



**TALKING ABOUT  
VIOLENCE IN THE  
NEWS WITH SMALL  
CHILDREN**

*Tragic events, wars, terrorist attacks ...*



Tragic events that occur in Québec and elsewhere in the world are reported in the news. As parents, we can find the disturbing and violent content broadcast by the media unsettling or troubling. Small children are sensitive to our emotions. At a very young age, children are already exposed to all types of information.

As parents, we ask ourselves questions such as:

- Can this affect my child?
- How should I react when a tragic event occurs?
- Should I talk about it?

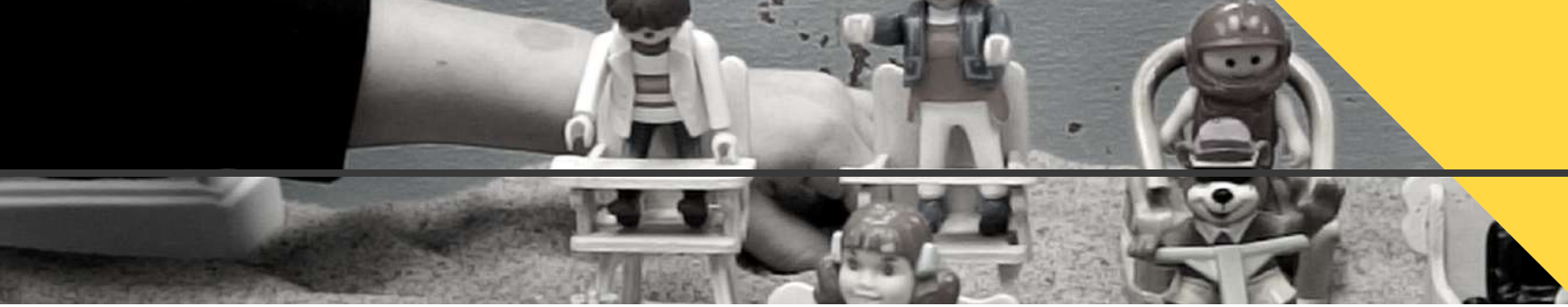
When it comes to broaching hard subjects with our children, we sometimes feel powerless. It is important to provide our small children with support. Fortunately, there are tools available to help us do that. This leaflet provides some insight into how to broach hard subjects with preschool-age children at home, as well as some helpful resources.



## HOW CHILDREN MIGHT REACT

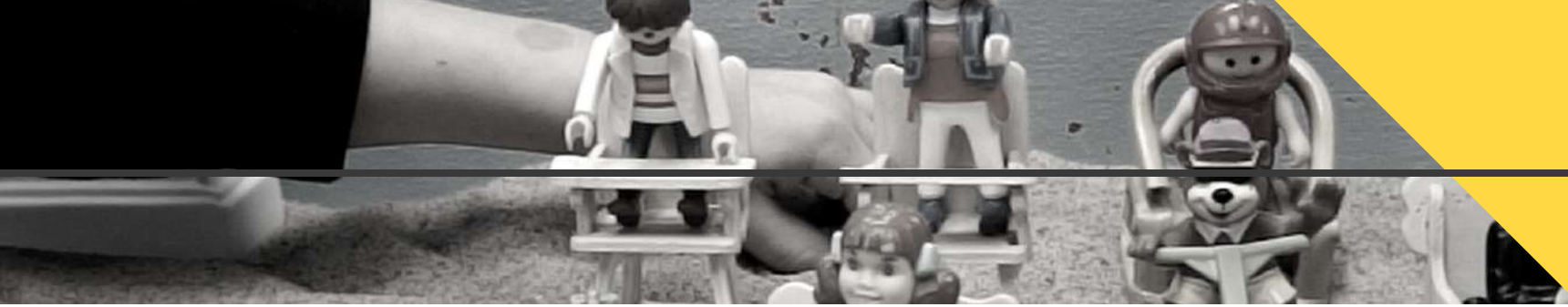
- Every child is different. Children will react in different ways when faced with violent events. They may be scared, disturbed, angry, etc.
- Some children may want to avoid hearing about the event and escape the images. Others may ask a lot of questions.
- Some children may also have nightmares or trouble sleeping, or act out when something bothers them.
- Despite all this, when children have some understanding of what frightens them and feel protected, they are reassured.





