

Coaching on Coping Skills

After a trauma, children may be stuck in Fight-Flight-Freeze responding. This can look like:

- Extreme emotions ('meltdown' or 'rage')
- Out of the blue or over very minor issue
- Happens quickly (zero to sixty)
- Unable to calm down
- Doesn't respond to reasoning
- Distress may last a long time
- Apologetic later

Ways to Help Your Child:

1. Create a sense of safety
 - Stand a few feet away from child
 - Speak in a calm and quiet voice
2. Tell child you can see he/she is feeling upset and you are available if he/she needs you
3. Offer to do a favorite coping skill together. (Or just start doing the coping skill yourself for child to join)
4. Allow your child time to calm
 - This means back away & be quiet! 😊
 - Stay in close distance so child can come to you with he/she is ready
5. Avoid Reasoning, Arguing, Questioning

Responding calmly to someone in the Fight-Flight-Freeze mode can be difficult, it is OK to take a moment to calm yourself before interacting with your child.