



THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

SILVER TRAIL MIDDLE SCHOOL

Steve Frazier, Principal
18300 Sheridan Street
Pembroke Pines, FL 33331
754-323-4300
www.silvertrailmiddle.com

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Broward County, Florida

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December 18, 2018

Dear Mustang Families:

I am writing with great sadness to inform you that one of our students, Bora Duz, has passed away. This has been a difficult day for all of us at Silver Trail. Bora will be missed by the children and staff at our school as he has touched many of our lives in a special way. Our thoughts and sympathies are with his family and friends.

Counselors are available at school to meet with students individually and in groups today as well as over the coming days and weeks. Please contact the school if you feel your child is in need of additional assistance. I have included documents that may assist you whenever you are helping your children cope with death. Additionally, please do not hesitate to contact one of the school counselors with any questions or concerns you may have.

Thank you for your support and kindness.

Sincerely yours,

Steve Frazier
Principal

HELPING CHILDREN COPE WITH DEATH OR TRAGEDY

By Dr. Robin F. Goodman

When children experience the death of someone special or deal with tragic events, it can be difficult to know what to say and how to help children. We offer the following suggestions to the adults as a guide.

Talk to your children: Start with a general statement or question then listen to what they say or ask. Look for opportunities to check in more than once.

Be honest: Use age appropriate language, share basic information, and correct misinformation. It's OK to say "I don't know" and focus on what you do know.

Reassure: Using routine and structure to reassure children they will be all right, you are all right, and things in their world will continue. Remind them of the people that take care of them and how to get help.

Return to the familiar: Getting back to familiar tasks and distracting or even fun activities provides balance and perspective.

Use media sense: If the death or event may be on the news, turn off or limit TV viewing especially for little ones. Monitor what news and social media children and teens are watching or using.

Model coping: Adults have feelings and can help children by modeling appropriate ones and especially how to cope with upset or sadness in healthy ways.

Encourage expression: Children may more easily express their thoughts and feelings in pictures, music, play and poems. Be careful not to press for details but rather validate how they feel and problem solve ways to feel better.

Stay connected: Being connected to others — friends, family, a faith community — can be especially healing and powerful when feeling upset, overwhelmed and alone.

Provide comfort: Hugs—given and received - help everyone, young and old.

Find the good: Look for stories of hope. Cope with kindness. When able, be the hope — reach out a hand, offer help, care for others day to day.

Originally posted on: www.acaringhand.org



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
School Psychologists

Trauma: Brief Facts and Tips for Children and Adults

- 1. Trauma is a serious problem.** Most children and adults will overcome a traumatic event with support. Some individuals are at greater risk for more serious traumatic reactions. Risk factors can include: proximity to a traumatic event, past exposure to trauma, substance abuse or mental illness, isolation, family stress, loss of a loved one, community stressors (poverty, violence).
- 2. Trauma can have a lasting impact.** Trauma can increase the risk for psychological, behavioral or emotional problems (depression or PTSD), substance abuse, low occupational attainment or academic failure, social maladjustment and poor medical health.
- 3. Common Reactions to Trauma.** Shock or disbelief, fear, sadness, guilt/shame, grief, confusion, pessimism, or *anger*.
In most cases these reactions are temporary and lessen over time.
- 4. Warning Signs.** If any of the following symptoms do not decrease over time, if they *severely* impact the ability to participate in normal activities, or if significant changes are noted, a referral to a mental health professional may be necessary.
 - Disruption or withdrawal from peer relationships
 - General lack of energy or interest in previously enjoyed activities
 - Decline in school/work performance, school/work avoidance, or difficulty concentrating
 - Physical complaints with no apparent cause (e.g., stomachaches, headaches)
 - Maladaptive coping (drug or alcohol use, severe aggression)
 - Repeated nightmares and reporting strong fears of death or violence
 - Repetitive play or talk re-enacting the traumatic events
 - Sleeping (difficulty falling or staying asleep) and eating disturbances
 - Increased arousal, easily startling or quick to anger, agitation, irritability, aggressiveness
 - Regression in behavior (thumb sucking, dinginess, fear of dark, assuming fetal position)
- 5. Signs of Strong Emotional Reactions.**
 - Short temper/impatience; verbal outbursts
 - Sleep and/or eating problems; physical symptoms
 - Restlessness and agitation
 - Hitting and slamming objects, pets, or people
 - Desire to do harm
 - A sense of losing control over your life
 - Poor concentration or attention span
 - Social media posts expressing intolerance and/or anger
- 6. There is help available.** If you or your family members are experiencing a crisis, reach out to the following: **Orlando Family Assistance:** (407) 246.4357, **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** 1 (800) 273-8255 **SAMHSA Helpline:** 1(800) 662-HELP (4357)- English and Spanish

