



# TRAUMA TALK

*Tips for Mental Wellness for the  
Whole Family in the Face of Trauma*

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October 9, 2020    6:00 pm    Zoom  
Presented by WPI *Ma'iak na Ha'āni* (Bright Futures)

# Tonight's Agenda

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- About Us
- About Trauma
- Coping with Trauma
- Community Resources
- Questions and Answers

# Who are we?

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*Ma'lak na Ha'ani* or “Bright Futures” is a trauma treatment program for youth ages 11-17 at three GDOE schools in the northern region.

Our program offers mental health services including, but not limited to, individual therapy, group therapy, crisis intervention, outreach, and education.



# Your Presenters

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Katrina Carranza, MA  
School-Based Clinician

Jean Macalinao, MS  
School-Based Clinician

Rosario Perez, MSW  
School-Based Clinician



**Let's talk  
about  
trauma.**





# What is trauma?

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An event that is sudden and frightening and that poses a threat of injury or death to oneself or other.

Usually makes an individual feel terrified, horrified, or helpless when it is happening.

*Source: Support for Students Exposed to Trauma: The SSET Program*



# Examples of Trauma

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- Psychological/ physical/sexual abuse
- Witnessing or experiencing domestic violence
- Community or school violence
- Physical or sexual assault
- Commercial sexual exploitation

