

Beyond Blue Community Support Training 2

To date the summer of 2010 has provided milder conditions for most with some welcome rain. February 7th has been marked in unique ways across the recovering fire affected communities of Victoria. A new school year has begun, businesses and homes are being rebuilt, some things change and some remain the same.

A major aim of the beyondblue Community Support Training Program that you attended was to help you to support people in your community and yourself during stressful times. The beyondblue book Taking Care of Yourself and Your Family by John Ashfield is a great self help resource that addresses many of the common mental health issues facing individuals. This book was included in your resource bag and extra copies can be ordered, free of charge by visiting <http://www.beyondblue.org.au> – click on Get Information or call the information line 1300 22 4636.

The after-effects of a traumatic event like the February 2009 bushfires are not always immediately visible or apparent. Research shows that talking can make a difference. If you or someone you know would like to access the free Federal Government counselling program, talk to your GP or Victorian Bushfire Case Manager about getting a referral. If you don't have a GP visit the General Practice Victoria website at: <http://www.gpd.org.au> or for referral to a case manager call 1800 050 400.

In this letter we're providing some further information on grief and supporting children and young people.

Grief

Grief is our response to loss. It is the normal, natural and inevitable response to loss, and it can affect every part of our life, but it is varied and different for different people.

Some helpful hints to manage grief

keep a diary or journal

exercise to use pent-up energy - walk, swim, garden, chop wood etc.

to help with sleeplessness, exercise, limit alcohol, eat well before sleeping, and try to have a routine

some holistic or self care ideas that may assist include meditation, distractions, relaxation, massage, aromatherapy and warmth

develop your own rituals - light a candle, listen to special music, make a special place to think

allowing yourself to express your thoughts and feelings privately can help e.g. write a letter or a poem, draw, collect photos, cry

draw on religious and spiritual beliefs if this is helpful

make time for the activities you find relaxing and soothing.

For more information visit the Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement www.grief.org.au or call during business hours 1300 664 786

Supporting Children and Young People.

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If you are concerned about a child or adolescent who has been affected by trauma, loss and/or grief, there are people and organisations that can help. Below, there are web links to organisations that may assist. However, there are also people within the community that are able to help, such as GPs and school counsellors.

www.earlytraumagrief.anu.edu.au/connections/finding_help/trauma_links/

For Further Information For Parents, Children and Young People:

Kids Help Line 1800 551 800

Confidential 24-Hour telephone counselling for young people aged 5 to 25

Parentline 13 22 89

Telephone counselling service for parents and carers of children from birth to 18. Operates weekdays 8am to midnight and weekends 10am to 10pm

Better Health Channel – tip sheets

The Better Health Channel website was founded in 1999 as a consumer health information website for the Victorian community. It is now Australia's most popular health and medical website.

headspace

headspace provides mental and health wellbeing support, information and services to young people and their families across Australia.

<http://www.headspace.org.au/home/information/useful-links-/>

speaking iN BRIEF

This is an Australian National University website where you can listen to a range of experts speaking about children's trauma, loss and grief issues.

http://www.earlytraumagrief.anu.edu.au/connections/speaker_series/

Red Cross: Resources and bushfire preparedness for young people

<http://aftertheemergency.redcross.org.au/get-stories>

<http://aftertheemergency.redcross.org.au/get-info/news-and-events/mp3s>

Lifeline 13 11 14

24-hour crisis support, information and referral

Youthbeyondblue

beyondblue's youth arm for young people aged 12 to 24 – Youthbeyondblue aims to educate young people that it's okay to talk about mental health issues and to get help when it's needed.

<http://www.youthbeyondblue.com/about/>