

# PSYCHOSOCIAL DISASTER NETWORK

A virtual hub for psychosocial disaster preparedness and recovery.



## PDN NEWSLETTER FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS

Our world and daily lives are constantly changing and we want to let you know that we are in this together. Our hope is to provide you with a centralized virtual hub for updates and resources for psychosocial disaster preparedness and recovery. We have three overarching messages that help guide our newsletters:

- 1) Prepare to recover
- 2) Communicate to coordinate
- 3) Strong communities save lives

## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

If you would like to be added to the email distribution list, have questions about psychosocial recovery, specific areas of interest, want information about specific aspects of psychosocial capacity building to support recovery, or would like to share resources, email Shanelle: [Shanelle.Reodica@ahs.ca](mailto:Shanelle.Reodica@ahs.ca). Please share this with your colleagues!

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS WEEK

Last week was Emergency Preparedness Week (May 3<sup>rd</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020). There's no better time than the present – especially during a global pandemic – to become more educated on the hazards and risks we can experience here in Calgary. They include storms, fires, tornadoes, power outages and flooding. Check out the [Disaster Risk Explorer](#) to learn more about the risks Calgary is susceptible.

Below are additional resources for emergency preparedness:

[Alberta Emergency Management Agency](#)

[Government of Canada](#)

[Public Safety Canada](#)

[Raise Awareness in Your Community](#)

[The City of Calgary](#)

## FORT MCMURRAY FLOOD

Our thoughts and hearts are with the communities that have been affected by the Fort McMurray flood. For flood studies, mitigation and recovery, and disaster assistance for people affected by a flood, click [here](#). For resources on coping with emergencies, click [here](#) and for the 211 Helpline and Database click [here](#).

## RESOURCES AND LINKS

[Addiction & Mental Health + COVID Weekly Digest](#)

[Addiction & Mental Health Information](#)

[Building Resilient Families](#)

[Caring for Vulnerable Populations in a Time of Crisis](#)

[Collective Impact Forum](#)

[Dr. Alan Wolfelt COVID-19 Resources](#)

Free health promotion resources  
Login ID: mentalhealthresources  
Password: mh2016

[How to Talk to Kids During Stressful Times](#)

[Mental Health Commission of Canada](#)

[Mental Wellness Moment, Dr. Mitchell](#)

[My Health Alberta Phone Numbers](#)

[Neurosequential Network Stress & Resilience](#)

[O'Brien Institute for Public Health](#)

Taking Charge of What You Can: A COVID-19 Toolkit - please see email attachment

[Three Steps to Coping with Anything \(including COVID-19\)](#)

[United Way Calgary and Area](#)

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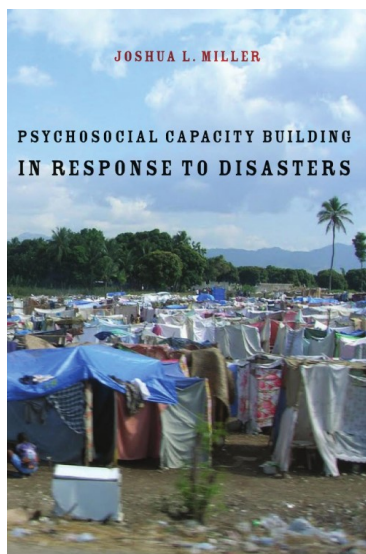


## GRIEF, LOSS, AND CHANGE

The impact of a disaster does not go away when it is over. These events are profound experiences that shape the way a person sees themselves, others, and the world. There may be change in routines or loss of freedoms (micro losses) and/or a loss of a loved one (macro losses). Grief is:

- our response to the loss of anything we value
- an expression of the loss
- a unique process for each person
- not an illness
- a normal part of life

There is no right or wrong way to grieve. Everyone grieves differently - it does not always unfold in orderly, predictable stages, and it can be an emotional rollercoaster. Grief may involve extreme emotions and behaviours. Feelings of guilt, anger, despair, and fear are common.



