

## Advice for Parents

It is wise for you to monitor your child's exposure to television coverage, print media and social media.

Some children and young people will want to talk about the tragic events and try to make sense of what they have both seen and heard.

Other children will avoid any discussion around the events and will be reassured by routine and normality.

Remember the importance of routine, sleep, exercise and healthy eating.

There is a range of things you can do to assist your child during events such as this, including:

Acknowledge that the event was distressing

Reassure children that they are safe

Look for signs of distress (e.g. some children/young people might be scared)

Normalise responses - typical response will range from anger to general upset or sadness

Maintain a normal routine - keeping the structure at home or at school in place

Allow children to express feelings as they arise

Telling stories about how people manage during difficult times can be helpful.

Separate fact from fiction e.g. children may express fears about unrelated events.

Plan relaxing activities before bed – talk your child through a gentle relaxation, this might include using soothing music and talking them through relaxing tension in their body or simply reading something to them that induces relaxation (i.e. a favourite book).

Speak in hopeful terms – children and young people will often take their cues from their parents' reactions; if you are honest, calm, compassionate and open they will be much more able to trust that they will be okay.

Always remember the value of doing something with children that they like to do such as playing, exercising, being outdoors - have a time during your day to share time with your child.