



TIPS FOR SUPPORTING FAMILY, FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES

MENTAL WELLBEING FACT SHEET 5

January 2020

After a major event, many people in our community need care, support and assistance from others. If someone you know has been involved, it can be difficult to know how to best support them in a major event.

The following tips will assist you to provide your support in a respectful and valuable way:

- Be there for them even if you don't know what to say. Simply spending time with the person may be the most helpful thing you can do.
- Allow people to cry, even if you are uncomfortable by such displays of emotion.
- Offer your assistance and a listening ear, even if they have not asked for help.
- Listen carefully if they decide to talk and try not to direct the conversation yourself.
- Make sure they will not spend the first night (or few nights) after the event in an empty house or alone.
- Help them with everyday tasks like cooking, cleaning, caring for the family and minding children.
- Reassure them and that they are safe if this is an issue.
- Give them some private time if you are sure they are coping.
- Don't take their anger or other feelings and emotions personally.
- Try to avoid cliches like 'you're lucky it wasn't worse' or 'I know how you feel' in an effort to console. Instead, share with them that you are sorry such an event has occurred, and you would like to support and assist them.
- Don't make assumptions about how they should behave.
- Sometimes touch can be very reassuring, but always offer beforehand (verbally or by gesture). Ask them if they need a hug.

Contacts (available 24/7)

CISS TEAM
1800 049 933

Ask for the CISS Duty Officer to be paged.

BENESTAR EAP
1300 360 364

Counselling and support for all NSW RFS members and their immediate families.

Senior Chaplains and family support are also available.

Content by **Benestar** 
Be your best you