

# Using therapeutic storybooks to promote post-traumatic resilience

The Be You Bushfire Response Program found that therapeutic storybooks are a sustainable, evidence-based way to achieve post-traumatic resilience. **Therapeutic storybooks can be used during all phases of recovery.**

## Therapeutic storybooks used pre-emptively

Therapeutic storybooks can be used pre-emptively, at times when educators and children often have greater emotional and practical capacity. They can be used to assist children and adults in psychological and practical preparedness, by raising the topic ahead of time.



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Educators are uniquely positioned to support children in the lead up to natural disasters. We know that trauma limits capacity to learn new skills, so it's important to embed understanding of natural disasters and emotional awareness ahead of time. Therapeutic storybooks are a great way to use current literacy practices to support students with skills to cope during and after traumatic events.

Be You Bushfire Response Program  
Contact Liaison Officer

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## Therapeutic storybooks in the recovery phase – encouraging talk and connection

Books can be a great resource, providing a common language between children and adults, a shared understanding of the event and a catalyst for conversation. Therapeutic storybooks are a scaffold to assist much-needed connection.

Books highlight the shared experience of a bushfire, showing children they're not alone in their experience or feelings.



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We have been reading the *Birdie's Tree* book and having discussions afterwards. We have used the Birdie and Mr Frog puppets, as well as used Birdie and Mr Frog resources we have found online, including an emotions wheel and handout, Birdie and Mr Frog puzzle and a dress the firefighter activity.

Be You Bushfire Response Program  
Early Childhood Educator

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## Therapeutic storybooks for looking forward with hope

The narrative structure of storybooks can assist with moving children from the conflict in the story towards a resolution. They have the chance to see that things will not always be as they are now, providing hope in recovery.

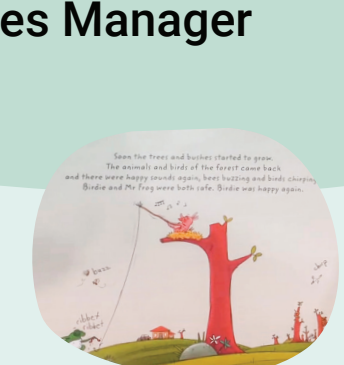


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Teachers and educators are committed to giving children and young people the opportunity to be heard, and the freedom and platform to express themselves. Therapeutic storybooks have allowed the children in our community to do this. With the support of their educators and teachers, children have been provided with the essential tools to show strength, reflective abilities, honesty and positivity, as the books scaffold us all towards healing and recovery.

Children's Services Manager

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The Be You Bushfire Response Program is an innovative model developed in response to the Black Summer bushfires. The Program recognises the unique role of learning communities in supporting recovery and resilience after bushfires.