

Talking to Kids About the Fires in Los Angeles

With fires in places like the Palisades and Altadena, we know it can be hard for adults to know how to talk to kids. You might not know what to say or you might worry that talking about it will upset them. But when kids aren't given information, they may become more scared or worried.

It's important to talk honestly with them in a way they can understand.

Here are some tips on how to talk about the fires and help kids feel safe:

1. Focus on What's Safe

Make sure your child knows what is safe and true in the moment. *"We are safe here. We're together, and I will do everything I can to keep us safe. Let's take a few deep breaths together."*

Try to keep your child away from too much news or adult conversations about the fires. Turn off the TV and watch what they're doing online. This helps protect them from seeing things that could make them feel scared.

2. Ask What They Know

If you're not close to the fires, ask your child what they've heard. *"Has anything happened today that you have questions about?"*

If they have questions, answer them truthfully in a way they can understand. *"A big fire happened, and many people lost their homes. But the community is doing everything it can to help."*

5. Take Care of Yourself

It's important to take care of your own feelings too. The better you feel, the better your child will feel. Talk to other adults and ask for support when you need it.

3. Let Them Share Their Feelings

Create a safe space for your child to talk about their worries. Let them know it's okay to feel any way they do. You can also talk about your own feelings but reassure them that you're okay and able to help.

6. Help Them Sleep

If your child has trouble sleeping, help them relax before bed.

- Turn off screens, and
- Try calming activities like listening to soft music
- Read a book together.
- Leave time to answer questions and reassurances.

4. Limit News and TV

7. Get Professional Help if Needed

If your child's behavior changes a lot—like problems sleeping, eating,

or acting differently—consider talking to a professional for help.

8. Show Healthy Coping Skills

Show your child how to deal with tough feelings in a healthy way. This could include talking to someone you trust, moving your body with exercise or yoga, eating meals, and drinking water.

9. Create a Family Safety Plan

When things feel calmer, make a plan for what your family would do if something happened and you couldn't take care of your kids. Ask them what would make them feel safe.

10. Help Others

Let your child take part in activities that help people affected by the fire, like donating to a charity, volunteering, or supporting families directly

For more information, visit www.OurHouse-Grief.org or call (888) 417-1444.
