

Crisis Response Cheat Sheet, per JFCS Pittsburgh

1. Breathe.
2. Document everything you do. Your memory of the first few days may not be so accurate later on, and you will want to keep a record of all that happened.
3. What are the immediate needs?
 - a. All affected parties have a safe place to be
 - b. People requiring active medical care are receiving it
 - c. People who need immediate psychological support are receiving it
 - d. Closely impacted people have access to reliable information
 - e. Someone is helping to locate any missing persons, communicating this to loved ones
4. What resources are needed for these immediate needs?
 - a. Staff
 - b. Volunteers
 - c. First responders
 - d. Other organizations (including hospitals, therapists, victim advocates, Red Cross, etc)
5. How has the Jewish Family organization been directly affected?
 - a. Wounded/deceased staff, board, and/or family members of these groups
 - b. Pay special attention to staff who were impacted, as their experience can be felt by their co-workers, who need to provide care to the community
6. What are the needs in the coming days and weeks?
 - a. Communication with Jewish Family staff
 - i. May include an all-staff meeting, daily check-ins and updates;
 - ii. Acknowledge to staff that this experience may make it hard for all of us to be at our best, and that we must treat each other (and ourselves) with grace when we screw up
 - iii. Are there certain departments that are impacted more greatly than others? How can the org best support the impacted departments?
 - iv. Start to consider how best to support your staff: massage, reiki, mental health days, meditation, art therapy; help them to set limits and avoid burnout
 - b. Children
 - i. Information and/or support may be needed for schools, daycare, synagogue preschools and Hebrew schools, youth groups, extracurricular groups
 1. Teachers/coaches may need special support, such as on-site drop-in hours
 - ii. Information and/or support may be needed for parents
 1. Handouts, psychoeducational materials, etc.
 - c. Adults
 - i. Consider regular, daily drop-in hours (including day and evening) at a location that feels safe and accessible; this should be staffed by

- therapists (staff or volunteers) who have been vetted and have some trauma training; this is not therapy but rather brief support
 - ii. Provide information to the community that normalizes the responses people may experience in the days, weeks, months and years ahead
 - iii. Offer support groups - online and/or in person. They may have themes (eg for people who still have trouble sleeping, for parents whose kids aren't eating, etc); such groups may be one-time or ongoing
 - iv. Offer referrals to appropriate, vetted therapists
 - v. Consider assigning a staff person to be the liaison with the families and witnesses; this person can be their "special support" and trusted source of information, checking in with them as needed and referring them to whatever they might need (eg therapy, cleaning assistance, meals, bill paying assistance); make sure they don't feel forgotten by the Jewish community!
- d. Media and Fundraising
- i. If possible, have another agency handle media requests, fundraising initiatives, etc. Direct service staff will not have the bandwidth to focus on this effectively. It may be possible to have staff in another department handle this.
 - ii. Set up a special fund for community members who wish to donate
 - iii. Be careful about putting victims and first responders into the spotlight; they may be too "shell shocked" to make informed decisions about their preparedness to do this, and the experience could be retraumatizing.
- e. Circles of Impact
- i. Consider who was affected by the event, by imagining concentric circles. This will help you decide who needs help, how, and when. The following is just an example:
 1. Center: Direct victims, families, witnesses
 2. Next circle: First responders, including mental health first responders
 3. Next circle: funeral homes, Jewish burial society
 4. Next circle: schools, youth organizations
 5. Next circle: other Jews, other synagogues
 6. Next circle: other neighborhood residents
 7. Next circle: others who closely cover the event (eg journalists, photographers, etc)
 - ii. You will continue to find additional circles of impact that you hadn't considered. That's ok. Pay attention, incorporate them into your plan, and move on.
- f. Funding
- i. There may be federal and/or state funds available to help cover your expenses;
 - ii. After the first few weeks, you may consider special fundraising to cover the ongoing cost of your services; consider private donors, foundations,

national organizations, etc. The need will likely continue for several years, though it will wax and wane.

g. Community Partners

- i. You cannot manage this by yourself; what other agencies can you partner with? Consider Jewish and non-Jewish agencies
- ii. What should be the role of each agency? Is there a need for overlapping services (ie for offering client choice)? Or is it better to separate each agency's responsibilities?
- iii. It's easiest to lean on pre-existing relationships; it's hard to build a relationship during a crisis, but it may be necessary to do so.