



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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Just in Time Psychological First Aid:

If you're called upon to help in a disaster, here are the 8 steps recommended by disaster behavioral health professionals:

1. **Be prepared, pragmatic, and flexible.** Know ahead of time what's going to be needed throughout the duration of the recovery period.
2. **Promote a sense of safety.** Give survivors a sense of calm, hope, connectedness, and boost their feelings of being able to cope with the crisis.
3. **Do no harm.** Know what strategies work and which do not. Take into account the resources available in the community. Be sensitive to cultural differences among victims and respect their rights. Be open to feedback on your effectiveness.
4. **Build on community resources.** Work with families, communities, schools, and friends and maximize the participation of everyone who's been affected.
5. **Integrate with existing larger systems.** Design programming that will reach as many people as possible and reduce the stigma of seeking help. Avoid building stand-alone programs that replicate other available services.
6. **Provide "stepped care."** Adjust the type of helping to the phase of the disaster. Early intervention calls for different strategies than later interventions.
7. **Provide support that reaches out to the community.** Help the community understand what you're trying to do, and frame your efforts in terms of the community's cultural, religious, memorial, and spiritual needs.
8. **Provide a spectrum of services.** Your intervention efforts should include assessment, Psychological First Aid, outreach, training, treatment for individuals showing signs of continued distress, and promotion of resilience.