

Behavioral Health Best Practice Resources Addressing Trauma and Violence

These resources include best practices on understanding, coping, referral, and treatment of trauma, mass violence, hate crimes, and other forms of violence. Resources are from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Disaster Technical Assistance Center (DTAC) and SAMHSA National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN), as well as other sources. The list features resources for and about children, youth, and young adults; parents and caregivers; schools; and responders. It also includes resources to address acute behavioral health needs and information about relevant SAMHSA programs.

Resources on Mass Violence, Community Violence, and Hate Crimes

- **The Dialogue: Mass Violence, Community Violence, and Hate Crimes:** SAMHSA DTAC The Dialogue edition highlighting experiences, perspectives, and resources from experts in the field focused on mass violence, community violence, and hate crimes. samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/dtac-dialogue-vol-18-issue-1-2.pdf
- **Disaster Behavioral Health Information Series Resource Center (DBHIS):** The SAMHSA DTAC DBHIS contains resources and toolkits on disaster behavioral health, including disaster-specific resources on mass violence and community violence. samhsa.gov/resource-search/dbhis?rc%5B0%5D=type_of_disaster%3A21219
- **Psychological First Aid (PFA):** NCTSN PFA is an evidence-informed modular approach to help children, adolescents, adults, and families in the immediate aftermath of disaster and terrorism. nctsn.org/treatments-and-practices/psychological-first-aid-and-skills-for-psychological-recovery/about-pfa
- **PFA Field Operations Guide: 2nd Edition:** SAMHSA NCTSN gives guidance on responding to disaster or terrorism events using the PFA intervention. nctsn.org/resources/psychological-first-aid-pfa-field-operations-guide-2nd-edition
- **Skills for Psychological Recovery (SPR):** SAMHSA NCTSN evidence-informed modular intervention that aims to help survivors gain skills to manage distress and cope with post-disaster stress and adversity. nctsn.org/treatments-and-practices/psychological-first-aid-and-skills-for-psychological-recovery/about-spr
- **SPR Field Operations Guide:** SAMHSA NCTSN guidance on responding to disaster, violence, or terrorism events using the SPR intervention to assist children, adolescents, adults, and families in the aftermath of disaster and terrorism. nctsn.org/resources/skills-for-psychological-recovery

- **Tips for Survivors: Coping with Anger After a Disaster or Traumatic Event:** This SAMHSA DTAC tip sheet helps survivors to understand that anger can be a common response to a traumatic event and includes anger management techniques and where to turn to for help. store.samhsa.gov/product/tips-survivors-coping-anger-after-disaster-or-other-traumatic-event/pep19-01-01-002

Resources about and for Children, Youth, and Young Adults

- **Understanding Child Trauma:** SAMHSA web page presents statistics on child trauma, signs of traumatic stress in children and youth, and tips for parents and other caregivers for helping children and youth to cope with trauma. samhsa.gov/child-trauma/understanding-child-trauma
- **Coping after Mass Violence:** SAMHSA NCTSN fact sheet presents information on coping after mass violence and common reactions children and families may be experiencing after a mass violence event. nctsn.org/resources/coping-after-mass-violence
- **Talking to Children about the Shooting:** SAMHSA NCTSN tip sheet presents information on how to talk to children about mass shootings, tips on how to start the conversation, and common reactions in children. nctsn.org/resources/talking-children-about-shooting
- **Talking to Children When Scary Things Happen:** SAMHSA NCTSN fact sheet offers guidance on talking with children and youth when scary things happen, including information on checking in with yourself, clarifying your goal, providing information, reflecting, asking helpful questions, and more. nctsn.org/resources/talking-to-children-when-scary-things-happen
- **Talking to Teens When Violence Happens:** SAMHSA NCTSN fact sheet offers guidance on talking with teens when violence happens, including checking in with yourself, clarifying your goal, providing information and options, reflection, asking helpful questions, and more. nctsn.org/resources/talking-to-teens-when-violence-happens
- **Age-Related Reactions to a Traumatic Event:** This SAMHSA NCTSN fact sheet describes how young children, school-age children, and adolescents react to traumatic events and offers suggestions on how parents and caregivers can help and support them. nctsn.org/resources/age-related-reactions-traumatic-event
- **Tips for Young Adults: Coping with Mass Violence:** This SAMHSA DTAC tip sheet explores the impact of mass violence on young adults (ages 18 to 26), describes mass violence incidents and their common effects, suggests ways to cope, and identifies signs of the need for professional behavioral health support. store.samhsa.gov/product/tips-young-adults-coping-mass-violence/pep22-01-01-006
- **Tip Sheet for Youth Talking to Journalists about the Shooting:** This SAMHSA NCTSN tip sheet describes a caregiver's and child's rights when talking with journalists and details the signs of a good and respectful reporter. nctsn.org/resources/tip-sheet-youth-talking-journalists-about-shooting

