



>> HOME > SpecialEnglish > IN THE NEWS - September 15, 2001: Explaining Tragedy

19 Sep 2001 022 UTC
Search

ADVANCED SEARCH

IN THE NEWS - September 15, 2001: Explaining Tragedy
By George Grow

▶ Also

- [Download RealAudio](#)
- [Download MP3](#)



Listen Now
Download Now
Topics
Arts & Culture
Business
Health & Medicine
International
Science & Technology
Sports
USA
About Us
Word Book
Program Archives
E-mail
Frequencies
Program Schedule
Theme Music List
History
English Shows
VOAnews.com
News Now
Talk to America
This Week



This is Steve Ember with the VOA Special English program, IN THE NEWS.

Few people escaped from seeing or hearing about the terrorist attacks in the United States Tuesday morning. Two hijacked airplanes struck the World Trade Center in New York City. A short time later, another hijacked plane hit the headquarters of the United States Defense Department, near Washington. A fourth hijacked plane crashed in the eastern state of Pennsylvania.

All two-hundred-sixty-six people on the four planes were killed. Hundreds of other people are known to have died. Thousands of others are missing, and feared dead. The President declared Friday a day to honor the memories of the many victims of the attacks.

When a terrorist attack happens, many people feel very frightened and worried. They experience the same feelings during a war, earthquake, flooding or other major event that is out of control.

Mental health experts are concerned about children who experience a tragic event before they are eleven years of age. They say such children are three times more likely to develop emotional problems than those who experience their first tragedy later in life.

Experts say children are better able to deal with a tragedy if parents, friends and other adults help them understand the experience. They say help should start as soon as possible after the event. Experts offer a number of suggestions about how to explain a tragedy to children. They say how adults react to a child's feelings and questions is important to helping a child feel safe again.

First, experts say parents should attempt to control their reaction to the tragedy. Parents should remain as calm as possible. They say children will react to what they see.

Next, adults should help children feel secure. Listen to the worries children express, without judging them. Parents should talk to their children. Tell children repeatedly that they and other loved ones are safe. Also, family members need to gather in one area and spend more time together.

Explaining a tragic event is difficult. The kind of explanation has to be based on the child's age and level of thinking. For a young child, a tragedy must be explained in simple terms. A terrorist attack can be explained as some people did something very bad.

Some experts urge adults to limit their time with radio or television when children are present. They say adults should not let their desire to be informed about events affect a child's mental health. Experts also urge parents to return to their normal activities as soon as possible. They say people of all ages like to have an established way of doing things.

This VOA Special English program, IN THE NEWS, was written by George Grow. This is Steve Ember.

 Email this article to a friend

[Home](#) | [VOA.GOV](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Contact VOANEWS](#) | [Disclaimer & Privacy Notice](#) | [Top of Page](#)