

## Our Vision

To reduce the impact of road trauma

## Our Mission

We are a community based organisation providing specialist counselling support for those affected by road trauma. We seek to change driver attitudes and behaviour through targeted education programs delivered, in part, by volunteers who share their personal stories of road trauma.

## Our Values

### Caring

We are committed to serving our clients with empathy and compassion

### Integrity

We display integrity, respect and dignity in all our dealings with clients, stakeholders and members of our workforce

### Quality

Our focus is on the people we serve and we strive for excellence in service delivery, evaluation and continuous improvement

### Accountability

We are accountable for our actions in working to deliver our services and our mission

Road Trauma Support Services Victoria (RTSSV) is a not-for-profit organisation contributing to the safety and wellbeing of Victorian road users. We provide counselling and support to people affected by road trauma, and address attitudes and behaviours of road users through education.

As the only organisation of its kind in Victoria, we provide the following services across the state:

- Free, professional face-to-face and telephone counselling
- Support and training
- Education programs

For more information about what we do, please call us or visit our website.

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Email: [info@rtssv.org.au](mailto:info@rtssv.org.au)

1300 367 797 | [www.rtssv.org.au](http://www.rtssv.org.au)

**Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.**

## Common reactions to trauma



After a trauma, people may go through a range of foreign feelings and emotions.

Often people who did not experience the trauma first hand, such as the person first at the scene of an accident, are surprised by the intensity of their responses.

Here is a list of some of the common reactions to a traumatic situation:

## Physical

- Nausea
- Upset stomach
- Sweating
- Rapid heart beat
- Increased blood pressure
- Problems sleeping
- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Increase in the use of alcohol or drugs
- Tremors
- Easily startled

## Thinking

- Slowed thinking
- Disorientation and trouble concentrating
- Memory problems
- Nightmares
- Seeing distressing images of the event in your mind (flashbacks)
- Poor attention span

## Emotional

- Sadness or grief
- Anger and irritability
- Guilt
- Shock
- Wanting to be alone
- Anxious and/or scared
- Need to control everyday experiences
- Panic
- Feeling lost and you struggle to find meaning in your life

This list is not exhaustive, but they are some of the typical reactions to trauma.

Here are some helpful tips that may assist keep some of these symptoms under control:

## For you

- Spend time with supportive friends
- Talk to someone who will listen to you about how you are feeling
- Get back to your normal routine as soon as you feel able to
- Exercise
- Look after yourself by eating well and not drinking or smoking too much
- Allow yourself to rest and have time for yourself
- Cry
- Write about how you feel
- Meditate

## For family and friends

- Spend time with the person when possible
- Listen to how they feel but do not push them to talk. You do not need to give advice, just listen and be there for them
- Reassure them that they are safe
- Resist the urge to say things like 'Everything will be OK', as these sorts of statements are not helpful
- Offer to do some practical tasks such as cooking, collecting children etc

There is no set time limit to deal with the often troubling reactions to trauma. Many people will recover well, and in some cases this may take many months, or even years.

Whilst people's intentions are to help you, it is important to ask family and friends not to push you, and that you need to deal with the incident at your own pace.

A crucial element that may contribute to how well and how soon people recover from trauma is ensuring that you maintain connected to good friends and family, and be prepared to ask for help from them, or from professionals if you have any concerns or doubts about yourself or what you are experiencing.

RTSSV has professional counsellors who can offer you a safe and supportive space to discuss your concerns. The counselling service is free of charge and operates between 9am-5pm Monday to Friday.

**To make an appointment call 1300 367 797**