



South Carolina Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services

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Memorandum

September 30, 2024

TO: Directors, State Government Agencies
Directors, County Alcohol and Drug Abuse Authorities

FROM: Sara Goldsby, Director

SUBJECT: Resources for Addressing the Behavioral Health Impacts of Hurricane Helene

As South Carolina deals with the ongoing impact of Hurricane Helene, I wanted to share some of the resources that the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has made available for addressing the behavioral health needs of survivors, those who are responding to the incident, and everyone witnessing this tragedy.

The following list of materials and services includes those focused on general behavioral health needs after a hurricane, as well as separate sections listing materials regarding children, adolescents, families, and schools; older adults; people with disabilities; faith-based communities and spiritual leaders; rural communities; and disaster responders and first responders. Also included are additional resources for acute behavioral health needs:

- ***Tips for Survivors of a Disaster or Other Traumatic Event: Managing Stress*** – This SAMHSA tip sheet gives stress prevention and management tips for dealing with the effects of a disaster or trauma. It identifies common reactions to disasters and other traumatic events, lists tips to manage and lower stress, and highlights signs of the need for professional support. <https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Tips-for-Survivors-of-a-Disaster-or-Other-Traumatic-Event-Managing-Stress/SMA13-4776>

This tip sheet is also available in Spanish at <https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Tips-for-Survivors-of-a-Disaster-or-Other-Traumatic-Event-Managing-Stress-Spanish-Version-/SMA13-4776SPANISH>.

- ***Mass Disasters, Trauma, and Loss*** – This booklet from the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies discusses common reactions to disasters, factors that make people more likely to experience reactions for longer periods, and steps survivors can take to cope effectively after a disaster. Signs of the need for professional mental health assistance are also provided.

https://istss.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ISTSS_MassDisaterTraumaandLoss_English_FNL.pdf

The booklet is also available in Spanish: https://istss.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/ISTSS_MassDisasterTraumaandLoss_Spa_FNL.pdf

- ***Helping Youth After Community Trauma: Tips for Educators*** – In this one-page tip sheet, the National Child Traumatic Stress Network identifies 10 ways youth may react to community traumas such as natural or human-caused disasters and suggests ways for educators to respond to these reactions and support youth in coping. The tip sheet also advises educators to find professional mental health support for youth – and for themselves – as needed: <https://www.nctsn.org/resources/helping-youth-after-community-trauma-tips-educators>

This tip sheet is also provided in Spanish: <https://www.nctsn.org/resources/helping-youth-after-community-trauma-tips-educators-sp>

- ***Helping Older Adults After Disasters: A Guide to Providing Support*** – Designed for anyone supporting older adults after a disaster, this SAMHSA guide highlights reactions to disasters that are common among survivors of all ages, as well as unique challenges older adults may face after disasters and how response workers can help. The guide also identifies resources available to help in connecting older adults with services and supports: <https://store.samhsa.gov/product/helping-older-adults-after-disasters-a-guide-to-providing-support/PEP19-01-01-001>

- ***Faith Communities & Disaster Mental Health*** – This tip sheet from the National Disaster Interfaith Networks provides information for religious leaders about common stress reactions people may have after a disaster and suggests ways faith leaders and others can cope effectively with such reactions, as well as helping others with coping. The sheet also provides information on referring people for mental health services: https://n-din.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/11_NDIN_TS_DisasterMentalHealth.pdf.

This tip sheet is also available in Spanish: https://n-din.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/11_NDIN_TS_DisasterMentalHealth_Sp.pdf.

- ***Rural Disaster Behavioral Health: A Guide for Outreach Workers and Crisis Counselors*** – Developed for crisis counselors, outreach workers, and others serving rural communities that have experienced disaster, this SAMHSA guide describes unique aspects of rural communities, explains how disasters may affect the behavioral health of rural populations, and suggests ways to help rural communities. The guide features resources and a tip sheet that can be customized for specific disaster response and recovery programs: <https://store.samhsa.gov/product/rural-disaster-behavioral-health-guide-outreach-workers-crisis-counselors/pep23-01-01-002>

If you have any questions about these materials or have problems accessing the links, please contact DAODAS at 803-896-5555.