

Companion / Reference Guide in case of Traumatic Events



Message from the Police (SPVM)

Experiencing a traumatic event or a crime can result in reactions and consequences that have an effect on your daily life and on the life of your loved ones.

The police can be of help to you. They are often the first on the scene at the time of a tragic event.

In order to thwart many types of crimes, the SPVM's prevention and repression operations can be carried out discreetly or in a way that is less apparent in the eyes of residents.

Our chances of success in fighting crime very often depend on the watchfulness and determination of residents like yourself in reporting offences or criminal acts that have an impact on your feeling of security.

The presence of police officers in your environment today is a way of supporting your contribution and your involvement in your efforts to improve the situation. The police will be visiting your neighbourhood a number of times over the next few days. During these encounters, the police from your neighbourhood station will explain you the work they are carrying out and will answer your questions.

If you have any information to give us, you can be sure we are listening! Phone your **neighbourhood station** at **514-280-0115** and we will take steps to make our encounters easier, if need be.

In addition, we wish to remind you that **Info-Crime** provides you with an opportunity to notify the police of information on criminal activities in an **anonymous and confidential** way, by phoning **514-393-1133**.

Message from the CSSS du Sud-Ouest–Verdun

The intensity of emotions and reactions varies from one person to another. Nevertheless, the reactions and consequences they experience are part of a normal process. Children and teens may also have significant reactions following a traumatic shock.

Faced with such situations, you may be subject to difficult and contradictory emotions. It may be important to talk to someone:

- A parent;
- A friend ;
- A significant other ;
- A social worker ;
- Or a police officer.

The CSSS du Sud-Ouest–Verdun therefore gives you an opportunity to contact the **psychosocial screening** office of your CLSC by phone or in person. No appointment is necessary.

St-Henri CLSC: 514-933-7541

3833 Notre-Dame West Street, Place Saint-Henri metro station

Verdun CLSC: 514-766-0546

400 de l'Église Street, de l'Église metro station

Ville-Émarald—Côte-Saint-Paul CLSC: 514-766-0546

6161 Laurendeau Street, Jolicoeur metro station

Message from the Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal

The Office municipal d'habitation de Montréal (OMHM) works in partnership with community resources in order to provide its tenants with a safe environment. We wish to remind you not to hesitate to contact your rental officer nor hesitate to phone the OMHM's general number at **514-872-6646**, in order to get the support you need.

The following section presents the various possible reactions following a traumatic event and depending on the age group of the people involved.

6-YEAR-OLDS AND UNDER

Tiny tots are dependent, fragile and vulnerable. They need people to rally round them, to be reassured and to feel safe and secure. Due to their overactive imagination, their fears are very intense. Their greatest fear is to be separated from their family and to be alone. Since their vocabulary is limited, they express their malaise through agitation, aggressiveness or fears.

Don't get alarmed if your child readopts childish behaviour that he had outgrown: such regression is a normal reaction following a **traumatic** event. Usually, this new behaviour is short-lived.

BEHAVIOUR THAT MAY BE NOTICED	WHAT YOU CAN DO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whining more than usual • Starting to wet his bed again • Constantly wanting to be picked up in your arms • More active than usual • Headaches, stomach aches, loss of appetite, etc. • Refusing to go to his room alone to sleep • Waking up frightened or trembling with fear • Insisting on sleeping with his parents • etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain to your child that such behaviour is normal. • Be patient and congratulate him when his behaviour improves. • Take the time to listen to your child and answer his questions. • Encourage him to take part in sports activities so that he can reduce his anxiety and burn off his excess energy. • Show your child that you aren't upset, because you know that this will pass over. • Help him talk about his fear; this will help him distinguish what's real from what's imaginary. • When he gets out of his bed or refuses to sleep in his room, reassure him through your presence. As a last resort, allow your child to sleep on a mattress in the same room as you. • If you have to go out of the house, let him know beforehand and make it clear to him that you will be coming back. Place him in the hands of someone who is reassuring. • As soon as the situation so allows, get back to the family's day-to-day routine.
<p>If your child's behaviour worries you or persists, do not hesitate to consult the CLSC professionals in your neighbourhood. You can go there with or without an appointment. Also inform the social worker, school and child care centre of the situation.</p>	

7 to 12-YEAR-OLDS

Youngsters in this age group are aware of the situation and want to understand the hows and whys of what they have just experienced.

