Following a natural disaster, many people are likely to show signs of trauma and stress. Reactions such as anxiousness, sadness, agitation and physical symptoms are likely to be experienced. Caring for children and adolescents who have been affected by the recent tragedy in Japan may be stressful for teachers, especially those who are trying to process their own reactions.

It is important to develop healthy practices for resolving your own emotions and anxieties if you are working with traumatised children and/or adolescents.

Self Care refers to the ability to ‘refuel’ oneself in healthy ways. These include:

- Massage
- Meditation
- Yoga
- Walking
- Exercising
- Relaxation techniques
- Sharing your experience with family, friends, colleagues
- Nutrition
- Being with those with whom you feel comfortable.

Additionally, you may want to consider:

- Keeping within your skill level – it can easily become overwhelming if you don’t. If you are concerned about a child or adolescent discuss your concerns with the school welfare coordinator who can assist with a referral to a mental health professional where required. Always consult with parent/carer/homestay family where possible.
- Maintaining a meaningful and gratifying life outside your professional role

- Engaging in peer/professional support if working with trauma-affected children is relatively new to you.

Monitor your reactions and emotions. By developing your own ‘self care’ plan you maximise resilience.

Seek help for your own trauma related stress. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has trained counsellors who can support you. A 24/7 Employee Assistance Program offers counselling support to all employees. It is available at FREE CALL 1800 337 068.