

Talking To Kids About Tragedy

INITIATE THE CONVERSATION

- Just because children are not talking about a tragedy, doesn't mean they're not thinking about it

REASSURE THEM

- Tragedy can rattle our sense of safety and our children's

LISTEN

- This means giving them your full attention and not jumping to judge or minimize what they are saying

FIND OUT WHAT THEY KNOW

- The key purpose of this conversation is to correct any misconceptions and offer concrete information.

ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO SHARE THEIR FEELINGS

- Sadness, anxiety, fear, stress, even excitement – show understanding and acceptance

SHARE YOUR FEELINGS

- Honestly express emotions, such as: "you seem sad when we talk about this; I feel sad too."

FOCUS ON THE GOOD

- Where there is tragedy, there is also heroism – acts by police officers, doctors or ordinary citizens that restore our faith in humanity when it is shaken

ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO ACT

- Encouraging children to do something about what they're feeling can give them an outlet and restore some control

