HOW TO REDUCE INTRUSIVE THOUGHTS...

After something very upsetting happens, people often have a lot of scary and upsetting thoughts and memories about what happened pop into their minds. When this happens, it can make you feel really upset and mad.

TRIGGERS:
Sometimes the scary memories just come for no reason. Other times something that a person hears or sees or smells reminds them of what happened and then they become afraid all over again, even though they are actually safe. These are called triggers.

Many people find it helpful to learn what triggers or reminds them of the frightening experience. This helps them understand why they are still feeling afraid even though the event is over and they are safe.

When thoughts or memories of the frightening experience pop into your mind, ask yourself these questions: DO THE MEMORIES POP UP WHEN?

- You are with certain people?
- You are in particular places?
- You see certain things?
- You hear certain sounds?
- You smell certain odors?
- You or someone else talks about certain things?
- You are watching certain TV shows or movies?

WHEN HAVING THESE UPSETTING THOUGHTS AND MEMORIES TRY TO:
- replace them with a good and happy thought such as scoring a goal, getting a good grade or walking on a beach.
- practice focused breathing.
- have someone rub your shoulders or back.
- drink something refreshing (hot or cold).
- smell something you really like, such as delicious food, perfume or a nice smelling soap.

Tell an adult you know well or a friend when you are having upsetting thoughts or memories and they will do some of these things with you to help you feel better.