

# Does my child need therapy?

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS



## Children are resilient

Most children recover over time with the support of their families, schools and communities. After a traumatic event, it is normal for children to have emotional, behavioral and physical reactions. With time and care, many children will feel better without needing formal therapy.



## It's normal to still be adjusting

In the days, weeks or even months after a traumatic event, many children may feel more anxious, sad, irritable or worried. These reactions are a normal response to an abnormal event and often improve gradually as they feel safer and return to routines.



## Signs to look for

Consider reaching out to a mental health professional for an evaluation if your child has several of the following signs that last for more than a few weeks, are getting worse, or are interfering with daily life at home, school or with friends.



Ongoing sadness, anxiety or worry that doesn't seem to improve



Difficulty concentrating or increased trouble with schoolwork



Significant changes in sleep or appetite



Frequent physical complaints (such as stomachaches or headaches) without a clear medical cause



Increased irritability, anger or more frequent tantrums



Risky behaviors or a regression in behavior (such as bedwetting or needing more help with basic tasks)



Avoiding school, friends or activities they used to enjoy



Seeming constantly on edge, easily startled or having intense fears



## You are not alone

Talking with your child's pediatrician, school counselor or a mental health professional who has experience supporting children after trauma can help you decide on next steps and what best fits your child's needs.



## Early support can help

For some children, additional support can help them process what happened, learn coping strategies and feel more like themselves again. Seeking support is a proactive step and can strengthen your child's well-being.