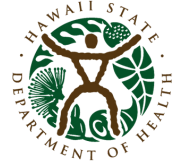


# Re-Entry Visits & Mental Health: Advice for Families with Keiki



## FOR MAUI RESIDENTS IMPACTED BY WILDFIRES

The Hawai'i State Department of Health Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division recommends that parents and guardians **DO NOT** bring children into areas impacted by the wildfires.

- 1** The debris and ash left over from the fires pose environmental and health risks to children who are more vulnerable to exposure.
- 2** Re-entry visits without keiki can provide parents with an opportunity to grieve and process without worrying about the potential physical and emotional effects on keiki.
- 3** Visiting alone first gives parents a chance to prepare their keiki for what they will see and what they might feel when they eventually see the property themselves.

### How to Talk to Kids After a Disaster

- Reassure them that they're safe.
- Tell them you are here for them and that they have somebody they can talk to if they need to.
- Listen to them, let your kids ask you questions about anything they're worried about, and answer those questions honestly and in age-appropriate ways.
- Show and share your emotions. It is important to communicate that it's normal to have emotions, as long as you avoid violent or scary reactions.



### Common Reactions After a Disaster

Parents may notice things like:

- Changes in sleep and appetite
- Regressive behaviors
- Increased fears and worries
- Increase in physical complaints
  - Headaches, stomachaches, aches and pains)
- Withdrawal, lack of interest in usual activities
- Irritability or aggression



These generally diminish with time, but knowing that these reactions are likely can help you be prepared to help your child.

### How to Help Kids Cope After a Disaster

- Reassurance and making them feel safe is key.
  - Give them physical contact like hugs.
  - Talk to them and answer their questions honestly and in age-appropriate ways.
- Monitor the amount of media coverage they are exposed to.
  - Be there with them when consuming media and answer any questions they may have about what they see or hear.
- Re-establish a daily routine.



### Where to Get Help

- Talk to your child's pediatrician.
- Check out online resources:
  - <https://www.helpyourkeiki.com/>
  - <https://hicares.hawaii.gov/>
- Visit a behavioral health specialist:  
Lāhainā Comprehensive Health Center  
'Ākoakoa Place  
(just below Lāhainā Civic Center)  
Open 7 days a week  
9:00 AM-4:00 PM  
808-495-5113



Learn more at [health.hawaii.gov/mauiwildfires](https://health.hawaii.gov/mauiwildfires)

**PLEASE FOLLOW ALL INSTRUCTIONS FROM LOCAL AUTHORITIES.**

