The Connection Between Climate Change and Mental Health: A Federal Perspective

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CDC’S CLIMATE AND HEALTH PROGRAM
CDC’s Climate and Health Program

- Funded by Congress since 2009
- **Serve as a resource** for federal, state, local, territory, and Tribal health agencies
- **Prepare public health practitioners** to address the health effects of climate change
- **Provide tools, guides, and processes** to help assess vulnerability to possible health effects
- **Serve as a leader** in planning for public health effects of climate change
Community Needs Assessment during Disasters

- Assessed mental and behavioral health
  - Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill
  - Droughts
  - Flint Water Crisis
  - Earthquakes
  - Hurricanes
- Assessed recovery needs
  - 2018 and 2019 post Hurricanes
CLIMATE AND HEALTH ADAPTATION

Preparing for and Responding to the Health Impacts of Climate change
Two Complementary Paths to Resilience

Adaptation
- Manage the risks of climate change impacts
  - Flood protection
  - Disaster preparedness
  - Managed retreat
  - Upgraded infrastructure
  - Green urban
  - Active transport
  - Public health
  - Sustainable agriculture

Mitigation
- Reduce emissions causing climate change
  - Education
  - Afforestation and reforestation
  - Carbon capture (CCS)
  - Energy efficiency
  - Clean energy sources
  - Energy efficiency
  - Green urban
  - Active transport
CDC’s Framework for Climate & Health Adaptation

**BRACE:** Building Resilience Against Climate Effects

1. Anticipate Climate Impacts and Assess Vulnerabilities
2. Project the Disease Burden
3. Assess Public Health Interventions
4. Develop and Implement a Climate and Health Adaptation Plan
5. Evaluate Impact and Improve Quality of Activities
Adapting BRACE for indigenous communities

- Community connection
- Natural resources security
- Cultural use
- Education
- Self-determination
- Resilience
Adaptation Plans Come in All Shapes and Sizes
Resources for Communities

www.cdc.gov/climateandhealth/guidance.htm
ADAPTION IN ACTION

Successes from the Climate-Ready States and Cities Initiative
How New York City is Addressing Extreme Heat

Disadvantaged communities face increased risk of climate-related illness and death.

Be A Buddy was implemented to prepare residents and local organizations to check in on vulnerable residents.

Strengthened relationships between residents and local organizations to reduce vulnerabilities to extreme heat and other weather emergencies in four low-income communities.
CDC Environmental Public Health Tracking Portal

Ephtracking.cdc.gov/DataExplorer/
Heat and Health Tracker

Douglas County, NE

37
Number of days above 90°F since April 21
Number of projected heat days in 2050 is 40

19.7% Percent of Minority Population
National Median is 14.2%

10.0% Populations without Health Insurance
National Median is 18.2%

7.1% People with Limited English-speaking Ability
National Median is 0.8%

11.4% Living in Poverty
National Median is 14.7%
How the Tribal Village of Wainwright is Preparing for Thinning Ice

Recent warming has caused a thinning of ice that was previously stable for much of the spring and used for transportation by snow machines, creating hazardous travel conditions.

THE PROBLEM

“InReach” devices implemented for emergency communication. Allows for emergency communication when snowmobiles get stuck in unseasonably thin ice.

OUR SOLUTION

Money saved due to reduction in helicopter rescues for ice emergencies and improved community awareness of hazards of unseasonably thin ice on travel.

LASTING IMPACT

Source: CDC
With increasing **sea level rise** and more **intense hurricanes**, Florida is more prone to flooding and will need to set up **emergency shelters** more readily and make them more accessible.

The Florida Department of Health conducted **assessments of emergency shelters** and made recommendations to clarify shelter roles and the resilience of communication systems.

Emergency shelters are **better prepared to serve the most in need residents**, particularly those with disabilities, and the partnership with FEMA and Red Cross is an established and **ongoing collaboration**.
Taking Care of Your Emotional Health
Information and resources for adults and families.
More information

Helping Children Cope
Information and resources addressing the special emotional needs of children during a disaster.
More information

Helping Teens Cope
Information and resources for older children, teens, and young adults to help better cope after a natural disaster.
More information

Planning Resources for State and Local Governments
Information and resources for emergency planners, state, and local government to support mental health in emergencies.
More information

Response Resources for Leaders
Information and resources for government, faith-based, and community leaders to support their communities.
More information

Responders: Tips for Taking Care of Yourself
Tips and resources for emergency responders for resiliency and coping during a disaster.
More information
For more information, please visit our website:

Website: www.cdc.gov/climateandhealth/

Email: climateandhealth@cdc.gov