

SELF-CARE AFTER AN INCIDENT INVOLVING SERIOUS VIOLENCE AND WEAPONS

This information aims to help people understand how they may react after a frightening or violent experience, and provides details about specially trained advice and the support available.

Crime often disrupts normal life and may make people go through a lot of confusing emotions. It can feel like there's more to cope with, which can impact wellbeing.

It's important to be patient, and with help and support, most people feel better, or even stronger - it can take time.



REACTIONS

People react to frightening situations in different ways.

Sometimes, people who have experienced or witnessed violence or other frightening situations may feel angry, sad, guilty, confused, or any combination of feelings. Some people continue to feel scared, even though the danger has passed. People might experience some of the following reactions:

- **Being jumpy and concerned about safety**
- **Feeling upset or angry**
- **Not being able to concentrate**
- **Continually remembering the frightening experience**
- **Not wanting to talk about what happened**
- **Having nightmares**
- **Feeling as if the situation is happening again**
- **Not eating or sleeping well**
- **Children and young people, playing or drawing about the event time and time again**

For children and young people:

There are many different types of crime, and many people might be affected by crime at some point in their lives. Everyone is unique and affected by crime in different ways. The damage from crime can be physical, emotional or psychological. For a lot of children and young people, experiencing a crime can be scary, upsetting, and shocking.

Sometimes people have an immediate response to what has taken place, and sometimes it may take days, weeks or months. This can include situations where there is no physical contact – such as online bullying, verbal abuse, theft or fraud.

Please remember the reactions and feelings we have mentioned are completely normal.

There are plenty of ways people can begin to recover from the effects of crime:

- Talk to someone who people trust and you are comfortable with can help. This person can be anyone from a parent, guardian, a youth worker, teacher or a friend
- Make contact with your GP, or specialists such as a therapist or Victim Support Officer

For people over 18:

As crime impacts people in different ways it is important to understand how people may feel afterwards. The after-effects can stay with people for a while no matter how serious the crime or situation was.

People may find that they experience strong emotions, such as anger or sadness, and this can make things seem even more confusing and unsettling.

There are many ways people can begin to recover:

- Sticking to usual routines as much as possible
- Talk about what has happened with someone trusted
- Sharing factual explanations can help make sense of what happened

Please think before you post what has happened on social media.

Posting a film of someone being hurt or abused can cause more trauma for victims and their families.

Please call emergency services straight away if someone is being attacked.

When should people seek more help?

Help and Support

Sometimes people can feel very distressed several weeks after an incident and may find it helpful to arrange to speak with specially trained support workers or a GP for more advice. Specialist support can be accessed through face to face, over the telephone or online.



Accessing support:

There are several specialist support services available:

Kooth is Lambeth's free, safe, online anonymous place for young people to access online support and counselling via www.kooth.com.

Lambeth Talking Therapies Service is available to anyone who is over the age of 18 and registered with a Lambeth GP.

You can access the service on a self-referral basis <https://lambethalkingtherapies.nhs.uk/>

Victim Support is an independent charity dedicated to supporting people who have experienced or witness crime.

You can access support 24/7 via the free online live chat service

<https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/help-and-support/get-help/support-near-you/live-chat/> or free support telephone line 0808 168 9291.

The Gaia Centre provide support to Lambeth based survivors of all gender-based violence - including sexual violence and domestic abuse. Support available by telephone, email, and text, whatever's safest.

You can contact the Gaia Centre on 0207 7733 8724 between 9am-5pm. Outside of office hours and on the Bank Holidays, you can contact them on 07725 245 779.

In an emergency always dial 999


Lambeth

kooth

**the
Gaia
centre**

**VS VICTIM
SUPPORT**