

# Hurricane Recovery: Disaster Behavioral Health

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# Overview

- Defining disaster behavioral health
- Common disaster reactions
- Coping with grief
- When to seek help
- Resources



# Disaster Behavioral Health (DBH)



“DBH addresses the psychological, emotional, cognitive, developmental, and social impacts that disasters have on survivors and responders as they respond and recover.”

— Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response,  
<https://www.phe.gov/Preparedness/planning/abc/Pages/DBH-federal.aspx>

# The Crisis Counseling Assistance and Training Program

- Funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and administered by FEMA and SAMHSA.
- Provides grants to states, territories, and federally recognized tribes to help address disaster behavioral health needs.
- Supports the following services:
  - Individual and group crisis counseling
  - Basic supportive or educational contact
  - Community networking and support
  - Assessment, referrals, and linkage to resources
  - Materials development and communications

# Common Reactions to Disasters

- Everyone who experiences a disaster is affected by it in some way.
- People who have survived disasters often experience some common physical, cognitive, emotional, and/or behavioral reactions.



**Related resource:** *Tips for Survivors of a Disaster or Other Traumatic Event: Managing Stress,*

<https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Tips-for-Survivors-of-a-Disaster-or-Other-Traumatic-Event-Managing-Stress/SMA13-4776>

# Common Reactions to Disasters (cont.)

## Physical

- Digestive problems
- Aches and pains without a clear physical cause
- Increase in appetite, or loss of appetite
- Sweating or chills (in someone who is not sick)
- Jumpiness, startling easily
- Trouble sleeping

## Cognitive

- Trouble remembering things
- Trouble thinking clearly and concentrating
- Confusion
- Increased worry
- Difficulty with making decisions

## Emotional

- Anxiety or fear
- Overwhelming sadness
- Anger
- Disconnection, lack of caring
- Numbness, inability to feel joy or sadness

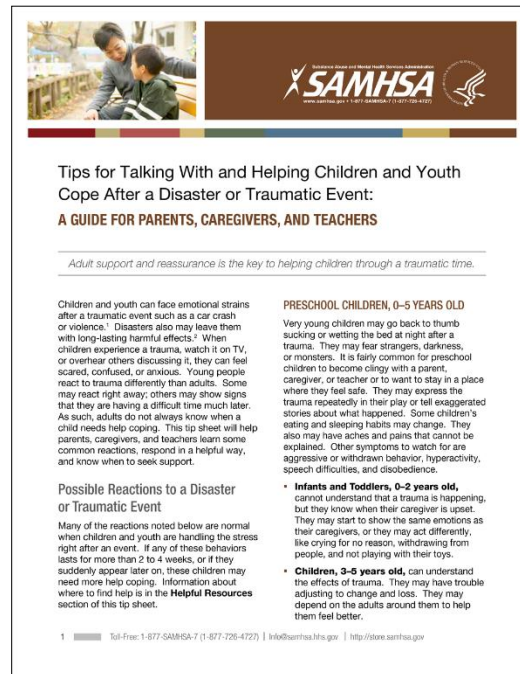
## Behavioral

- Trouble sleeping, or trouble relaxing
- An increase or decrease in energy and activity levels
- Use of alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, or prescription medication to try to cope
- Outbursts of anger
- Trouble accepting help or helping others
- Self-isolation



# Common Reactions in Children

- Children and teens have many of the same reactions as adults.
- Reactions vary by age.