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Información y consejos para niños y adultos

- 1. Los traumas son un problema grave.** La mayoría de los niños y adultos superan un acontecimiento traumático si reciben apoyo. En algunas personas, existe un riesgo mayor de que se produzcan reacciones traumáticas más graves. Entre los factores de riesgo, se pueden incluir: cercanía a un acontecimiento traumático, exposición a traumas en el pasado, abuso de sustancias o enfermedades mentales, aislamiento, estrés familiar, pérdida de un ser querido, factores adversos de la vida en comunidad (pobreza, violencia).
- 2. El impacto de los traumas puede ser duradero.** Los traumas pueden aumentar el riesgo de experimentar problemas psicológicos, emocionales (depresión o TEPT) o de comportamiento, abuso de sustancias, dificultades laborales o fracaso académico, inadaptación social y mala salud.
- 3. Reacciones comunes a los traumas.** Shock o incredulidad, miedo, tristeza, culpa o remordimiento, pena, confusión, *pesimismo o enojo*. *En la mayoría de los casos, estas reacciones son temporales y disminuyen con el tiempo.*
- 4. Señales de advertencia.** Si alguno de los síntomas descritos a continuación no disminuye con el tiempo, si tiene un impacto *serio* en la capacidad de la persona para participar en actividades normales o si se perciben cambios importantes, es posible que se necesite acudir a un profesional de la salud mental.
 - Interrupción o aislamiento de las relaciones con otros
 - Falta de energía o desinterés por actividades que antes se disfrutaban
 - Disminución del rendimiento escolar o laboral, evasión de la vida escolar o laboral, o dificultad para concentrarse
 - Problemas físicos sin causa aparente (p. ej., dolores de estómago, dolores de cabeza)
 - Ineficacia para enfrentar situaciones (consumo de drogas o alcohol, agresiones graves)
 - Pesadillas constantes y mucho miedo a la muerte o violencia
 - Juegos o charlas repetitivas en los que se recrean los acontecimientos traumáticos
 - Trastornos alimenticios y del sueño (dificultad para conciliar o mantener el sueño)
 - Excitación elevada, situaciones en las que la persona se sobresalta fácilmente o se enoja con rapidez, nerviosismo, irritabilidad, agresividad
 - Regresión en el comportamiento (chuparse el dedo, apego a otros, miedo a la oscuridad, adopción de la posición fetal)
- 5. Síntomas de reacciones emocionales fuertes.**
 - Mal genio o poca paciencia, arrebatos verbales
 - Trastornos alimenticios o del sueño, síntomas físicos
 - Agitación e inquietud
 - Maltrato y golpes hacia otras personas, animales u objetos
 - Deseo de hacer daño
 - Sensación de pérdida de control de la propia vida
 - Falta de concentración o períodos de atención reducidos
 - Publicaciones en redes sociales en las que se expresa intolerancia o enojo
- 6. Puede recibir ayuda.** Si usted o alguno de sus familiares están pasando por una crisis, llame a los siguientes números: **Orlando Family Assistance (Centro de Asistencia Familiar de Orlando):** (407) 246-4357, **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (Red Nacional de Prevención del Suicidio):** 1 (800) 273-8255, **SAMHSA Helpline (Línea de Ayuda de SAMHSA):** 1(800) 662-HELP (4357), inglés y español

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