



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH: CRISIS RESPONSE TOOLKIT

EMPLOYER RESOURCE

Tragedy, such as the death of a colleague or workplace violence, can happen at any time. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City (Blue KC) is here to support our clients during these difficult times.

CRISIS RESPONSE TOOLKIT

Leverage the *Behavioral Health: Crisis Response Toolkit* when a tragic or traumatic incident occurs to activate assistance from Blue KC and Spira Care*, and to share helpful resources with your employees.

In this toolkit, you will find:

- Support offered through Blue KC
- Support available at Spira Care Centers*
- Employee resources



*For employer groups who offer employees Blue KC plans with exclusive access to Spira Care Centers.

SUPPORT OFFERED THROUGH BLUE KC

Blue KC offers a variety of behavioral health services to support members with their everyday behavioral health care needs, but also during times of tragedy. Please contact your sales representative if you would like to activate any of the support options listed below.

CRISIS RESPONSE THROUGH NEW DIRECTIONS BEHAVIORAL HEALTH



Blue KC employer groups have access to immediate assistance to address critical work-related incidents. A representative can be available within 24 hours to conduct an on-site debriefing group.

HOW TO ACTIVATE:

Contact your Blue KC sales representative.

CRISIS RESPONSE THROUGH MINDFUL ADVOCATES



In a unique role exclusive to Blue KC health plans, Mindful Advocates are available 24/7 to help with behavioral healthcare needs. Mindful Advocates are licensed behavioral health clinicians and are trained in listening, navigating care and crisis management.

Blue KC can inform Mindful Advocates that your organization has experienced a crisis, and your employees may need specialized, in-the-moment care and attention. Mindful Advocates will be prepared and available to receive these calls and offer support.

HOW TO ACTIVATE:

Employers: Contact your Blue KC sales representative.

Employees: Call [833-302-MIND \(6463\)](tel:833-302-MIND6463) to speak with a Mindful Advocate.

GRIEF AND LOSS SUPPORT GROUP



Members of the Blue KC Behavioral Health Team are available to conduct Grief and Loss Support Groups. This support group allows employees to discuss the grief process, express emotions they are experiencing, and identify effective ways to cope with grief. These sessions are tailored based on the specific event, can be conducted virtually or in-person, and multiple sessions can be held as needed.

HOW TO ACTIVATE:

Contact your Blue KC sales representative.



Kansas City

SUPPORT AVAILABLE AT SPIRA CARE CENTERS



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONSULTANTS



Blue KC members enrolled in a health plan with exclusive access to Spira Care Centers have access to on-site Behavioral Health Consultants for behavioral healthcare needs.

Appointments with a Behavioral Health Consultant are available with a referral from a patient's Spira Care primary care provider.

HOW TO ACTIVATE:

Employees: Call **913-29-SPIRA (77472)** to request an appointment with a Behavioral Health Consultant.



Kansas City

SAMPLE MESSAGING

The sample messaging provided below is available for you to use if you choose to activate support options. Please confirm with your Blue KC sales representative that these options have been activated before sharing with your employees.



Crisis Response through Mindful Advocates

Blue KC offers a variety of behavioral health services to support members with their everyday behavioral healthcare needs, but also during times of tragedy.

Blue KC members have Mindful Advocates in their corner who are available to help 24/7. Mindful Advocates are licensed behavioral health clinicians and are trained in listening, navigating care and crisis management.

If you would like to speak with a Mindful Advocate, please call **833-302-MIND (6463)**.



Behavioral Health Consultants Available at Spira Care Centers

Blue KC members enrolled in a health plan with exclusive access to Spira Care Centers have access to on-site Behavioral Health Consultants for behavioral healthcare needs.

Appointments with a Behavioral Health Consultant are available with a referral from a patient's Spira Care primary care provider. To request an appointment with a Behavioral Health Consultant, call **913-29-SPIRA (77472)**.



Grief and Loss Support Group

We are here to support our employees as they process [\[insert event\]](#). Members of the Blue KC Behavioral Health Team will be holding a Grief and Loss Support Group on [\[insert date, time, location\]](#).

This support group allows employees to take a moment to discuss the grief process, emotions they may be experiencing, and identify effective ways to cope with grief.



Kansas City

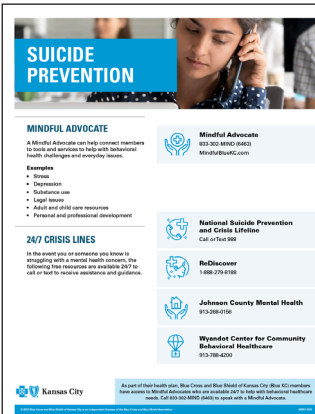
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Consider sharing these documents with your employees as they cope with emotions following a tragic event.

