



# Support for individuals and communities following natural disasters

Natural disasters can greatly impact the mental health and wellbeing of affected communities and individuals.

Even those not directly affected may feel the effects due to previous experiences related to a natural disaster, having loved ones in affected areas, or witnessing distressing events through media coverage and social media platforms.

Following natural disasters, it can be difficult to prioritise self-care, however it is important to look after your mental health and wellbeing during and following stressful times. Here are some suggestions that may support your wellbeing.

## Set limits

While information is important, continuous exposure to details and others' opinions can increase worry and stress. Seek factual information only from reliable sources.

## Stay connected

Communicate openly with family, friends or other community members. Check in with people you know. Whether through phone calls or in-person conversations, make time for social connections both at work and at home.

## Feel your feelings

It's okay not to feel okay. Allow yourself to experience emotions without judgement.

## Reach out

If you are struggling, don't hesitate to talk to someone – a family member, friend, your doctor or a helpline. Encourage others to do the same and accept help when offered.

## Maintain a routine

Although this may be hard, where possible, try to return to routine as soon as you can. This might be eating a meal at the same time or walking the dog.

## Take some time out

Where possible, adjust your expectations for yourself, your family and your workplace. Acknowledge this is a difficult time and try to allow yourself to slow down, do things you enjoy and practice self-care.

## Support services

Australian Red Cross - Disasters and emergencies: [redcross.org.au/emergencies](https://redcross.org.au/emergencies)

Phoenix Australia - Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health: [phoenixaustralia.org/disaster-hub](https://phoenixaustralia.org/disaster-hub)

Disaster Welfare Assistance Line: 1800 018 444

Lifeline: 13 11 14 | Text 0477 13 11 14  
[lifeline.org.au](https://lifeline.org.au)

Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467  
[suicidecallbackservice.org.au](https://suicidecallbackservice.org.au)

Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636  
[beyondblue.org.au](https://beyondblue.org.au)

MensLine Australia: 1300 789 978  
[mensline.org.au](https://mensline.org.au)

StandBy Support After Suicide  
1300 224 636

Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800  
[kidshelpline.com.au](https://kidshelpline.com.au)

headspace: 1800 650 890  
[headspace.org.au](https://headspace.org.au)

ReachOut: [Reachout.com](https://Reachout.com)

Head to Health: mental health portal  
[headtohealth.gov.au](https://headtohealth.gov.au)

Life in Mind: suicide prevention portal  
[lifeinmind.org.au](https://lifeinmind.org.au)

SANE: online forums | [saneforums.org](https://saneforums.org)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander: 13 92 76 | [13YARN.org.au](https://13YARN.org.au)

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and intersex: 1800 184 527 | [qlife.org.au](https://qlife.org.au)

Culturally and linguistically diverse: [embracementalhealth.org.au](https://embracementalhealth.org.au)



Scan the QR code to access additional information and resources to support those affected by natural disasters

[lifeinmind.org.au](https://lifeinmind.org.au)

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