



## Psychosocial Impacts of Disasters on Children: A Lesson and Reference for Health Professionals

### Ten Ideas for Face-to-Face Training

The National Center for Disaster Medicine and Public Health produced an online lesson on the psychosocial impacts of disasters on children. Authored by David J. Schonfeld, MD, FAAP, the online lesson is accredited for continuing education credits for multiple professions. To access the lesson, please visit:

<https://www.usuhs.edu/ncdmph/research-education/pediatric-preparedness/psychosocial>

The online lesson is designed for a wide range of health professionals and after completing the lesson they should be able to:

- Describe common adjustment reactions in children exposed to disasters, including the unique ways that bereavement and specific risk factors make adjustment more difficult.
- Take steps to create a healthcare delivery environment that anticipates and reduces contributions to child and family distress after a disaster.
- Advise parents and other caregivers about supporting children's recovery after a disaster.

This document offers ideas for how the online lesson could serve as the basis of face-to-face training for groups of health professionals within organizations, at professional meetings, or in academic classrooms. If continuing education credits are desired for the face-to-face training session, training organizers are encouraged to work with their continuing education provider, profession, or institution.

The educational ideas below should be considered in light of the context in which the face-to-face training will be taking place:

**who will be the learners in attendance?**

**what health and education professions will be represented?**

**will the learners represent one or many organizations?**

**how many attendees are likely?**

**how much time is available?**

**how familiar are the learners likely to be with the topic?**

Trainers are encouraged to combine one or more of the ideas below or to customize them as appropriate for their context.

- 1. Encourage staff or colleagues to complete the online lesson and then lead an informal discussion afterwards. Discuss how the material presented in the online lesson applies in the learners' profession(s), institution(s), and/or location(s).**
- 2. Discuss the challenges of psychosocial impacts of disaster on children. How might this manifest in different scenarios?**
- 3. Discuss the role(s) the learners would play regarding psychosocial impacts of disasters on children. Consider how the information in the lesson applies to their setting(s).**
- 4. Analyze how your healthcare delivery setting could take steps to create an environment that anticipates and reduces contributions to child and family distress after a disaster.**
- 5. Discuss one or more of the “in the field” cases presented in the online lesson as a group. How would the case scenario be addressed by the learners in the room, given their profession(s), institution(s), and location(s)?**
- 6. Develop a case scenario of a child affected by a disaster that is likely to occur in your setting. How would you evaluate and care for this child? How would you advise a parent or caregiver?**
- 7. Review your institutional emergency preparedness plan. How might you add language to your plan addressing the psychosocial needs of children impacted by disasters?**
- 8. Incorporate the psychosocial needs of children into your institution's existing preparedness exercises and other activities.**
- 9. Bring multiple professions and partner organizations together for a discussion of roles in addressing psychosocial needs of children in disasters.**
- 10. Select one or more of the works cited in the online lesson for reading and discussion.**

**The NCDMPH serves as the Nation's academic center of excellence for education, training, and educational research in disaster medicine and public health preparedness**