

## Call us

Whatever the nature and extent of your concerns, feel free to call us. We are available by telephone 24 hours a day.

Simply provide some basic details about yourself and your workplace and we will offer you a confidential appointment with a counsellor at a time that suits you.

## Contact

For confidential enquiries and appointments:

### **ACCESS Programs**

[www.accesssa.com.au](http://www.accesssa.com.au)

[enquiries@accesssa.com.au](mailto:enquiries@accesssa.com.au)

In Australia, call 1300 66 77 00 | 08 8215 6799

In New Zealand, call 0800 327 669



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ACCESS Programs is a social enterprise of:



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A Child Safe Organisation  
Centacare has an ongoing commitment to building and maintaining a Child Safe Organisation.



Centacare welcomes people who are intersex, gender diverse and of all sexualities.



#### **Statement regarding the traditional owners of the land**

For thousands of years Aboriginal people have walked on this land, in their country. Their relationship with the land is at the centre of their lives. We acknowledge the Aboriginal people and their stewardship and spiritual connection with their lands.



Centacare is nationally accredited against the Quality Improvement Council (QIC), Australian Health and Community Services Standards.

**A C C E S S**  
**P R O G R A M S**  
eap & workplace consulting

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

## Following a Traumatic Event

## Following a traumatic event

Being involved in a traumatic event can cause disruption to your life for some time. It is common to experience a range of emotions which may sometimes be quite contradictory. This is often a normal reaction to an abnormal event.

**Common emotions are: numbness or emptiness; fear; anxiety; sadness; guilt; regret; anger; and relief.**

If you have difficulty coping, you may wish to seek professional support. Counsellors who are skilled in responding to traumatic events understand the potential impact on a person's life. Counsellors listen without judgement and can offer strategies to minimise the impact that such events may have on our wellbeing.

## Ideas for handling the impact of a traumatic event

Traumatic events impact on people in different ways. For example you may be unable to sleep, have difficulty concentrating or become anxious. Be prepared for some disturbance and don't expect to get over it in a couple of days.

**There are some simple things you can do:**

- Prepare yourself to be anxious when near the scene of the event or in similar circumstances
- Be patient with yourself
- Practice relaxation techniques
- Physical exercise is helpful. Go for walks or a swim, or play your favourite sport
- Eat regularly and well, even if you don't feel like it
- Keep to your normal routines as much as possible
- Acknowledge your emotions and share them with people you trust
- Keep in touch with your friends, family and colleagues

- Keep occupied with meaningful tasks, don't allow yourself too much 'empty' time to mope or dwell
- Use deep breathing and relaxation to help you get to sleep, or back to sleep if you wake up during the night.

## Avoid things that won't help

- Driving or using heavy machinery in the period immediately following an event, especially if feeling a little unsettled
- Overuse of alcohol, coffee and other stimulants or food
- Working to excess for the sake of keeping busy, giving you no time to relax and do the things you enjoy
- Withdrawing from others
- Bottling things up, instead of talking about what you are experiencing
- Dwelling on negative thoughts
- Making important life decisions straight away

## Tips for family and friends

Having your friend or loved one involved in a traumatic event affects you too. Being available to talk can provide valuable support. Listening to what they say without judging can help them feel safe to start the conversation.

They may not want to talk about it at all. Don't take it personally but remind them you are there if they change their mind. Try to give them space and time to recover in their own way.

Don't be surprised if they display extreme fear, anxiety or anger. Reactions to a traumatic event can be powerful and, at such times, people can be unable to simply 'calm down' or 'pull themselves together'.

Understand that this is a difficult time. Remind them that it can help to speak to a professional counsellor used to dealing with these situations.