



For children who have experienced a frightening event

If you are reading this, you have recently experienced something frightening and difficult. Something that just happened without you being prepared at all.

Then, things can be and feel different for a while. And that is okay.

Even if we experience the same event, we may feel differently, because we, as people, are different, quite simply.

You might think that only those who injured their bodies feel bad, but that is not the case. Anyone who experiences something difficult or frightening can feel bad, even if they are not injured.

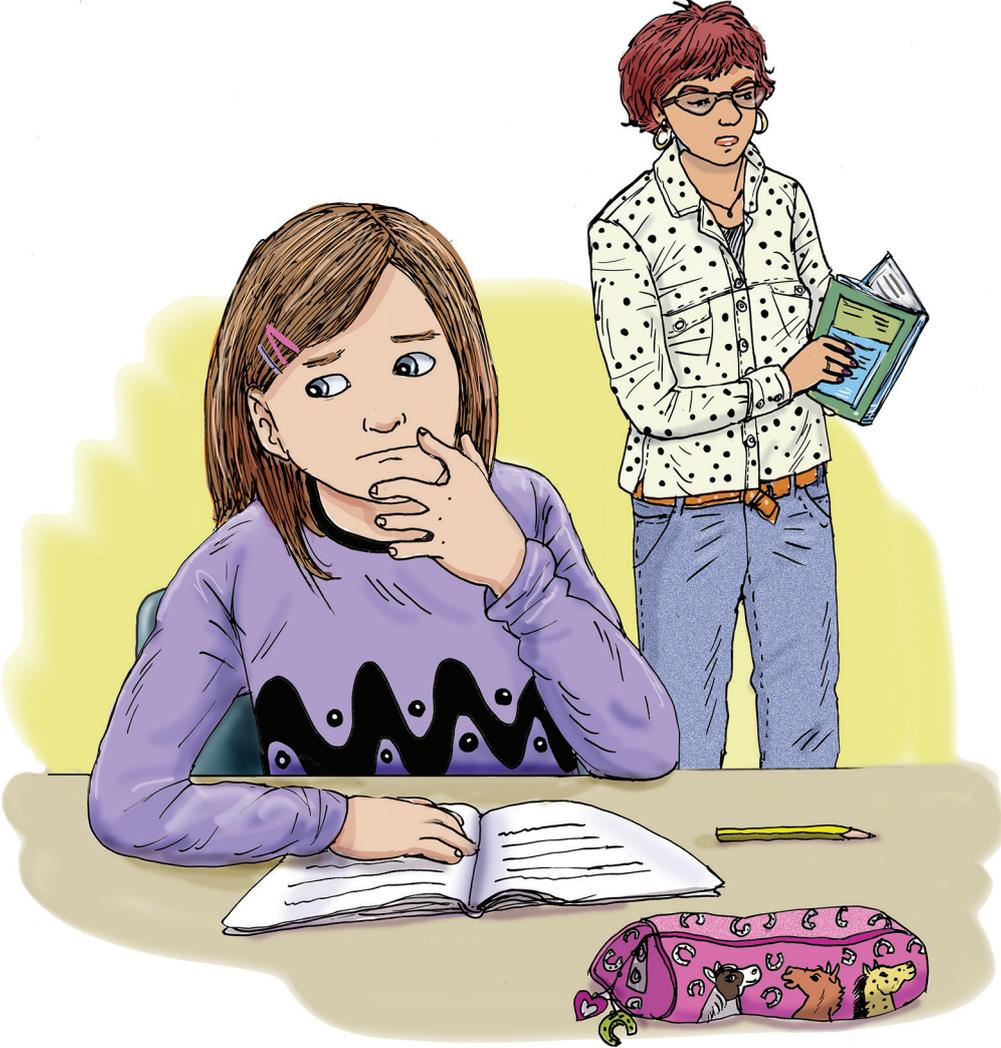
In this leaflet, you can read about how this can be. But, at the same time, only you know what it is like for you.

Right now, you may not recognise yourself in how you feel. It is not normally like this.

