Thank you for contacting the REMS TA Center with your request for good child-focused resources or examples of mental health response plans or guidance on the topic. In follow-up emails you stated that you were looking for mental health resources that could be used to help with county-wide planning in the event of a large disaster or emergency, with a goal of creating an approach or framework that could be adopted anywhere in the U.S. We applaud you for proactively seeking out information for how to better protect this vulnerable group!

As you're aware, the TA Center supports K-12 school and institution of higher education (IHE) communities, and their partners across the nation with emergency preparedness efforts in the areas of safety, security, and emergency management. As such, our work—including the creation of new resources—is tailored for these groups. Below we have identified TA Center resources that can help meet the needs of K-12 students and their caregivers across the country after an emergency, as well as information from other federal sources. In an email you also mentioned that some of the information or resources could possibly be integrated into a county emergency operations plan (EOP) annex, so we've included some basic information on planning too.

REMS TA Center Resources

The TA Center provides a variety of information, resources, and lessons learned on social, emotional, and behavioral health, including:

- **Lessons Learned**
  Several publications provide lessons learned from previous incidents, such as:
    - Paying Tribute to Deceased School Community Members, which covers topics such as considerations for erecting permanent school memorials, holding a memorial service, and handling anniversaries.
    - A Coordinated Response to Multiple Deaths in a School Community Helps the Healing Begin, which describes how a school community responded to the deaths of seven middle school children through activities such as establishing a short-term counseling center and distributing information to families.
    - Bus Crash at Lakeview Public Schools, which describes the response to a school bus crash that injured sixteen elementary and middle school children and killed four. The Lessons Learned document describes how, for example, the district communicated with families and organized support services.
- Public Health, Medical, and Mental Health Annex. This Web page provides school and school district planning teams with considerations for what to include in a Public Health, Medical, and Mental Health Annex of their EOP. Additional resources are provided in the Related Resources pop up, found on the left of the page, such as Special Considerations for Mental Health Services in Rural Schools and a link to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention School Health Policies and Practices Study. More information on how to create, review, or revise an EOP—including annexes—is provided in the section below titled "Integrating the Needs of Children into EOPs."
- **Psychological First Aid (PFA).**
  PFA is an early, brief and focused intervention that can help reduce the social and emotional distress of children and adults during and after traumatic events. More information on Psychological First Aid for Schools (PFA-S), which is an evidence-informed intervention specifically designed to assist students, staff, and families, can be found in the:

- o A Closer Look section of the Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans (School Guide).
- o Helpful Hints publication Psychological First Aid (PFA) for Students and Teachers: Listen, Protect, Connect—Model & Teach
- o Implementing Psychological First Aid (PFA) in School and Postsecondary Settings Webinar. This archived webinar provided participants with a description of PFA, its role following an emergency, and its use in both the K-12 and higher education settings. Additionally, strategies for developing the necessary supports prior to an emergency, and for implementing PFA when needed, were presented.

- **Resilience Strategies for Educators**
  - o The TA Center currently provides a 6-hour training by request (TBR) for caregivers in schools and districts to better understand, and teach others, resilience strategies following emergency events. More information on the TBR, including how a training can be requested, can be found on the Trainings by Request Web page.

- **Responding to Bereavement and Loss**
  The TA Center provides two opportunities to learn more about developing a bereavement and loss annex for a school's EOP and training for response teams. These include:
  - o An online course, which takes participants through four modules over a period of 30 to 45 minutes.
  - o A specialized training package, which can be used by individuals to train others or to brush up on their own knowledge.

- **Suicide**
  - o Multiple resources are available in the Related Resources of the Threat- and Hazard-Specific Annexes page, including Youth Suicide in the United States: A Fact Sheet for Schools.

Federal Resources

Additional relevant information and resources are provided by the following federal sources:
- National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE). The NCHE provides research, resources, and information enabling communities to address the educational needs of children experiencing homelessness. The Center also supports educators and service providers through producing training and awareness materials and providing training at regional and national conferences and events.
- National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). The Psychotherapies Web page describes the different types of psychotherapy, such as cognitive behavioral therapy, and describes how the therapies can be applied and adapted to treat different mental disorders. One section of the page describes how psychotherapies can be adapted to the needs of children and adolescents, depending on the mental disorder.
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA):
  - o School and Campus Health. This Web page provides an overview of school and campus health and provides links to additional resources, such as information for educators, students, parents, and families. These additional resources include materials such as a toolkit for high schools to help prevent suicide.
  - o Trauma-Informed Approach and Trauma-Specific Interventions. This Web page describes SAMHSA's concept of a trauma-informed approach, including six key principles. The page also lists, describes, and provides links to some well-known trauma-specific interventions based on psychosocial educational empowerment principles.
  - o Disaster Technical Assistance Center (DTAC). DTAC prepares States, Territories, federally recognized Tribes, and local entities to deliver an effective behavioral health response to disasters. Support provided includes a Crisis Counseling Assistance and Training Program (CCP) and other resources.
  - o Disaster Distress Hotline. The Disaster Distress Helpline is a national hotline dedicated to providing year-round immediate crisis counseling for people who are experiencing emotional distress related to any natural or human-caused disaster. This toll-free, multilingual, and confidential crisis support service

is available to all residents in the U.S. and its territories. To connect with a trained counselor, individuals can:

