

# Trauma and Disaster

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# FEMA CRISIS COUNSELING PROGRAM

- The mission:
  1. to assist individuals and communities in recovering from the effects of disasters through the provision of community-based outreach and psycho-educational services
  2. short-term interventions assisting disaster survivors in understanding their current situation, reactions, mitigating stress, and develop coping strategies
  3. reviewing disaster recovery options, linkages with other individuals and agencies who may help survivors in their recovery process (recover to their pre-disaster level of functioning)

# HEALING JOPLIN CCP TEAM



# SHOW ME HOPE CCP TEAM

SHOW-ME  
HOPE  
MISSOURI



# TRAUMA AND DISASTER

- Trauma is sudden, unexpected and changes the way you view your world
- A disaster tends to be a one-time acute trauma. Intense exposure = greater degree of risk
- Children are one of the highest risk groups to have emotional reactions and difficulties
- Reactions range from mild to severe. Better outcomes occur when services and support are provided quickly

# TRAUMA AND DISASTER

- Normal children in an abnormal circumstance
- Children may regress both behaviorally and academically following a trauma
- Response affected by prior life events
- Assumptions about safety and security are challenged
- Reactions depend upon personality and ability to cope with stress
- Support systems are important to the healing process

# WHY CHILDREN ARE AT RISK

- Limited experience coping with adversity
- Limited verbal skills
- Lack of coping skills
- Dependence on adults
- Change in routine or separation from family, especially those with special needs

# FOUR TYPES OF REACTIONS DISASTER SURVIVOR'S EXPERIENCE

- Physical
- Emotional
- Cognitive
- Behavior

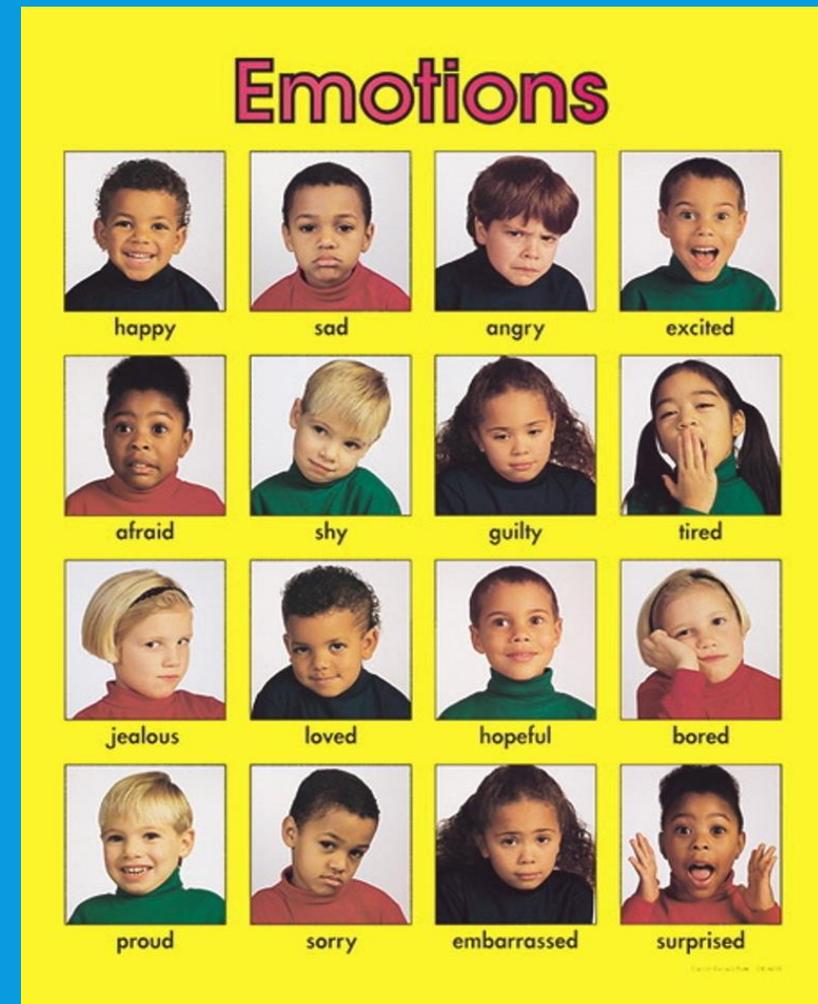


# PHYSICAL REACTIONS

- Aches and pains (headaches, backaches, stomach aches)
- Sudden sweating, chills or heart palpitations (fluttering)
- Changes in sleep patterns, and appetite
- Gastrointestinal problems (constipation or diarrhea)
- Easily startled by noises or unexpected touch
- More susceptible to colds and illnesses
- Clumsiness, increased accidents

# EMOTIONAL REACTIONS

- Shock, denial, and disbelief
- Anxiety and fear
- Guilt, and shame
- Depression, and mood swings
- Apathy, detachment and numbing
- Grief



