

Family Fact Sheet: Trauma and Your Family

What is trauma?

Trauma is a scary, dangerous, or violent event that can happen to any or all members of a family such as:

- Accidents or injuries
- House Fires
- Abuse
- Natural disasters
- Homelessness
- Violence within the family

What is traumatic stress?

Traumatic stress is emotions, reactions and behaviors related to experiencing a trauma. Some examples of this are:

- Feeling numb or shock
- Avoiding people and places that remind them of the event
- Have nightmares or strong memories of the event
- Being very afraid, angry or sad
- Having trouble sleeping or paying attention
- Feeling helpless or hopeless
- Being very tired and worn out
- Having aches and pains

How does trauma impact the family?

Trauma can affect every member of the family. Each family goes through trauma differently. Some family members may get closer to each other. Some families may not do as well as they did before. Some families might feel more alone or be in shock or believe no one will be there for them. Others may end up cutting ties with family members who hurt them.

Things families can do to cope with traumatic stress?

- Find a mental health provider who has helped families overcome traumatic stress
- Look for trauma treatments that help families better understand trauma and can help families with all of the challenges that they are experiencing as a result of the trauma

Source: The National Child Traumatic Stress Network