

Supporting Children Who Hear Scary News

As we hear both local and international news of tragedy, we need to process the information, and help our children process the information in age appropriate ways. For most children under age 5, shielding them from tragic information that they won't understand, or have no context for, might be the best route. However, if they overhear or are exposed to the information inadvertently (often this happens in a mixed age environment at home or school) it is important that we as adults are truthful and appropriately reassuring to our children. Explaining the extremely low chances of it happening again, what safety measures are in place to keep them and their loved ones safe, etc. For an older child, there may be opportunities to talk about bigger issues and to help them process the new information in a useful way. In all exchanges, the consistent advice is to answer their questions directly and truthfully, without giving more information than they are asking about. Because of our mixed age environment and the different levels of information/news provided in different families, it would also be helpful to advise older children to be sensitive to how they talk about such things at school.

Here are articles on this topic from a very useful website ([Common Sense Media](#)) that helps with children/student guidelines for apps and social media:

[Explaining the News to Our Kids](#)

[Teaching Kids Media Smarts During Breaking News](#)

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