



medical
reserve
corps



Psychological First Aid

2023

An Introduction to Psychological First Aid for the GO Health VALOR Medical Reserve Corps
2 of 2 Required MRC Trainings



Preview the online
course here!



**During times of stress,
you never know the
impact you will have.**



Why Is Psychological First Aid Important?

- ❖ Emergencies & disaster can happen at any time and affect anyone
- ❖ PFA techniques can be applied to emotional and physical injuries
- ❖ It is easy to learn and apply
- ❖ Does not require a medical degree or mental health training
- ❖ May prevent adverse long term mental health outcomes to those affected
- ❖ **Can support the overall effectiveness of a disaster response**



Key Takeaways

- ❖ What you say may not always have a positive impact, despite good intentions.
- ❖ Training and remembering key principles can improve the likelihood of positive impact.
- ❖ During times of stress, tensions are high and impacts are more impressionable.
- ❖ What you say and do can directly affect an individual, the degree of trauma they experience, and their healing process.
- ❖ It is important to try and prevent further psychological harm in times of need.



What Psychological First Aid Is Not

- ❖ It is NOT debriefing
- ❖ It is NOT counseling
- ❖ It is NOT treatment



What is Psychological First Aid?

Psychological First Aid (PFA) is an evidence-based intervention approach meant to reduce symptoms of stress and assist in healthy resilience and recovery associated with trauma or personal crisis.

- ❖ Particularly relevant at times of disaster and emergency.
- ❖ Consists of many different best-practices and context-specific approaches.
- ❖ Framework for interacting with others at times of potential crisis or trauma.



Key Elements of Psychological First Aid

Safety: Responders help people locate food, shelter, and medical attention.

Calm: Responders listen to people's stories and feelings.

Connection: Responders help people locate friends and family, keep families together.

Hope: Responders remind people that help is coming, tell them about resources available.

Self-efficacy: Responders give suggestions on how people can help themselves.

What Is Psychological First Aid? See more at [verywellhealth.com](https://www.verywellhealth.com)



The **ABC**'s of Psychological First Aid

Awareness: Pay attention to non-verbal communication, distress signals, and safety while learning more and communicating clearly.

Balance: Create clear boundaries, realistic goals, and allow space for emotional reactions.

Connection: Strengthen and expand support systems by connecting to resources and encouraging personal resilience.



Look, Listen, Link

(Used by diverse agencies including SAMHSA, Red Cross, UNICEF)



Look: Look at the surroundings. Is the location secure? Are there urgent needs?

Stay calm. Approach respectfully.



Listen: Listen and identify needs. Give information and answer questions. Encourage the person to be active and praise their actions.

Speak calmly, using simple words. Respect people's needs.



Link: Link to other forms of help. Encourage contact with friends and family.

Keep groups together and avoid separations.

Video Link from Swedish Red Cross: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kly45u9ml_A



