

Health and Wellbeing after a traumatic event

Emergencies can be traumatic and overwhelming events, and can cause emotional, physical and financial stress.

Everyone will feel different in the days, weeks and months that follow. It is important to notice how you and those around you feel and behave in case extra support is needed.

It is important to know that support services and initiatives are also available to assist anyone impacted by the Dolphin Sands Bushfire.

Counselling and support services

[FindHelpTAS](#) is a self-funded community initiative. It is led by a partnership of Tasmanian community service organisations and supported by the Tasmanian Council of Social Services (TasCOSS). Below is a directory of services that may be helpful in disaster or emergency situations.

Services directory

There are many services waiting to listen and support anyone who needs advice or a friendly and understanding voice to talk things through.

- [Lifeline: 13 11 14](#) (24 hours, 7 days)
- [Lifeline Tasmania: 1800 98 44 34](#) (8am - 8pm, 7 days)
- [Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636](#) (24 hours, 7 days)
- [MensLine Australia: 1300 789 978](#) (24 hours, 7 days)
- [Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800](#) (24 hours, 7 days)
- [Headspace: 1800 650 890](#)
- [Rural Alive and Well \(RAW\): 1800 729 827](#) (24 hours, 7 days)
- [ReachOut](#)
- 13Yarn: 13 92 76 (24 hours, 7 days)
- Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467 (24 hours, 7 days)
- Alcohol and Drug Information Service and Family Drug Support: [1800 811 994](#)
- Alcohol and Drug Services (Department of Health): [1300 139 641](#)
- [Quit Tasmania: 13 78 48](#)
- [Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs Council Tasmania](#)

Australian Red Cross Psychological First Aid

The Tasmanian Government has activated the Australian Red Cross to provide Psychological First Aid to support individuals and communities impacted by the Dolphin Sands Bushfire.

What is Psychological First Aid?

Psychological first aid is a 'check in' service with people affected by an emergency, disaster or traumatic event.

People may experience strong emotional and physical distress reactions during natural disasters, this is a normal experience.

The sudden, disruptive nature of emergencies means that people will be exposed to uncertainty and stress. People will experience different degrees of distress.

Accessing Psychological First Aid

If you, or someone you know, would like to access Psychological First Aid, please head to the Recovery Centre at the Old Courthouse on Noyes Street, Swansea to talk to a Red Cross representative in person,

or,

email recovery@dpac.tas.gov.au and include a contact number. We will organise for Australian Red Cross to call you and check in.

Looking after yourself following a traumatic event and what to expect

It is normal for people to have a strong reaction following a traumatic event. You might experience one or more of the following reactions:

Shock

- Feeling overwhelmed
- Feeling numb and detached

Images

- Nightmares
- Flashbacks of what happened

Attitudes

- Feelings of failure
- Questioning your actions

Physical reactions

- Cannot eat
- Feeling sick
- Cannot sleep

Emotions

- Fear

- Sadness
- Anger
- Guilt

Social

- Avoiding people
- Needing to talk about it

Thoughts

- Confusion
- Forgetting things

Behaviour

- Increased alcohol consumption

Taking care of yourself and others

Staying in touch with friends and family and talking about how you feel will be important in recovering after a traumatic event.

When and where should I get help?

Do not wait until things become too hard or you feel that you are doing it tough before speaking to someone.

When to get help

- If you are worried
- There is no-one to talk to
- You continue to feel upset
- Physical feelings worry you
- Loss of hope or interest in the future

Where to get help

- Family and friends
- Your doctor
- Social Work Services at your local Community Health Centre
- Local community groups
- Employer assistance programs

Looking after yourself

- Keep in touch with people you trust
- Talk about it

- Exercise
- Try to eat something and drink water to stay hydrated
- Give yourself time
- Take a pause and breathe slowly

Looking after others

- Listen to their worries
- Help with simple things
- Give them time to recover
- Let them show their feelings
- Remind them to eat and rest
- Ask what is important to them
- Reassure them about safety security

Safe from family and sexual violence

Everyone deserves to live free from fear and violence. In an emergency always call Triple Zero (000).

During emergencies there is a greater sense of instability, insecurity and fear, loss of autonomy, and dependency on others for help. This can increase cases of family and sexual violence. Everyone deserves to live free from fear and violence.

The Safe from Violence website is Tasmania's central point of information for family and sexual violence.

Safe from Violence provides information, online resources and links to support services about family and sexual violence.

For more information, please visit www.safefromviolence.tas.gov.au.

If you or someone you know is impacted by family violence, call the Safe at Home Family Violence Response and Referral Line on **1800 633 937**.

If you or someone you know is impacted by sexual violence, call the Statewide Sexual Assault Crisis Line on **1800 697 877**.

Additional support information

For more information on additional support for people impacted by bushfire, including financial assistance, visit www.TasRECOVERY.com