HANDOUT

Suicide Prevention and Crisis Resources

VIEW HANDOUT



SUICIDE PREVENTION

MINDFUL ADVOCATE

A Mindful Advocate can help connect members to tools and services to help with behavioral health challenges and everyday issues.

Examples

- Stress
- Depression
- Substance use
- Legal issues
- Adult and child care resources
- Personal and professional development

24/7 CRISIS LINES

In the event you or someone you know is struggling with a mental health concern, the following free resources are available 24/7 to call or text for crisis assistance and guidance.

ReDiscover
1-888-276-6188

National Suicide Prevention and Crisis Hotline
Call or Text 988

Johnson County Mental Health
913-288-0150

Wyandot Center for Community Behavioral Healthcare
913-386-4000

As part of their health plan, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City (Blue KC) members have access to Mindful Advocates who are available 24/7 to help with behavioral healthcare needs. Call 855-363-8892 (toll-free) to speak with a Mindful Advocate.

HANDOUT

Grief and Loss

VIEW HANDOUT



GRIEF AND LOSS

RECOGNIZING GRIEF

- Mental suffering over a loss
- Separation distress
- Traumatic distress
- Guilt and remorse
- Social withdrawal

Managing Grief

- Acknowledge and accept feelings
- Talk about your loss
- Stay connected with loved ones
- Adapt healthy choices
- Engage with the present moment
- Find professional help when needed

Practice Coping Skills

- Take Care of Yourself
- Maintain Routines
- Spend time with loved ones

Supporting a Caregiver

- Be present
- Refrain from asking questions or comparing
- Acknowledge the loss
- Retain engaged and supportive

Strategies to Help Children Cope

- Permission to Grieve
- Active Listening
- Ask Questions
- Provide Appropriate Answers

SUPPORT

Signs of successful grieving

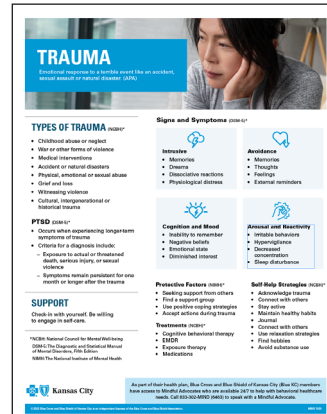
- Improved connections with others
- Increased emotional regulation
- Visualize future without loved one
- Engaged in daily life
- Hopeful for what is to come

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HANDOUT

Trauma Awareness

VIEW HANDOUT



TRAUMA

Traumatic experiences can include events like an accident, sexual assault or natural disaster (NCE).

TYPES OF TRAUMA

- Childhood abuse or neglect
- War or other forms of violence
- Medical interventions
- Accidents or natural disasters
- Physical, emotional or sexual abuse
- Child and teen
- Witnessing violence
- Cultural, intergenerational or historical trauma

PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder)

Occurs when experiencing long-term symptoms of trauma

- Criteria for a diagnosis include:
- Exposure to actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual violence
- Symptoms nearly persistent for one month or longer after the trauma

SUPPORT

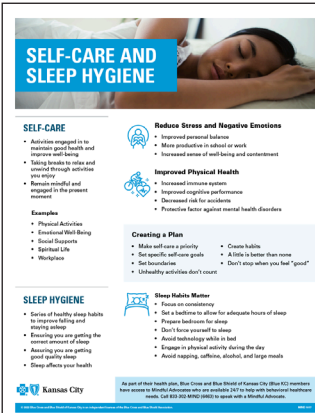
Check in with yourself: the willing to engage in self-care.

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HANDOUT

Self-Care

VIEW HANDOUT



SELF-CARE AND SLEEP HYGIENE

SELF-CARE

- Activities engaged in to maintain good health and improve well-being
- Taking breaks to relax and spend time with loved ones
- Being engaged and involved in the present moment

Examples

- Physical Activities
- Emotional Well-being
- Social Supports
- Spiritual Life
- Work-life

Reducing Stress and Negative Emotions

- Improved personal balance
- More productivity in school or work
- Increased sense of well-being and satisfaction

Improved Physical Health

- Increased immune system
- Improved cognitive performance
- Decreased risk for accidents
- Protective factor against mental health disorders

Creating a Plan

- Make self-care a priority
- Set specific, realistic goals
- Set boundaries
- Create habits
- A life is better than a routine
- Don't stop when you feel "good"