Again,

What Psychological First Aid Is Not

- ❖ It is NOT debriefing
- ❖ It is NOT counseling
- ❖ It is NOT treatment



Psychological First Aid Don'ts

Do not force people to share their story

Do not tell people what they should be feeling, thinking, or doing

Do not tell people how they should have acted

Do not criticize services in front of people who need those services

Do not make promises you can not keep

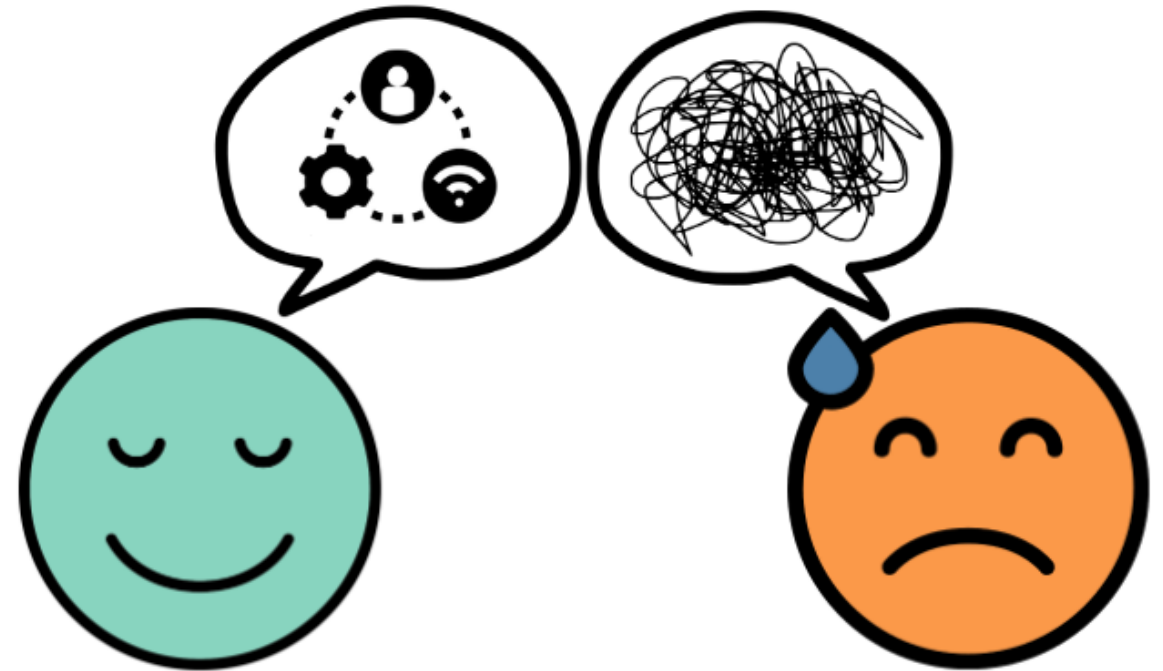
Do not give simple reassurance such as:

- ❖ “Everything will be okay!”
- ❖ “At least your survived.”
- ❖ “I know how you feel.”



The Core Actions of Psychological First Aid

1. Making initial contact
2. Ensuring people are safe and comfortable
3. Calming and orienting people
4. Identifying people's immediate needs
5. Offering practical assistance
6. Connecting people with resources
7. Providing coping strategies
8. Linking people with collaborative services



The Core Actions (Expanded)

Make initial contact

- ❖ Establish a human connection in a non-intrusive, compassionate manner

Safety and comfort

- ❖ Enhance immediate and ongoing safety, and provide physical and emotional comfort if warranted

Calming and orienting people

- ❖ Stabilizing overwhelmed survivors with helpful information and calm body language

Identifying people's immediate needs

- ❖ Offer practical assistance and information to help survivors address their immediate needs and concern

The Core Actions (Expanded)

Offering practical assistance

- ❖ Give information and assistance to help survivors address their immediate needs and concerns

Connecting people with resources

- ❖ Connect survivors as soon as possible to social support networks, including family, friends, and community helping resources

Providing coping strategies

- ❖ Give information that may help survivors cope with psychological impact of disasters / emergencies

Linking people with collaborative services

- ❖ Clarify how long PFA provider will be available, and link the survivor to another member of a response team or to indigenous recovery systems, public-sector services, and organizations

Where Can Psychological First Aid Be Used?

- ❖ Immediate disaster/emergency location
- ❖ General population shelters
- ❖ Service centers
- ❖ Community outreach teams
- ❖ Family reception centers
- ❖ Family assistance centers
- ❖ Point-Of-Distribution (POD) centers
- ❖ Phone banks/hotlines
- ❖ Emergency First Aid stations
- ❖ Hospitals/ER
- ❖ Respite centers
- ❖ Everywhere!



How to Start Training Psychological First Aid

1. Create a Learning Management System account



Username Password (case-sensitive) [Login](#) [Forgot Username or Password](#)

**New to the system?
Register Here**

- Home
- Getting Started
- Password Retrieval
- LMS Demos
- Course Catalog
- Conference
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Professional Development in 3 steps:

- 1 Assess and maintain your competencies
- 2 Register for recommended courses
- 3 Get trained

[Start Assessment](#)

Announcement

[Pediatric Vax Training](#)
Pediatric COVID-19 Vaccination Training

[Updated Vax Modules](#)
Updated COVID-19 Vaccinator Training (4 Modules)

[NYSDOH-COVID-19-POD](#)
Enroll & Complete POD Ops Training for POD Staff

[NYSDOH-COVID-19-HIPAA](#)
How to Enroll and Complete NYSDOH-COVID-19-HIPAA

[2020 PHEducator CEProgram](#)
The Voluntary PHEd-CEP2020 is now available!

