Supporting Your Child After Trauma

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Helping your child navigate life after a traumatic experience can feel overwhelming, but with patience and understanding, you can provide the support they need. Here are some key strategies to guide you as you help your child cope with their trauma:

- Create a safe space: Ensure your child feels physically and emotionally safe at home. Offer reassurance and a consistent routine to help them regain a sense of security.

- Be patient with emotional reactions: Trauma can cause a wide range of emotions such as anger, sadness, or anxiety. Allow your child to express their feelings without judgment.

- Listen actively: Be an empathetic listener, allowing your child to share their experience in their own time. Avoid pushing them to talk before they're ready.

- Normalize their feelings: Reassure your child that their reactions to trauma—fear, confusion, or even numbness—are normal and valid.

- Encourage creative expression: Give your child alternative outlets for expressing their emotions, such as drawing, playing, or writing, especially if they struggle to verbalize their feelings.

- Help them feel in control: Offer choices and decisions when appropriate to help your child regain a sense of control, which may have been lost during the trauma.

- Avoid overexposure to distressing material: Limit access to media or discussions that might re-trigger their trauma or cause further anxiety.

- Model calm behavior: Children often look to their parents for emotional cues. Try to stay calm and composed when discussing the trauma or handling related stress.

- Be consistent with routines: Daily routines provide a sense of normalcy and structure, which is comforting for a child who has experienced trauma.

- Seek professional support: If your child's trauma response feels overwhelming for them or for you, reach out to a trauma-informed child therapist for additional help.

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