



Understand your feelings

When you're experiencing a range of emotions due to what's happening in the world, there are helpful ways to cope with them.

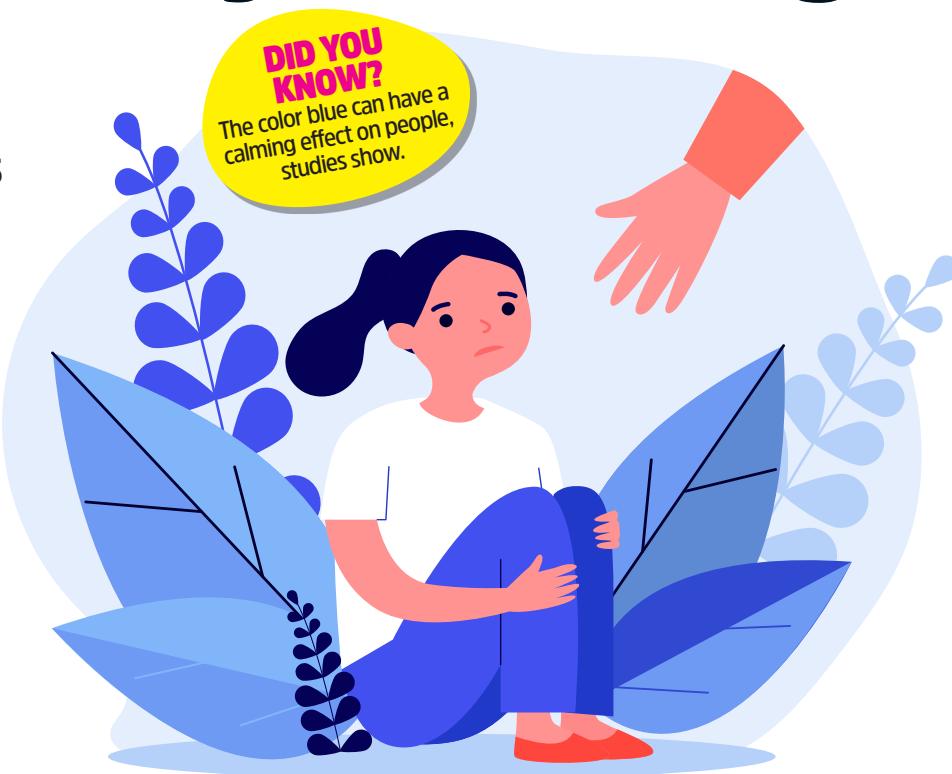
People across the country are mourning the loss of the students and teachers who died on May 24 at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas. This news is difficult to process. If you're unsure how to handle it, experts who spoke to *The Week Junior* said there are steps you can take to feel better. Here's what you need to know.

1 ALLOW YOUR EMOTIONS TO HAPPEN

"We have emotions because they give us information," said Dr. Jamie Howard, a psychologist at the Child Mind Institute in New York City. "Some events can cause you to feel many uncomfortable emotions." You may feel anxious that something like this could happen to you or to someone you know. You may also feel angry because you don't want a tragedy like this to happen again. You may feel sad for the people who died and for their friends and family. It's common to feel many different emotions, even at the same time, and it can be helpful to share them with trusted family and friends.

2 ASK QUESTIONS

Whenever something difficult happens, remember that there are people in your life who can help you make sense of what's happening. You don't have to keep your worries to yourself. Dr. Howard suggests bringing up any questions you have with a parent or other trusted adult. You could say, "This is really on my mind and I want to talk about it." You can end the conversation by saying, "OK, I might want to come back with more questions later."



3 FEEL SAFE WITH OTHERS

Research shows that being close and connected to others helps people cope. Activities you enjoy—like attending drama club or going to a coding class—are especially important to maintain right now. As much as you can, turn off devices, cut back on screen time, and spend time with people you care about. "Face-to-face human contact is what makes people feel safe and soothed," said Abby Morss, a clinical social worker in New York. "The time you spend with people will bring you fun and happiness."

4 DRAW OR WRITE HOW YOU FEEL

Sometimes it's hard to voice how you're feeling. This is especially true for complicated emotions, said Dr. Howard. "You may feel mad and scared at the same time, and drawing or

writing can be a soothing way to understand those emotions." Research has shown that drawing and writing are effective ways to cope. If you would like, you can use the page at right to write or draw what you're feeling. You can do this just for yourself or show what you've written or drawn to a family member or friend if you'd like to start a conversation.

5 TAKE ACTION

There may be other children in your school or community who feel upset by the news. You could start a listening group so kids can meet and support one another, said Morss. If there is anything you feel strongly about, you could send a letter or email to an elected official. You can find the people who represent your area at [usa.gov/elected-officials](https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials). If you'd like to support the families in Uvalde, you and your family could donate to one of the fundraisers that have been set up for them. Always remember, said Morss, "that we can take care of each other."

GETTY IMAGES



If you wish, use this space to write or draw how you feel.

