Today’s piece was prepared by Jen Rosenthal, MD, based on a story from a USA TODAY news article entitled [Schoolkids can find comfort in routines after tragedy](http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2012/12/14/school-schooling-trauma-counseling/1769963/). http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2012/12/14/school-schooling-trauma-counseling/1769963/

The story provides recommendations to readers on helping children recover after exposure to violence. The reporters specifically comment on the school shooting in Newtown, Connecticut and write that many children will develop anxiety as they experience trauma through news feeds via TV, Facebook, or tweets.

The reporters recommend maintaining schedules and routines to provide kids with reassurance and a sense of safety. They advise to monitor for behavioral changes that can be signs of stress, and that adults project a sense of calm, because kids take cues from their parents. They quote a psychiatrist who advises not to expose children to violent news coverage. The article quotes a spokesman for the AAP and states that “studies suggest that kids who watch more media coverage of shootings or other violent events are more traumatized than other kids.”

This article does a good job of reflecting research-based findings in managing trauma exposure in children and youth. The journalists highlight that “even children far from the violence can be frightened”. It helps to make readers aware that witnessing violence through media can be traumatic and cause anxiety. Face validity is weakened, however, because the reporters do not cite any studies but rather only quote experts. While limiting children’s exposure to violent media coverage is appropriate direction, children ofdifferent developmental stages understand and respond variably to trauma, and the reader may be misled into reacting identically to all children without differentiation.

**RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES ON TRAUMA:**

[Center on Media & Child Health](http://cmch.typepad.com/cmch/2012/12/research-news-and-resources-for-dealing-with-tragedy.html) *Boston Children’s Hospital resource with links to research, news & resources to help kids & families cope w/tragedy & violence* <http://cmch.typepad.com/cmch/2012/12/research-news-and-resources-for-dealing-with-tragedy.html>

[Talking to Children About Disasters](http://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/pages/Talking-to-Children-About-Disasters.aspx) *American Academy of Pediatrics* http://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/pages/Talking-to-Children-About-Disasters.aspx

And that’s today’s Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics: IN THE NEWS!