[Collective Impact Courses](#)
NEW: Introduction to Collective Impact framework

[NYSDOH-CONF100](#)
Keeping Business and Info Confidential in NYS

[Public Health Orientation](#)

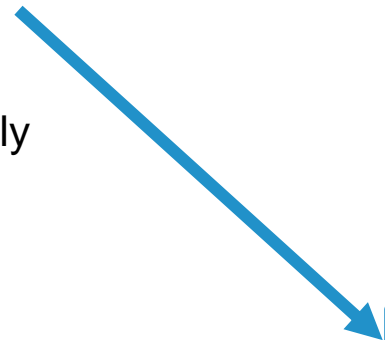
<https://www.nylearnsph.com/Public/Default.aspx>



Username Password (case-sensitive) [Login](#)

2. After logging in, click on "Course Catalog"

This may take a while to fully load, so please be patient.



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- [Pediatric Vax Training](#)
- [Pediatric COVID-19 Vaccination Training](#)
- [Updated Vax Modules](#)
- [Updated COVID-19 Vaccinator Training \(4 M](#)
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- [NYSDOH-COVID-19-HIPAA](#)
- [How to Enroll and Complete NYSDOH-CO](#)
- [2020 PHEducator CEProgram](#)
- [The Voluntary PHEd-CEP2020 is now avail](#)
- [Collective Impact Courses](#)



3. Pick the category “Emergency Preparedness” ... then search “Psychological First Aid”

Browse Catalog By Category

- View All Courses
- Accreditation
- Administration
- Chronic Disease
- Climate and Health
- Communicable Disease
- Communication
- Core Public Health
- Early Intervention
- Emergency Preparedness**
- Emergency Preparedness - FEMA
- Environmental Health
- Epidemiology/Surveillance
- Health Literacy
- Human Resources

OR Search Catalog Query

Course Keyword Search

Psychological First Aid

Course Format

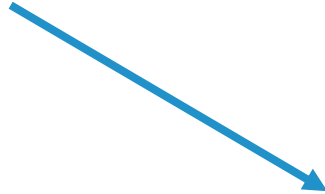
Any Format

Course Category

View All Courses

Search

4. Select the option Psychological First Aid: Addressing Mental Health Distress During Disasters



Course Category
View All Courses ▾

Search

Emergency Preparedness

Course Name	Course #	Formats	Completion Hours	User Rating
CDR HEPC Pediatric Disaster Mental Health	UASPH-CPHP-20150520	Video	1	No one has rated this course.
Disaster Mental Health: Building an Organizational Culture of Resilience: Lessons from the Field	OHEP-BP3-20220630	WebEx	1.5	No one has rated this course.
Psychological First Aid: Addressing Mental Health Distress During Disasters	CDC-EPIC20200422	Streaming	1	Based on 14 rating(s). Ease-of-Use ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Quality of Information ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Overall Satisfaction ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



LAUNCH!



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Course Description

[Course Catalog](#) | [Program Catalog](#) | [Advanced Search](#) | [Recommended Courses](#) | [Required Courses](#)

CDC-EPIC20200422 Psychological First Aid: Addressing Mental Health Distress During Disasters

Enrollment Deadline	Section	Course Format	Start/End Dates	Details	Instructor(s)	Speakers
Launch Completed Course Ongoing	Archived Webcast	Streaming	Ongoing			

Course Description

April 22, 2020

When people are faced with disaster, intense emotions are often present and appropriate. Psychological First Aid (PFA) can help responders promote an environment of safety, calm, connectedness, self-efficacy, empowerment, and hope. PFA was developed by the National Child Traumatic Stress Network and the National Center for PTSD, with contributions from individuals involved in disaster research and response. This webinar provides a brief overview of PFA and connects viewers with both online and in-person training resources.

Presenter

Meghan Griffin, M.P.H.



