



Child Welfare Evidence-at-a-Glance: Healing And Resilience After Natural Disasters

- **175 million children across the globe experience natural disasters**, including floods, cyclones, droughts, heatwaves, tsunamis, severe storms, and earthquakes. Approximately 14 percent of all children and youth in the United States have experienced a natural disaster.
- **Children and youth who experience natural disasters and secondary adversities are more likely to develop mental health problems than adults**, such as
 - Depression
 - Anxiety
 - Traumatic stress symptoms
 - Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
 - Grief
 - Suicide
- **Some children and youth are more vulnerable to the physical, mental health, and learning difficulties after a natural disaster**, including those who:
 - Were severely injured or ill due to the natural disaster or a family member has experienced significant injuries or illness
 - Endured other forms of trauma after the natural disaster
 - Experienced multiple events that are dangerous or life-threatening during the disaster
 - Experienced the death of a loved one or pet
 - Believed there was a direct threat to their life or a family members' life during the disaster
 - Experienced multiple adversities after a disaster
 - Missed school for an extended period of time or had to drop out
 - Were at greater risk for property loss and personal impact after the natural disaster (i.e., due to poverty, systemic racism, oppression)
 - Had a family member/caregiver who was a rescue worker or an essential worker
- **All children and youth have the capacity for healing and resilience following exposure to a natural disaster.** Protective factors that support resilience to natural disasters include, but are not limited to:
 - Close relationships, trust, belonging
 - Self-regulation, executive function skills
 - Problem-solving and planning
 - Hope, optimism
 - Sense of individual meaning and purpose
 - Positive views of self, self-efficacy
 - Positive habits, routines, activities
 - Skilled school leadership
 - Positive views of family
 - Culture and religion
 - Family routines, traditions
 - Trauma-informed social service agencies and systems, schools, and communities