A Guide for Older Adults

Senior citizens today are a sturdy, reliable generation. We have proven time and again our ability to survive everything from the Great Depression to world wars and the threat of nuclear holocaust. We are proud, tough and resilient. However, when disaster strikes, we may find that we suddenly feel terrified...alone...and overwhelmingly vulnerable. These feelings of helplessness may frighten us even more.

After a Disaster: What Teens Can Do

Provides information for teens to help understand some of their reactions as well as others, to terrorist events. Suggestions are also provided to help ease the unfamiliar feelings related to the event.

Age-Related Reactions to a Traumatic Event

How children experience traumatic events and how they express their distress depends, in large part, on the child's age and level of development.

Families Coping with Traumatic Events

Continues several special reports adapted from articles published in Family Information Services over the past few years when other crises have occurred. Many of the ideas, even though originally written to respond to other types of crises, will be very helpful to you as you talk with children, parents and families about new threats to our security and mental well-being.

FEMA - Helping Children Cope with Disaster
http://www.fema.gov/rebuild/recover/cope_child.shtm

Disasters can leave children feeling frightened, confused, and insecure. Whether a child has personally experienced trauma, has merely seen the event on television, or has heard it discussed by adults, it is important for parents and teachers to be informed and ready to help if reactions to stress begin to occur.

Glossary of Terms Related to Child Traumatic Stress
http://www.nctsn.org/nccts/nav.do?pid=gls_main

Contains words, phrases, and their definitions or descriptions that will help you understand child traumatic stress.

Help Guide .org
http://www.helpguide.org/mental/stress_signs.htm

Modern life is full of hassles, deadlines, frustrations, and demands. For many people, stress is so commonplace that it has become a way of life. Stress isn’t always bad. In small doses, it can help you perform under pressure and motivate you to do your best. But when you’re constantly running in emergency mode, your mind and body pay the price.
Children are the most vulnerable population. Times of disaster and trauma increase their vulnerability. Gives tips to parents in recognizing children's symptoms of stress and how to help them.

**Helping Children Cope With Stress**
http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/fcs/index.html

Reactions to stress vary with the child's stage of development, ability to cope, the length of time the stressor continues, intensity of the stressor, and the degree of support from family, friends, and community. The two most frequent indicators that children are stressed are change in behaviors and regression of behaviors. Children under stress change their behavior and react by doing things that are not in keeping with their usual style. Behaviors seen in earlier phases of development, such as thumb sucking and regression in toileting, may reappear.

**Helping Our Children Deal with Shocking Events**

Guide for parents to help children deal with shocking events, such as war and terrorism.

**How Families Can Help Children Cope with Fear and Anxiety**
http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/Ca-0022/default.asp

Explains how families can help children who are dealing with responses to traumatic events.

**How Families Can Help Children Cope with Fear and Anxiety**
http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/Ca-0022/default.asp

Whether tragic events touch your family personally or are brought into your home via newspapers and television, you can help children cope with the anxiety that violence, death, and disasters can cause.

**How to Talk to Kids about Violence: A Response from Parenting Press**
http://www.parentingpress.com/violence/intro.html

Violence is overwhelming to children and adults alike. For those too young to distinguish the real from the fictional, a national tragedy like that experienced on September 11, 2001 can be mind-boggling. At Parenting Press, we have made a continued commitment to both communication between parents and children, and acknowledgment of feelings. In the discussion of national violence, that is where parents must begin—with open communication and with acceptance of feelings.

**Information for Parents on Childhood Traumatic Grief**

The information presented provides an overview of childhood traumatic grief, its general signs and symptoms, and some suggestions on what parents can do to help their child.

**Leadership Stress Management**

The magnitude of death and destruction in this event require special measures for leaders to deal with their own stress. Leadership is paramount in maintaining organized, efficient work for continuity of efforts and recovery.

**Managing Strong Emotional Reactions to Traumatic Events: Tips for Parents**

Our society has been plagued by a number of traumatic events in recent years—schoolyard shootings, the Oklahoma City bombing, floods and tornadoes, and the terrorist attacks of September 2001. When a large-scale tragedy occurs, it can cause strong and deeply felt reactions in adults and children. How adults express their emotions will influence the reactions of children and youth. Parents and teachers can help youngsters manage their feelings by both modeling healthy coping strategies themselves and closely monitoring their own emotional state and that of the children in their care.
Managing Traumatic Stress: After the Hurricanes
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The effects of the recent hurricanes will be long-lasting and the resulting trauma can reverberate even with those not directly affected by the disaster. It is common for people who have experienced traumatic situations to have very strong emotional reactions. Understanding normal responses to these abnormal events can aid you in coping effectively with your feelings, thoughts, and behaviors, and help you along the path to recovery.

Managing Traumatic Stress: Dealing with the Hurricanes from Afar
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Even if you were not directly affected by the hurricanes, you may experience a sense of vulnerability from witnessing the results of the disaster. This can be especially acute if a relative or friend was affected by the disasters, particularly if you have been unable to get news on their welfare.

Managing Traumatic Stress: the Hurricanes and Children
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The intense anxiety and fear that often follow a disaster can be especially troubling for surviving children, especially if children were victims of the disaster or were separated from their families. Some may regress and demonstrate younger behaviors such as thumb sucking or bed wetting. Children may be more prone to nightmares and fear of sleeping alone. Performance in school may suffer. Other changes in behavior patterns may include throwing tantrums more frequently, or withdrawing and becoming more solitary. Provides several things parents and others who care for children can do to help alleviate the emotional consequences of trauma.