BEHAVIOUR THAT MAY BE NOTICED	WHAT YOU CAN DO
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fear of being separated from their parents• Fear that the traumatic event will reoccur• Fear of noise and darkness• More active than usual• Headaches, stomach aches, loss of appetite, etc.• Wakes up frightened or trembling with fear• Nightmares• Learning difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listen to what your child has to tell you about his fears, his emotions and his thoughts on what happened.• Take your child's fears seriously. A child who says he's afraid is really afraid.• Reassure him and tell him that it's normal to feel afraid.• Don't force your child to confront what is frightening him. The greater his fears, the more important it is to face them gradually.• Inform him of past, present and future events.
<p>If your child's behaviour worries you or persists, do not hesitate to consult the CLSC professionals in your neighbourhood. You can go there with or without an appointment. Also inform the social worker and school of the situation.</p>	

TEENS

An event such as the one you have just experienced is stressful. It is normal, following a traumatic event, for you to feel afraid, worried or angry. It's important that you adopt the right ways of coping with this event.

BEHAVIOUR YOU MAY NOTICE	WHAT YOU CAN DO	ADVICE TO PARENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concentration problems or learning difficulties • Difficulty sleeping or the desire to sleep longer than usual • Loss of appetite or increased appetite • Strong emotions, such as fear, sadness, worry or anger • If you drink, your drinking might increase. • You might try and find a guilty party. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the situation with someone you trust. • Meet with a professional from your CLSC (either a doctor, social worker or nurse). • Get involved in activities that you enjoy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open a dialogue with your teen. Even if he doesn't ask for any, give him support and attention. • Be attentive to certain changes in behaviour (a drop in school marks, absenteeism, temporary depression). • Maintain family rules, but with a certain flexibility.
<p>If your child's behaviour worries you or persists, do not hesitate to consult the CLSC professionals in your neighbourhood. You can go there with or without an appointment.</p>		

ADULTS AND SENIORS

Following a disaster or a traumatic event, the intensity of physical or emotional reactions prompts people to judge themselves harshly or believe that they are "abnormal".

BEHAVIOUR THAT MAY BE NOTICED	WHAT YOU CAN DO
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feelings of being overwhelmed, fatigue and powerlessness• Physical malaise: headaches, stomach aches, loss of appetite, palpitations, etc.• Difficulty concentrating and making decisions; no longer knowing what to focus on• Hypervigilance• Anger, rebelliousness• Fear, impatience and irritability• Isolation, withdrawal• Abuse of drugs, alcohol or medication• Increased or decreased libido• Questioning the meaning of life• Having doubts about one's religious beliefs• Possible efforts to find a guilty party	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give yourself the right to feel overwhelmed and uncomfortable.• Stand back and take stock of the situation, seek advice and allow yourself moments of reflection.• Give yourself time despite the many things you have to do.• Take the time to relax, breathe deeply.• Don't try to play the part of a strong person who can manage through it alone.• Talk to the people around you.• Share your emotions and your problems.• Attend information meetings. Keep informed.
<p>If these symptoms or behaviour persist, do not hesitate to consult a social worker, a doctor or another professional.</p>	

RESOURCES

Bilingual Resources

- Suicide Action Montreal: 514-723-4000
www.suicideactionmontreal.org
- Tel-jeunes: 1-800-263-2266
www.teljeunes.com
- Tel-aide: 514-935-101
www.telaide.org
- LigneParents: 1-800-361-5085
www.ligneparents.com
- Centre de crise l'Autre Maison: 514-768-7225
- Centre de référence du grand Montréal: 514-527-1375
- Drugs (assistance and referrals): 514-527-2626