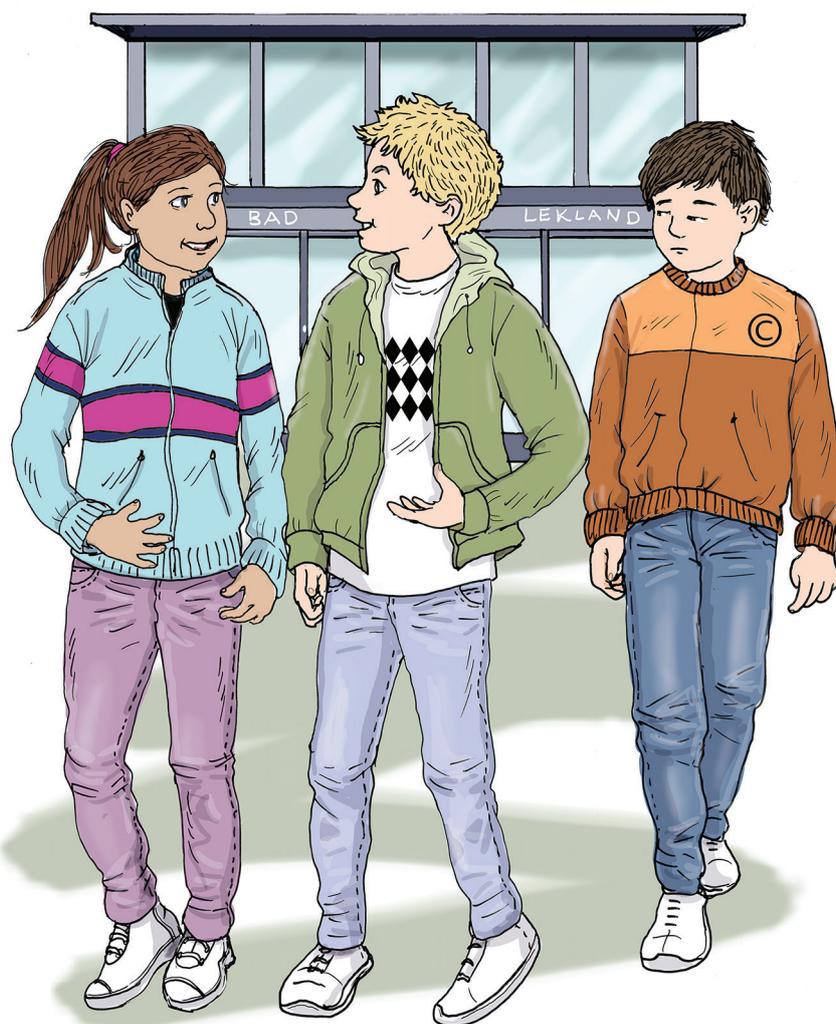


Sometimes you may feel that everything is just strange and different. Which it is right now.

When you are doing something, it may not be as easy as it used to be.



You may feel really sad all the time, or you may get sad all of a sudden when you are playing or doing something else.



You may also not feel like doing what you usually like to do.

You may be afraid of all sorts of things.



Or you may be easily frightened, and get startled when you hear loud noises. Which is not surprising.

Perhaps you feel pain in your body, stomach or head.



Your body may remember a smell or colour or something else that makes you feel scared or sad.



You may get angry much more easily than usual, perhaps because of things that would not have made you angry before the frightening event happened.



Sleeping may be really hard.



You may find it hard to fall asleep, or nightmares may wake you up. This is not unusual, based on what is happening now.

Images of the bad thing that has happened may just pop into your head without you wanting them to. Sometimes it can be really tough when the images just come. So tough that you try and try to make them go away.



Some people have to keep the images and thoughts away almost all the time, which makes them very tired.

Right now, you need as much peace and security as possible. You need adults around you who can take care of you.

It might feel childish to need help like a younger child, if you are an older child, and tend to be more self-sufficient. But it is important to accept support. All children who have been through difficult things need this (adults too, actually).

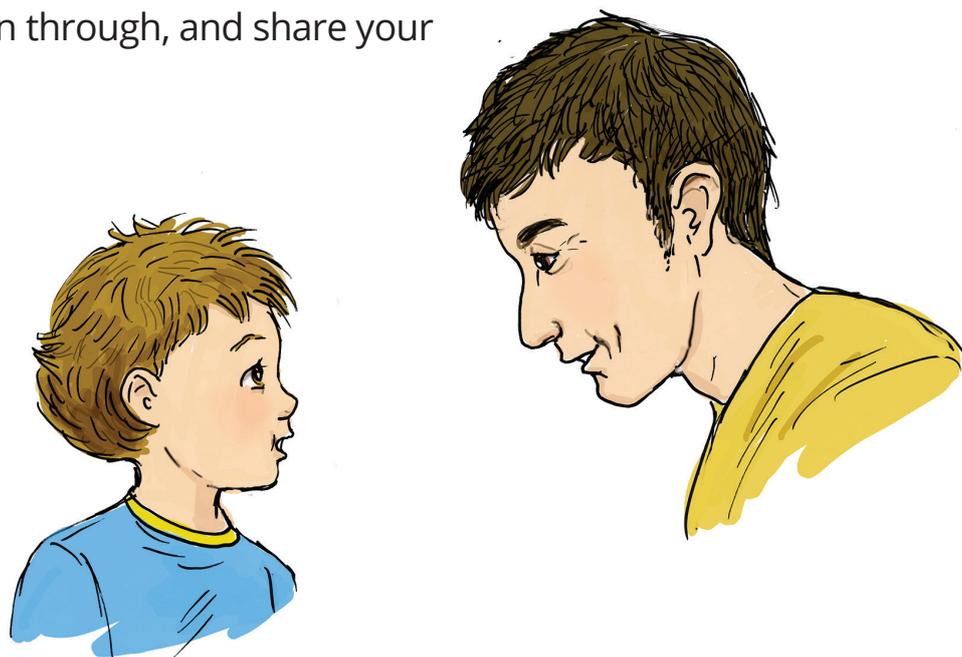


The adults around you are very important right now, more important than usually.

Often, they just need to be there, and maybe hold you, or listen.



It is also great if you talk to adults about what you have been through, and share your thoughts.



But just talk when it suits you.



Let adults you know tell you and explain what has happened, and what will happen. If you do not understand – tell them, and ask again!



Do not spend too much time looking at frightening pictures of the event, and what is happening now.

Drawing and writing about what happened may also be helpful.



Talk to friends or peers, if possible. Sharing thoughts and experiences, not being alone, may also feel good.

Feel free to play and do as much as you usually do, based on what feels good and what is possible at the moment. You can play by yourself or with someone else. It may make you feel a little better, and that is important. Don't you think?



It may also be a good idea to go to preschool or school, once that is possible.

Now you know a bit more about how you and other children might think and feel when something frightening happens, and what you and the adults around you can do.

We hope that what you have read in this leaflet will help you a bit. And that what is different now can one day be good again.



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