**Related resource:** *Tips for Talking With and Helping Children and Youth Cope After a Disaster or Traumatic Event: A Guide for Parents, Caregivers, and Teachers,*  
<https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Tips-for-Talking-With-and-Helping-Children-and-Youth-Cope-After-a-Disaster-or-Traumatic-Event-A-Guide-for-Parents-Caregivers-and-Teachers/SMA12-4732>

# Common Reactions in Children (cont.)

- Increased fear and worry
- Acting out parts of the disaster in play, sometimes again and again
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Complaints of aches and pains without a clear physical cause
- Aggressive behavior and disobedience
- Hyperactivity
- Withdrawal, stopping spending time with friends
- Poor performance at school
- Risk-taking behavior



# Disaster-related Stress and Resilience

**MANY**



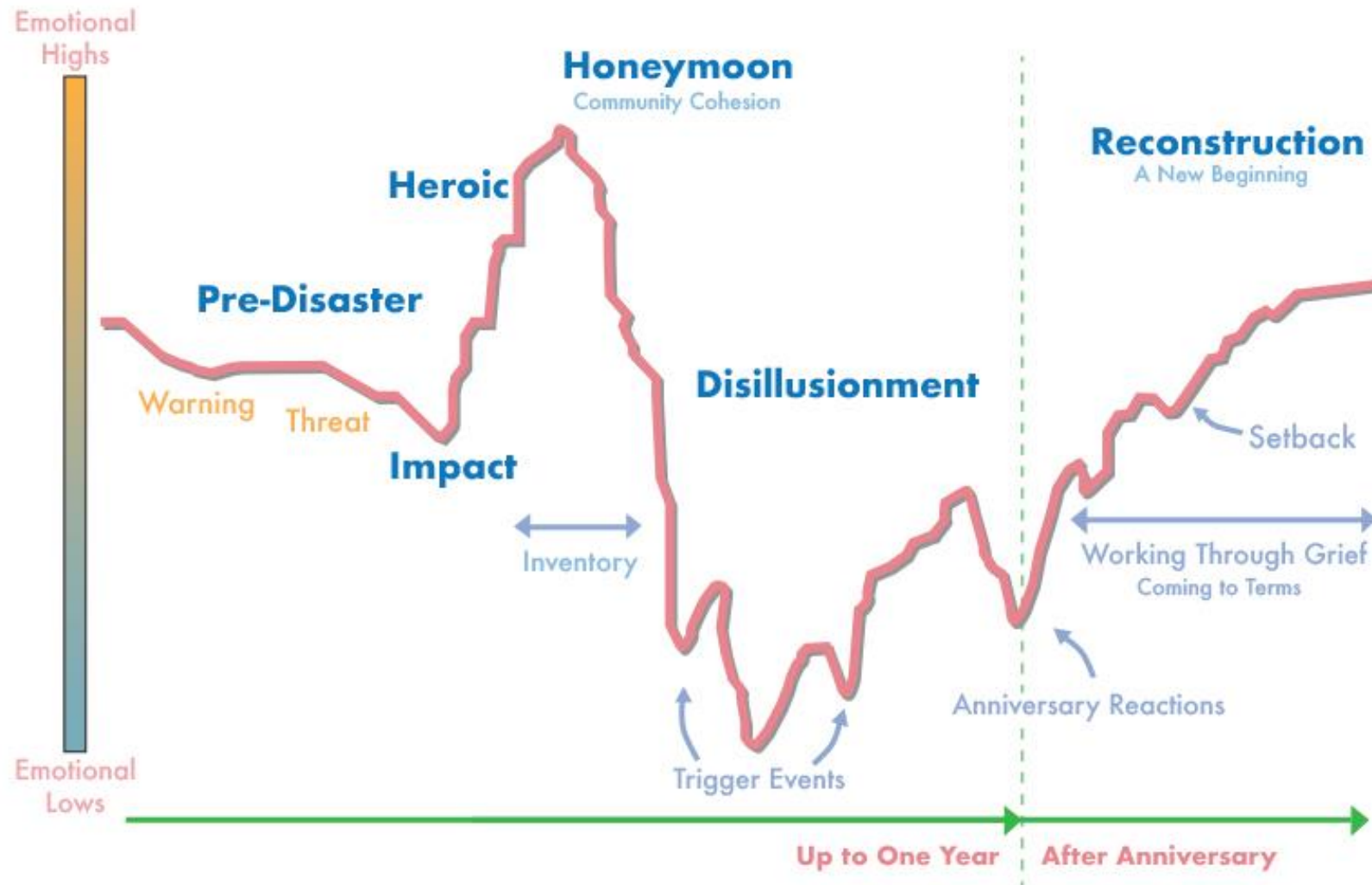
**SOME**



**FEW**



# Phases of Disaster



Adapted from Zunin & Myers as cited in DeWolfe, D. J. 2000. *Training manual for mental health and human service workers in major disasters* (2nd ed., HHS Publication No. ADM 90-538). Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Mental Health Services.

# Coping with Grief

- Grief is the normal response of sorrow, heartache, and confusion that comes from losing someone or something important to you.



Related resource: Tips for Survivors: *Coping with grief after a disaster or traumatic event*,  
<https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Tips-for-Survivors-/SMA17-5035>

# National Hotlines

- The SAMHSA Disaster Distress Helpline is a national hotline (1-800-985-5990) and SMS (text “TalkWithUs” to 66746) service available to anyone in U.S. states and territories before, during, and after natural and human-caused disasters.