- Call **1-800-985-5990** or text **TalkWithUs** to **6674**
- Call **1-800-846-8517** if they are hard of hearing or deaf
- Text **Hablanos** to **66746** if they are a Spanish speaker
  Individuals can also follow the hotline on Twitter at @distressline

- U.S. Department of Education (ED). The Tips for Helping Students Recovering from Traumatic Events Web page provides tips for various groups that have experienced a traumatic event, including students; parents or guardians; teachers; school psychologists, counselors, and social workers; coaches; and administrators.
- ED and the National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments (NCSSLE). Responding to Trauma in K-12 Schools. This Web page provides links to several archived Webinars on trauma in K-12 schools, such as Integrating Trauma-Sensitive Practices in Schools, as well as additional resources.

National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) Resources

The NCTSN was established by Congress in 2000 and is a collaborative effort between frontline providers, researchers, and families to help increase access to child-focused services. The NCTSN provides several resources to support mental/behavioral health after an emergency, including:

- Psychological First Aid for Schools Field Operations Guide. This guide includes worksheets in the appendix, such as "Connecting with others: for students," "When terrible things happen: for students," "Helping your family cope: for parents" and "Tips for relaxation."
- PFA Mobile App. This app can assist responders who provide PFA to adults, families, and children. The app allows individuals to review core actions, match interventions with stress reactions, hear mentor tips, self-assess, and assess and track survivors' needs.
- Fact sheets for Coping in Hard Times. These materials cover a variety of topics, including the need for a sense of safety, the ability to calm, efficacy, connectedness and hope. Fact sheets are available for Teachers, Counselors, Administration, Support Staff; Parents; and Youth (High School & College Age).
- Age-Related Reactions to a Traumatic Event. This two-page document describes how pre-school and young school-age children; school-age children; and adolescents may react to traumatic events and how to help.

Support from Organizations and Groups

Several national, state, and local organizations and groups may be able to provide mental/behavioral support to children after an emergency. These include:

- Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD). As you're likely aware, national members of VOAD include groups such as Save the Children, AmeriCares, and Feeding America that provide a range of services before, during, and after emergencies, such as mental/behavioral support. Individuals from VOAD organizations who may be able to provide the most support for your work in Arkansas and New York are:
  - Janice Mann, the Chair for the Arkansas VOAD. Janice can be contacted at 870-703-8359 or disaster@arumc.org
  - Peter Gudaitis, the Chair for the New York VOAD, who can be contacted at 212-669-6100 or pgudaitis@n-din.org
- Long-term Recovery Groups (LTRG). An LTRG is a cooperative body formed during or after a large emergency or disaster made up of representatives from NGOs—such as Save the Children—philanthropic groups, the private sector, and other organizations who coordinate with government representatives. Each LTRG is unique and may be formed at the local, regional, or state level. Generally, these groups coordinate and prioritize recovery services and support with one another to help with unmet needs of individuals, families, and others—including schools and children.

Integrating the Needs of Children into EOPs

In one of your emails, you mentioned that you may be incorporating information and resources into a county EOP annex. ED and the REMS TA Center recommends that schools and IHEs use the same planning process to create, review, or revise EOPs—or EOP components such as a Public Health, Medical, and Mental Health Annex—that jurisdictions across the U.S. use, as described in the Community Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101 v.2. The planning process is flexible and adaptable, may be customized to the building level, and is ongoing so it can continually help identify and prepare for the latest threats or hazards

For example, after a planning team is formed (Step 1: Form a Collaborative Planning Team), the team may identify through assessments that social, emotional, and behavioral efforts need to be addressed in the EOP (Step 2: Understand the Situation). Goals can be created that identify desired outcomes for before, during, and after an emergency and objectives can be established that are specific and measurable actions to achieve those goals (Step 3: Determine Goals and Objectives). Courses of action are then developed to accomplish those objectives (Step 4: Plan Development [Identifying Courses of Action]). After a draft of the EOP is written and approved (Step 5: Plan Preparation, Review, and Approval), schools and districts can implement the activities described in the EOP, including conducting exercises and training (Step 6: Plan Implementation and Maintenance). More information on the six step planning process for schools can be found by clicking here.

We hope you find the resources identified above helpful as you help meet the needs of children in emergencies. If you create material that may be of use to schools or school districts, we encourage you to submit it for consideration for inclusion in the TA Center's Tool Box. The Tool Box is an online repository of tools and resources developed by practitioners in the field and pertinent to the needs of school and higher ed practitioners as they engage in the process of school and higher ed emergency management planning.

Please do not hesitate to reply to this message or contact the TA Center with any additional questions on the resources contained within this document. For additional resources and information on school and higher ed emergency preparedness, please visit the TA Center Website or call us toll-free at 1-855-781-REMS [7367].

Thank you, once again, for contacting the TA Center. We appreciate you reaching out to us for assistance!