Sleep Hygiene Matters

- Focus on consistency
- Set a bedtime to allow for adequate hours of sleep
- Prepare bedroom for sleep
- Don't force yourself to sleep
- Avoid technology in the bedroom
- Engage in physical activity during the day
- Avoid napping, alcohol, and large meals

SLEEP HYGIENE

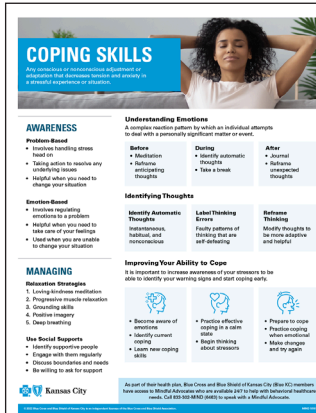
- Practice healthy sleep habits to improve falling and staying asleep
- Ensuring you are getting the correct amount of sleep
- Assessing you are getting good quality sleep
- Sleep affects your health

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HANDOUT

Coping Skills

VIEW HANDOUT



COPING SKILLS

Also known as emotional regulation, coping skills are strategies to manage and control negative emotions and stressors in difficult situations or challenges.

AWARENESS

Problem-Based

- Involves identifying the problem
- Taking action to resolve any difficulties
- Helpful when you need to change your situation

Emotion-Based

- Involves regulating emotions in a problem
- Helpful when you need to take care of your feelings
- Useful when you are unable to change your situation

Understanding Emotions

A complex reaction pattern by which an individual attempts to deal with a personally significant matter or event.

Before

- Identification
- Reflection
- Identifying thoughts

During

- Identify automatic thoughts
- Take a break

After

- Journal
- Reflect
- Identify automatic thoughts

Identifying Thoughts

Identify Automatic Thoughts

- Instantaneous, spontaneous, automatic, and nonconscious

Label Thinking Errors

- Identify patterns of thinking that are self-defeating

Balance Thinking

- Modify thoughts to be more objective and helpful

Improving Your Ability to Cope

It is important to increase awareness of your emotions to be able to identify warning signs and cope early.

MANAGING

Relaxation Strategies

1. Deep breathing exercises
2. Progressive muscle relaxation
3. Guided imagery
4. Meditation
5. Deep breathing

Use Social Supports

- Identify current coping skills
- Engage with them regularly
- Discuss challenges and needs
- Be willing to ask for support

Identify Automatic Thoughts

- Become aware of emotions
- Identify current coping skills
- Engage with them regularly
- Learn new coping skills

Practice effective coping in a safe space

- Engage with them regularly
- Learn new coping skills

Prepare to cope

- Practice coping when emotional
- Make changes when again

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SUICIDE PREVENTION

MINDFUL ADVOCATE

A Mindful Advocate can help connect members to tools and services to help with behavioral health challenges and everyday issues.

Examples

- Stress
- Depression
- Substance use
- Legal issues
- Adult and child care resources
- Personal and professional development

24/7 CRISIS LINES

In the event you or someone you know is struggling with a mental health concern, the following free resources are available 24/7 to call or text to receive assistance and guidance.



Mindful Advocate

833-302-MIND (6463)
MindfulBlueKC.com



National Suicide Prevention and Crisis Lifeline

Call or Text 988



ReDiscover

1-888-279-8188



Johnson County Mental Health

913-268-0156



Wyandot Center for Community Behavioral Healthcare

913-788-4200



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GRIEF AND LOSS

RECOGNIZING GRIEF

- Mental suffering over a loss
- Separation distress
- Traumatic distress
- Guilt and remorse
- Social withdrawal

Complicated Grief

- Approximately 7% of people experience
- Prolonged and intense
- Interferes with grief healing process
- Includes distressing thoughts, emotions, and behaviors

SUPPORT

Signs of Successful Grieving

- Important connections with others
- Increased emotional regulation
- Visualize future without loved one
- Engaged in daily life
- Hopeful for what is to come



Managing Grief

- Acknowledge and accept feelings
- Talk about your loss
- Stay connected with loved ones
- Adopt healthy choices
- Engage with the present moment
- Find professional help when needed

Practice Coping Skills

- Take Care of Yourself
- Maintain Routines
- Spend time with Child



Supporting a Coworker

- Be patient
- Refrain from asking questions or comparing
- Acknowledge the loss
- Remain engaged and supportive



Strategies to Help Children Cope

- Permission to Grieve
- Active Listening
- Ask Questions
- Provide Appropriate Answers

Jacie Harris, LMLP - Behavioral Health Training and Development Specialist from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City



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TRAUMA

Emotional response to a terrible event like an accident, sexual assault or natural disaster. (APA)

TYPES OF TRAUMA (NCBH)*

- Childhood abuse or neglect
- War or other forms of violence
- Medical interventions
- Accident or natural disasters
- Physical, emotional or sexual abuse
- Grief and loss
- Witnessing violence
- Cultural, intergenerational or historical trauma

PTSD (DSM-5)*

- Occurs when experiencing longer-term symptoms of trauma
- Criteria for a diagnosis include:
 - Exposure to actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual violence
 - Symptoms remain persistent for one month or longer after the trauma

SUPPORT

Check-in with yourself. Be willing to engage in self-care.

