

Intentional Mom Guide

Parenting your school-age child during a crisis



School-Age

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Children in this age group are expanding their emotional range. Gone are the days of the simple feelings of happy and sad. Now their feelings are much more complex. This can be a confusing time for them and difficult for their parents. It's hard to know how to help them navigate these internal changes. It's even harder in the middle of a crisis.

How to Help:

- Patience, tolerance, and reassurance
- Staying in touch with friends through telephone and Internet
- Regular exercise and stretching
- Engage in educational activities (workbooks, educational games)
- Participate in structured household chores
- Set gentle but firm limits
- Discuss the current outbreak and encourage questions. Include what is being done in the family and community
- Encourage expression through play and conversation
- Limit media exposure, talking about what they have seen/heard

One of the best ways you can help your 6-12 year old cope when dealing with a crisis is by helping them know who they can trust. As they deal with the crisis, here are a few things you can say to help them build trust.

[give them honest answers to explain what's happening]

"I won't lie to you. You can trust that I will tell you the truth"

[pay attention to changes in their behavior]

"I noticed that you are spending a lot more time in your room since **(name tragedy/disaster)**. When you're ready to talk, I'm here."

[encourage them to relax and do what you can to make them feel comfortable]

"Let's watch one of your favorite movies together today. You bring the blankets, and I'll grab some snacks"

***Signs Your 6-12 year old May Need Additional Help:**

Irritability, whining, aggressive behavior, clinging, nightmares ,sleep/appetite disturbance, physical symptoms (headaches, stomachaches), withdrawal from peers, loss of interest, competition for parents' attention, forgetfulness about chores and new information learned at school

THE NATIONAL CHILD TRAUMATIC STRESS NETWORK WWW.NCTSN.ORG

*If your child needs additional help reach out to a local church or visit www.PsychologyToday.com for a detailed list of mental health professionals.

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