**MASHABIM - The Community Stress Prevention Center**

**HOW TO SPEAK TO OUR CHILDREN ABOUT THE CURRENT SECURITY SITUATION**

Events affecting Israel’s security are escalating, a situation which may invoke fear and anxiety about one’s personal safety.

As parents, we can help our children cope with the influx of information and reinstate their sense of security by helping them understand the complex reality, and maintaining their daily routines.

**HOW TO TALK TO OUR CHILDREN ABOUT CURRENT EVENTS**

**MODERATE** their exposure to the media

**DESCRIBE** facts in a clear and organized manner

**MEDIATE** the information sensitively, in an age-appropriate and factual manner

**HOW CAN WE HELP OUR CHILDREN WHEN THEY ARE ANXIOUS?**

**CALM** them by expressing confidence

**MAINTAIN** their daily routine

**ENCOURAGE** them to share their questions and thoughts

**GIVE** the children tasks and responsibilities

**OTHER TIPS…**

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| **PAY ATTENTION**to your own reactions | Children’s distress responses match those of their parents, and they are hypersensitive to messages they receive from adults (both verbal and non-verbal). When you, the parents, are calm and composed, your children will sense this. |
| **MEDIATE**information in an age-appropriate manner | Ask your children what they know about what happened, and how they feel about it. Explain the situation using simple words, and avoid going into details or offering excessive information. |
| **RESPOND**to their questions, and help organize the information they receive | Encourage them to ask questions and share their thoughts and feelings. |
| **LEGITIMATE and VALIDATE**their feelings | Don’t’ tell them “There is nothing to worry about.” Accept and understand their feelings, and say “It is sad and painful.” Hug them and express encouragement in a calm, secure parental voice. |
| **INSTILL**a sense of security | Provide them with messages such as: “We have a strong army and a strong police force who protect us, and we protect you.” |
| **CREATE**a “protective” character with your younger children | Draw a picture with your children, or create a plasticene image, which represents something that calms them down – a fairy who makes you strong, or a superhero who protects us. |

**MASHABIM Community Stress Prevention Center | 04-6900600 | www.icspc.org**