



# spotlight on health

## VA Treats The Trauma Of Terror

(NAPSA)—Helping people deal with the aftermath of traumatic events is something that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has had considerable experience in. As a result, VA offers advice on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) that many Americans may be able to use.

VA experts say that traumatic events create fear, grief, horror, helplessness and a feeling of being overwhelmed. VA clinicians who study and treat PTSD say these are normal reactions to very stressful events, and they usually subside with time.

People directly affected by tragedy, young children, people who have been through other traumatic events, and those with emotional problems may need extra help.

Whether directly affected by traumatic events or helping others through a difficult time, there are things to keep in mind:

- Remember that everyone has his or her own pace for processing trauma. It is important to honor that unique pace and way of dealing with the situation.

- Talk to or spend time with people. Coping with stressful events is easier when people support each other.

- If talking does not feel right, other forms of expression such as journal writing, hobbies, art, or other enjoyable activities are often helpful.

- Find something positive you can do. Give blood. Join efforts in your community to respond to the tragedy. Talk to your children and



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other loved ones to make sure they are okay.

- For children, let them know you understand their feelings. Tell them that they really are safe. Keep to your usual routines. Keep them from seeing too many frightening pictures of the events.

VA experts say that if a person is still upset a month after the traumatic event, he or she may need to get extra help coping.

You can get more help at:

- VA National Center for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder: [www.ncptsd.org](http://www.ncptsd.org). This Web site provides general information about trauma responses, research, and treatment, and has information about self-care, treatment, veterans, primary care clinicians, and phases of responses in the aftermath of terrorism.

- PTSD Alliance: [www.PTSDAlliance.org](http://www.PTSDAlliance.org)—provides educational information on PTSD to patients, families and professionals.