



# EDUCATION FACT SHEETS:

## Tailored and Timely Disaster Mental Health Response

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### ABSTRACT

The behavioral choices people make in the wake of a disaster, such as staying in place, evacuating, seeking or not seeking medical care, and searching for loved ones have very real life and death implications. Effective mental health disaster response requires timely and accurate information for victims, first responders, leaders, family members and other effected stakeholders to better inform their decision making. Because cognition changes during crises, the delivery of educational information designed to influence behavior should consider several important issues. Disaster education should be timely and accurate. It should address predictable issues of concern to those effected, while informing them of actions to take and those to avoid. The Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress (CSTS) has developed a systematic process for the development of disaster response education fact sheets. The process involves rapidly incorporating subject-matter experts that provide educational guidance based on the events surrounding a specific disaster. This information is used to develop customized fact sheets that provide critical education to those impacted by a disaster. These fact sheets are finalized within twenty-four hours of the disaster event. They are subsequently disseminated to a broad range of national and international partners and relevant stakeholder organizations by email and social media as well as hard copy if needs dictate. The CSTS disaster mental health fact sheet development and dissemination process has been refined over more than fifteen years of disaster mental health response and used to assist in directing the response of victim advocacy organizations, healthcare personnel, first responders, and community leaders in the management of over 70 disaster events.

### IMPACT

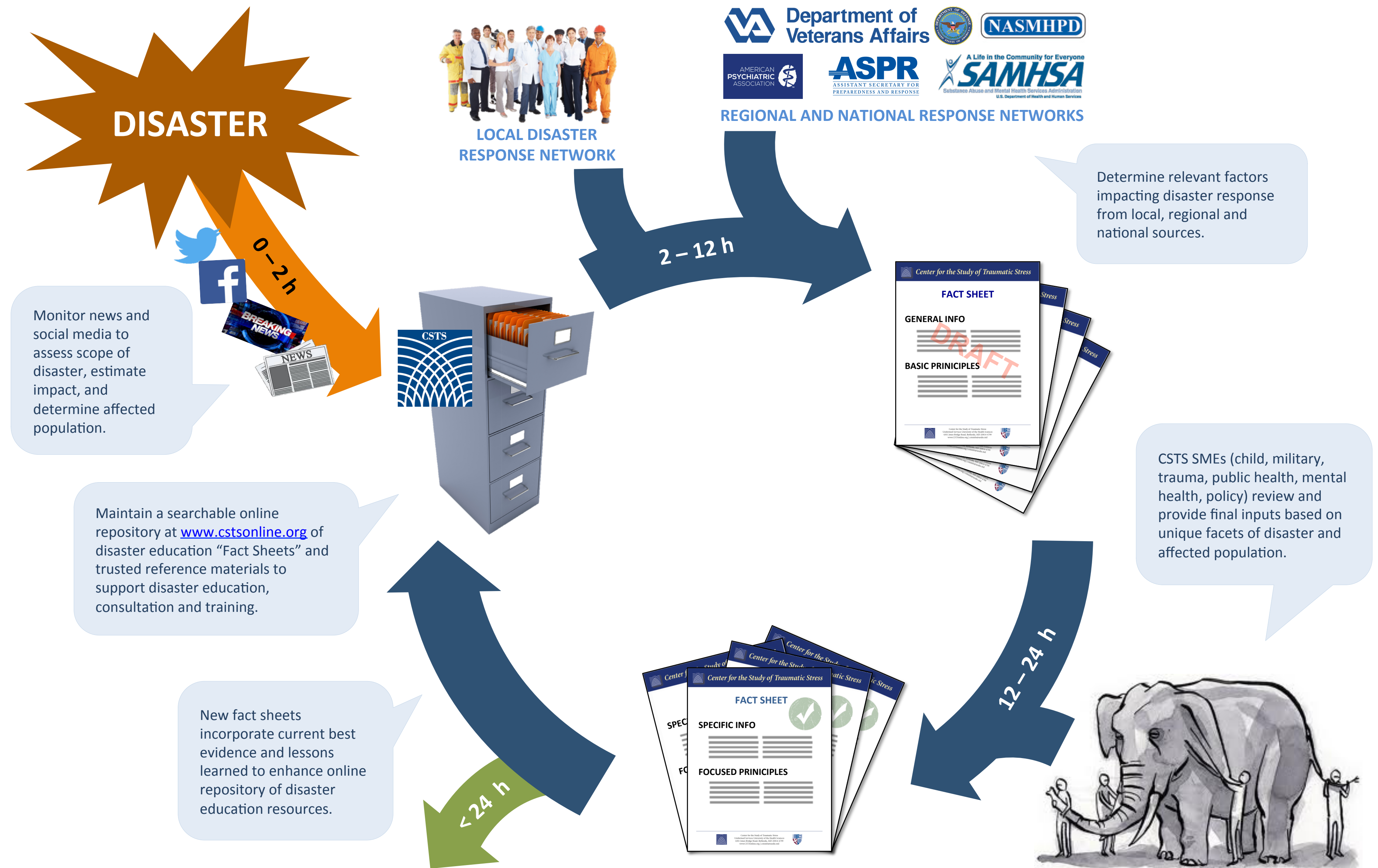
- Eases the educational burden for organizations often in crisis or responding to a crisis.
- Provides very rapid educational evidence based information from a credible source.
- Fact sheets are in the public domain so: they are free to recipient, reproducible without obstacles, and easily customizable for recipients own purposes.
- Address a range of issues for a variety of audiences some of which may be traditionally overlooked (i.e.; leaders).

