

Mental Health Considerations during a Disaster/Crisis
Key Principles for the CMU Campus Community

The following key principles guide CMU's actions in response to a disaster/crisis in order to:

1. Enhance individual and group functioning during the incident; and
2. Reduce as much as possible the negative mental health effects of exposure to the incident.

CMU's crisis/disaster response actions strive to reduce community stress, fear and anxiety as much as possible to promote individual resiliency by:

1. Keeping members of the community informed by providing current, factual and non-inflammatory information including how to prepare for and cope with the incident.
2. Anticipating and, by coordinating with other resources, helping ensure as much as possible that basic needs (e.g. safety, security, food, shelter, rest, comfort, etc.) are met for members of the community and their families.
3. Maintaining a calm and supportive environment and staff presence.
4. Encouraging and supporting the use of naturally occurring support systems (e.g. friends, family, roommates, co-workers, etc.).
5. Providing or referring to mental health support services before (when possible), during and after the incident as needed.
6. Identifying those who may be vulnerable (e.g. injured, history of mental illness including PTSD or depression, etc.) or appear distressed and guide them to available mental health support services as needed.

Ross Rapaport
Counseling Center
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