

WHAT IS TRAUMA?



Trauma can be any event that, when witnessed or experienced by a child or adolescent, is extremely distressing to them. These events are often in situations where the children feared for their safety or their lives or the safety and lives of others. There are many different kinds of trauma including:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Exposure to violence
- Loss of a significant loved one
- Natural Disaster
- House fire
- Car accident

WHAT ARE SOME REACTIONS TO TRAUMA?

Each person can react in different ways to a traumatic event based on many things, such as age when the trauma occurred, the severity of the trauma, and the amount of time that has passed since the trauma. Some possible reactions include:

- Difficulty sleeping or nightmares and/or not wanting to sleep alone
- Difficulty not thinking about the event
- Increased fear in both safe and risky situations
- Feelings of shame or guilt
- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty staying still
- Thoughts about death or dying
- Low self-esteem
- Mood swings/depression
- Drop in grades/performance at school
- Irritability and problems with anger control
- Efforts to avoid talking about the event or doing things that remind the child about the event

Trauma symptoms may become worse before getting better during an investigation or when the child starts therapy.