# COGNITIVE REACTIONS

- Poor concentration
- Disorientation and confusion
- Recurring flashbacks, dreams and nightmares
- Trouble making decisions
- Preoccupation with disaster

# BEHAVIORAL REACTIONS

- Clinging to caregiver, separation fear, avoidance of triggering places or activities
- Difficulty sleeping
- Frequent crying
- Declining school performance
- Difficulty communicating or listening
- Change in activity level and regression of age appropriate skills

# STRATEGIES TO MANAGE REACTIONS

- Limit television or news of the disaster but provide age appropriate information
- Help the child figure out events they can control and reassure safety
- Provide opportunities to talk about the disaster (no pressure)
- Create routines and if possible maintain pre-disaster routines

# STRATEGIES TO MANAGE REACTIONS

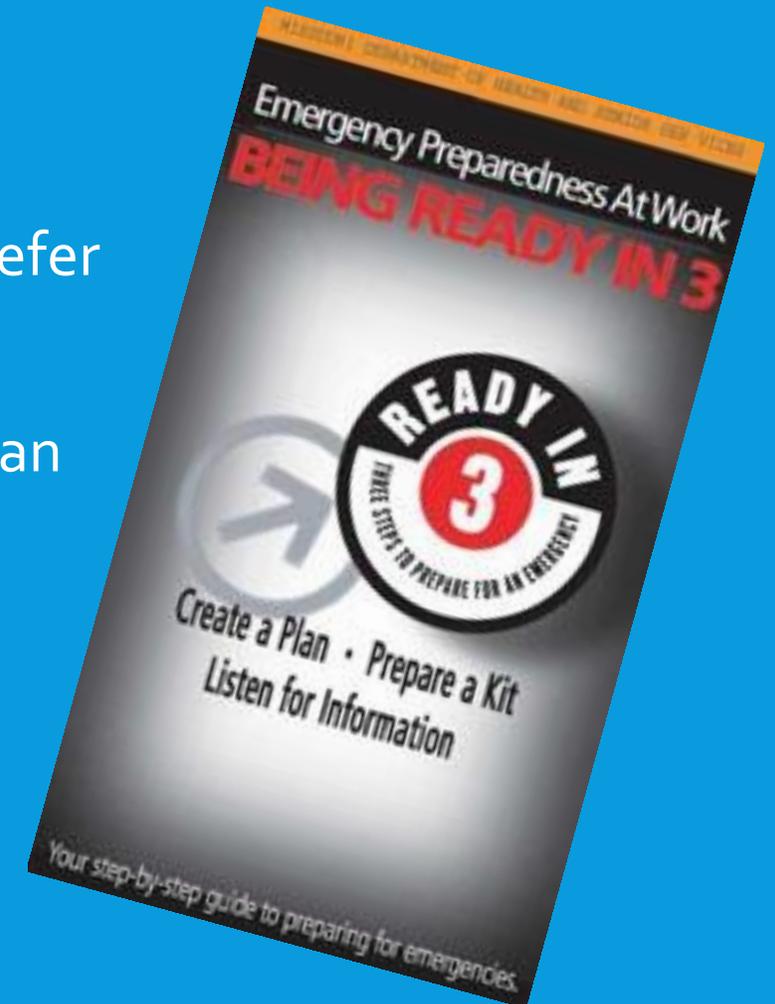
- Keep regular bed-times and provide extra support
- Encourage physical exercise and recreational activities
- Help understanding of loss and death
- Practice how to breathe slowly and evenly (3 to 5)

# STRATEGIES TO MANAGE REACTIONS

- Putting words to difficult experiences – use a diagram of the body and point to or color areas where they feel strong emotions or physical reactions
- Positive distracting activities (music, movies, walks, journal, drawing)
- Decrease isolation, and encourage play in small groups to build social connections
- Eat healthy meals together

