



PRESS RELEASE

Psychological First Aid *Preparation for Response to Disasters*

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The Missouri State University Department of Nursing and Center for Homeland Security are co-sponsoring the public affairs event, *Psychological First Aid*, on Saturday, October 17, 2009 from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. in the Theater at the Plaster Student Union. The event is free and open to students, faculty, and the community. Drs. Melissa Brymer and Jo Sornborger of the Terrorism and Disaster Program, National Center for Child Traumatic Stress, UCLA Neuropsychiatric Institute and Duke University will be the guest speakers. CEUs are available for a charge of \$25 payable at the door.

Psychological First Aid was developed by the National Child Traumatic Stress Network and the National Center for PTSD. It is an evidence-based approach to care for survivors in the immediate aftermath of disaster or terrorism. *Psychological First Aid* is designed to reduce the levels of distress in survivors and to promote both short-term and long-term adaptive functioning and coping following a traumatic event. Objectives for the event, based on the goals of *Psychological First Aid* include the following:

- The participant will be able to initiate contact and respond to survivors in a non-intrusive, compassionate, and helpful manner.
- The participant will be able to enhance the immediate and ongoing safety of survivors, and provide physical and emotional comfort.
- The participant will be able to calm and orient emotionally overwhelmed or disoriented survivors.
- The participant will be able to identify immediate needs and concerns, gather additional information, and tailor *Psychological First Aid* interventions.
- The participant will be able to offer practical help to survivors in addressing immediate needs and concerns.
- The participant will be able to help establish brief or ongoing contacts with primary support persons and other sources of support for survivors, including family members, friends, and community helping resources.
- The participant will be able to provide information about stress reactions and coping to reduce distress and promote adaptive functioning in survivors.
- The participant will be able to link survivors to available services needed at the time of the traumatic experience or in the future.
- The participant will be able to acquire skills needed to enhance self-care when responding to such events.

Contact Patricia Webb at 417-836-5310 in the Missouri State Department of Nursing or David Claborn at 417-836-8945 in the Missouri State Office of Homeland Security for more information.