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

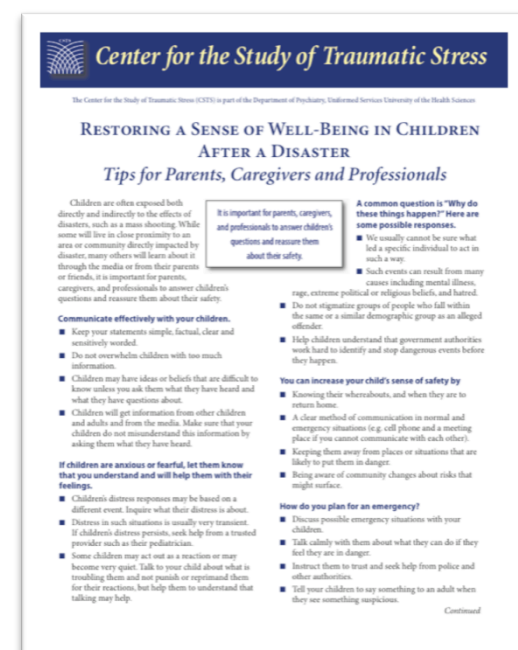
- Flynn BW, Morganstein JC. *Curriculum recommendations for disaster health professionals: disaster behavioral health*. Ncdmph.usuhs.edu/Documents/BehavioralHealthRecommendations-201401.pdf
- Covello, VT (2003). Best practices in public health risk and crisis communication. *Journal of Health Communication*, 8(S1), 5-8.
- Ursano, RJ, Fullerton, CS, Raphael, B, Weisaeth, L (Eds.). (2007). *Textbook of Disaster Psychiatry*. London, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- <http://www.cstsonline.org/resources/fact-sheet-search>

The views expressed in this presentation are those of the author(s) and do not reflect the official policy of the Department of Army/Navy/Air Force, Department of Defense, or U.S. Government.

### PROCESS



### FAMILIES / CHILDREN



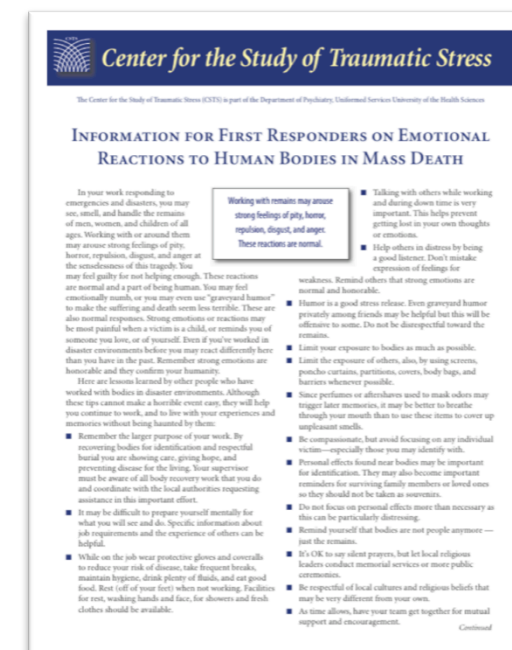
### HEALTH CARE



### LEADERSHIP



### FIRST RESPONDERS



### CSTS SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS REVIEW

Final fact sheets distributed to a broad range of stakeholders throughout the affected population.