

SPECIAL ENEWS

From: Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA

Re: TODAY'S UPDATE (9/8/05) – Hurricane Aftermath

MORE RESOURCES

>>From the US Department of Education

>>>Hurricane Help for Schools (e.g., Fact Sheets and Additional Resources) – website at <http://www.ed.gov/news/hurricane/index.html>

>>>About Providing Supplies for Schools Serving Students Displaced by Katrina – “Many schools are accepting students who cannot attend their own schools because of Hurricane Katrina. If your school is serving students displaced by the hurricane and if you need books, clothes, or other supplies, go to <http://www.ed.gov/news/hurricane/school-form.html> please state what you need. The name of your school, its address, and what you need will be posted on the What Schools Need page. <http://www.ed.gov/news/hurricane/school-needs.html>

If you are a company or organization that is looking to send books, clothes, or other supplies to a school serving students displaced by Hurricane Katrina, go to <http://www.ed.gov/news/hurricane/org-form.html> please state what supplies you can provide. The supplies you can provide, along with your organization's name and contact information, will be posted on the What Organizations Are Offering Schools page – <http://www.ed.gov/news/hurricane/org-offers.html>

>>For those who are ready for a “big picture” view of mental health concerns related to the aftermath, see CDC’s “Disaster Mental Health Primer: Key Principles, Issues and Questions” <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/mentalhealth/primer.asp>

>>Various folks have suggested resources for use as school and classroom “lessons” related to the disaster and its aftermath.

>>>From the National Education Association, Health Information Network <http://www.neahin.org>: "Tools for Teaching Resilience Strategies for Life's Ups and Downs. Activities book Grades k - 5"

>>“Children, Stress, and Natural Disasters: A Guide for Teachers” <http://www.ag.uiuc.edu/~disaster/teacher/teacher.html>

VOLUNTEERS

>>The International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (www.icisf.org) has sent put out a message urging “CISM Teams outside the affected States not to self-deploy unless formally requested by FEMA, State Agencies within the affected States, or ICISF. They caution that it “would be only add to the catastrophe and help turn responders into victims as well.”

They report “ICISF is involved in communicating with representatives from the States of Mississippi, Alabama and Louisiana in reference to their current and projected CISM needs. Communications are also ongoing with our partners in the American Red Cross, Salvation Army,

National Organization of Victim Assistance (NOVA) and many others.

Should ICISF be requested to provide assistance, the initial focus will be to provide support to community leaders with Assessments and Strategic Planning. Based on those discussions will be the deployment of CISM Teams and/or CISM Assessment/Strategic Planning Groups as needed and requested.

We should all keep in mind that this catastrophic situation is still ongoing (operations mode) and continuing to expand as well. With that in mind, Crisis Management Services should be viewed in the long term, not short term.

>>The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is now requesting that requests about volunteer activities go to the following sources:

For **public health workers employed by state and local public health agencies**, please volunteer through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), an agreement among 48 states to share resources during a disaster. More information about the EMAC can be found at the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) web site at <http://www.astho.org/?template=1bioterrorism.html> and also specifically at the EMAC web site at <http://www.emacweb.org/>

For **healthcare professionals and relief volunteers** from non-public health organizations, the Federal Government is mobilizing and identifying individuals with expertise in several specific professional areas. Please see the HHS web site at <https://volunteer.hhs.gov/> and please complete and submit the online form to volunteer these individuals. If your volunteers have questions regarding the online application, please call the Hurricane Katrina Volunteer Call Center at 1-866-KATMEDI (1-866- 528-6334).

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), as the lead agency in the Hurricane Katrina emergency response, is also involved in mobilizing and identifying individuals <http://www.usafreedomcorps.gov/>. If you or your members have an **offer of goods or services**, please call the FEMA hotline at 1-800-440-6728. A representative will take the caller's name and information, as well as what type of goods or services the caller wishes to donate. Donation offers may include temporary housing for disaster victims, vehicles, construction equipment, food, clothing, or other offers that may assist those displaced by Hurricane Katrina. The callers will be directed to the National Emergency Resource Registry (NERR) at <https://www.swern.gov/>.

FEMA is also linking **general volunteer** coordination to several national voluntary organizations that are active in disaster and emergency response. These national voluntary organizations are included at <http://www.nvoad.org/membersdb.php?members=National>

You can also call FEMA to volunteer at 1-800-440-6728. As recovery and relief efforts begin to assist victims, well-meaning volunteers are being urged not to report directly to the affected areas unless directed by a volunteer agency. Visit the USA Freedom Corps Volunteer Network to find additional opportunities to engage in ongoing relief efforts and prepare for future disasters http://www.usafreedomcorps.gov/content/for_volunteers/find_opps/index.asp

PERSONAL ACCOUNTS

>>From Dallas school district administrator: "We have about 25,000 evacuees in our area, and it has been a challenge getting them in school and their needs attended. My staff has been coordinating much of the school district efforts and so far it has gone remarkably well. Yesterday we had about 400 students picked up at our shelters and transported to designated schools. Our mental health staff has coordinated the intakes and are in full force at the designated shelter campuses. Of course we have hundreds of students enrolling in our 220 campuses throughout the city who are staying in hotels, churches, or with friends and family. Working with the families has been rewarding for all

of us.”

