

Learning Objectives



To recognize the unique ways children experience and react to grief and loss.



To understand the risk factors for trauma in young children.



To explore ways providers can support children in trauma.



To understand the connection between attachment and loss.



To identify ways providers can support resiliency in children.



To practice communicating with parents regarding trauma-related issues.



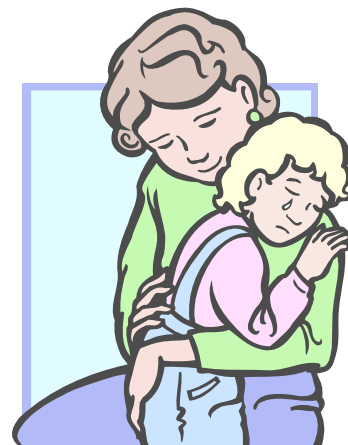
To apply injury prevention information to the family child care program.

Young Children's Reactions to Crisis and Trauma

May include the following:

- Bedwetting
- Crying
- Immobility
- Excessive clinging
- Thumb-sucking
- Wetting pants
- Loss of bowel control
- Fear of darkness
- Inattentiveness
- Fear of animals
- Fear of being left alone
- Fear of crowds
- Hyperactivity
- Nightmares
- Sleep disturbances
- Sensitivity to noises
- Irritability
- Speech difficulties
- Eating problems
- Violent play
- Re-enacting the traumatic event through play
- Talking about the wish to go to heaven

The child should not be punished for these natural reactions to trauma. Children need adult support.



Helping Children

Crisis intervention as prevention

Timely crisis intervention is the best means of preventing traumatic reactions later. This means recognizing and reporting immediately when you have concerns about child abuse or neglect.

It means helping a child deal with death, divorce or other losses right away.

Use of play and therapy



Children use play, stories, puppets and art to express feelings. Children process their feelings through play and imagination. Recommend counseling if the child appears stuck or ritualistic in play or behaviors.

- Play and art therapy allow children to transform their frightening feelings into feelings of mastery and control.
- Use of puppets allows the child to project internal conflicts onto external objects.
- Storytelling can distance the child from a problem and recreate a healthier ending to the tale.
- Art therapy stimulates fantasy and creativity to resolve problems through self-reflection.

