

ADOLESCENTS . . .

Adolescents may require special attention. Their natural need to rebel, coupled with confusion and rage over what they have experienced, might make them especially difficult to reach in a time of crisis. Be patient. Take time to communicate and reestablish bonds.

Behavioral/Emotional Reactions

Depression or sadness
Suicidal fantasies
Decline in social interest or activities
Feelings of inadequacy or helplessness
Marked increase or decrease in physical activity level
Confusion, lack of focus, difficulty concentrating on planned activities
Spending an unusual amount of time fantasizing
Regression to earlier behaviors, such as sleeping in parents' bed
Survivor's guilt; anxiety, irritability

Physical Reactions

Sleeplessness
Nightmares
Withdrawal into heavy sleep
Bowel, bladder, digestive problems
Headaches and tension
Skin rashes
Other physical reactions, such as hair loss
Unusually painful menstrual cramps, or an interruption in the cycle

- ✧ Make time to be with your teenager. Share meals together. Enjoy each other's company. Listen to each other, including what is NOT said.
- ✧ Avoid being judgmental. Let your goal be better understanding.
- ✧ Allow teens to see your vulnerability. Express your anxiety about what has happened and acknowledge your fears.
- ✧ Handle conflict as a problem to be solved, not as a war. Avoid pre-judging, labeling or name-calling. Focus on the issue at hand.
- ✧ Be specific about rules and expectations, and spell out consequences in advance. Special rules, such as curfews, may be imposed during a disaster. Give your teen a chance to express views.
- ✧ Treat teenagers with respect. Praise and acknowledge their accomplishments.

Putnam County Crisis Hotline (toll-free)
1.800.468.4357