>> “I am the Lead School Social Worker for Edgecombe County Public Schools in North Carolina. My county was extensively flooded after Hurricane Floyd. We lost 2 schools and around 2,000 homes. I realize the affected states are dealing with a much larger crisis. The lead psychologist, crisis intervention counselor, Director of Student Support Services and myself met as soon as possible to plan. We gathered information from other communities that had been flooded. We worked on locating our students and staff. We connected and planned with all of our community agencies. We organized mental health teams to be at every location when we were ready to start school again. We used counselors, social workers, and psychologists from across the state to come to our community and help us get students back in school. These teams were in our schools for 2 weeks every day. We organized special activities for our staff who had also lost their homes. We took care of each other and our students.”

>> “I am with the Fort Worth Independent School District ... FWISD is receiving many evacuees. Because we have the tragic experience of the Wedgwood Baptist Church shootings in 1999 - we are probably more prepared than most in the area of critical incident response and stress management. I made sure all of my counseling staff (210), nurses and many administrators have been trained in the Mitchell Model of Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) through an ICISF trainer. We have combined good information from Bill Steele of the Trauma and Loss in Children (TLC) which follows the Mitchell Model but has been modified for children. We also use some of Cheri Louvre's materials adapted to fit in with our plan. We work hard to do pre-education about stress and stress reactions throughout the year. This pre-education has helped as FWISD has good information and a pretty solid understanding of stress and stress reactions as we as a learning community try to handle this tragic situation. We are now working the shelters to help the city meet basic needs of people and we get school children enrolled in school and agencies help with other needs. We are working a Hope Line answering calls and connecting folks with area resources.

The schools have safe rooms set up for children to offer information, education, reassurance, as indicated. These rooms are staffed with well trained school counselors.

Our infrastructure includes taking care of the caretakers. We encourage them to assess their own health before agreeing to provide interventions. We count them more professional if they have the courage to say "no". We know they will help another time. We do not want people to respond who are not in a position to be helpful. We debrief the debriefers etc. Right now - as we are still in the impact phase we are mostly focused on the basic needs of our new neighbors.

I would love to participate in any forum or planning for training in this area.”

ARTICLE FROM THE NY TIMES

Across Nation, Storm Victims Crowd Schools – By Sam Dillon (9/7/05)
<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/09/07/national/nationalspecial/07child.html>

“School districts from Maine to Washington State were enrolling thousands of students from New Orleans and other devastated Gulf Coast districts yesterday in what experts said could become the largest student resettlement in the nation's history. Schools welcoming the displaced students must not only provide classrooms, teachers and textbooks, but under the terms of President Bush's education law must also almost immediately begin to raise their scholastic achievement unless some provisions of that law are waived. Historians said that those twin challenges surpassed anything that public education had experienced since its creation after the Civil War, including disasters that devastated whole school districts, like the San Francisco earthquake and the Chicago fire. ...

The total number of displaced students is not yet known, but it appears to be well above 200,000. In Louisiana, 135,000 public school students and 52,000 private school students have been displaced from Orleans, Jefferson, St. Bernard and Plaquemines Parishes. ...

The crisis poses new challenges for [Secretary of Education] Spellings, including financial. The Department of Education's budget this year for homeless student programs is about \$61 million, which she said was insufficient. Ms. Spellings, who has spent her first months in office fighting a backlash by local educators and state lawmakers against the federal law known as No Child Left Behind, is also hearing calls from advocacy groups that she take emergency measures that could be controversial.

The National Education Association, the nation's largest teachers union, asked her on Friday to waive the accountability provisions of the law for schools in the hurricane's path as well as in Texas and other states receiving large numbers of students, a move Ms. Spellings said she was reluctant to take.

Private companies that operate online courses or charter schools are urging her to use emergency powers to authorize them to enroll displaced students at the Houston Astrodome and other shelters across the nation.

Ms. Spellings has invited 40 education groups, including the P.T.A. and teachers unions, to meet at the Department of Education today to discuss disaster recovery efforts. ...

Reg Weaver, president of the N.E.A. ...[has] asked Ms. Spellings to use her powers to waive provisions of the [No Child Left Behind] law, which requires school districts to raise student scores on standardized tests each year by a percentage set by each state, a goal known as making adequate yearly progress. ... Ms. Spellings is consulting with state school superintendents as she considers whether to waive the law's accountability provisions in some cases, said her spokeswoman, Susan Aspey. One consideration is how many displaced students that individual schools or districts enroll; those with higher concentrations may be more likely to receive waivers, Ms. Aspey said. ...

The Bush administration must also make decisions about another hotly debated issue in public education: charter schools. The National Council of Education Providers, which represents the nation's largest commercial school management companies, has asked the Department of Education to authorize it to enroll students housed at emergency shelters in Internet-based courses offered by its companies. ...”