



January 2010



Special Issue – Response to Haiti

Dear VAPT members,

Thank you for your caring and generous response to the heartbreaking events in Haiti. Our professional organizations and advocacy groups offer excellent guidance about the good work we can do in our communities now. I have collected a few resources for you to consult.

APT – Association for Play Therapy

www.a4pt.org

Helping Haiti. Per lessons learned after Hurricane Katrina, if you wish to assist Haitian earthquake victims, click on and register with the *Red Cross*, complete its mini-disaster training program, and then be available when called upon to serve in Haiti and elsewhere. Red Cross typically coordinates relief efforts both within and outside of the US.

I also suggest you consult the excellent guidance offered in the APT journal article noted below:

Preparing play therapists for disaster response: Principles and procedures.

By Baggerly, Jennifer

International Journal of Play Therapy. Vol 15(2),2006, 59-81.

Abstract

In the wake of numerous recent natural disasters such as the 2004 tsunami and 2005 hurricanes, play therapists have been asked to provide disaster response. However, the role of disaster response interventionists is vastly different from the typical role of play therapists. In order for play therapists to be prepared for disaster response, an explanation of disaster response principles and procedures is needed. This article will help educate play therapists about how to use their play therapy skills and knowledge in a disaster response environment. Specifically, this article will (a) explain basic principles such as following the Incident Command Structure; (b) discuss the play therapist's role in disaster response in light of the phase of disaster; and (c) recommend disaster response procedures. Examples from APT members' response to the tsunami and Hurricane Katrina are provided.



NCTSN - National Child Traumatic Stress Network

www.nctsn.org

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network has currently developed for the Haiti Earthquake Response and Recovery efforts:

1. Tips for Parents on Media Coverage of the Earthquake (for families in the US)



2. Parent Guidelines for Helping Children after an Earthquake
3. Teacher Guidelines of Helping Students after an Earthquake
4. Guidance for School Personnel: Students Who Had a Loved One Die in the Earthquake
5. Guidance for Caregivers: Children or Teens who had a Loved One Die in the Earthquake

These documents are now being translated into Creole. Be sure to check back to the NCTSN website if you require them. All of these documents are currently posted at:

http://www.nctsn.org/nccts/nav.do?pid=typ_nd_earth_recovery&disasterType=earth&navPid=typ_nd_earth_desc

Thanks to Melissa Brymer, Ph.D., Psy.D., Director, Terrorism & Disaster Programs, National Center for Child Traumatic Stress for sharing this information.

NASP – National Association of School Psychologists

NASP posted this helpful message and link on their website. I believe their handout, *Global Disasters* is **one of the best** to use.



Along with the rest of the world, the hearts and thoughts of NASP leadership and staff go out to the people of Haiti and those trying to aid survivors. It will be sometime before comprehensive or school-related mental health services can be made available to children on the ground. However, here at home, schools may be supporting children affected by the disaster either because they are from Haiti and have family there or are from another part of the world recently devastated by a natural disaster. NASP's natural disaster resources are available online. Most specific is the [Global Disasters: Helping Children Cope](http://www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis_safety/globaldisasters.pdf), http://www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis_safety/globaldisasters.pdf which addresses helping children here in the United States. It is especially important to remind adults to monitor children's exposure to media images, particularly young children and those with preexisting trauma risk. Protective factors can include maintaining a sense of normalcy, focusing on people's resilience and the outpouring of help from around the world, and taking action to help.

APA – American Psychological Association

APA Psychology Help Center <http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/> resources:

Tips for Recovering from Disaster and Other Traumatic Events

<http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/recovering-disasters.aspx>

Managing Traumatic Stress: Dealing with the Hurricanes from Afar

<http://www.apa.org/helpcenter/hurricane-afar.aspx>

(The Managing Traumatic Stress information was written to help people who may have had relatives in the Gulf coast region following Hurricane Katrina. Many of the tips could be applicable in this earthquake situation.)

NASW – National Association of Social Workers

The NASW organization has a consumer website, Help Starts Here, with resources at the following address:

<http://www.helpstartshere.org/mind-and-spirit/grief-and-loss>

ACA – American Counseling Association

<http://www.counseling.org/PressRoom/NewsReleases.aspx?AGuid=87d3abbf-fef8-444c-b1e0-0a37858fa23d>

The ACA webpage encourages persons to give money to the Red Cross or their foundation. They also have links to the Red Cross document **“Taking Care of Your Emotional Health After a Disaster.”**

English

<http://www.counseling.org/Sub/TakeCareEmotionalHealth.pdf>

Haitian-Creole

http://www.counseling.org/Sub/HT_EmotionaHealth_final.pdf