



# Utah Disaster Crisis Counselor

July 2023  
Newsletter

## Thank you!

We want to express our appreciation to everyone for your commitment, dedication, and willingness to learn new techniques that will help your community following a disaster or critical incident.

A big shout out to all who attended the disaster crisis counseling workshop in May. If you were not able to attend and want to continue your certification, make sure you have completed the 2 free online courses through The National Child Traumatic Stress Network: [Psychological First Aid](#) and [Skills for Psychological Recovery](#) within the last 3 years.

We hope you will take time this summer to refresh and renew your body, your mind, and your spirit.

## Take care of yourself

Responding to disasters can be both rewarding and challenging work. Stress for emergency responders can come from witnessing human suffering, risk of personal harm, intense workloads, life-and-death decisions, or separation from family. Stress prevention and management is critical to staying well and being able to continue to help in an emergency situation. To take care of others, first responders must be feeling well and thinking clearly.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has developed a list of important steps to take before, during and after an event to make sure responders are able to do their tasks and cope with challenges of the situation.

*Live on.*

## A mantra of hope

Live On is a statewide effort to prevent suicide by promoting education, providing resources, and changing our culture around suicide and mental health.

Live On has launched the state's [first suicide prevention training](#) available for free entirely through Instagram. This training is delivered by Utah mental health and suicide prevention experts, and will teach you how to recognize warning signs for suicide, have tough conversations, and know where to go for help. In less than 10 minutes per lesson, you can learn skills to prevent suicide, and become a Live On Ambassador. Together we can get through, reach out, lift up, look ahead, and Live On. You can take a free course on the Live On Instagram page,



## 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline is available 24/7 for calls, texts, and chats for those experiencing emotional distress, suicidal thoughts, substance use disorder crises, veteran's crises, and LGBTQIA crises. The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) is a national network that is comprised of more than 200 crisis centers across the country. Anyone that calls 988 from a Utah area code is directed to the Utah Crisis Line, managed and staffed by certified crisis workers at the Huntsman Mental Health Institute.

## Self-care ideas

Self-care looks different for everyone. It may take trial and error to discover what works best for you. Even small acts of self-care in your daily life can have a big impact on your emotional, physical, and mental health.

- **Get regular exercise.** Just 30 minutes of walking every day can help boost your mood and improve your health. Small amounts of exercise add up, so don't be discouraged if you need to break up this 30 minutes into several smaller times throughout the day.
- **Eat healthy meals and drink lots of water.** A balanced diet and staying hydrated can improve your energy and help you focus better throughout the day. Try to limit the number of caffeinated beverages you drink, like soft drinks or coffee.
- **Make sleep a priority.** You need more sleep than you may realize. Most adults need 7-9 hours of sleep each night. Go to bed and get up at the same time every day. Stop using your phone, computer, and other devices 30 minutes before bedtime. The blue light from devices and screens can make it harder to fall asleep.
- **Try a relaxing activity.** Explore relaxation or wellness programs or apps that use meditation, muscle relaxation, or breathing exercises. Schedule regular times for these and other healthy activities you enjoy such as journaling.
- **Set goals and priorities.** Decide what must get done now and what can wait. Learn to say "no" to new tasks if you start to feel like you're taking on too much. Try to be mindful of what you have accomplished at the end of the day, not what you have been unable to do.
- **Practice gratitude.** Remind yourself of the things you are grateful for each day. Be specific. Write them down at night or replay them in your mind.
- **Focus on the positive.** Identify and challenge your negative and unhelpful thoughts.
- **Stay connected.** Reach out to your friends or family members who can provide emotional support and practical help.

## Spread the word

To learn more about disaster response counseling, visit our [webpage](#)

If you know someone who may be interested in becoming a part of Utah's disaster crisis counseling team, send them to the Utah Responds Volunteer Registry by clicking the icon below or visiting <https://www.utahresponds.org/>. They will need to select "Utah Crisis Counseling" as their organization during the registration process.

