

29th November 2023



Dear Parents/Carers,

We are pleased to share with you advice and tips from Place2Be, the counselling service with which the academy works closely, on how to support your child through bereavement. This may be particularly useful for some students at the present time.

Supporting your child after a traumatic event

When children and young people are exposed to very frightening and stressful events they may react in a number of different ways. Your child may, for example:

- Have problems getting to sleep or have nightmares
- Feel as if the frightening and stressful event is happening all over again
- Be more 'on edge' and on the look-out for danger
- Get angry or upset about 'small' things
- Act out the event in their play or in drawings
- Avoid people, places or things that may remind them of the frightening and stressful event
- Not want to talk about what happened
- Want to be near you and other family members all the time
- Have headaches or stomach aches
- Find it difficult to concentrate

Any and all of these reactions are normal and often pass with time (4-6 weeks) and with the right support.

It can be difficult to know how to support your child after a traumatic event. Here are some ideas for you to think about:

Create a sense of safety

Your child may feel less safe after a traumatic event. They may need extra hugs or reassurance. Remind them that you (and others in their lives, such as their teachers) will always try to keep them safe.

Create a sense of calm

Children will often be calmer if their parents or carers are. Do things that help you and your child to feel calm. This might be having a bath, playing a favourite game, or playing with a pet.

Stick to normal routines

Maintain normal routines as much as possible. After a traumatic event, routines can reassure children and young people that parts of their life can remain the same. Try to stick to regular mealtimes and bedtimes.



Principal – Ms Catrin Green

Homefield Road, Old Coulsdon, Surrey, CR5 1ES
Tel: 01737 551 161. www.oasisacademycoulsdon.org

Oasis Academy Coulsdon is sponsored by Oasis Community Learning
www.oasiscommunitylearning.org – part of Oasis UK.
Oasis Community Learning is a Company Limited by Guarantee registered in
England & Wales No 5398529. Registered Office: 75 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7HS.

Stay connected to others

Make sure that you and your children stay connected to loved ones, friends, neighbours, wider family, and faith groups (if you have one). Encourage your child to play, hang out with friends and have fun – and allow yourself to, too. Reach out for help if you feel you or your child are struggling.

Maintain a sense of hope

Remaining hopeful can help you and your child to recover from the traumatic event. Things may seem so overwhelming right now – but they won't always be like this. Think about things that you and your child can look forward to in the future, however small.

Tips on talking to your child about the traumatic event:

- It's best for children and young people to learn about the traumatic event from a safe, trusted adult. There is no need to go into too many details. Be brief and honest and allow your child to ask questions. It is ok to say 'I don't know'. Encourage your child to avoid looking on social media for news about the event, as it may be mis-leading, sensationalist and potentially overwhelming for your child.
- Listen to what your child wants to say about the event and acknowledge how they are feeling. Let your child know it is normal to experience difficult feelings such as anger, guilt, and sadness, and to express things in different ways—for example, they may feel sad but not cry. It is also normal to sometimes feel nothing at all after a traumatic event.
- Don't worry about not knowing exactly the right thing to say — after all, there is no answer that will make everything ok.
- Remember the 'oxygen mask principle' - if you have ever been on a flight, you will have been told that, in the event of an incident, you must put on your own oxygen make first, before helping others. So, remember to take care of yourself as this will help you to take better care of your child, too.
- **If you are worried about your child's wellbeing following a traumatic event, make an appointment to see your doctor and contact your child's school.**
- **Place2Be counsellor Antony Johnston is available to meet with parents for advice on how to support your child, and is in school on Wednesdays and Thursdays. To book an appointment with him please email:**
Antony.johnston@place2be.org.uk



Further resources from Place2Be can be found here:

<https://parentingsmart.place2be.org.uk/>

<https://www.place2be.org.uk/page/get-urgent-help/>

As always, if you have any further queries or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us, and for any urgent matters, please email safeguarding@oasiscoulsdon.org

Yours sincerely,

Ms C Green
Principal



Principal – Ms Catrin Green

Homefield Road, Old Coulsdon, Surrey, CR5 1ES
Tel: 01737 551 161. www.oasisacademycoulsdon.org

Oasis Academy Coulsdon is sponsored by Oasis Community Learning
www.oasiscommunitylearning.org – part of Oasis UK.
Oasis Community Learning is a Company Limited by Guarantee registered in
England & Wales No 5398529. Registered Office: 75 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7HS.