Resources for Parents and Caregivers

- **After a Crisis: Helping Young Children Heal:** This SAMHSA NCTSN fact sheet offers tips to caregivers on how to help young children, toddlers, and preschoolers heal after a traumatic event. nctsn.org/resources/after-crisis-helping-young-children-heal
- **Helping Young Children with Traumatic Grief: Tips for Caregivers:** This SAMHSA NCTSN tip sheet outlines the feelings of young children struggling with the death of someone meaningful and offers suggestions on what caregivers can do to help. nctsn.org/resources/helping-young-children-traumatic-grief-tips-caregivers
- **Helping School-Age Children with Traumatic Grief: Tips for Caregivers:** This SAMHSA NCTSN tip sheet describes how school-age children may feel when struggling with the death of someone close and offers tips on what caregivers can do to help. nctsn.org/resources/helping-school-age-children-traumatic-grief-tips-caregivers
- **Helping Teens with Traumatic Grief: Tips for Caregivers:** This SAMHSA NCTSN tip sheet describes how teens may feel when struggling with the death of someone close and offers tips on what caregivers can do to help. nctsn.org/resources/helping-teens-traumatic-grief-tips-caregivers
- **Parent Guidelines for Helping Youth After the Recent Shooting:** This SAMHSA NCTSN fact sheet describes common reactions children may have after a recent shooting, how parents and caregivers can help them, and self-care tips after an event. nctsn.org/resources/parent-guidelines-helping-youth-after-recent-shooting
- **Tips for Parents on Media Coverage of a Shooting:** This SAMHSA NCTSN tip sheet gives information to parents and caregivers about media coverage after a shooting, describes what they can do to help their children, and explores what it is like when a family is a part of the story. nctsn.org/resources/tips-parents-media-coverage-shooting
- **Guiding Adults in Talking to Children about Death and Attending Services:** This SAMHSA NCTSN fact sheet provides ways to navigate questions about death, funerals, and memorials. nctsn.org/resources/guiding-adults-talking-children-about-death-and-attending-services

Resources for Schools

- **Helping Youth after Community Trauma: Tips for Educators:** This SAMHSA NCTSN tip sheet lists common reactions educators might see in the students with whom they work and offers suggestions on how they may help after community trauma. nctsn.org/resources/helping-youth-after-community-trauma-tips-educators
- **Creating Supportive Environments When Scary Things Happen:** This SAMHSA NCTSN fact sheet offers guidance on creating supportive environments for youth when scary things happen. nctsn.org/resources/creating-supportive-environments-when-scary-things-happen
- **Providing PFA: Principals and Administrators:** This SAMHSA NCTSN fact sheet offers principals and administrators a quick resource for using the core actions of PFA in response to an emergency event on school grounds. nctsn.org/resources/providing-psychological-first-aid-principals-and-administrators

- **Providing PFA: Support Staff:** This SAMHSA NCTSN fact sheet offers school support staff a quick resource for using the core actions of PFA in response to an emergency event on school grounds. nctsn.org/resources/providing-psychological-first-aid-support-staff
- **Providing PFA: Teachers:** This SAMHSA NCTSN fact sheet offers teachers a quick resource for using the core actions of PFA in response to an emergency event on school grounds. nctsn.org/resources/providing-psychological-first-aid-teachers
- **Providing PFA: Health-Related Professionals:** This SAMHSA NCTSN fact sheet offers school health professionals a quick resource for using the core actions of PFA in response to an emergency event on school grounds. nctsn.org/resources/providing-psychological-first-aid-health-related-professionals

