

COMMUNITY SUPPORT RESOURCE FOR THOSE IMPACTED BY GUN VIOLENCE

In the wake of the recent suicides linked to previous mass shootings and the growing political spotlight on those impacted by gun violence, the American Association of Suicidology in collaboration with Brady, Disaster Distress Helpline, and youth community activists have collaborated on this document to help community members better identify and support those impacted by gun violence. Milestone anniversaries and heightened media attention have shed light on the lasting impact on communities and individuals involved in these tragic events. While many survivors are resilient, some trauma survivors, loved ones, and community activists may find it challenging to care for not only their own mental health, but the mental health of those around them.

TRAUMATIC EVENTS HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO CAUSE EMOTIONAL DISTRESS. SOME MAY BE AT HIGHER RISK THAN OTHERS.

- Survivors living or working in the impacted areas (youth and adults)
- Loved ones of victims
- First Responders, rescue, and recovery workers

EMOTIONALLY YOU MAY FEEL

Overwhelmed by sadness
Anger and/or guilt
Heroic, like you can do anything
Excitable
No energy at all
Disconnected, not caring about anything or anyone
Numb, unable to feel either joy or sadness
Anxiety and/or depressed

PHYSICAL REACTIONS MAY INCLUDE

Stomach aches
Headaches
Unexplained physical pains
Sweating or having chills
Getting tremors or muscle tension
Jumpiness or easily startled
Eating too much or too little

HOW TO BEST SUPPORT YOURSELF AND SOMEONE ELSE IN DISTRESS

CHECK IN

Talk about it with those you trust. Ask for support from those around you, share your experience, and connect with others who have been through something similar.

CHECK UP

Find a balance you are comfortable with while coping with your experience and/or supporting others through their experience. Do you need to eat? Do you need to sleep? Do you need to run a mile to work off that extra energy built up? Do you need to scream into your pillow?

CHECK OFTEN

Recognizing the need for boundaries is an important step to processing one's interactions with the experience and with those around them.

SOME THINGS YOU CAN SAY IF YOU ARE CONCERNED SOMEONE MAY BE IN DISTRESS OR FEELING SUICIDAL

- “I’ve noticed that you haven’t been acting like yourself lately. I’m worried about you, is something going on?”
- “What can I do to help? How can I help you?”
- “How long have you been feeling this way?”
- “Have you spoken with anyone else about all of this?”
- “It makes me afraid to hear you talking about dying; there is hope for feeling better, can we talk to about this?”
- “What do you feel like? What are you experiencing?”
- “Have you been having thoughts about trying to kill yourself?”
- “Have you ever had thoughts about hurting yourself?”
- “Do you think you might be in immediate danger?”

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Crisis Text Line

Text “Listen” to 741741

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

Call 1-800-273-8255

Disaster Distress Helpline

Call 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746 to connect with a trained crisis counselor.

Disaster Distress Helpline “Anniversaries and Trigger Events”

Strength After: A project of the National Disaster Distress Helpline

Deaf Videophone Crisis Line: 321-800-DEAF (3323)

Team Enough Suicide Prevention Resources

GLBT National Hotline 888-843-4564

Spanish Speakers 1-800-985-5990 and press “2”