

# *The Campus Assistance Program*

Traumatic life experiences can be a major challenge to normal adults with good coping skills. Hurricane Katrina was a traumatic event that surpassed most individual's expectations.



The impact Hurricane Katrina had on the numerous children and adolescents who experienced the actual catastrophe, as well as those exposed to the many losses that resulted in the aftermath, is unimaginable.

## **Contact The CAP**

For more information or for an appointment with a counselor, please call: **568-8888**. A counselor is on call and available to you 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The CAP is located in the Clinical Education Building 1542 Tulane Ave. New Orleans, LA. 70112

For Help. Call Today.

Campus  
Assistance  
Program

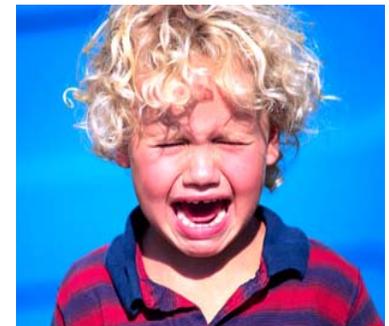
1542 Tulane Ave  
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**LSU**  
Health Sciences  
Center

**Campus  
Assistance  
Program**

**Children  
&  
Trauma**



**Prepared by The LSUHSC  
Campus Assistance Program.  
568-8888**

*<http://www.lsubsc.edu/no/organizations/campushealth/>*

## The Range Of Responses.



There is a wide range of responses to catastrophic events. Some children and teenagers experience temporary worries that get better quickly. Others experience long-term problems such as fear, depression, withdrawal, anger, haunting memories, avoiding

reminders of the events, regressive behavior (acting younger than their actual age), worrying about themselves and others dying or being hurt, and irritability. Reactions can occur immediately after the event or even weeks later.

Young children, age 5 and younger, may experience new fears such as separation anxiety or fear of strangers or animals. They may act younger or lose a skill they have already mastered (such as toilet training).

Elementary school-aged children may get parts of the traumatic experience confused or out of order when recalling the memory. They may complain of body symptoms that have no medical cause (e.g., stomach aches). They may stare into space or seem “spacey,” or startle easily.

Adolescents may experience visual, auditory, or bodily flashbacks of the events, have unwanted distressing thoughts or images of the events, demonstrate impulsive and aggressive behaviors, or use alcohol or drugs to try to feel better. They may feel depressed or have suicidal thoughts.

Most children and adolescents will recover within a few weeks with support. However some children may require more help. As an adult, you may want to consider seeking the help of a mental health professional who is trained in helping children with traumatic responses. The Campus / Employee Assistance Program can assist you in locating needed resources.

## What Adults Can Do To Be Helpful?

- Let the child know it’s normal to feel upset when something bad or scary happens
- Encourage the child to express feelings and thoughts, without making judgments
- Protect the child or adolescent from further exposure to traumatic events, as much as possible
- Return to normal routines as much as possible, such as having meals together, initiating family activities, or returning to church
- School can be a major healing environment as the child’s most important routine. Educate school personnel about the child’s needs. Reassure the child that it was not his or her fault, that adults will try to take care of him or her, etc.
- Allow the child to feel sad or cry
- Give the child a sense of control and choice by offering reasonable options about daily activities (choosing meals, clothes, etc.)
- If the child regresses (or starts to do things he or she did when younger), adults can help by being supportive, remembering that it is a common response to trauma, and not criticizing the behavior.

### Helpful Websites

- National Institute of Mental Health ([www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov))
- About Our Kids ([www.aboutourkids.org](http://www.aboutourkids.org))
- After The Storm, Children Play Out ([www.apa.org](http://www.apa.org))
- Families Helping Families ([www.fhfla.gov](http://www.fhfla.gov))
- Jefferson Parish Human Service Authority ([www.jpsha.org](http://www.jpsha.org))
- Substance Abuse Mental Health Agency ([www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov))

## Getting Help

The LSUHSC Campus Assistance Program (CAP) is a free service provided by LSU Health Sciences Center to assist faculty, staff, residents, students and employees in the resolution of personal problems.

LSUHSC recognizes that everyone, at some-time, needs a “helping hand” or assistance. Whether you have a simple or a complex problem, CAP can help.

If you or an immediate family member has a problem for which you need assistance, you can call the CAP. A counselor will discuss your problem over the telephone or set a time to meet with you personally.

Any contact that you have with the CAP is **confidential**, whether that contact is by phone or personal appointment.

The intent of the CAP is to prevent problems from affecting your job or school performance. It is an offer to help, not an attempt to pry. Early attention to such personal problems can often avoid costly, burdensome consequences.

A Counselor is on call and available to you 24 hours a day, seven days a week. So please call today.

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