

Galpins Road Incident: Support for young people after trauma

Following a traumatic or frightening event, it is normal for children and young people to experience difficulties.

Children and young people will react differently, but these are some common reactions that you may notice in your child which might include:

- Pictures of the traumatic event suddenly popping into their mind
- Nightmares
- Feeling angry or easily upset
- Becoming more clingy with parents or carers, and finding separation difficult
- Physical complaints such as headaches or stomach aches
- Avoidance e.g. not wanting to think or talk about the traumatic event or be reminded of it
- Sleep problems
- Difficulty concentrating

How can I support my child during this time?

It can be helpful to encourage children to talk about difficult experiences. This can stop them from “bottling it up” and reassures them that it is okay to feel upset about what happened and to ask questions.

Talking about it also prevents children from “filling in the blanks” with their imagination, which can be distressing.

It can also be helpful to make sure your child has a regular routine and structure, like going to bed at the same time every night (we call this sleep hygiene) and getting regular exercise as this can help young people feel better and support sleep.

Some children and young people may benefit from relaxation exercises if they are unable to settle or if they are feeling very overwhelmed.

Merton local services that can be helpful to link in with.

There are some local services that may be helpful:

- **Jigsaw4u** (www.jigsaw4u.org.uk) for bereavement support
- **Childline** (www.childline.org.uk) for general emotional support
- If children are aged 11+, **Off the Record** (www.talkofftherecord.org) can also be a useful service



Getting urgent mental health support.

Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Crisis Line

If you are a parent/carer concerned about a young person's mental health, you can contact the SLP (South London Partnership) CAMHS Crisis Line on **0203 228 5980**. The line is open 5-11pm Monday-Fridays and 9am-11pm at weekends and bank holidays.

24/7 Mental Health Crisis Line

Alternatively, you can call the Trust's 24/7 Mental Health Crisis Line on **0800 028 8000**. Our crisis line team are trained NHS mental health professionals who will help you to get the care and support you need.

The crisis line is open to everyone: both children and adults of all ages, and to people who haven't previously accessed mental health services.

Some useful websites and resources.

- Kooth offers an online support service for children aged 11-25. Their website is www.kooth.com
- My self-care plan: The Anna Freud Centre has a useful resource which walks young people through a series of steps, helping them create a detailed self-care plan that works for them. Visit <https://www.annafreud.org/schools-and-colleges/resources/selfcaresummer-secondary-pack>
- Anxiety Canada - anxiety self-help www.anxietycanada.com
- Centre for Clinical Interventions (CCI) - self-help worksheets www.cci.health.wa.gov.au
- How to get Up and Go When You Are Feeling Low: Top tips for feeling good https://www.ucl.ac.uk/evidence-based-practice-unit/sites/evidence-based-practice-unit/files/how_to_get_up_and_go_when_youre_feeling_low.pdf
- After the Event has a leaflet for parents about supporting children after a frightening event: <https://aftertheevent.org>