*Source: SAMHSA National Child Traumatic Stress Initiative*



# Examples of Trauma

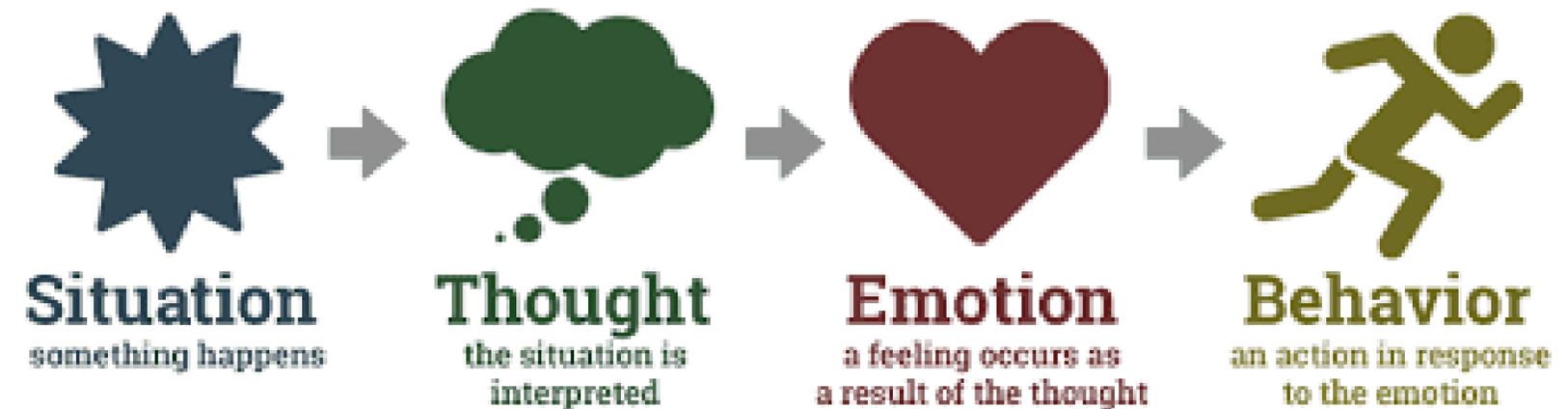
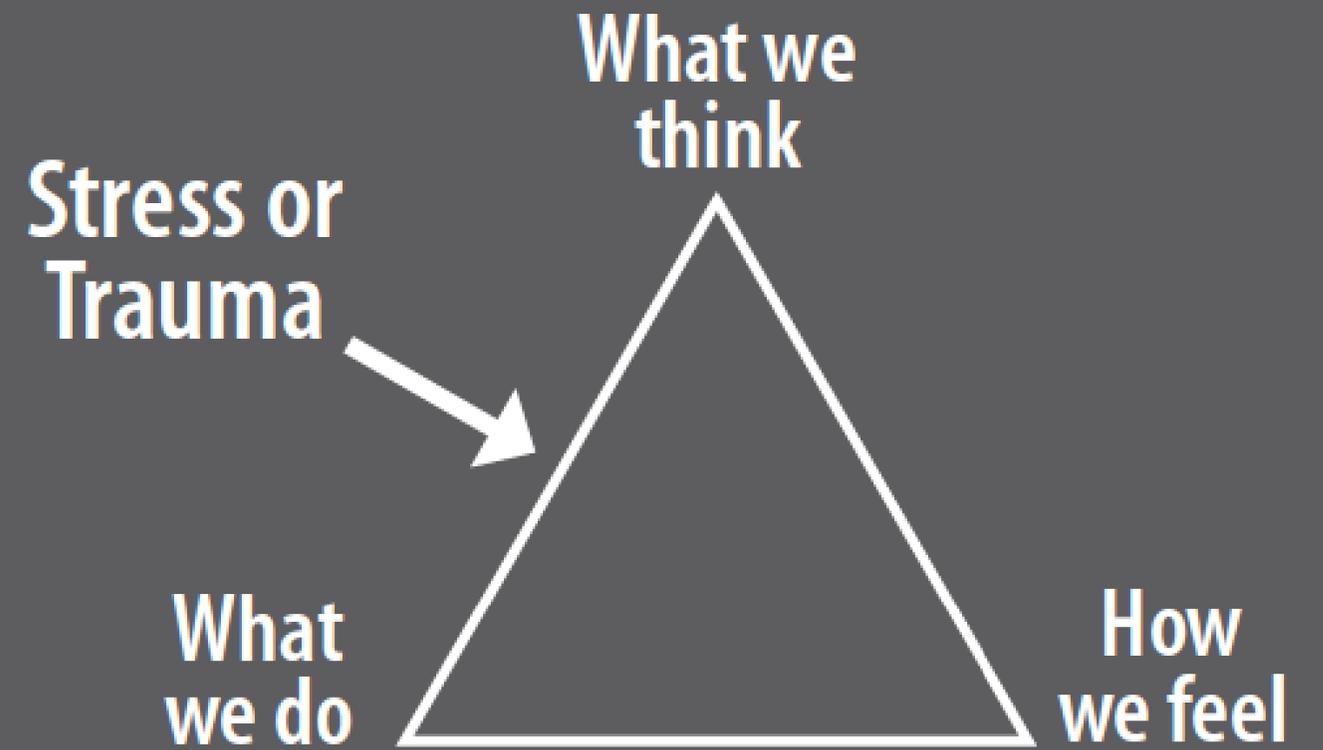
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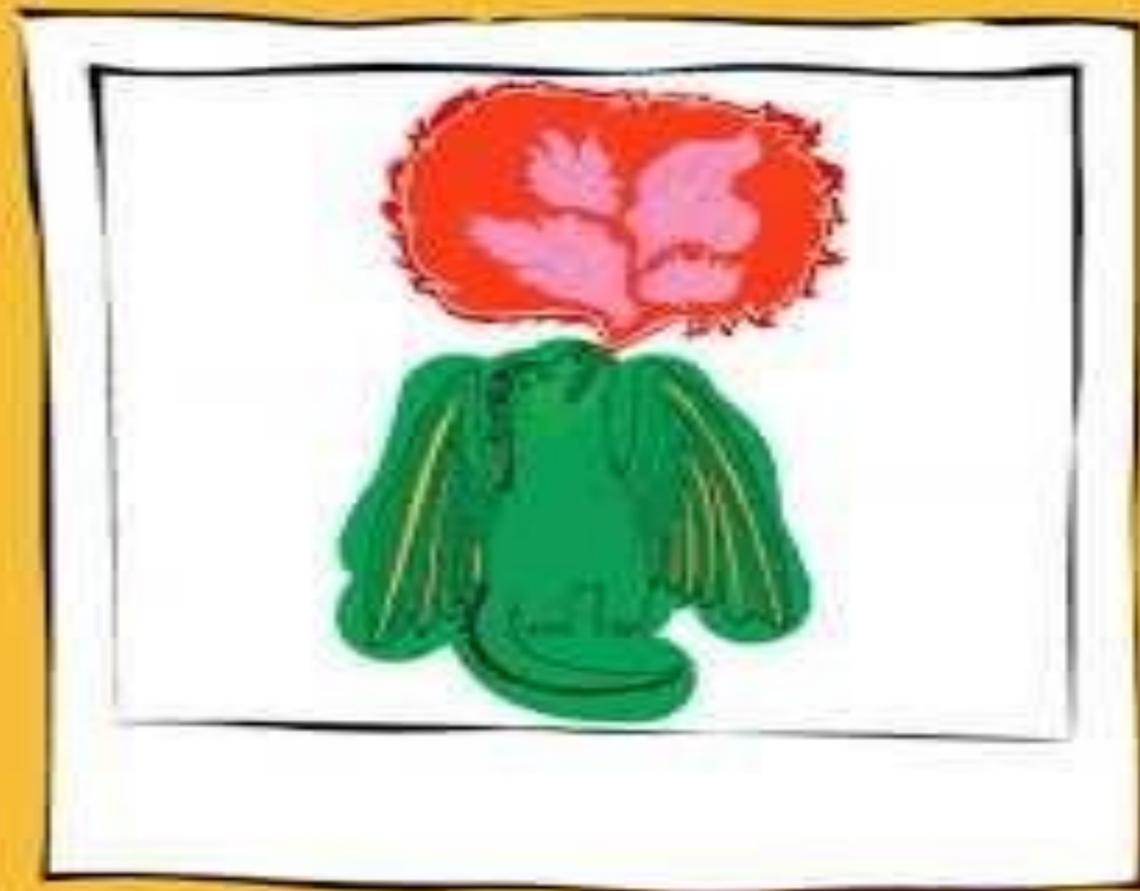
- Serious accidents or life-threatening illness
- Sudden or violent loss of a loved one
- Refugee or war experiences
- Natural disasters or terrorism
- Military family-related stressors
- Neglect

