

Mental Health Resources

It is normal to feel stressed & even overwhelmed during & following a disaster. The SLRD has compiled a list of helpful information & resources to address mental health & wellness challenges.

Common reactions after a disaster

- Trouble falling asleep or staying asleep. A lack of energy or feeling exhausted all the time.
- Sadness, depression, hyperactivity, irritability, anger, or feeling numb.
- Lack of appetite or eating all the time.
- Trouble concentrating or feeling confused.
- Thinking no one else is having the same reactions as you.
- Headaches, stomach aches, or other body pains.

Children's reactions after a disaster

- As well as experiencing the same reactions as above, young children may become clingy, fearful, have tantrums, or resume behaviors such as bedwetting or thumb-sucking.
- School-aged kids may get into fights, socially isolate, or have trouble with school work.

What can help:

- Eat, hydrate, exercise, and get rest on a regular basis; taking care of your body reduces the negative effects of stress.
- Avoid using alcohol, tobacco and other drugs to manage distressing emotions; these substances often make things harder in the long-run and can cause problems.
- Find healthy ways to relax, such as breathing exercises, meditation, mindfulness, calming self-talk, soothing music.
- Engage in fun and restoring activities, including exercise, hobbies and social activities.
- Use credible sources of information to avoid speculation and rumours. Limit exposure to social media content about the disaster; overexposure can increase distress.

Helping children and youth:

- Maintain routines at home and school as much as possible
- Spend family time together; this can increase feelings of safety & provide opportunities to talk & share.
- Ensure they have regular meals and get good sleep every night.
- Make time & encourage kids to ask questions. Don't force children to talk about things unless and until they're ready.
- Be prepared to repeat information & explanations several times. Some information may be hard to accept or understand. Asking the same question over and over may also be a way for a child to ask for reassurance.
- Acknowledge and validate the child's thoughts, feelings and reactions. Let them know that you think their questions and concerns are important and appropriate.

Mental Health Resources



Online Resources

- Anxiety Canada - Free online resources for those struggling with anxiety disorders: www.anxietycanada.ca.
- eMentalHealth - Trustworthy info on mental health & useful tools to find local services across BC: eMentalHealth.ca.
- Here to Help - Info on mental health & substance use concerns, self-screening tests & key resources: www.heretohelp.bc.ca.
- Canadian Mental Health Association - Mental health skill-building courses, free & low-cost counselling services, & info on how parents and guardians can support children: www.cmha.ca.

Adults

- Wellness Together Free Counselling: 1-866-585-0445 or text WELLNESS to 741741.
- BC Mental Health Support Line: 310-6789 (no area code needed).
- BC 211: Free, confidential, multilingual 24/7 links to resources for help & referrals to a broad range of services. Call or text 2-1-1.

Children and Youth

- Children's Help Line 310-1234 (no area code needed).
- Kids Help Phone 1-800-668-6868 or text CONNECT to 686868.
- Youth in BC Distress Line 1-866-661-3311 .
- Wellness Together: 1-888-668-6810 or text WELLNESS to 68686.

Front Line Workers

- Wellness Together: Free Counselling: 1-866-585-0445 or text FRONTLINE to 741741.
- Care for Caregivers: A mental health help line for health & social support workers: Call or text 1-866-802-7337 Mon-Fri 9 a.m. - 9 p.m.

Seniors

- Senior's Distress and Support Line 604-872-1234

Crisis Support

- Suicide Prevention Line 1-800-784-2433

Indigenous-Focused Supports

- Hope for Wellness Helpline for Indigenous People 1-855-242-3310
- KUU-US Indigenous Line: 1-800-588-8717

Intimate Partner Violence

VictimLinkBC - Provides service in 150 languages, 24 hours a day/7 days a week
Call or Text: 800-563-0808 or VictimLinkBC@bc211.ca

*These resources were compiled from various sources.
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