Ways to CALM YOUR CHILD

Try these techniques to help calm your child when he or she is experiencing trauma-induced stress:

- Hugs, cuddling
- Take deep breaths together
- Validate their feelings (“I know that you are sad/mad/upset.”) and repeat, “It will be OK.”
- Allow your child to talk about the trauma through storytelling, acting, drawing, etc.
- Questions to ask: “Where do you feel happy/sad?” “What does it feel like?” Encourage them to address whatever they are feeling in a friendly way.
- Count to 100 together
- Rub the palm of their hand, back, head, arm, etc.
- Give them a sense of control with questions like, “What do you want to do?” “What would you like to have for dinner?”
- Take a walk together
- Read a story together
- Sit quietly with them
- Remind them that they are safe (“I am here now. That scary person/dog/situation is gone.”)

Each child is unique and could react differently to trauma. Work with your child to find what works best. It is most important for your child to know that their safety is of utmost importance to you. Children look to their primary caregiver for safety and well-being. It’s best if you can remain calm and do these activities with your child to instill that sense of connection. Even if they don’t seem to return your affection, don’t give up! They do care and, most importantly, they need to know that you care, too.