*Source: SAMHSA National Child Traumatic Stress Initiative*

# Impact of Trauma

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# Common reactions to trauma

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- Feeling anger
- Feeling shame
- Feeling guilt
- Feeling sadness/grief/loss
- Feeling bad about yourself

- Being on guard to protect yourself; feeling like something bad is about to happen
- Jumping when there is a loud noise
- Having physical health problems and complaints

*Source: Support for Students Exposed to Trauma: The SSET Program*



**If you have had any common  
reactions to trauma...**

**That is normal.**

# Exposure to traumatic events among youth is relatively common.

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More than one third of U.S. children report being victims or physical violence in the past.

19% of injured and 12% physically ill youth have post-traumatic stress disorder.

More than two thirds of children reported at least one traumatic event by age 16.

*Source: SAMHSA National Child Traumatic Stress Initiative*

# Trauma and its Impact on Children

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- For school-age children, trauma may elicit feelings of persistent concern over their own safety and the safety of others in their school or family.
- They may experience guilt or shame over what they did or did not do.

*Source: National Child Traumatic Stress Network*

# Trauma and its Impact on Children

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- In adolescents, feelings of fear, vulnerability, and concern over being labeled “abnormal” or different may cause adolescents to withdraw from family and friends.
- Some adolescents engage in self-destructive or accident-prone behaviors.

*Source: National Child Traumatic Stress Network*

# Presentation of Trauma By School Group

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## Preschool Children

- Fearing separation from parents or caregivers
- Crying and/or screaming a lot
- Eating poorly and losing weight
- Having nightmares

## Elementary School Children

- Becoming anxious or fearful
- Feeling guilt or shame
- Having a hard time concentrating
- Having difficulty sleeping

## Middle and High School Children

- Feeling depressed or alone
- Developing eating disorders and self-harming behaviors
- Beginning to abuse alcohol or drugs
- Becoming sexually active

# Trauma and its Impact on Relationships

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- Families dealing with high stress, limited resources, and multiple trauma exposures often find their coping resources depleted.
- Intimate partners may struggle with communication and have difficulty expressing emotion or maintaining intimacy, which make them less available to each other and increases the risk of separation, conflict, or interpersonal violence.
- Parental stress, isolation, and burden can make parents less emotionally available to their children and less able to help them recover from trauma.

