



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 LUCET



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.

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.

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.

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 local and national resources to help with behavioral health challenges and everyday issues.

Examples

- Grief
- 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 experiencing a mental health concern, the following hot lines are available 24/7 for help or to connect members and providers.

ReliOnCare
1-888-270-6188

Johnson County Mental Health
913-388-0156

Wanderl Center for Community Behavioral Healthcare
913-388-4000

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 health needs. Call 833-362-MIND (6463) to speak with a Mindful Advocate.

HANDOUT

Grief and Loss

VIEW HANDOUT

GRIEF AND LOSS

RECOGNIZING GRIEF

- Mental suffering near a loss
- Repetitive thoughts
- Traumatic distress
- Guilt and remorse
- Social withdrawal

Managing Grief

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

Practice Coping Skills

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

Supporting a Careworker

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

Strategies to Help Children Cope

- Provide Age-Appropriate Answers

SUPPORT

Signs of Bereavement Grieving

- Increased concern with others
- Increased emotional reactivity
- Visitation failure without legal aid
- Engaged in daily life
- Hopeful for what is to come

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HANDOUT

Trauma Awareness

VIEW HANDOUT

TRAUMA

Emotional distress or a physical injury that an accident, violent assault or natural disaster (ADP)

TYPES OF TRAUMA

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

PTSD signs

- Distress when experiencing triggers or symptoms of trauma
- Certain fear or phobias include:
 - Exposure to actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual violence
 - Experiences events similar to those
- Symptoms remain persistent for one month or longer after the trauma

Check to see if you need the setting 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 avoid overexertion
- Researching and engaged in the present moment

Reduce Stress and Negative Emotions

- Improved personal behavior
- More productive in school or work
- Increased amount of well-being and contentment

Improved Physical Health

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

Examples

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

Creating a Plan

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

SLEEP HYGIENE

- Health of healthy sleep habits
- Improves feeling and energy during the day
- 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 bedspace for sleep
- Don't turn on your phone
- Avoid technology while in bed
- Engage in physical activity during the day
- Avoid napping, caffeine, alcohol, and large meals

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HANDOUT

Coping Skills

VIEW HANDOUT

COPING SKILLS

Also known as stress management, is a set of techniques and strategies to help with emotional health and anxiety in stressful situations or changes.

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 recognizing emotions in a problem
- Helpful when you need to take care of your feelings
- Helpful 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	During	After
• Motivation	• Mentally automatic thoughts	• Journal
• Behavior	• Thoughts	• Reflection
• Emotions	• Take a break	• Mindfulness

Identifying Thoughts

Identify Automatic Thoughts

- Involves recognizing thoughts in a problem
- Helpful when you need to take care of your feelings
- Helpful when you are unable to change your situation

Label Thinking Errors

- Identify automatic thoughts
- Identify patterns of thinking that are self-defeating
- Modify thoughts to be more realistic and helpful

Improving Your Ability to Cope

It is important to increase awareness of your emotions to be able to identify, manage and cope with them.

MANAGING

Relaxation Strategies

1. Loving-kindness meditation
2. Progressive muscle relaxation
3. Guided imagery
4. Mindfulness
5. Deep breathing
6. Deep breathing

Use Social Supports

- Identify supportive people
- Engage with them regularly
- Discuss difficulties and needs
- Discuss difficulties and needs

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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

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)

Signs and Symptoms (DSM-5)*

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



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

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

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

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

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

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