple and factual. Avoid graphic details or replaying footage.

## Limit News Exposure

Too much news can increase worry, for adults and children. Turn off background coverage and take breaks from social media when needed.

## Reassure without Making Promises

Remind children they are safe right now. Let them know there are adults, at home, at school and in the community, whose job it is to help keep them safe.

## Return to Routine and Grounding

Familiar routines help children feel secure. This might include:

- Slowing the breath together
- Moving the body through play or a walk
- Connecting with a trusted adult
- Keeping regular bedtime routines

Short breathing, movement and wind-down practices in the Help Kids Navigate Distressing Events collection can support these moments.

## Seek Extra Support If Needed

If worries or changes in behaviour continue, reach out to school wellbeing staff, your GP or community support.

For immediate help, contact these support lines.

- **Lifeline (24/7 crisis):** 13 11 14
- **Beyond Blue (24/7):** 1300 22 4636
- **Kids Helpline (5-25, 24/7):** 1800 55 1800
- **13YARN (24/7, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander):** 13 92 76

A range of support services for adults, families and children are listed at:

[smilingmind.com.au/support-services](https://smilingmind.com.au/support-services)