

Connecting with Others: For Students

- Talking or hanging out with other people can help you feel better.
- It is important to get support from both adults (family members and teachers) and peers your age (friends and classmates).
- It may help to spend time with other people who have been through similar experiences.

Those who can support you include:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family who live with you • Extended family members who don't live with you • Adults at school (teachers, coaches, aides, administrators) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close friends/boyfriends/girlfriends • Classmates or others your age who have had experiences like yours • School counselors or other counselors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious leaders • Doctors or nurses • Pets |
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When you want to talk to someone:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Decide carefully whom to talk to by thinking about a person you trust, who listens to you, and who can help you. ✓ Choose the right time and place to talk. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ For example, a teacher may not be able to talk to you while she is teaching class, but may be happy to talk to you after class. ✓ Ask the person if it's a good time to talk. ✓ Let the person know that you want to talk. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ If you don't feel like talking, tell the person that you just want to spend time with them. ✓ Start by telling the person what you need. ✓ If you feel ready, you may talk about sad or scary thoughts or feelings, but you don't have to talk about anything if you don't want to. |
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Sometimes students don't want to talk about what happened because they worry that:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other people won't want to listen or don't have time to listen. • Other people will be upset if they hear about what happened. • Adults will be mad if you talk about bad things that happened. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They will look like they are weak or scared if they ask for help. • If they let themselves feel sad or scared, they will never feel better. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – For example, some people are scared that if they start crying, they won't stop. This is not true; it actually helps to talk, as long as you wait until you are ready. |
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Do not let your worries stop you from talking to family and friends. They want to be there for you, and you will feel better if you spend time with them.

What to do:

- ✓ Tell a family member or friend that you would like to talk about what happened and your feelings about it.
- ✓ Tell family members or friends if you don't feel like talking about what happened, but want to spend time and do fun things with them.
- ✓ Remember that after something bad happens, it is ok to have many different feelings.
- ✓ Know that it is ok to spend time with people and to have fun, even during a sad time.
- ✓ Reach out to friends or family members by phone or internet.
- ✓ Get involved in support groups and community, school, or religious activities (sports, volunteering, youth groups).
- ✓ Support others; sometimes it will help you feel better, too.

Good things to do when giving support to other people:

- Let people know that you are interested in how they are feeling.
- Understand that people have all different kinds of feelings after a traumatic event. There is no right or wrong way to react. Some people cry when they are sad; other people may feel sad, but respond by being quiet, laughing, or seeming angry.
- Listen to the other person, respect his/her feelings, never make fun of the person, and encourage friends to seek support from adults when you think it might help. It always helps to be a good friend.