# Trauma and Culture

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- Extended family relationships can offer sustaining resources in the form of family rituals and traditions, emotional support, and caregiving.
- Some families who have had significant trauma across generations may experience current problems in functioning, and they risk transmitting the effects of trauma to the next generation.

*Source: National Child Traumatic Stress Network*



# COVID-19 has been shown to place stress on families.

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- Half of the families surveyed are worried they can't pay their bills.
- 55% worry that their money will run out.
- 52% said financial concerns affected their parenting.
- 50% said social isolation got in the way of parenting.

*Source: HealthDay*

# COVID-19 has been shown to place stress on families.

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- Four in 10 parents had shouted, screamed or yelled at their kids during the past two weeks.
- One in 6 said they had spanked or slapped their child in the past two weeks, and 11% said they'd done it a few times or more.

*Source: HealthDay*

**How has COVID-19 affected you?**

# Building Resilience

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- The family unit, as well as extended family members, is a single yet vital component of support during stressful situations and encouraging mental health wellness.
- Partnerships with schools, spiritual community, and community organizations as systems of support.
- Helping children learn the skill of resiliency increases their capacity to bounce back from stress, adversity, failure, challenges, and even trauma.

*Source: Psycom*



# Fostering Resiliency

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Promoting resiliency can equip children and youth with the skills and resources they can use in times of distress, discomfort, or adjustment.

These are some ways that resiliency can be fostered across a school or home setting.

- Make connections
- Helping others
- Routine schedule
- Practicing self-care
- “Temperature check”
- Muscle Relaxation

*Source: APA*

# Adapting At Home

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## Keep a routine

- Wake up, get dressed and have breakfast at the normal time.
- Decide where everyone can do their work most effectively and without distractions.
- List the times for learning, exercise and breaks.
- Schedule time for nutritious lunches and snacks. Many schools are providing take-home school meal packages for students who need them.

# Adapting At Home

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- Don't forget afternoon breaks as well!
- Have dinner together as a family and discuss the day.
- Enjoy more family time in the evenings, playing, reading, watching a movie or exercising together.
- Stick with normal bedtime routines as much as possible during the week to make sure everyone gets enough sleep.

# Fostering Resiliency

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# Supporting the Home Environment

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## Establish Opportunities to Check In

Make time to check in with your child on how they are doing, managing, and coping with things. Checking in fosters a supportive presence and strengthens familial relationships.

*Source: NYU Langone Health*

# Supporting the Home Environment

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## Model Resiliency

Be aware of your emotions and how it is expressed. Communicate with honesty to your child with how you are feeling and how you are managing your emotions in a healthy and appropriate way.

*Source: NYU Langone Health*

# Supporting the Home Environment

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## Allow for Soothing Activities

Explore soothing or calming activities to manage feelings of stress and to optimize physical and mental health well being.

*Source: NYU Langone Health*

# Coping Strategies

## Individual Activities

- Mindfulness coloring
- Journaling or drawing
- Going for a brief walk or riding a bike

## Activities with Family or Friends

- Sports with friends or extended family members
- BBQ or small gathering at the beach
- Story time or craft time with parents or grandparents

# Coping Strategies

## Grounding Techniques

- Play soothing music or listen to the waves at the beach
- Burn essential oils in a diffuser
- Go out into the warm sun for 15-30 minutes
- Apply a cool washcloth to your face – add lavender or lemon grass oil for a calming boost

*Source: Eddins, R. (2020)*

## What we think might happen

If I write or talk about my trauma, I will feel even more afraid, upset, or angry.

## What actually happens

I may feel relief because I was able to talk about my trauma.

It can feel good to know that someone wants to hear about what happened.

It is possible to feel safe and comfortable sharing my trauma.

## What we think might happen

I don't know if I or others can take hearing about my trauma.

## What actually happens

It can be hard to hear about trauma, but talking about it can make me stronger by facing my fear.

When I share with people I trust, they will want to support and help me.

## What we think might happen

I will fall apart when I try to share my trauma.

## What actually happens

It's okay to feel a lot of emotions when I share my trauma. But talking more about it allowed me to feel a little more comfortable talking about my trauma and I can only grow stronger from here.



