

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **TLC provides tips for coping with trauma, loss in Connecticut school shooting**

**Clinton Township, Mich.** – TLC and its staff would like to express our deepest condolences to the families, friends and community of Newtown, Conn., in the wake of the school shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

TLC is a program of Starr Commonwealth, a nonprofit child and family services organization, that specializes in trauma-informed care for children and families.

Unfortunate incidents like this can have a profound impact on communities, and the trauma that can result from these tragedies must be treated with compassion and care.

TLC offers many services that can be utilized after tragic events. The Parent Trauma Resource Center is a free online resource for parents, caregivers and professionals working with grief and trauma and can be found at [www.starrtraining.org/ptsd-in-children](http://www.starrtraining.org/ptsd-in-children).

### **Please see below for guidance on dealing with trauma and loss:**

Parents, caregivers and professionals should know that trauma can be any experience that leaves a person feeling hopeless, helpless, fearing for life or safety, or feeling out of control.

During an initial 4-6 week period following the traumatic experience, any sort of behavior is common and should be considered normal. Following this 4-6 week period, behavior outside of a child's norm can indicate trauma or post-traumatic stress. These behaviors include:

- Hyper-vigilance
- Asking lots of questions – “What if?” “How do I know it won't happen to us?” or “Will it happen again?”
- More afraid than normal
- Clingy – more than considered normal

Parents and caregivers should also watch for:

- Re-experiencing – unable to get thoughts/images/sounds out of their heads, may have a difficult time falling or staying asleep, feeling anxious, headaches or stomach aches.
- Avoidance – completely avoid anything or anybody that would remind them of what happened. Traumatized individuals may also exhibit a diminished interest in activities or in things they previously enjoyed.
- Arousal – may be acting out or unable to focus or concentrate.

There are steps parents or caregivers can take to help a child in trauma.

- Limit the amount of exposure. Turn off the TV if a traumatic event is being shown to prevent overexposure.
- Actively listen to what they are experiencing. Be careful not to judge or state that, “It’s no big deal” or “This is something we all go through.”
- Normalize their symptoms and reaction regardless of their experience. Kids in trauma often feel like they are alone in what they are experiencing and feeling or that it is abnormal.
- If a child has questions regarding a traumatic event, be honest and answer their questions without going into unnecessary detail. If questions are avoided, children will often make up a scenario on their own that is many times scarier. Be honest and give facts but at their pace.
- Everyone’s reaction—or lack of reaction—to a traumatic experience is normal. Everybody responds differently, which is absolutely OK.

Further questions can be directed to TLC Director Caelan Kuban at [ckuban@tlcinst.org](mailto:ckuban@tlcinst.org) or 586.899.5056.

*Founded in 1990 by Dr. William Steele, TLC, a member of the Starr Global Learning Network, offers professionals trauma-informed training, support, consultation, online learning opportunities, certifications and trauma intervention programs, tools and techniques for working with children and families. TLC has trained over 50,000 professionals, including 6,000 TLC certified trauma and loss specialists working with communities around the world. For more information on TLC, please visit [www.starrtraining.org/tlc](http://www.starrtraining.org/tlc).*

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