

## You Can Help!

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Children who are victims of or witnesses to violence may experience symptoms of trauma immediately, days, or months after the violent incident occurs.

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If your child has exhibited any behaviors outlined in this pamphlet or if you are concerned that your child may have been a witness to or a victim of violence, he or she will need help to recover from this traumatic event.

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Your local police, school, and pediatrician can connect you with the proper resources to help children who have experienced trauma.



Adverse Childhood Experiences

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## Helping Traumatized Children Learn and Succeed

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**TIMOTHY J. CRUZ**  
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The Plymouth County District Attorney's Office



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## A Message from the District Attorney:



Many children have found themselves in the unfortunate situation of experiencing a traumatic incident.

These adverse childhood experiences create long lasting negative effects on our children and place them at a greater risk of not getting a proper education and succeeding in life.

By creating a supportive school environment, children can learn to cope with traumatic events, and successfully further their education.

To help these children succeed in school, it is important for all of us in our community to take an active role and step in to assist.

Sincerely,

Timothy J. Cruz  
District Attorney

## How Do Children React to Violence?

### *Children may:*

- cry, whimper, scream, and act clingier than usual
- have difficulty moving or move around in a daze
- show fearful facial expressions
- revert to childish behaviors: such as; thumb-sucking, bed-wetting, or being scared of the dark
- have nightmares, flashbacks, or difficulty sleeping
- exhibit outbursts of anger and fighting
- complain of stomach aches or illnesses that have no medical basis
- neglect school work or refuse to attend school
- avoid reminders of the event and hide emotions
- abuse illegal substances
- engage in anti-social behavior, become withdrawn or isolated

## How Does Handle with Care Work?

Police officers are trained to note whether a child was present during a traumatic incident.

Officers then determine what school the child attends and files a “handle with care” notice with that school.

In other cases, a parent or caregiver may alert the school that something is going on at home, such as a parent’s impending military deployment, or the death of an extended family member.

The one-page form doesn’t provide details about what happened but simply lets the school know that something happened that potentially could effect the child’s ability to learn, and that the student may need extra attention.



**Handle with Care**