

Facing Trauma Together



Recent local and national events—including the events at Robb Elementary School in Ulvade, TX—are weighing on our hearts and minds. We are flooded with questions, filled with changing emotions, and concerned for our security. Many of us are worried about the well-being of our children, significant others, family, and friends.

Today's mobile communications and 24-hour news cycle give us real-time updates. This continuous access to information allows us to feel a connection with the victims, their families, and the impacted communities.

It's important to remember that reactions to trauma and the grieving process vary from person to person. Although the way we are impacted may be different, one thing we can all do is empathize and listen. Being patient as we process our emotions and thoughts can stabilize us through troubling times.

As individuals process the news and react, they may show the following symptoms of trauma:

Physical Symptoms

- headaches
- muscle tension
- upset stomach
- chest tightening
- fatigue

Emotional Symptoms

- sadness
- anxiety or worry
- irritability or anger
- shock or numbness
- restlessness

Behavioral Symptoms

- decreased focus
- forgetfulness
- increased errors
- withdrawal
- outbursts

Tips to support ourselves:

- Monitor your exposure to media. Easy access to the details of recent incidents can intensify our emotions and make it challenging to go about our day.
- Accept that tragedy is painful and finding solutions to the problem and answers to our questions will be difficult. Open yourself up to healing even as we prepare for a long recovery process.

Tips to support others:

- Everyone has their own unique experiences that will influence their reaction to trauma. Listening and supporting the needs of others without sharing your opinions is important.
- Keeping a "normal" routine can be difficult, even on a typical day. Our response to these tragedies becomes yet another thing to process for all—including children. You can help children navigate these tragic events. Try to be calm and factual, acknowledge their fears, and encourage questions.

As we reflect on recent events, our view of society and how we live in it may change. Focus on the positive impact that you can make. Continue to offer a helping hand, a kind word, and a giving spirit to your neighbors so that we can all start to heal.

If you would like to talk to someone, call us at 1-800-899-8174 to schedule a free, confidential counseling session.

Visit us online at [OptimaEAP.com](https://www.OptimaEAP.com) for more support resources.

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