

Coping with Tragedy

Sooner or later, children will encounter tragedy, whether it's close to home or far away. But “even when the world is in turmoil all around us, we can receive the blessing of inner peace.”¹ Here are some things you can do to help children feel that peace.



Stability

When something tragic happens, children may feel like their world is out of balance. Be an example of steadfastness for them. Speak calmly and confidently about the issue. Maintain a routine as much as you can. Do all you can to keep holding family home evening, scripture study, prayer, and other family habits. With time, children can learn that even when their world is shaken, the gospel brings perspective and life goes on.

Respect

Show respect for children's emotions. Listen to children and acknowledge how they feel. Show them that you are taking their concerns seriously. Give them space if they need it but let them know you're available when they're ready to talk. Honestly answer questions as they arise in an age-appropriate way. Let your children know they can always talk to you about their fears and worries.



Guidance

Your children may ask, “Why does God let bad things happen?” Explain that both good times and bad times are part of life and part of God's eternal plan. He allows each person to make their own choices, and sometimes people make bad choices that cause suffering. Other times, tragedies are no one's fault but are just a part of nature. No matter what, Heavenly Father is there for us. With His help, we can learn and grow, even from painful experiences. We can turn to Him to find peace.

Empowerment

Show children that they have the power to make a difference by giving them a way to help. For example, they could help gather donations for disaster victims, visit an ill or injured friend in the hospital, cheer up someone who is dealing with a family loss, or pray for those who are struggling. We can't fix everything, but we have the capacity to do much good, and "we work for peace whenever we help relieve the suffering of another."²



Comfort

Remind your children that God loves them and that you love them. Don't give false promises that nothing bad will ever happen to them, but assure them that they're safe right now and that you will do all you can to protect them. Reassure them that Heavenly Father will help them get through any trial that comes their way.

When you find yourself disheartened by adversity, remember that in the end, good will triumph over evil. "We are waging a war with sin, . . . but we need not despair," taught President Thomas S. Monson (1927–2018). "It is a war we can and will win. Our Father in Heaven has given us the tools we need in order to do so. He is at the helm. We have nothing to fear."³ ■

NOTES

1. "Peace," Gospel Topics, [topics.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/topics/peace).
2. "Peace," Gospel Topics.
3. Thomas S. Monson, "Looking Back and Moving Forward," *Ensign*, May 2008, 90.

FOR CHILDREN

In this month's *Friend*:

- "I Will See Him Again" (page 26)
- "Comfort Cards" (page 27)

For other resources, visit [lessonhelpsofJesusChrist.org](https://www.lessonhelpsofJesusChrist.org) and click "Lesson Helps by Topic."



FOR TEENS

From the *New Era*:

- "Be at Peace When Your Life Is in Pieces" (Mar. 2019, 6)
- "I Will See Her Again" (Apr. 2019, 14)

For other resources, visit [youth.ChurchofJesusChrist.org](https://www.youth.ChurchofJesusChrist.org).