Resources for Disaster Responders and First Responders

- **Connecting Communities to Substance Use Services: Practical Tools for First Responders:** This guide provides practical, evidence-based information that first responder agencies, their partners, and communities can use to implement or expand practices and programs for linking people to substance use services. <https://store.samhsa.gov/product/connecting-communities-substance-use-services-practical-tools-first-responders/pep23-06-01>
- **Addressing Burnout in the Behavioral Health Workforce through Organizational Strategies:** Burnout is a complex issue resulting from chronic workplace stress that encompasses exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. This guide will highlight organization-level interventions to prevent and reduce burnout among behavioral health workers. <https://store.samhsa.gov/product/addressing-burnout-behavioral-health-workforce-through-organizational-strategies/pep22-06>
- **SAMHSA Disaster Mobile App:** Free mobile app that offers responders immediate access to behavioral health resources for any type of traumatic event at every phase of response, including pre-deployment preparation, on-the-ground assistance, and post-deployment resources. store.samhsa.gov/product/samhsa-disaster-mobile-app/pep13-dkapp-1
- **A Guide to Managing Stress for Disaster Responders and First Responders:** SAMHSA DTAC guide for first responders, public health workers, construction workers, transportation workers, utility workers, crisis counselors, and volunteers who respond to disasters and other crises; it provides information on the experience and signs of stress and ways to manage and mitigate stress before, during, and after disasters. store.samhsa.gov/product/managing-stress-responders/pep22-01-01-003
- **Tips for Healthcare Professionals: Coping with Stress and Compassion Fatigue:** SAMHSA DTAC tip sheet offers information on stress and compassion fatigue, signs of distress after a disaster, and ways to cope and enhance resilience. store.samhsa.gov/product/tips-healthcare-professionals-coping-stress-and-compassion-fatigue/pep20-01-01-016

- **Pause-Reset-Nourish (PRN)* to Promote Wellbeing: Use as Needed to Care for Your Wellness!:** This SAMHSA NCTSN fact sheet offers a way to address unwanted symptoms of stress, foster wellness, and enhance resilience. nctsn.org/resources/prn-to-promote-wellbeing-as-needed-to-care-for-your-wellness
- **PFA Online:** This 5-hour interactive online course helps participants learn the core actions of PFA and describes ways to apply them in different post-disaster scenarios and with different survivor needs. learn.nctsn.org/enrol/index.php?id=596
- **PFA: When Terrible Things Happen:** SAMHSA NCTSN PFA Field Operations Guide handout with information on immediate reactions that may occur after something terrible has happened, common negative reactions that may continue, reactions to the death of a loved one, and ways to cope, as well as strategies that do not work. nctsn.org/resources/pfa-when-terrible-things-happen

Resources for Acute Needs

- **SAMHSA Disaster Distress Helpline (DDH)** is the first national hotline (1–800–985–5990) dedicated to providing year-round disaster crisis counseling. This toll-free, multilingual, crisis support service is available 24/7 to all residents in the United States and its territories who are experiencing emotional distress related to natural or human-caused disasters and emergencies. DDH callers can connect with counselors in over 100 languages via third-party interpretation services. People who are deaf or hard of hearing can call the DDH’s toll-free number using their preferred relay provider. samhsa.gov/find-help/disaster-distress-helpline
- **SAMHSA 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (988)** is a source of support available 24/7 to people in crisis, including people experiencing mental health struggles, triggers of past trauma, and other adversities. People in the United States can call or text 988 for support in English or Spanish. After calling 988, people in the United States can also request interpretation services in more than 240 languages and dialects. There is also an online chat feature available in English and Spanish. People who are deaf or hard of hearing who communicate using American Sign Language can call 988 Videophone; those who are deaf or hard of hearing and who use a TTY can use their preferred relay service or dial 711 and then 988. 988lifeline.org

Additional Resources

- **Practical Guide for Implementing a Trauma-Informed Approach:** This practical guide updates and expands the discussion presented in SAMHSA’s Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach Resource from 2014. The primary goal of this guide is to provide implementation strategies across multiple domains based on the original publication. <https://www.samhsa.gov/resource/ebp/practical-guide-implementing-trauma-informed-approach>
- **Faith-based Communities and Spiritual Leaders:** SAMHSA DTAC DBHIS resource collection includes materials to help communities of faith and spiritual leaders support survivors of natural and human-caused disasters. samhsa.gov/resource-search/dbhis?rc%5B0%5D=audience%3A20217