## WHAT YOU CAN DO

- You can limit your small children's exposure to violent or sad images, for example, by supervising or limiting television time. Also, when you watch the news with your children, you can explain what you see in a simple way.
- When violent images are shown, you can explain that violence is bad, and that it can be frightening. You can tell your children that, even though some images may be frightening, they are safe at home and at daycare.
- If your small children sense that you are sad or worried, it is important to tell them that it is not their fault.
- The important thing is to reassure your children and create some hope, for example, by emphasizing that coming together to support one another provides comfort and helps people who are going through hard times.



## WHAT YOU CAN DO

- When you sense that something is bothering your children, wait until they are ready to talk about it. Avoid forcing them to talk if they don't want to.
- There are no perfect words. Choose simple language that your children can understand. Find a happy medium between providing too much detail and not talking about it at all.
- Children often express themselves through play. Activities can be good ways to talk with your children and help them understand difficult events. For example, if your children reproduce what they saw in a game or a drawing, it can be a good opportunity to talk about it and answer questions.
- If you still feel that your children are vulnerable and having trouble managing their emotions, or you want another opinion, don't hesitate to call on other resources or seek out support services.

### IN SHORT

**Supervise media time, pay attention to reactions, use simple language, offer reassurance, use play as a space for communication, and ask for help if necessary.**

Professional support for parents, available 24/7:

Ligne Parents [www.ligneparents.com](http://www.ligneparents.com) Tel.: 1-800-361-5085



## RESSOURCES

### **Citoyen de demain**

Thèmes : pratiques démocratiques en classe, dialogue et citoyenneté

[www.citoyendedemain.net](http://www.citoyendedemain.net)

### **Dessine-moi un petit prince**

Thèmes : partage, générosité, entraide

Auteur : Michel Van Zeveren, Édition Pastel

### **Juste un petit bout !**

Thèmes : partage, amitié, tolérance

Auteur : Émile Jadoul, Édition Pastel

### **La couleur des émotions**

Thèmes : partage, dialogue

Auteurs: collectif, Édition Quatre fleuves

### **La Maison Théâtre**

Thèmes : jeux, identités, situations émouvantes

[www.maisontheatre.com/9-spectacles-pour-les-petits-jusqua-5-ans](http://www.maisontheatre.com/9-spectacles-pour-les-petits-jusqua-5-ans)

### **Les enfants au service de garde**

Thèmes : jeux, activités, vidéos

<http://enfant0-12.ccdmd.qc.ca>

### **Les enfants voient. Les enfants apprennent.**

Thèmes : ressources multimédias et conseils variés

[www.lesenfantsvoientlesenfantsapprennent.ca](http://www.lesenfantsvoientlesenfantsapprennent.ca)

### **Les mots et les images qui font peur**

Thèmes : peur, vivre ensemble, détresse

Auteurs : Catherine Dolto-Tolitch et Colline Faure-Poirée, Gallimard Jeunesse

### **Les questions des tout-petits sur les méchants**

Thèmes : éthique, violence, cruauté, quête de sens, polarisation

Auteure : Marie Aubinais, Gallimard Jeunesse

### **Moi Dieu merci qui vis ici**

Thèmes : partage, dialogue, guerre, discrimination

Auteurs : Thierry Lenain et Olivier Balez, Les éditions Éditions Albin Michel Jeunesse

### **Naître et grandir**

Topics: information, issues, activities

<https://naitreetgrandir.com/en/feature/>

### **Pilotin**

Thèmes : peur, entraide

Auteur : Léo Lionni, L'École des loisirs

### **Rébellion chez les crayons**

Thèmes : dialogue, créativité, tolérance et diversité

Auteurs : Drew Daywalt et Oliver Jeffers, Éditions Kaleidoscope

### **Sept milliards de visage**

Thèmes : différences, tolérance, marginalisation, préjugés

Auteur : Peter Spier, L'École des loisirs

### **Si on parlait de la mort**

Thèmes : parler de la mort, gestion des émotions

Auteurs : Catherine Dolto et Colline Faure-Poirée, Gallimard Jeunesse

# C R E D I T S

**A presentation by Centre de recherche SHERPA**

Website : [www.sherpa-recherche.com](http://www.sherpa-recherche.com)

## **In collaboration with**

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