*"Grief, bereavement, and mourning are often used interchangeably by disaster responders. However, Halpern and Tramontin (2007) define grief as the emotional reaction to loss and bereavement and mourning as the processes of relinquishing and adapting that survivors undergo in the wake of destruction, death, and dying. Although this is helpful, what is meant by relinquishing and adapting can vary considerably across individuals and cultures. Psychologist Paul Ekman has mapped universal emotions and feelings across cultures and concluded that sadness and anguish over loss is universal (Goleman, 2003). In all cultures, there are practices and rituals that work with these feelings and help survivors to create meaning out of what has happened and to assimilate the loss of loved ones with the lives of the living. Yet the specifics of these expectations and practices vary across cultures."*

Miller, J. L. (2012, February 28). Psychosocial Capacity Building in Response to Disasters. Retrieved from [https://books.google.com/books/about/Psychosocial\\_Capacity\\_Building\\_in\\_Respon.html?id=CZk7AAAAQBAJ](https://books.google.com/books/about/Psychosocial_Capacity_Building_in_Respon.html?id=CZk7AAAAQBAJ)

Grief can be linked to spiritual considerations. Many people suffering loss will turn to their belief systems for help with death related rituals, prayer support, comfort, and for advice on placing the loss within greater spiritual context. It is a time when many reach back to their traditions for connections. Some reconnect with their faith system and some seek comfort in other areas outside of faith.

## GRIEF, LOSS, AND CHANGE RESOURCES

[Anger and Loss](#)

[Grieving Together](#)

[Grief: Helping Children Understand](#)

[Grief: Helping Older Adults With Grief](#)

[Healing Your Spirit - Surviving After the Suicide of a Loved One](#)

[McInnis and Holloway's COVID-19 resources](#)

[Preventing Suicide - Injury Prevention & Safety Information](#)

[Recovery After a Disaster or Emergency Resources](#)

[Stop Negative Thoughts](#)

[Unresolved Grief](#)

Watch for new spiritual coping and resilience resources in the next newsletter!

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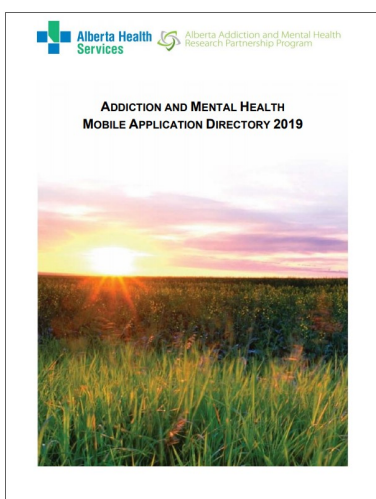
## NEW! TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE COLLECTIVE TOOLKIT

The Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) Collective Toolkit is a new resource that provides a better understanding of what trauma is, how trauma affects the thoughts, actions and behaviours of people affected by it and give an understanding that we can come together in solidarity and hope. This toolkit includes information about TIC resources and training and has a significant focus on self-care and resiliency.



Click [here](#) to access the toolkit.

## ADDICTION AND MENTAL HEALTH MOBILE APPLICATION DIRECTORY



This directory provides a directory of mobile applications (apps) that may be used as aids in mental health or addiction conditions.

Intended audience - this directory may be useful for:

- Clinicians looking for information about apps related to mental health or addiction
- Clinicians looking for electronic technologies to supplement care
- Researchers interested in learning about mobile health technology
- Application developers identifying gaps in the current app market

Further evaluation and clinical judgment is encouraged prior to recommending apps to patients. To access the full document, click [here](#). For the Mobile Tools to Promote Mental Wellness resource, click [here](#).

## TRAININGS

### NEW! Transform Your Stress: the Resilience Advantage - Strategies for Managing Stress in Challenging Times

Stress affects people physically, mentally and emotionally. Many Albertans have identified feeling stressed with the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic. This introductory course includes a basic discussion of stress plus looks at different ways to manage stress, including 2 HeartMath breathing techniques.

This interactive webinar will:

1. Discuss the stress response;
2. Identify warning signs of stress;
3. Make an action plan to address their own stress;
4. Review how emotions impact the body, brain, and overall health;
5. Participate in 2 practical stress-relieving breathing techniques;
6. Discuss how resilience can be enhanced through regular use of the breathing tools;

May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020 10:00 AM – 11:45 AM Mountain Time (US and Canada)

Registration information for this and other upcoming webinars can be obtained by emailing [AHS.HeartMath@ahs.ca](mailto:AHS.HeartMath@ahs.ca).

