

LESSON 6: EMOTIONS FROM A DISASTER



Youth Preparedness Initiative

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Pencil
- Paper
- Permanent marker
- Beach ball
- “Let’s talk about it!” question sheet

NOTES

“Denotes instructor statements to class.”

PROJECT AREA:

Disaster Preparedness

LESSON # IN BOOK:

Six out of six

TARGET AGE/GRADES:

Fourth through eighth grade

TIME LENGTH REQUIRED:

45 minutes

LESSON OBJECTIVES:

- Youth will be able to identify ways to help with their emotions from a natural disaster.
- Youth will be able to talk about their emotions.

VOCABULARY WORDS:

- **Depression:** Constant feelings of sadness and loss of interest.
- **Anxiety:** A sense of worry, nervousness, or unease, typically about an imminent event or something with an uncertain outcome.
- **Stressed:** Experiencing mental or emotional strain or tension.

INTRODUCTION TO LESSON:

Hand out blank paper to each student.

“After learning a lot about natural disasters over the last few lessons, let’s reflect and talk about how natural disasters make us feel. Some of us have experienced a natural disaster or have heard about one.

Write down your answers on the paper next to the number that coordinates with the question.

1. Have you experienced a natural disaster?
2. How has the hurricane, tornado, flood, etc., made you feel?
3. What do you feel when you hear a natural disaster coming to your town?
4. Have you ever felt depressed or had anxiety during or after a disaster? Why or why not?
5. Have you told someone how you feel about the natural disaster?

After answering these questions, we can see that natural disasters can be emotional for us to handle and go through. We feel stressed, depressed, anxious, scared or worried. It is an unknown time for everyone. You never know what will happen, and it is ok to feel those things. Today we will discuss the emotions you may get from your experience and how to move forward.”

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ACTIVITY SHEET:

“Let’s talk about it!”

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EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:

“ Any natural disaster is scary, especially living through one. Often several thoughts and emotions are going through our minds. We are still determining what will happen. Will we be safe? Should we evacuate? How can we prepare? There’s little time before this big destruction is coming! These emotions can take time for children, adults and communities to process. Sometimes, the loss of homes and destruction of a town can leave a lot of uncertainty. PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) is another emotional issue that can be common for children and adults who have gone through a natural disaster. All of these emotions could be from not knowing a lot about the situation, being unable to control the event, having little to no experience dealing with stressful events or not knowing how to communicate their feelings.

To manage these emotions, there are a few things we can do before the disaster comes. We can discuss what the natural disaster is and the emergency plan. We can make an emergency kit together to prepare. Getting together with family after the disaster and seeing familiar faces is also beneficial. After the disaster, make sure you are honest when answering any questions. Talking to others so that they understand can help. Ask them how they feel and if they want to talk about anything they are unsure of. In today’s activity, that is precisely what we will be doing — asking how you feel and discussing your emotions about natural disasters.”

ACTIVITY:

Let’s Talk About It

Write the numbers one through five multiple times on the beach ball with a permanent marker. Make the numbers big enough for the students to read them.

“ Today we will discuss emotions when a natural disaster comes through our town. You can share your personal experience if you want to, or you can say, in general, “I think people would feel...”

For this activity, we will get into one big circle. I will have a beach ball with the numbers one through five written on it. When someone throws the ball to you, you will tell me what number your right thumb lands on or is closest to. I have a list of questions that correlate with those numbers. You will answer my question to discuss your feelings or what you think others will feel. After you answer, you will throw the ball to someone else in the circle. Let’s start!”

REFERENCES:

Disaster and Its Impact on Mental Health: A Narrative Review. (2019 October). Retrieved From <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6857396/> (accessed October 2023).

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT!

1. Have you experienced a natural disaster?
 1. How does the term “natural disaster” make you feel?
 1. Did your family prepare for a disaster before?
2. Do you feel safe with your family when a natural disaster comes?
 2. What would make experiencing a natural disaster better?
 2. Do you talk to someone about your feelings?
3. What emotions do you still feel from a past natural disaster?
 3. What is one thing you felt during the disaster?
 3. How did you cope with your emotions?
4. Do your emotions overwhelm you?
 4. Has someone helped you understand what a natural disaster is?
 4. What is one thing you can do to make your home or community more prepared for a natural disaster?
5. Do you think talking about your emotions makes you feel better?
 5. If your emotions got too bad, would you tell someone?
 5. How has this activity made you feel?



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