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
  - Toll-free phone: 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255)
  - Website: <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

# Disaster Behavioral Health Resources

<https://www.samhsa.gov/dtac>

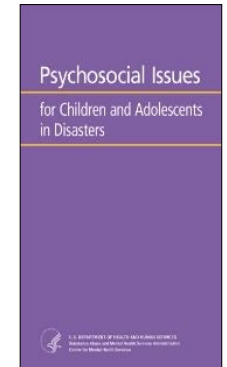
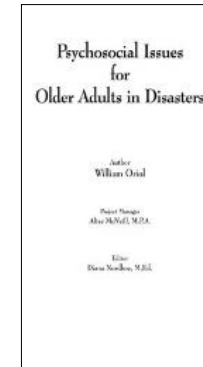
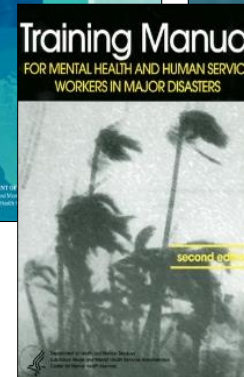
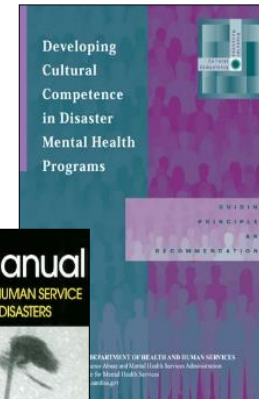
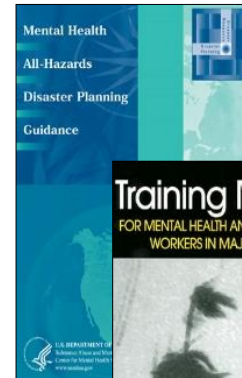
or

<https://store.samhsa.gov>



Visit [bit.ly/disasterapp](https://bit.ly/disasterapp) to  
learn more.

# Tip Sheets, Guides, and Pamphlets





# Disaster Behavioral Health Information Series (DBHIS)

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Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration

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**DTAC**

- About DTAC
- CCP
- CCP Toolkit
- Recovering From Disasters
- Disaster Behavioral Health Resources

**DBHIS Collections**

- Online Training
- Webinars and Podcasts
- Behavioral Health Resources on Zika

**Disaster Distress Helpline**  
1-800-985-5990

**Disaster Behavioral Health Information Series (DBHIS) Resource Collections**

SAMHSA Disaster Technical Assistance Center (DTAC) provides various resources and useful information for those in the disaster behavioral health field.

All the resources for which links are provided are in the public domain or have been authorized for noncommercial use. Hardcopies of some materials may be ordered by using the publication numbers cited in bibliographies. If utilized in program materials, stakeholders should acknowledge the source of the materials.

