

Community Crises and Disasters

A Parent's Guide to
Talking with Children of All Ages



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A Project of
The Marjorie E. Korff Parenting At a Challenging Time Program
Massachusetts General Hospital

MARJORIE E. KORFF PACT PROGRAM
PACT
Parenting At a Challenging Time



MASSACHUSETTS
GENERAL HOSPITAL

CANCER CENTER

About The Marjorie E. Korff Parenting At a Challenging Time Program

The Marjorie E. Korff Parenting At a Challenging Time (PACT) Program at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) provides parent guidance consultation to parents, and their partners, who are facing cancer or other life-threatening medical illnesses. Focusing on honest communication to support children's resilient coping, the PACT parent guidance model is also being used to support military-connected families and families affected by community violence.

The PACT website offers in-depth information for parents and professionals about supporting a child's resilient coping through a parent's medical illness, collaborations with community partners to address a range of additional challenges facing families, and our MGH Cancer Center clinical services. Learn more at www.mghpact.org.

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Resources

Marjorie E. Korff Parenting At a Challenging Time Program (PACT)

The PACT website offers in-depth information for parents and professionals about supporting a child's resilient coping through a parent's medical illness, collaborations with community partners to address a range of additional challenges facing families, and our MGH Cancer Center clinical services. It also has links to a digital version of this handbook, as well as to the other Patriots' Day Project resources. [www.mghpact.org]

RESILIENCE

Arthur Family Health on PBS KIDS

This site provides basic information, games and activities, and videos of Dr. Paula Rauch of Massachusetts General Hospital (and an author of this handbook), which all address the topic of bolstering resilience in children exposed to upsetting events. [<http://pbskids.org/arthur/health/resilience>]

Center on the Developing Child

The mission of the Center is to drive science-based innovation that achieves breakthrough outcomes for children facing adversity. Particular areas of focus include the needs of children who face poverty, maltreatment, violence, racial and ethnic discrimination, and family mental illness. [www.developingchild.harvard.edu]

Clay Center for Young Healthy Minds

This site provides information about the mental health and well-being of children, adolescents, and young adults who struggle with behavioral, emotional, or learning challenges. [www.mghclaycenter.org]

TRAUMA

National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN)

The NCTSN mission is to raise the standards of care and improve access to services for traumatized children, and their families and communities throughout the U.S. The website has information about the impact of trauma on children and families, as well as resources. [www.nctsn.org]

National Center for PTSD

The Center is dedicated to research and education on trauma and PTSD, and ensuring that the latest research findings help those exposed to trauma. [www.ptsd.va.gov]

Identifying Seriously Traumatized Children: Tips for Parents and Educators

This publication by the National Association of School Psychologists describes the symptoms of severe trauma in children, and makes suggestions about an approach to getting help for these children. [www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis_safety/psycht_general.aspx]

BEREAVEMENT

The Dougy Center

The Dougy Center's mission is to provide a safe place for children, teens, and young adults who are grieving a death to share their experiences. They do this through peer support groups, education, and training. The website contains information about the center, including news and events, as well as abundant resources. [www.dougy.org]

The Children's Room

This is a Massachusetts nonprofit organization that describes itself as dedicated to creating safe, supportive communities so that no child, teen, or family has to grieve alone. The website has written guides to many topics, as well as information about services they provide to families and professionals. [<http://childrensroom.org>]

Death and Grief: Supporting Children and Youth

This publication by the National Association of School Psychologists includes tips for adults to support grieving children, and guidance for children and teens with grieving friends and classmates. [www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis_safety/deathgrief.pdf]

MENTAL ILLNESS

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP)

The mission of AACAP is to promote the healthy development of children, adolescents, and families through advocacy, education, and research. The website provides information about child psychiatric challenges, as well as guides to many topics, including finding care. The site also contains links to additional resources for families and clinicians. [www.aacap.org]

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

SAMHSA is the agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that leads public health efforts to advance the behavioral health of the nation. SAMHSA's mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities. The website includes information on a wide range of efforts to improve mental health, as well as therapist locators. [www.samhsa.gov]

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)

The mission of NIMH is to transform the understanding and treatment of mental illnesses through basic and clinical research, paving the way for prevention, recovery, and cure. The website provides information on a number of mental health disorders, as well as research updates and other resources. [www.nimh.nih.gov/index.shtml]

MILITARY FAMILIES

The Red Sox Foundation and Massachusetts General Hospital Home Base Program

The Home Base Program offers clinical care and support services for post-9/11 service members, veterans, and their families throughout the deployment cycle, and community education about the “invisible wounds of war.” The Home Base Program is also engaged in research to develop better understanding and treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI). [www.HomeBaseProgram.org]

Staying Strong

This parent guidance website for military connected families is associated with the Home Base Program. The website contains a number of videos that provide guidance about parenting in general, child development, and parenting in difficult circumstances. [www.StayingStrong.org]

FINDING PROFESSIONAL HELP

These resources are geared to those seeking a helping professional (therapist, psychologist, social worker, psychiatrist, mental health counselor, et al.):

National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN)

This lists several websites that can help you locate a therapist; it also provides information about evidence-based therapies for PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) in children. [www.nctsn.org/about-us/about-this-web-site]

National Association of Social Workers

This source lists several searchable websites for finding therapists with different backgrounds, including social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, and mental health counselors. [www.HelpStartsHere.org]

American Psychological Association (APA)

This is the APA listing of licensed psychologists. [<http://locator.apa.org>]

Psychology Today

The print magazine maintains an online listing of clinicians. [www.therapists.PsychologyToday.com]

FOR EDUCATORS

Crisis Resource Guide: A Tool for Families, Schools, and Professionals

Working with Youth During a Crisis

This is a guide from Children's Hospital Boston (the Children's Hospital Neighborhood Partnerships Program/CHNP), which summarizes web-based resources for schools and families, including topics such as crisis preparedness in schools, supporting youth impacted by a death, talking with youth about disasters and violence, and the impact of media during crises.

[www.childrenshospital.org/chnp]

Child Trauma Toolkit for Educators

This toolkit was written by the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, and funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The toolkit contains trauma facts and suggestions for educators, as well as specific guidance for school staff caring for students of all ages.

[www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/Child_Trauma_Toolkit_Final.pdf]

Helping Children After a Natural Disaster: Information for Parents and Teachers

This online publication by the National Association of School Psychologists describes actions parent and teachers can take after specific natural disasters (e.g., hurricanes, tornadoes, etc.), and provides guidance for the immediate aftermath of these disasters.

[www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis_safety/naturaldisaster_ho.aspx]

Coping with Crisis—Helping Children With Special Needs:

Tips for School Personnel and Parents

This online resource of the National Association of School Psychologists addresses the impact of trauma in students with special needs, and ways in which parents and school personnel can best assist this population. [www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis_safety/specpop_general.aspx]

American Psychological Association Resilience Guide for Parents & Teachers

This is a concise guide for parents and teachers of children of all ages. The authors give specific information applicable to children in each age range (preschoolers, elementary school-age, etc.), including 10 useful tips for building resilience in children and teens.

[www.apa.org/helpcenter/resilience.aspx]