

HOW CHILDREN COPE: THE BASIC Ph MODEL

The Basic Ph Model was developed by Dr. Mooli Lahad, Director of the Community Stress Prevention Center in Qiryat Shmona, Israel (Zanere, 2004). The model suggests that people possess six potential characteristics or dimensions that are at the core of an individual's coping style. Coping efforts are believed to be effective as long as children can sustain their basic routine. Creating a sense of adult support and normalcy (to the extent possible) is critical in helping children deal with psychological stress.

Six Coping Styles

Belief (B)	This is when a child turns to their belief system as a means of coping; they are relying on their core values. Parents and adults can reinforce this coping strategy by reaching out to their faith community and providing opportunities for their children to spend time with others who share their beliefs. School personnel should be sensitive to a student's belief.
Affect (A)	Feelings or emotions. Children who utilize their affect are relying upon the ability to express through emotions. These students will require opportunities to share anxieties, fears, anger, sorrow, and grief, and have those emotions validated by the adults in their life. Adults can foster children's emotional development by modeling open and genuine expression of feelings. It is important to emphasize that someone is always available to help them.
Social (S)	Children who cope with adversity through social channels typically seek support and control through the structure of their friendships. The roles and responsibilities that are assigned to children within a social context such as the classroom or their family can increase connections and decrease isolation. This can also restore emotional security and strengthen the child's sense of well-being. Extracurricular activities are encouraged during this time.
Imagination (I)	Children frequently turn to their creativity as a means of coping with trauma. Adults should provide opportunities for children to express their thoughts and feelings creatively by supplying materials, resources, environment, and encouragement necessary to encourage their expression. This is the time for art projects, essays, drama activities, and music.
Cognitive (C)	Children with a cognition-based coping style (typically, your older children) utilize a problem-solving, direct approach to dealing with issues of concern. These students will benefit from age-appropriate honest dialogue regarding the events. These children will likely be open to suggested strategies for addressing problems, anxieties, and fears.
Physiological (Ph)	Physical activity provides coping fulfillment for many children. Children cannot deal with intense issues on a continual basis and some diversions need to be put in place. Physical activity has a dual benefit of permitting informal processing of and allowing necessary buffer time in a non-threatening format. Opportunities for formal and informal physical activities should be abundant.