- [Acute Interventions](#)
- [American Indian and Alaska Native Tribal-specific Resources](#)
- [Animals and Disasters](#)
- [Chemical and Biological Events](#)
- [Children and Youth](#)
- [Disaster Apps](#)
- [Disaster Responders](#)  
Note: This item replaces the "Public Safety Workers DBHIS"
- [Disaster-related Funding Opportunities](#)
- [Disaster-specific Resources](#)
  - [Drought](#)
  - [Earthquake](#)
  - [Flood](#)
  - [Hurricane](#)
  - [Technological Disaster](#)
  - [Terrorism](#)
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  - [Tsunami](#)
  - [Wildfire](#)
- [Faith-based Communities and Spiritual Leaders](#)
- [Immediate Disaster Response](#)
  - [Drought](#)
  - [Tornadoes](#)
- [Languages Other Than English](#)
- [Mass Violence/Community Violence](#)
- [Military Personnel and Their Families](#)
- [Online Disaster Behavioral Health Trainings](#)
- [Older Adults](#)
- [People With Disabilities and Other Functional and Access](#)

**DTAC Bulletins and Newsletters**

- [The Dialogue](#): A quarterly newsletter for disaster behavioral health professionals.
- [SAMHSA DTAC Bulletin](#): A monthly e-newsletter with resources, events, and updates from the field.
- [Supplemental Research Bulletin](#): Catch up on the latest findings from the literature.

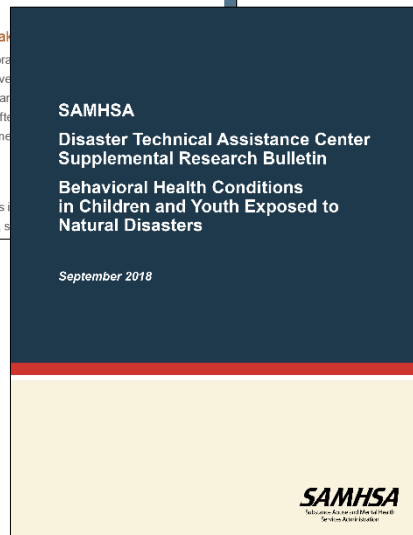
We value your input, please complete a [brief survey](#) about these and other SAMHSA DTAC products.

- [Acute Interventions](#)
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- [Suicide & Disasters](#)
- [Women & Disasters](#)

# SAMHSA DTAC Newsletters



- ***SAMHSA DTAC Bulletin:*** Monthly e-newsletter with DBH resources
- ***The Dialogue:*** Quarterly journal of articles by DBH professionals
- ***Supplemental Research Bulletin:*** A biannual research summary
- To subscribe, email [DTAC@samhsa.hhs.gov](mailto:DTAC@samhsa.hhs.gov) or enter your email address and select newsletter subscriptions at <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USSAMHSA/subscriber/new>.



# Disaster Response Template Toolkit

- Printed materials

- Brochures
- Newsletters
- Tip sheets
- Postcards

- Messaging through other media

- Blogs
- Public service announcements
- Websites
- Social media



To access the Disaster Response Template Toolkit, contact SAMHSA DTAC at 1-800-308-3515 or [dtac@samhsa.hhs.gov](mailto:dtac@samhsa.hhs.gov).

# SAMHSA DTAC Webinars and Podcasts

- Promising Practices in DBH Planning webinar series
- Resilience podcast series
- Cultural awareness webinars



Available at

<https://www.samhsa.gov/dtac/webinars-podcasts>.

# Thank you.

SAMHSA's mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities.

Disaster Technical Assistance Center

[dtac@samhsa.hhs.gov](mailto:dtac@samhsa.hhs.gov)

1-800-308-3515

[www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov)

1-877-SAMHSA-7 (1-877-726-4727) • 1-800-487-4889 (TDD)  
19