# SKILLS FOR RECOVERY

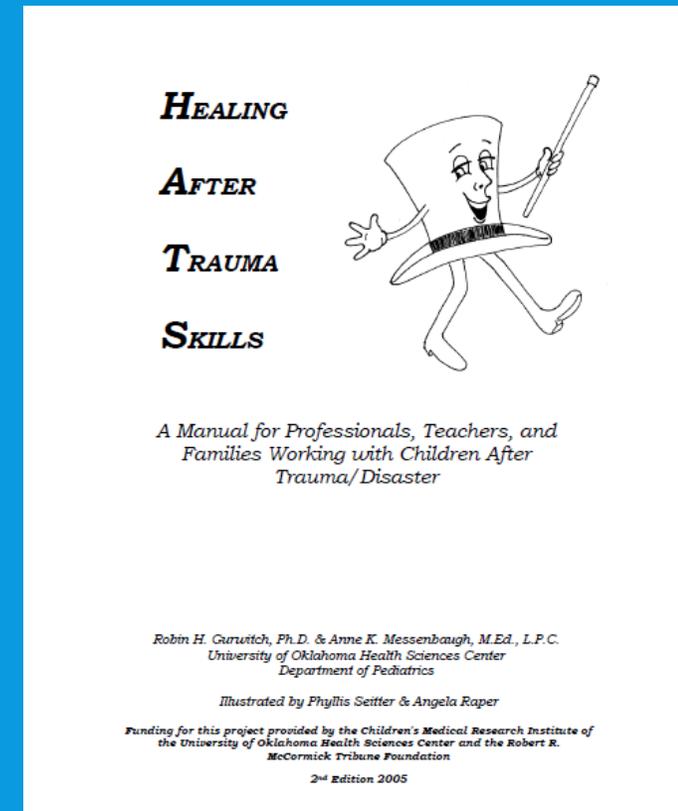
- Normalize reactions and reassure they are common
- If severe symptoms remain one month post disaster, refer
- Build an emergency preparedness kit and develop a plan  
<http://health.mo.gov/emergencies/readyin3/>



# SKILLS FOR RECOVERY

- Utilize Healing After Trauma Skills Manual (HATS)

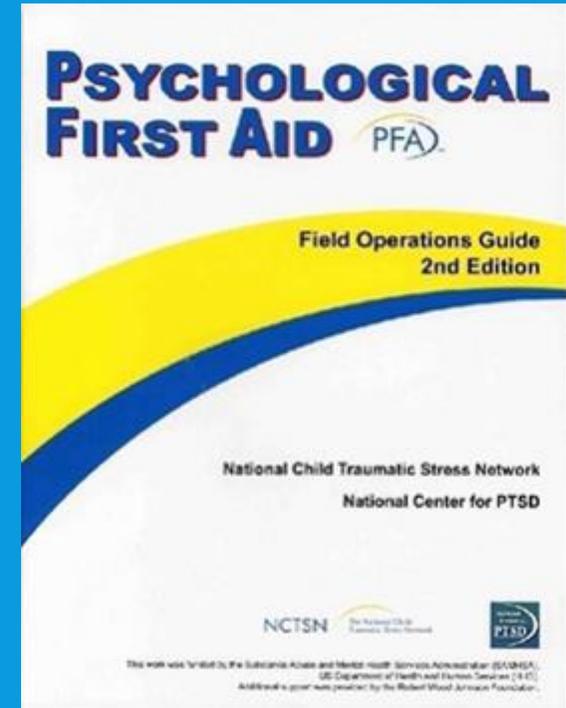
1. Children and trauma
2. Parent information
3. What happened and searching for sense of safety
4. Getting back to basics
5. Naming and dealing with feelings
6. Relaxation
7. Good dreams and bad dreams
8. One year later



<http://digitalprairie.ok.gov/cdm/ref/collection/stgovpub/id/10263>

# SKILLS FOR RECOVERY

- Caregivers take Psychological First Aid (PFA) course on-line (NCTSN). PFA has eight core actions:
  1. Contact and engagement
  2. Safety and comfort
  3. Stabilization
  4. Information gathering on current needs and concerns
  5. Practical assistance
  6. Connection with social supports
  7. Information on coping
  8. Linkage with collaborative

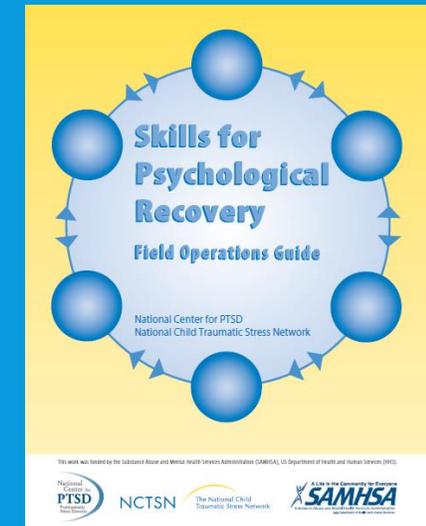


<https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/manuals/psych-first-aid.asp>

# SKILLS FOR RECOVERY

Utilize Skills for Psychological Recovery (SPR) that teaches five main skills:

1. Building problem-solving skills
2. Promoting positive actions
3. Managing reactions
4. Promoting helpful thinking
5. Building healthy social connections



The goal of SPR is to teach new ways to deal with all the changes resulting from the disaster by exploring new actions, thoughts, and ways to respond.

[https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/manuals/manual-pdf/SPR\\_Manual.pdf](https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/manuals/manual-pdf/SPR_Manual.pdf)

# MISSOURI DISASTER RANKING

- Missouri ranks #10 for natural disasters
- The Show-Me State has had disastrous weather in every month of the year:
  1. severe snow and ice storms in winter
  2. tornadoes during the spring, summer and fall
  3. flooding at virtually any time
- Major disaster declarations since 1953: **53**

