

# Childhood Traumatic Grief

## For Parents

For some children and adolescents, traumatic events can have a profound effect on the way they see themselves and their world. They may experience long-lasting changes in their ability to feel safe, trust others, navigate other life challenges, or believe in any kind of justice or fairness in life.

It's important to remember that most children who experience traumatic events will recover naturally while others will have ongoing difficulties. Some will develop high levels of resilience and strength and others may not even start to grieve for years. Children who have experienced other traumatic events in their lives may be more likely to have ongoing difficulties. There is no recipe for how children respond to traumatic loss.

### Identifying Traumatic Grief in Children

Children at different developmental levels may react differently to a traumatic event. Common signs and symptoms that may indicate a child's need for professional help include:

- Being overly preoccupied with the details of the event
- Showing signs of emotional and/or behavioral distress when reminded of the loss
- Avoiding reminders of the traumatic event
- Withdrawing from friends and activities they usually enjoy
- New behavioral problems or acting like they are "numb"
- Being excessively jumpy or easily startled
- Having on-going physical complaints
- Acting "cold" - avoiding close physical contact or conversations that were normal before the event
- Showing signs of a lack of interest in life

If your child is exhibiting these symptoms, consider taking him/her to a mental health therapist. Look for one who knows how to do a type of therapy called brainspotting, which is especially effective in relieving stuck trauma symptoms in children. Most kids enjoy the therapy and find relief quickly.

For more information about brainspotting, go to [brainspotting.com](https://brainspotting.com)

When looking for a therapist in the USA who knows how to do brainspotting (or other therapies), go to <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapists/hi/maui-county> - *City - Show More Types of Therapy - Brainspotting.*

Play therapy is available free of charge in Kihei for children who were impacted by the Lahaina Fires. Email [traumahealingmaui@gmail.com](mailto:traumahealingmaui@gmail.com) for more information.

Go to [BrainspottingHelp.com/Maui](https://BrainspottingHelp.com/Maui) to request free online brainspotting for children or adults who were impacted by the Lahaina Fires.