# Parent & Caregiver Role

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When a child expresses that they have experienced a trauma, these are the steps you can take:

- Provide care and support by listening.
- Assure the child that he or she is safe. Talk about the measures you are taking to get the child help and keep him or her safe at home and school.

*Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Association*



# Parent & Caregiver Role

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When a child expresses that they have experienced a trauma, these are the steps you can take:

- Explain to the child that he or she is not responsible for what happened. Children often blame themselves for events, even those events that are completely out of their control.

*Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Association*



# Parent & Caregiver Role

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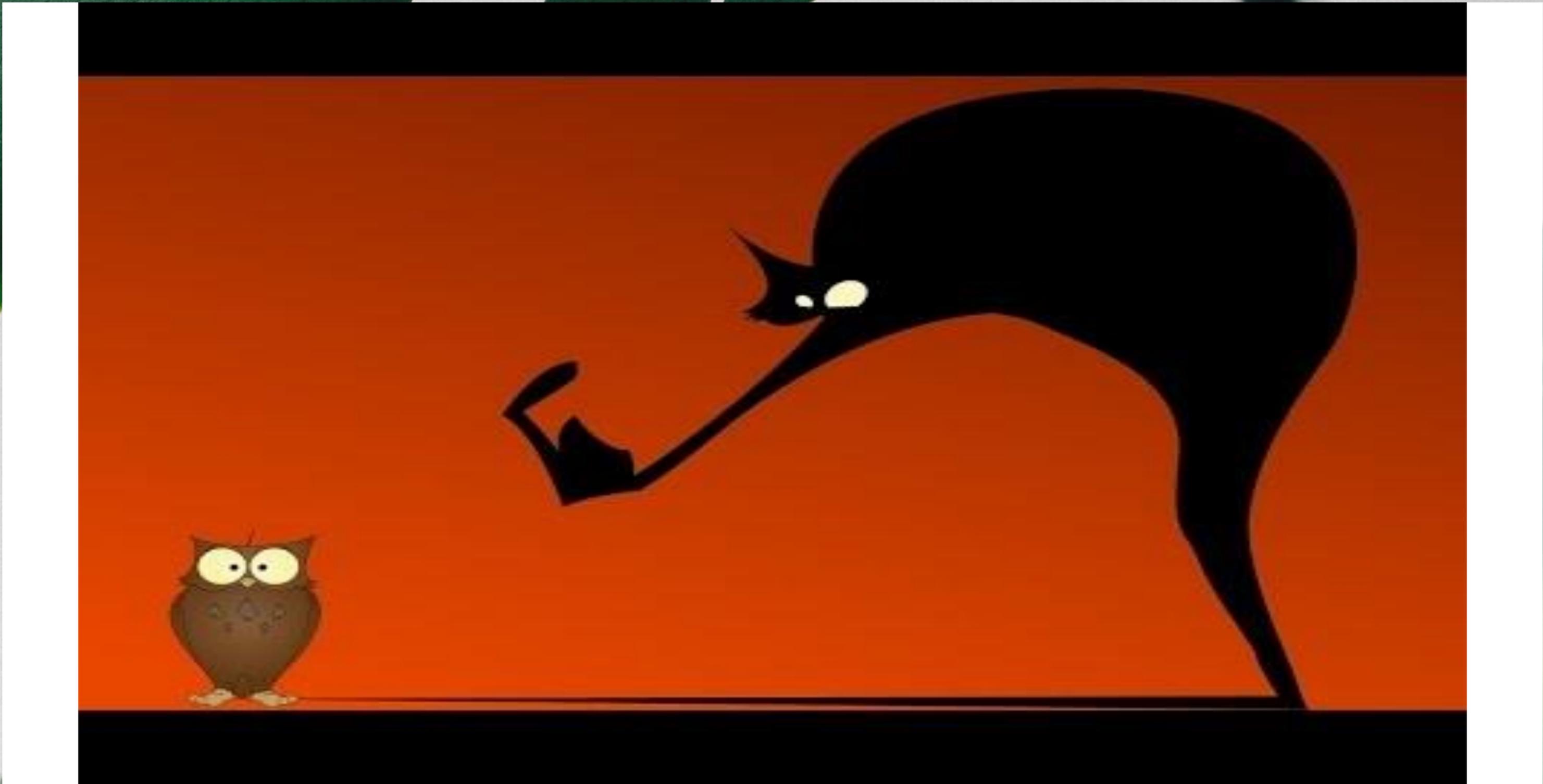
When a child expresses that they have experienced a trauma, these are the steps you can take:

- Be patient. There is no correct timetable for healing. Some children will recover quickly. Others may recover slowly. Try to be supportive and reassure the child that he or she does not need to feel guilty or bad about any feelings or thoughts.

*Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Association*



**Just like when we digest a big meal, we can feel more comfortable when we break down the trauma.**



# Seeking Support

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# At-Home Resources

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## Further Information

- Child Welfare Information Gateway
  - For resources on trauma for caregivers & families
    - <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/responding/trauma/caregivers/>
- Utah Trauma-Resiliency Collaborative
  - For trauma-resiliency solutions
    - <https://trcutah.org/mobile-apps>
- Child Mind Institute
  - For resources and tips to help children cope with trauma and grief
    - <https://childmind.org/topics/concerns/trauma-and-grief/>
- Technical Assistance Network for Children's Behavioral Health
  - Video on understanding trauma and promoting resilience in vulnerable children (provided in conjunction with SAMHSA)
    - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cyrf0qKFiOo>



# At-Home Resources

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## Mobile Applications

- Stop, Breathe, Think
  - For relaxation
    - <https://my.life/>
- Utah Trauma-Resiliency Collaborative
  - For trauma-resiliency solutions
    - <https://trcutah.org/mobile-apps>
- Smiling Mind
  - For meditation for all ages
    - <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/smiling-mind/id560442518>
- NTCP TF-CBT Triangle of Life
  - For cognitive processing
    - <https://tfcbt.org/tf-cbt-triangle-of-life/>



# At-Home Resources

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## Activities for Kids

- Happily Ever Elephants
  - For paperback and eBooks on trauma, grief, and fear
    - <https://happilyeverelephants.com/home/childrens-books-about-trauma-grief-and-fear>
- Color Mandala
  - For coloring pages
    - <https://colormandala.com/>



# Support Services Available

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Guam Behavioral Health and  
Wellness Center (GBHWC)  
*Suicide and mental health crisis  
intervention*

647-8833  
647-8834

National Suicide  
Prevention Lifeline  
*Suicide Hotline*

1-800-273-8255



# Support Services Available

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Victim Advocates  
Reaching Out (VARO)

*Domestic violence, sexual assault,  
abuse, violent crime*

477-5552

Healing Hearts  
Crisis Center

*Rape crisis intervention*

647-5351

Alee Shelter

*Emergency shelter for  
abused women and children*

648-4673



# Support Services Available

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National Domestic  
Violence Hotline  
*Domestic violence hotline*

1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

National Sexual  
Assault Hotline  
*Sexual assault hotline*

1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

National Dating  
Abuse Helpline  
*Dating abuse hotline*

1-866-331-9474

# Support Services Available

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Guam Department  
of Education  
*Student Support Division*

300-1624  
Imbcruz@gdoe.net





# COVID-19 Support Services

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## DPHSS Crisis Hotline

*Counseling services for distress or  
anxiety due to COVID-19*

Call/ Text

988-5375

683-8802

686-6032

## DPHSS Medical

### Triage Hotline

*Community health center for persons  
experiencing COVID-19 symptoms*

480-7859

480-6760

480-7883

687-6170 (ADA)

## Joint Information Center

*COVID-19 Resources*

478-0208/09/10

Dial 311

# Westcare Pacific Islands

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Westcare Pacific Islands  
Reflection Center, 222 Chalan Santo  
Papa Juan Pablo Dos Suite 102  
Hagåtña, 96910, Guam

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# References & Resources

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# References & Resources

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- Trauma in Children During the COVID-19 Pandemic. (NYU Langone Health). Retrieved October 06, 2020, from <https://nyulangone.org/news/trauma-children-during-covid-19-pandemic>



# **Question & Answers**



# ***Si yu'os ma'åse!***

**Thank you for your time and attendance from *Ma'lak na Ha'åni* (Bright Futures).**