



CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP I

(FOR AGES 3 AND UP)

(IMMEDIATELY POST-HURRICANE)

Because of the strong emotional responses and volatility of people involved in a catastrophe, it is advised that appropriate mental health personnel or counselors be available to work with participants during this workshop.

CORE CONCEPTS:

It is okay to feel emotions, particularly after loss from a hurricane.
There are appropriate ways to express emotions.

TARGET GROUPS:

Toddlers and preschoolers who have been affected by a hurricane.

GOAL:

Children who have been affected by the hurricanes will express their emotions appropriately.

OBJECTIVES:

Children participating in an interactive session with play therapists/psychologists will have the opportunity to:

- talk about what they feel
- draw what they feel
- hit a bop bag to release anger and stress.

GROUND RULES:

Every child has the right to pass (on speaking, participating in activity, etc.)
No one will be punished for emotional outbursts but they will be disciplined for bad behavior.

Uncomfortable feelings can elicit acting out behavior. It is unfair for us to stir up emotions and then punish children for their behavior. All the volunteers should be familiar with "Emotion coaching" techniques. At the beginning of the session children should be told: "this is a safe place and we have some rules. No one will be allowed to hurt another person with words or any other way. If we see any of you hurting another, we will remind you about this rule, and someone will help you." "Help you" means that a volunteer will work with the child to understand that emotions the child is expressing and talk about other ways the child may express those feelings. If two children get into a scuffle, volunteers will help the children work it out with words or compromise/cooperation. Children with exceptional difficulties will have a shadow that will help them throughout the entire session. We will designate a quiet corner for children that find the experience too intense. There will be limits but no child will be punished or asked to leave.



www.lpb.org/cope/



Louisiana Public Broadcasting • 7733 Perkins Rd • Baton Rouge, LA 70810 • 225.767.5660 • 800.272.8161 • www.lpb.org • edserv@lpb.org

© 2006 Louisiana Educational Television Authority on behalf of Louisiana Public Broadcasting. All rights reserved.

Funding for the development of this workshop was provided by a grant from the Talaris Research Institute; Seattle, Washington.

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES:

Tell the child it is OK to be angry, but no ok to hurt others or be mean. Say “what are some ways you can show how mad you are besides _____” (name the behavior observed.)

Reflect with words what the child might be feeling. Use feeling words to describe the child’s emotions such as “you looked frustrated when...” or “you look mad” or “maybe you feel sad when so-and-so took your truck.” Then say: “It is okay to have those feelings but I will not let you hurt anyone else. And I won’t let anyone hurt you here.” Then give them ideas for expressing their emotions like dancing, jumping, or stomping feet.

If a child cries during the session say “you look sad. It is ok to cry, but when you are done, you can tell me why you are sad.” If the volunteer feels comfortable they can say “I feel sad sometimes too and cry. Then I do _____and feel better.”

If a child expresses fear during an activity a volunteer should listen very carefully and say “Let’s talk together with your (Mom, Dad or whomever brought the child) so they can make you feel safer about that. Or say, “That feels very scary to you now, but maybe later you will not be scared about that.”

(See Mercy Corps Handbook for more suggestions. Volunteers may be given Mercy Corp materials to understand how children react to a disaster. Children may be given “My Hurricane Story” produced by Mercy Corps.)

CHILDREN’S ACTIVITIES:

The video will be shown to all children in one group, then go in small groups to the activity stations. The psychologist will run the small group station where children talk about their feelings.

1. Watch “Friends to the Rescue” in which they see Big Bird lose his home in a hurricane, express what he is feeling, and rebuild his home.
 - Chapter 3 Getting Ready
 - Chapter 4 Safe Inside
 - Chapter 5 Cleaning Up
 Total Duration (13:34)

2. Discuss:
 - What happened after Big Bird lost his home?
 - Ask if anyone knows what hurricane’s are like? What is it like?
 - What does it feels like to lose toys, home?
 - Has anyone had to live in a different home after a hurricane? What is it like?

3. Watch:
 - Chapter 8 Twig by Twig (38:24-41:13) (2:59)
 - Chapter 11 Big Bird’s New Home (50:30-51:15) (:45)

4. Activity Stations:
 - do art to express what they are feeling (t-shirt/markers)
 - read and tell stories to express themselves
 - do physical activities (music, dance)
 - hit bop bags with bats to relieve stress and anger.

5. Give children books and toys. Reunite with their parents.



A Focus on Early Learning



www.lpb.org/cope/



GROUND RULES:

Those who work with the children need to address discipline and behavior in a positive way. All of the volunteers should be familiar with “Emotion coaching” techniques. At the beginning of the session children should be told: “this is a safe place and we have some rules. No one will be allowed to hurt another person with words or any other way. If we see any of you hurting another, we will remind you about this rule, and someone will help you.” Help you means that a volunteer will work with the child to understand the emotions he or she is expressing and talk about other ways the child may express him or herself. For example, if two children get into a scuffle, volunteers will help the children work it out with words or compromise/cooperation. Children with exceptional difficulties will have a shadow that will help them throughout the entire session. We will designate a quiet corner for children to regroup if they get too excited. This is not time out! There will be limits but no child will be punished or asked to leave the session.

VOLUNTEERS’ GUIDELINES:

Tell the child it is OK to be frustrated, but not ok to hurt others or to be mean. Say “what are some ways you can show how frustrated you are besides (name the behavior observed).”

Reflect with words what the child might be feeling. Use feeling words to describe the child’s emotions such as “you looked frustrated when....” or “you look mad” or “maybe you felt sad when so-and-so took your marker.” Then say: “It is okay to have those feelings but I will not let you hurt anyone else. And I won’t let anyone hurt you here.” Then give the child ideas for expressing emotions like dancing, jumping, or stomping feet.

If a child cries during the session say “you look sad. It is ok to cry; when you are done, you can tell me why you are sad.”

LINKS FOR MATERIALS USED IN WORKSHOPS:

Mister Rogers Materials

<http://pbskids.org/rogers/parentsteachers/special/scarynews-thoughts.html>

<http://pbskids.org/rogers/parentsteachers/special/scarynews.html>

To order:

Sesame Street Friends to the Rescue

<http://www.sonymusicstore.com/store/catalog/TalentDetails.jsp?talentId=400881>

To order:

Parenting Counts Materials

<http://www.talaris.org/store.htm>