

The War Is Taking a Toll on Ukraine's Kids. Psychologists Share How Parents Can Help

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Hanna Usatenko's 10-year-old daughter, Kate, is afraid the war in Ukraine is making her lose her memory.

She's heard the deafening sound of rocket attacks. She had to [flee her home](#) in Kyiv with her father and 12-year-old sister – while her mother, a psychologist, psychotherapist and nurse, stayed behind to volunteer at local hospitals.

About a week after the war started, Kate called her mom and told her that she had a hard time concentrating when she was reading her books. She even “downloaded an IQ test to check whether she's less clever than she used to be,” says Usatenko, 40.

Usatenko, who treats both children and adults in her psychotherapy practice, explained to her daughter: “You've got high anxiety. And when people have high anxiety, it's normal to be forgetful.” She keeps a notebook with her at all times to write everything down – and told her daughter to do the same.

And although Usatenko isn't physically with her daughters, she calls them several times a day to check how they're doing. “We talk a lot. I ask them how they feel. What they see,” she says.

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