

WHAT IS TRAUMA?



Traumatic events can be either physical or mental, ranging from boat, farm or car accidents through to bushfires, floods, the death of someone close to you, or relationship problems. Traumatic events can cause immediate, delayed and/or long-term reactions. Each person will react differently to a traumatic event, and no reaction is right, wrong or too much.

REMEMBER

if you or a person you are with is in immediate danger dial '000', visit a hospital emergency department or contact a Mental Health Service.

Beyond Blue
1300 22 4636

Kids Helpline
1800 551 800

Lifeline
13 11 14

Suicide Call Back service
1300 659 467

FACTS ON TRAUMA

- Trauma can cause strong physical and emotional reactions. This is a normal reaction to events which cause shock and extreme stress.
- Everyone will react differently - but for everyone, support (in many forms) is important, both immediately after the event and further down the track.
- Don't hesitate to seek professional help if you feel you need it immediately, or if your feelings don't begin to return to normal after three or four weeks.
- Avoid stress overload - you need to rest, eat well, sleep well and still find things to enjoy after a traumatic experience. It's okay to still find happiness after trauma.
- Avoid unnecessary exposure to social media or media commentary of a traumatic event - it can become overwhelming.
- Sometimes traumatic experiences can affect us for a long time, and that's okay.

If you think you might be suffering from the impacts of a trauma for more than a few weeks after the event, check in with your Doctor. You can also check out Beyond Blue's signs and symptoms checklist at

www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/anxiety/types-of-anxiety/ptsd



www.stayafloat.com.au
facebook.com/StayAfloatAustralia

WHAT IS TRAUMA?



SUPPORTING OTHERS AFTER TRAUMA

Trauma will affect everyone differently and there is a vast range of emotional, physical and behavioural responses. There is no 'right' or 'wrong' way to react to trauma. Some people may react with anger, anxiety, exhaustion or sadness, while others might throw themselves into work or practical tasks.

Teenagers especially may withdraw and seem not to react. People's reactions may vary because of past experiences, available support networks, coping strategies, life skills, and in response to the reactions of others around them.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Offer comfort and support
- Ask how you can help or help. Don't assume what people need
- Offer practical support. If it's a friend or family member you might offer to help with some housework, cook a meal, help with kids. If it's a workmate, offer to help with tasks at work, assist with paperwork, or finish the shift to give someone extra rest
- Invite them to go for a walk with you
- Offer them a cuppa and a chat
- Talk to them normally and about something other than the traumatic event

Remember that alcohol and other substances can worsen any mental health problems, so encouraging support in other ways is most helpful.

BEYOND MENTAL HEALTH

Trauma and significant change can have impacts beyond Mental Health. There can be issues with finances, housing, substance use and more. If you think someone might need help in other areas, your local Primary Health Network can be a great place to start. Yours can be found at

www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/PHN-Locator



This document has been produced with thanks to the National Centre for Farmer Health and Beyond Blue.



www.stayafloat.com.au
facebook.com/StayAfloatAustralia