*NCBH: National Council for Mental Well-being

DSM-5: The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition

NIMH: The National Institute of Mental Health

Signs and Symptoms (DSM-5)*



Intrusive

- Memories
- Dreams
- Dissociative reactions
- Physiological distress



Avoidance

- Memories
- Thoughts
- Feelings
- External reminders



Cognition and Mood

- Inability to remember
- Negative beliefs
- Emotional state
- Diminished interest



Arousal and Reactivity

- Irritable behaviors
- Hypervigilance
- Decreased concentration
- Sleep disturbance

Protective Factors (NIMH)*

- Seeking support from others
- Find a support group
- Use positive coping strategies
- Accept actions during trauma

Treatments (NCBH)*

- Cognitive behavioral therapy
- EMDR
- Exposure therapy
- Medications

Self-Help Strategies (NCBH)*

- Acknowledge trauma
- Connect with others
- Stay active
- Maintain healthy habits
- Journal
- Connect with others
- Use relaxation strategies
- Find hobbies
- Avoid substance use



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SELF-CARE AND SLEEP HYGIENE

SELF-CARE

- Activities engaged in to maintain good health and improve well-being
- Taking breaks to relax and unwind through activities you enjoy
- Remain mindful and engaged in the present moment

Examples

- Physical Activities
- Emotional Well-Being
- Social Supports
- Spiritual Life
- Workplace



Reduce Stress and Negative Emotions

- Improved personal balance
- More productive in school or work
- Increased sense of well-being and contentment



Improved Physical Health

- Increased immune system
- Improved cognitive performance
- Decreased risk for accidents
- Protective factor against mental health disorders

Creating a Plan

- Make self-care a priority
- Set specific self-care goals
- Set boundaries
- Unhealthy activities don't count
- Create habits
- A little is better than none
- Don't stop when you feel "good"

SLEEP HYGIENE

- Series of healthy sleep habits to improve falling and staying asleep
- Ensuring you are getting the correct amount of sleep
- Assuring you are getting good quality sleep
- Sleep affects your health



Sleep Habits Matter

- Focus on consistency
- Set a bedtime to allow for adequate hours of sleep
- Prepare bedroom for sleep
- Don't force yourself to sleep
- Avoid technology while in bed
- Engage in physical activity during the day
- Avoid napping, caffeine, alcohol, and large meals



Kansas City

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COPING SKILLS

Any conscious or nonconscious adjustment or adaptation that decreases tension and anxiety in a stressful experience or situation.

AWARENESS

Problem-Based

- Involves handling stress head on
- Taking action to resolve any underlying issues
- Helpful when you need to change your situation

Emotion-Based

- Involves regulating emotions to a problem
- Helpful when you need to take care of your feelings
- Used when you are unable to change your situation

Understanding Emotions

A complex reaction pattern by which an individual attempts to deal with a personally significant matter or event.

Before

- Meditation
- Reframe anticipating thoughts

During

- Identify automatic thoughts
- Take a break

After

- Journal
- Reframe unexpected thoughts

Identifying Thoughts

Identify Automatic Thoughts

Instantaneous, habitual, and nonconscious

Label Thinking Errors

Faulty patterns of thinking that are self-defeating

Reframe Thinking

Modify thoughts to be more adaptive and helpful

MANAGING

Relaxation Strategies

1. Loving-kindness meditation
2. Progressive muscle relaxation
3. Grounding skills
4. Positive imagery
5. Deep breathing

Use Social Supports

- Identify supportive people
- Engage with them regularly
- Discuss boundaries and needs
- Be willing to ask for support

Improving Your Ability to Cope

It is important to increase awareness of your stressors to be able to identify your warning signs and start coping early.



- Become aware of emotions
- Identify current coping
- Learn new coping skills



- Practice effective coping in a calm state
- Begin thinking about stressors



- Prepare to cope
- Practice coping when emotional
- Make changes and try again



Kansas City

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