- **Mass Violence:** Resource collection developed by the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response Technical Resources, Assistance Center, and Information Exchange team, this resource collection is designed to help emergency managers, public health professionals, and other responders support communities affected by an incident of mass violence. asprtracie.hhs.gov/mass-violence
- **National Mass Violence Center (NMVC):** NMVC, funded by the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, offers mass violence-related resources for community leaders (nmvvc.org/community-leaders/rebuild-your-community/) and the Transcend NMVC mobile app to assist with recovery after mass violence. apps.apple.com/us/app/transcend-nmvc/id1504741131
- **Resources for Leaders of Faith-Based Communities, Organizations, and Institutions to Protect Against Targeted Violence:** U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) website with a variety of resources that may be helpful to leaders of faith-based communities, organizations, and institutions when facing heightened threats of targeted violence and terrorism. dhs.gov/faith-based-tv-resources
- **The Vicarious Trauma Toolkit:** This online toolkit from the Office for Victims of Crime within the U.S. Department of Justice is designed to help responders and others exposed to the traumatic experiences of other people. ovc.ojp.gov/program/vtt/introduction

SAMHSA Grant Programs and Technical Assistance Centers

- **SAMHSA Disaster Technical Assistance Center (DTAC):** SAMHSA DTAC assists states, territories, tribes, local entities, and grantees with all-hazards-focused technical assistance and training to help them prepare for, respond to, and recover from the mental health and substance use-related effects of disasters and traumatic events. DTAC also supports collaboration among mental health and substance use authorities, federal agencies, and nongovernmental organizations and facilitates in the sharing of information and best practices with the disaster behavioral health field. DTAC staff are available to provide consultation to review disaster behavioral health plans, trainings or consultations, and research on emergent issues. To contact DTAC, email DTAC@samhsa.hhs.gov or call the toll-free hotline at 1-800-308-3515. samhsa.gov/dtac
- **SAMHSA National Child Traumatic Stress Initiative (NCTSI):** Created in 2000, SAMHSA NCTSI raises the standard of care and increases access to services for children, adolescents, and their families who experience or witness traumatic events. The NCTSI consists of programs organized into Category I, II, and III:
 - NCTSI Category I – The National Center for Child Traumatic Stress (NCCTS) cooperative agreement develops and maintains a collaborative structure, supports resource and policy development and dissemination, and coordinates NCTSI's national child trauma education and training efforts. The NCCTS supports SAMHSA in the organization of the NCTSI.
 - NCTSI Category II – Treatment and Service Adaptation (TSA) Centers provide national expertise for specific types of traumatic events, population groups, and service systems, and support the specialized adaptation of effective evidence-based treatment and service approaches for communities across the nation.
 - NCTSI Category III – Community Treatment and Service (CTS) Centers provide and increase access to effective trauma-focused treatment and services systems in

communities for children, adolescents, and their families who experience traumatic events throughout the nation.

NCTSN includes the Category I, II, and III grantees as well as any NCTSN affiliates. Current NCTSI grantees are automatically a part of NCTSN. Affiliates are former NCTSI grantees, including individuals and/or organizations from previous NCTSI grants, who continue their involvement in the NCTSN. nctsn.org

- **Crisis Counseling Assistance and Training Program (CCP):** A short-term disaster relief grant for states, U.S. territories, and federally recognized tribes, CCP grants are awarded after a presidential major disaster declaration. CCP funding supports community-based outreach, counseling, and other behavioral health services to survivors of natural and human-caused disasters. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds and implements the CCP as a supplemental assistance program to support mental health assistance and training activities in presidentially declared emergency and disaster areas. SAMHSA’s Center for Mental Health Services works with FEMA through an interagency agreement to provide technical assistance, consultation, grant administration, program oversight, and training. samhsa.gov/dtac/ccp
- **Resiliency in Communities After Stress and Trauma (ReCAST):** A SAMHSA discretionary grant program for communities that have recently faced civil unrest, community violence, and/or collective trauma. ReCAST grantees support high-risk youth and families and promote resilience and equity in their communities through implementation of evidence-based violence prevention and community youth engagement programs, as well as linkages to trauma-informed behavioral health services. samhsa.gov/trauma-violence/project-recast
- **SAMHSA Emergency Response Grants (SERG):** SAMHSA supplemental grant program that addresses prevention, response, and recovery after a behavioral health crisis that overwhelms the behavioral health system or creates behavioral health service needs that do not fit existing behavioral health resources. SERG funds are “funds of last resort” and cannot supplant existing resources. samhsa.gov/find-help/disasters/serg

For further assistance, please contact a technical assistance specialist at SAMHSA DTAC by calling 1–800–308–3515 or emailing DTAC@samhsa.hhs.gov.