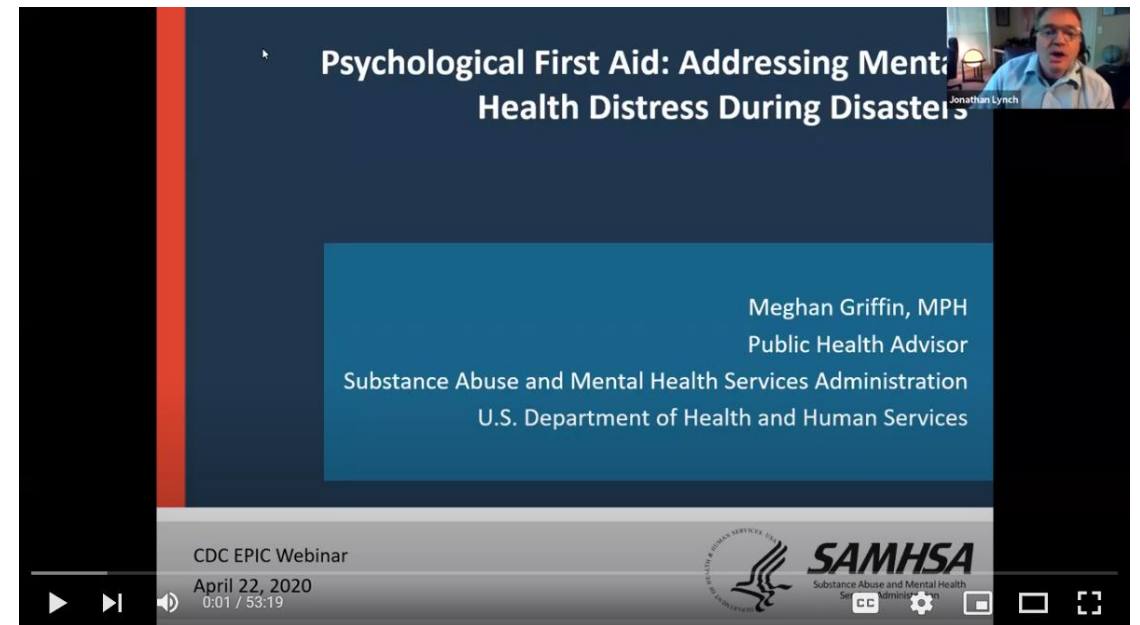
Additional PFA Resources

[Psychological First Aid - Support during mental trauma, natural disasters, wars, mass crime](#)



Dr SMART team

[Psychological First Aid: Addressing Mental Health Distress During Disasters - YouTube](#)



Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) –
Psychological First Aid: Addressing Mental Health Distress
During Disasters



Quiz Time!



True or False: Psychological First Aid is providing counseling.



True or **False**: Psychological First Aid is providing counseling.



Which of these is NOT a core action of Psychological First Aid?

1. Ensuring people are safe and comfortable
2. Offering practical assistance
3. Calming and orienting people
4. Resolution of Emotional Trauma



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1. Ensuring people are safe and comfortable
2. Offering practical assistance
3. Calming and orienting people

4. Resolution of Emotional Trauma



True or False: Psychological First Aid is to be used only at the immediate disaster/emergency location.



True or **False**: Psychological First Aid is to be used only at the immediate disaster/emergency location.



You meet a natural disaster survivor who tells you they're hungry. You bring them a sack lunch that has been made up for community members. Which core action is this an example of?

1. Providing coping strategies
2. Ensuring people are safe and comfortable
3. Identifying people's immediate needs
4. Connecting people with resources



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You observe a young man who appears to be distraught and overwhelmed after an emergency. Which is the best option for providing effective Psychological First Aid?

1. Give him a hug
2. Offer to take him to the crisis counselors
3. Tell him that “it could have been worse”
4. Ignore him



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A survivor tells you that they have become separated from their partner during a tornado. You inform them on the current response efforts to locate survivors and that a shelter has been put in place where community members can reconnect. This is an example of what core action?

1. Offering practical assistance
2. Providing coping strategies
3. Making initial contact
4. Calming and orienting people



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1. Offering practical assistance

2. Providing coping strategies
3. Making initial contact
4. Calming and orienting people



A survivor tells you that they feel useless after a natural disaster has struck their community. You brainstorm with them and help them come to conclusion to donate blood at the nearby Red Cross truck. What core action is this an example of?

1. Providing coping strategies
2. Identifying immediate needs
3. Linkage with collaborative services
4. Calming and orienting people



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2. Identifying immediate needs
3. Linkage with collaborative services
4. Calming and orienting people



Yes or No:

You observe a young mother who appears to be visibly upset. She tells you that she left her children alone to go get food and when she returned, one was missing. Before offering to help, you tell her that she should have kept her kids with her the whole time. Does this reflect effective psychological first aid?



Yes or **No**:

You observe a young mother who appears to be visibly upset. She tells you that she left her children alone to go get food and when she returned, one was missing. Before offering to help, you tell her that she should have kept her kids with her the whole time. Does this reflect effective psychological first aid?



Additional Resources

<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/mhdpr/mhdpr-pfa.pdf>

https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources//pfa_field_operations_guide.pdf

[Administering Psychological First Aid \(PFA\) After A Crisis - YouTube](#)



NY Learns Psychological First Aid
Login/Register



Psychological First Aid CDC course