Managing Traumatic Stress: Tips for Recovering From Disasters and Other Traumatic Events
http://helping.apa.org/articles/article.php?id=22
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The September 11th terrorist attacks were the type of events we thought could never happen. Like other types of disasters they were unexpected, sudden and overwhelming. In some cases, there are no outwardly visible signs of physical injury, but there is nonetheless a serious emotional toll. It is common for people who have experienced traumatic situations to have very strong emotional reactions. Understanding normal responses to these abnormal events can aid you in coping effectively with your feelings, thoughts, and behaviors, and help you along the path to recovery.

Managing Traumatic Stress: Tips for Recovering From Natural Disasters
http://helping.apa.org/articles/article.php?id=69
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It is common for people who have experienced traumatic situations to have very strong emotional reactions. Understanding normal responses to these abnormal events can aid you in coping effectively with your feelings, thoughts, and behaviors, and help you along the path to recovery.

Mental Health and Mass Violence - National Institute of Mental Health
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Evidence-Based Early Psychological Intervention for Victims/Survivors of Mass Violence. A Workshop to Reach Consensus on Best Practices Americans have been exposed to increased levels of mass violence during the past decade. School violence, shootings in the workplace, and terrorist acts both here and abroad – all have affected individuals, families, communities, and our country. This report addresses the urgent need to evaluate the various psychological interventions that are increasingly among the first responses to these traumatic events.

Mind/Body Health: The Effects of Traumatic Stress
http://helping.apa.org/articles/article.php?id=122
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Even if you did not suffer bodily harm in the recent hurricanes, traumatic stress such as being affected by the hurricane emotionally can have physical effects as well.

Parenting in a Challenging World
http://www.nctsn.org/ncccts/nav.do?pid=ctr_aud_prnt_chlg
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Parents want the world for their children. They strive to help them grow and thrive. A large part of their work is to protect their children from harm, because the safety of a child is a worry that never disappears. The task of keeping a child safe is a full-time job. Information and video clips from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network.

**Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, A Real Illness**

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An easy-to-read booklet on post-traumatic stress disorder that explains what it is, when it starts, how long it lasts, and how to get help — includes a self-test.

**Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**
http://www.aacap.org/page.ww?section=Facts+for+Families&name=Posttraumatic+Stress+Disorder+%28PTSD%29

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All children and adolescents experience stressful events which can affect them both emotionally and physically. Their reactions to stress are usually brief, and they recover without further problems. A child or adolescent who experiences a catastrophic event may develop ongoing difficulties known as posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The stressful or traumatic event involves a situation where someone's life has been threatened or severe injury has occurred (ex. they may be the victim or a witness of physical abuse, sexual abuse, violence in the home or in the community, automobile accidents, natural disasters (such as flood, fire, earthquakes), and being diagnosed with a life threatening illness). A child's risk of developing PTSD is related to the seriousness of the trauma, whether the trauma is repeated, the child's proximity to the trauma, and his/her relationship to the victim(s).

**Strategies to Assist Children Manage Stress**
http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/fcs/index.html

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During disasters, many families suffer from the onset of sudden stress. Severe stress can disrupt functioning. Overtime, relief from stress enables families to eventually reestablish equilibrium. Informed intervention can speed up this process and in many instances can prevent serious problems later.

**Stress Management for Parents**

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The magnitude of death and destruction in this event require special attention to communicating with children and adolescents. Physical safety and security takes priority.

**Stress: When and How to Get Help**
http://helping.apa.org/articles/article.php?id=27

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In the workplace and at home, stress and other difficult situations are at an all-time high for many Americans. Being constantly worried about being laid off, or doing the job of two people, can cause serious problems for workers. On the home front, going through a divorce, caring for elderly parents, or dealing with a life-threatening illness are some of the difficult situations that can test a family's coping abilities.

**Talking with Children During Tough Times**
http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/fcs/index.html

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As adults we try to protect children against tragedies. We would like to ensure that they have happy, innocent, and carefree lives. So what is a parent, teacher, or other caring adult to do when disasters fill the airwaves and the consciousness of society?

**Tips for Survivors of a Traumatic Event - What to Expect in your Personal, Family, Work, and Financial Life**

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Covers things to remember when trying to understand disaster events, signs that adults need stress management assistance, and ways to ease stress.

**Tips for Talking to Children in Trauma: Interventions at Home For Preschoolers to Adolescents**

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Suggests activities arranged by age group to help children share recovery feelings and experiences at home. Includes activities for preschoolers, elementary age children, and pre-adolescents and adolescents.

**Understanding Child Traumatic Stress**
http://www.nctsn.org/nccts/nav.do?pid=ctr_aud_pmt_under

» We live with dangers every day. As children and adolescents grow up, they continually learn about different types of dangers. We are always looking for ways to make our lives safer. However, traumatic experiences sometimes happen, both within and outside the family.

**What is Child Traumatic Stress?**

» Although many of us may experience reactions to stress from time to time, when a child is experiencing child traumatic stress, these reactions interfere with his or her daily life and ability to function and interact with others.