

# Helpful Information for Talking to Children and Young People about the Kahramanmaras earthquake



**We know that lots of members of the Enfield community are personally affected by the Kahramanmaras earthquake. It is very understandable for children and young people and their parents to be experiencing a range of emotions such as shock, worry, distress and anger. You might be wondering how much information to share with your children, how to answer their questions and how to help them with their feelings. It is also important to look after yourselves too. This leaflet has some suggestions on how to do this.**

## **How much information should I share with my child or young person?**

Children and young people are exposed to information from news outlets, social media and general conversation with friends and family, even when we might think they aren't listening. It's important to have conversations with them about what they are seeing and hearing, what they have understood, and how they are feeling.

- ▶ Adjust the amount of information, and the level of complexity, to your child's developmental level, so that they are not overwhelmed with information they can't yet understand.
- ▶ Be mindful of your children and be aware of what is on the television or radio when they are present.
- ▶ Try to limit how much time you spend listening/watching the news and make sure you are taking breaks.
- ▶ Follow your child's lead. If your child does not want to talk about what has happened or does not seem interested, it is best to let them come to you when they are ready to talk.

How much news coverage is OK for children?  
([apa.org](https://www.apa.org))



**Email: [EPS@enfield.gov.uk](mailto:EPS@enfield.gov.uk)**

**[www.enfield.gov.uk](http://www.enfield.gov.uk)**

## How do I answer my child's questions?

You know your child best; you know what information they are developmentally ready for. Some helpful advice is to:

- ▶ Be as honest as you can, even if the answer is difficult or sad.
- ▶ Focus on answering the question that is being asked. Don't offer more information than your child can process.
- ▶ Listen carefully, to hear whether there is a question underneath the question e.g. a question about whether you, their parents, or the, the child, are at risk too.
- ▶ Remember that it is ok to say that you do not know the answer. You might want to tell your child that you will find out the answer, or you will tell them once the information becomes available.
- ▶ Check-in with yourself and look after yourself well, so you can manage your emotions in these conversations and focus on your child and their feelings.

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/news.html>

## How can I help my child with their feelings?

- ▶ Listen carefully to what your child is saying they are feeling. Try to make space for their feelings, even if they aren't what you might expect or believe are the 'right' things to feel.
- ▶ Let your child know that it's very understandable to feel what they feel. Explain that these feelings may come and go, and you are here to support them.
- ▶ Help your child to think of things they can do to cope with their feelings (e.g. breathing calmly, thinking of something which helps them feel safe, doing something relaxing or pleasant).

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/joinin/help-children-cope-with-emotions>

*"It's ok to feel sad. What has happened is really sad".*

*"I can understand feeling worried. It is scary not to know whether family member is okay"*

*"I hear you. You're worried about going to school because you don't know whether we'll hear more news while you're not here."*

## How can I help myself at this difficult time?

30-3-30 approach

This approach, developed by 4 Mental Health, can help in the moment at a time when feelings may be very overwhelming.

Select an activity of your own choice that will help you stay calm, focused, and able to cope. The approach fits in to whatever time you have available, be that:

- ▶ 30 seconds e.g. deep breaths, counting 20-0, take a few sips of water
- ▶ 3 minutes e.g. make a warm drink, listen to a song, solve a sudoku puzzle or a crossword
- ▶ 30 minutes e.g. watch a gentle or fun TV show, phone a helpline, read or exercise

<https://nhsfreemind.co.uk/get-your-mind-and-body-healthy/>

## How can we help our community?

Research following devastating disasters shows that individuals and communities tend to have 5 main needs to help them recover:

- ▶ A sense of safety
- ▶ A sense of calming
- ▶ A sense of control
- ▶ A sense of connectedness
- ▶ A sense of hope

(Hobfoll et al., 2007).

You might find it helpful to think about ways to meet each of these needs for your child, yourself, and your community.

# Where can I get more help?

## Professional help:

### ► Educational Psychology Service telephone support line

The Enfield EPS offers bookable telephone calls with parents and carers, supporting them to support their children. Call 0208 379 2000 or request a call [here](#).

### ► Kooth

Kooth is commissioned to provide free, safe and anonymous online mental health support to young people aged 11-24.

<https://www.kooth.com/>

### ► Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families

Self-care section with strategies developed with young people and their families.

<https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/self-care/>

### Grief Encounter- Supports bereaved children and young people and their families.

<https://www.griefencounter.org.uk/>

GriefTalk helpline: 0808 802 0111

### Hope Again

The youth website of Cruse Bereavement Care.

<https://www.hopeagain.org.uk/>

## Community help:

### ► Day-mer

An organisation set up to support Turkish, Kurdish and Website-Cypriot Turkish communities in the UK.

<https://daymer.org/general-information/>

Email: [Info@daymer.org](mailto:Info@daymer.org)

020 7275 8440

### ► Derman

Offers free services to all Kurdish, Turkish, Turkish Cypriot, and Eastern European Turkish people, including group support sessions.

<http://derman.org.uk/en/>

### ► Imece Womens Centre

Support for Turkish-speaking women over the age of 18.

<https://imece.org.uk/teatime-sessions/teatime-16/>

02073541359