



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Rockingham Close, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 2UA

Tel: 01895 232 814

Fax: 01895 235 403

Email: stmarys@hgfl.org.uk

Website: www.st-marys.hillingdon.sch.uk

Headteacher: Miss Ann Shevlin B.A. (Hons.) • Chair of Governors: Mrs Maureen Thorpe

We have all read about and heard of the awful and sad things happening in Ukraine and for some of our community you may be personally impacted by what is happening.

The news and social media feeds are filled with the latest information, and some of it is very upsetting and worrying for us as adults. Children listening and viewing distressing images can become frightened and fearful.

I have attached some links and guidance for you to read which may help you if you have concerns about your child.

Whatever age your child is, it is important to talk about what is happening in an age appropriate way, and to show content and information that is suitable for your child.

Newsround have created a roundup for young people about the situation in Ukraine, which can be a good way to start conversation with older children if they are seeing content online. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/60417806>

Supporting your child if they see upsetting content online about what is happening in Ukraine (Childnet)

<https://www.childnet.com/blog/supporting-your-child-with-upsetting-content/>

How to talk to children about what's happening in Ukraine and anxiety (Metro)

<https://metro.co.uk/2022/02/24/how-to-talk-to-children-about-whats-happening-in-ukraine-16163133/>

What Parents Can Do to Help

The media can inform and educate us and our children. Unfortunately, the media coverage of a traumatic event also has the potential to upset and confuse. There are many ways that parents can help children understand media coverage of traumatic events and manage their exposure.



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Monitor Adult Conversations. Although parents may monitor media coverage, it is also important for to monitor your adult conversations related to the traumatic event and coverage. Even when adults are not aware, children often listen and may not wholly understand what is being said. Overhearing adult conversations may increase worries and fears related to the traumatic event and lead to further confusion and distress

Monitor What Your Child is Watching It is really important to monitor what children are watching. It is also quite likely that they have some confusion about the facts and the magnitude of the danger they personally face. Younger children often combine facts and connect them to their own experiences in surprising ways that can increase their sense of fear, believing for example, "Planes have bombs on TV, so the planes over my house have bombs too." They often have mistaken information, questions, and some strong feelings.

Clear Up Any Misunderstandings. Children, particularly younger children, may not always fully understand media coverage of a traumatic event. For example, young children may be unnecessarily concerned about the risk to their own or their family's safety. Younger children also may have greater difficulty separating fantasy from reality. It may be difficult for them to differentiate between scary movies and actual real life events. Clarifications to correct misunderstanding and confusion can be reassuring. It is important not to make assumptions about what your children are thinking, but to find out what they are worried about and then discuss their worries with them.