

Community Wellbeing Toolkit (User Guide)

Feeling Safe,
Self Care,
and Getting Support.



Why use this toolkit?



- The toolkit is designed to be used for **anyone who may experience an emotional response to traumatic events** such as public outbreaks of violence, terror, hate crime or civil unrest.
- There is a children and young people's version and a version for adults – to reflect the way mental health and wellbeing support is set up in Liverpool.
- **This is an important part of any incident response** – how people are thinking and feeling will influence how they behave, access help and take care of themselves immediately after the event. Fear and anxiety can cause health and wellbeing to quickly deteriorate particularly for the most vulnerable and for any group or community who may be particularly impacted or at risk.
- **For some the emotional impact can be significant and lasting** - people with history of mental illness, substance use, previous or current trauma and especially those who are also isolated and lacking support are more likely to develop more severe symptoms and need additional help.
- **The impact of a traumatic event may be particularly strong for those present** including witnesses, local business employees and first responders.
- **All employers should also be mindful** that employees may be impacted in many different ways, they may have been personally impacted, they may find it difficult or triggering to be involved in the response or anxious to attend their workplace.

How this toolkit helps?



- **People vary significantly in their level of emotional literacy** which is the ability to understand and express feelings, recognise our own emotions, understanding the feelings of others, and managing emotions effectively.
- **People also vary significantly in their knowledge or perspective on mental health** which is commonly misunderstood.
- **These factors can make it very difficult for people to seek help or to offer to help** – even when they really want to.

- This toolkit provides a **simple and universal evidence-based guide** for connecting people with the information and help they may need to feel better following a difficult or traumatic event.
- **It can make it easier** for workplaces, community workers, education settings etc. to do something quickly to let their people know that it's understood that they may be struggling and connect them with some important sources of help.
- There may be other sources of help and support that can be added to tailor this toolkit to work better for where you are, **this includes informal support networks and activities that are good for wellbeing**.
- It's important to make sure that any formal source of mental health support that you recommend (e.g. therapeutic support) is **accessible** (ideally free) and **good quality** (ideally evidence based and part of a legitimate governing body).

How to use this toolkit?



- **People will benefit from guidance to use this toolkit** – especially following a major event where it can be difficult to prioritise mental health alongside the other emergency responses.
- **People you know or work with may struggle to know how to address mental health** – they will appreciate having this information to share.
- Consider including an email that makes use of this toolkit as easy as possible.
- **In your email/communication remind people:**
 - **Mental health is an important part of responding to difficult events** – the mental health impact will likely be felt by the most people and for many it will be significant.
 - **Help is out there** - the impact will be significantly reduced if people are encouraged to open-up and support one another informally and know when and how to get help.
 - **Share as widely as possible, and as soon as possible** - encourage everyone to spread this information across their networks, social media, friends and family – the information is designed to appeal universally to everyone, and the earlier people seek help and support the greater the impact will be.