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## Disaster Distress Helpline Set up in Alabama

By WKRG Staff



A disaster or tragedy is unexpected and often brings out strong emotions. The Disaster Distress Helpline 1-800-985-5990 can provide immediate counseling to anyone who needs help in dealing with the storm related problems affecting Alabama. The Helpline is a 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week resource that responds to people who need crisis counseling after experiencing a natural or man-made disaster or tragedy.

Sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the Helpline immediately connects callers to trained and caring professionals from the closest crisis counseling center in the nationwide network of centers. The Helpline staff will provide confidential counseling, referrals and other needed support services.

“When disaster strikes, people react with increased anxiety, worry and anger. With community and family support, most of us bounce back. Some may need extra assistance to cope with unfolding events and uncertainties,” said SAMHSA Administrator Pamela S. Hyde. “People seeking emotional help in the aftermath of a disaster can now call 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746 and begin the process of recovery.”

The Disaster Distress Helpline is the nation's first permanent hotline dedicated to providing disaster crisis counseling. The toll-free Helpline is confidential and multilingual and available for those who are experiencing psychological distress as a result of natural or man-made disasters, incidents of mass violence or any other tragedy affecting America's communities. The Helpline complements the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and other disaster response capacities, and is available immediately anywhere within the United States.

The helpline can also be accessed at <http://disasterdistress.samhsa.gov/>.

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