



Practice Perspectives of Disaster Work

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[Social workers are ideally suited for disaster work]

- Understanding of Human Behavior
- Emphasis on Person-in-Environment
- Community Work & Program Planning
- Advocacy

American Red Cross

- 1900 American Red Cross established by U.S. Congressional mandate
 - Aid to wounded
 - Communication between military and family members
 - Relief to those affected by disasters

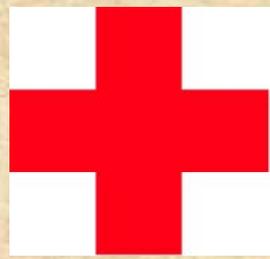


American Red Cross

American Red Cross

Disaster Mental Health Services

- 1990 recognized need for psychological support following two large disasters
 - Earthquake and hurricane
- Volunteer licensed mental health professionals (currently)
 - 40% social workers
 - 22% psychologists
 - 18% mental health counselors
 - 14% psychiatric nurses
 - 5% marriage & family counselors
 - 1% psychiatrists



American Red Cross

in Greater New York

- Cover 5 boroughs NYC & 4 Upstate counties (population approximately 9 million)
- Respond to 9 disasters daily
- Over 3,000 yearly
- 1995 New York Chapter developed volunteer mental health program
- Mental Health coverage available 24/7
- 2001 1st Paid Mental Health Director



A disaster is happening right now . . .
you just don't know about it.

Disaster Mental Health Notification Guidelines



- Death or missing person / Death or missing pet
- Multiple casualties
- Child who appears fearful or traumatized
- Person who is highly agitated, depressed, confused, very angry, extremely anxious
- Request by client, family member, staff member or community to speak with a mental health worker
- Request for chaplain
- Individual or community with history of major trauma & disaster
- Special needs population (children, elderly, physically or mentally disabled)
- Staff member in distress (fatigued, agitated, or overwhelmed)
- Whenever a Red Cross reception center, service center or shelter is opened

Disaster Mental Health Interventions

■ Psychological First Aid

- Emotional support
- Linking to basic needs
- Validating thoughts & feelings
- Supporting concrete tasks
- Providing access to information
- Connecting to support systems
- Normalizing stress reactions
- Reinforcing Positive Coping Strategies

■ Crisis Intervention

- Assessment
- Problem solving
- Psycho education
- Referral

■ Other

- Advocacy
- Bereavement Counseling
- Anger Management
- Supporting Death Notification
- Support to Paid and Volunteer Staff

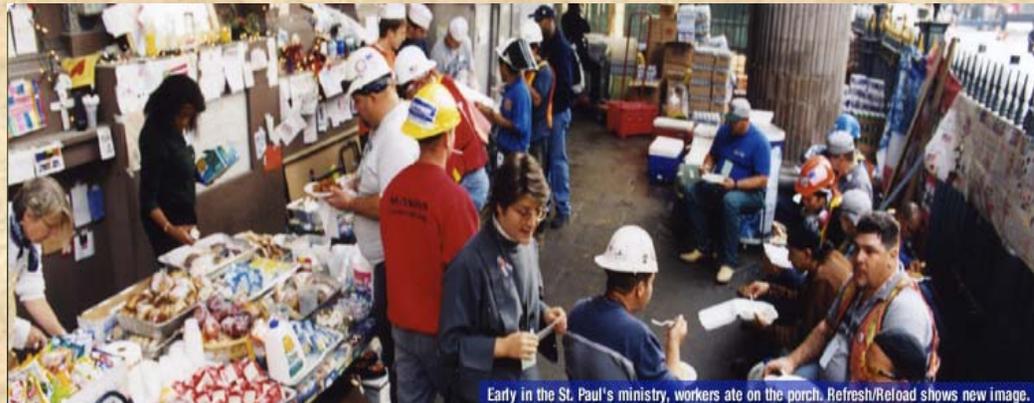
Mental Health Response at Disaster Sites



Mental Health Response at Disaster Sites



Mental Health at Service Centers & Shelters



Early in the St. Paul's ministry, workers ate on the porch. Refresh/Reload shows new image.



[Fires & Building Collapses]



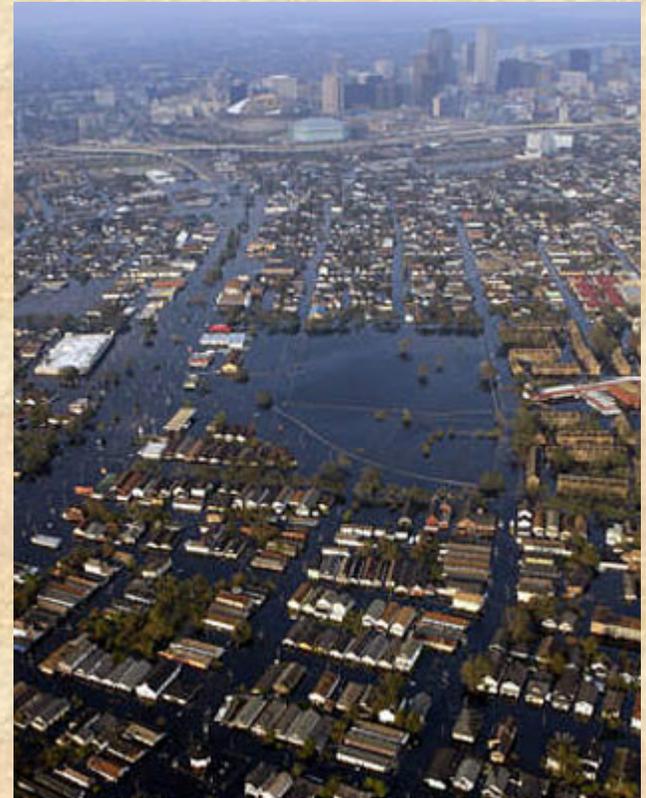
(Courtesy WNYW)



Transportation Incidents

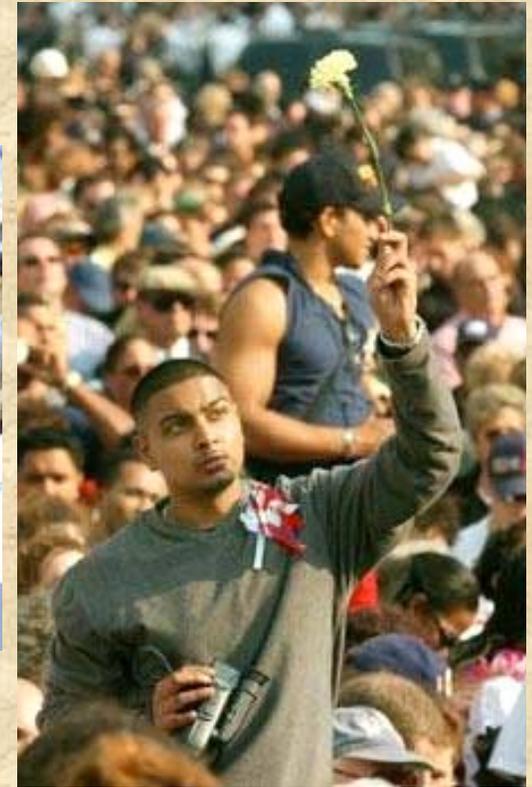


Mass Casualty Disasters



MJ/Schmitt 2004

[Mental Health at Memorials]



Mental Health Support to Responders



Partnerships



Collaboration with MDA



Other Collaboration



Recommendations

- Mental Health Response
 - Cultural, Spiritual & Community Context
- Disaster Preparedness
 - Education and Training of Social Workers
 - Collaboration and Partnerships
- Disaster Management & Planning