

Tips to Help Your Child

During Recovery from Hurricane Sandy

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- **Stay Calm-children watch your actions and react to them. Model the behaviors that you want from your child. Watch when you are talking as children always hear what you say even if you think they are not listening.**
- **Try to keep things as normal as possible. Structure makes children feel secure. Having a schedule and knowing what to expect will help children cope with the stress of the incident. For example having a set time for meals (if possible) or knowing that they have certain chores to complete will help give them a sense of purpose and help them cope. Put them to work even if it is just busy work like picking up leaves or branches(where it is safe to do so)**
- **Talk to your children. Ask them what they know to flush out rumors. Limit access to internet, newspapers, or TV-which may increase stress and anxiety. You can find out a lot just by talking to them and letting them ask you questions.**
- **Tell them you love them. Hug them-reassure them that the adults are taking care of everything and that we are resilient and will get through this. Assure them that they are safe.**
- **Have your children draw pictures for you. Children express themselves in a number of ways and art can help them process their feelings. Don't be surprised if you see children playing "Hurricane Sandy." Children make sense of their world through play and this is totally normal.**
- **You may see some regression developmentally with your child. The child that was able to sleep alone may want to sleep with you- or a child that has been toilet trained may start to have accidents or wet the bed. This is totally normal. Just understand that stress manifests in many ways.**
- **Realize that one size does not fit all. Each child will react to stress/anxiety in their own way. If you already have an anxious child-their anxiety may increase.**

Remember: Children are resilient and having supportive adults around them will help them get through the next couple of weeks