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## TRAININGS CONTINUED

### Psychosocial Disaster Learning Series

The five chapters of this learning series will provide participants with a refresher to a disaster psychosocial approach known as Psychological First Aid (PFA). The goal of these online sessions is to provide a foundational review of knowledge about a disaster psychosocial approach, tailoring it to our local needs in Alberta. Each chapter is intended to help update your knowledge prior to being deployed in a disaster responder role.

Chapters 1 and 2 are now available! To access the series, click [here](#) for **community** and click [here](#) for AHS staff.

### Psychological First Aid (PFA) for a Pandemic

Psychological First Aid (PFA) is considered to be the first stage intervention during a disaster or emergency. During a pandemic, how we respond looks different but the principles are the same. PFA Online Training allows responders to provide support over the phone to individuals that may be quarantined, in self-isolation, or practicing physical distancing in order to prevent the spread of a pandemic. The 2 hour interactive online training will cover essential tools, key PFA action principles, and self-care for responders.

Objective: To build capacity of helpers by using practical care and support within the four main actions of PFA that they can use over the phone with affected individuals.

Audience: Professionals/Paraprofessionals, first responders, non-profit organizations, and general public.

Details: 2 hour interactive online training

Training is done in real-time, audience participation is required.

Audio required.

Skype is recommended (if you don't have Skype, please indicate it at the time of registration).

If you are a **non-AHS service provider** and interested in this workshop, email Wendy: [Wendy.MacGregor@ahs.ca](mailto:Wendy.MacGregor@ahs.ca).  
Upcoming [MyLearningLink](#) sessions for AHS staff: May 13<sup>th</sup>, May 20<sup>th</sup>, and May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

Stay tuned for upcoming versions of PFA!



### Ready Calgary

Ready Calgary is a community preparedness program developed by the Calgary Emergency Management Agency (CEMA) for the citizens of Calgary. It has been designed to inform, educate and build resiliency to the impacts of emergencies. The course encourages safety at home, in the workplace, neighbourhood and community. Become a leader in your community and help empower a resilient network of prepared citizens. Click [here](#) to access the training.

### Ready Squad

CEMA's [Ready Squad](#) online course supports the Alberta education curriculum's learning outcomes in health, social studies and science. Learning how to prepare for and what to do during an emergency lessens the impact of an event and builds resilience to disasters like floods, tornados, power outages and more. It's geared towards children from ages 7-12.



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## TRAININGS CONTINUED

### Wellness Exchange

Wellness Exchange is a resilience-building group curriculum and toolkit for professionals and para-professionals interested in teaching a series of evidence-informed skills that promote positive mental health and well-being. A skill building approach can be very effective means to help individuals cope with post-disaster stress and adversity. Some people will experience stress and difficulties that will continue weeks and months after an event, and for many people, an action-oriented and skills building approach will be all the help they need to recover. This intervention was developed by the National Centre for PTSD based in the United States.

The curriculum for this five-part psycho-educational group was originally developed by AHS Addiction & Mental Health professionals Calgary zone in conjunction with community partners, based off the international disaster recovery skills model, Skills for Psychological Recovery (SPR). Although SPR was originally designed to meet the needs of individuals recovering from a natural disaster, Wellness Exchange broadens the applicability to other times of stress and adversity. Wellness Exchange encourages self-reflection and teaches five main skills: problem solving, positive activities, managing reactions, helpful thinking, and healthy connections.

Watch for more details about Wellness Exchange in the next newsletter! If you are interested in this workshop, please contact Devon Racher: [Devon.Racher@ahs.ca](mailto:Devon.Racher@ahs.ca).



## ARE YOU INTERESTED IN AHS PSYCHOSOCIAL WORKSHOPS?

At this time, we are keeping lists of individuals and organizations who are looking for AHS psychosocial workshops and organizing with our facilitators. Please send your requests to Wendy: [Wendy.MacGregor@ahs.ca](mailto:Wendy.MacGregor@ahs.ca). Thank you so much!

