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## **Psychoeducation as a Response to Community Disaster**

**Jamie M. Howard, EdM**  
**Ann Goelitz, MSW, CSW**

From Safe Horizon.

Contact author: Jamie M. Howard, EdM, 1520 York Avenue, #12C, New York, NY 10028. E-mail: [jamiehoward20@hotmail.com](mailto:jamiehoward20@hotmail.com).

Public education is a means of supporting trauma survivors without impeding their natural recovery process by providing accurate information about normal reactions and ways to cope in the aftermath of community disaster. It can also be used to screen for high-risk individuals who could benefit from ongoing care. Normalizing trauma reactions and eliminating the hardship of seeking mental health resources may reduce the stigma associated with obtaining this type of support. One way to accomplish this is by linking psychoeducation with concrete services, a tactic that may also attract greater numbers of participants. This article explores the literature on the subject and reports the results of psychoeducation interventions provided in response to the events of September 11, 2001. The format and outcome of the public education workshops are presented along with case material. Recommendations for implementation, including other potential applications of this methodology, are highlighted.

**KEY WORDS:** trauma, disaster, psychoeducation, stress, stigma, public education

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