

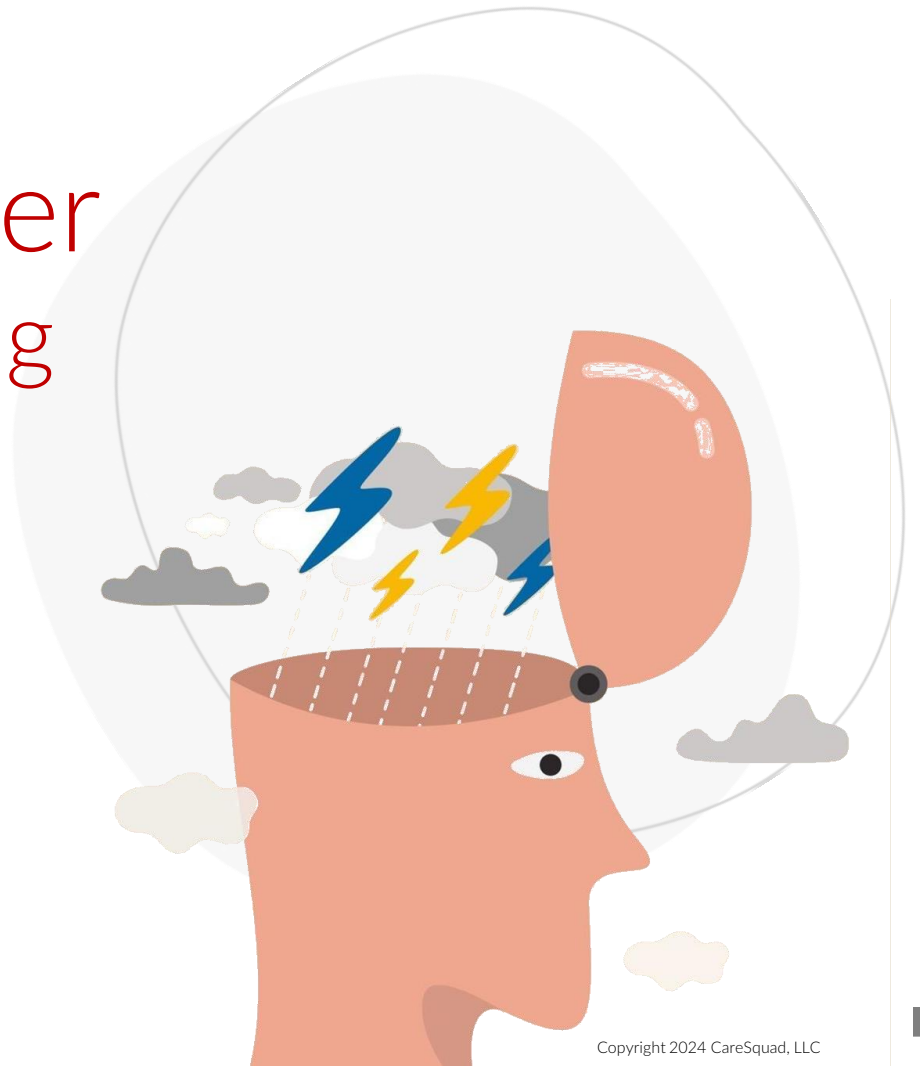
Extreme Weather and Your Well-being



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PRODUCTIVE - ENERGIZED - PEOPLE





What we'll talk about today!

- Interesting statistics
- Impact on emotional wellbeing
- Long-term symptoms
- Knowledge and empowerment
- Helping children with fear and anxiety
- Surviving and thriving

Severe Weather ...

- Hurricanes, floods, droughts, heatwaves, thunderstorms, blizzards, tornadoes, wildfires, mudslides, volcanos, climate change...
- Do those mere words cause you stress, anxiety, depression or aggressive feelings? If so, you are not alone!
- 70% of Americans worry about climate change, and 51% experience ongoing climate anxiety & helplessness

Think about your earliest memory of a severe weather event





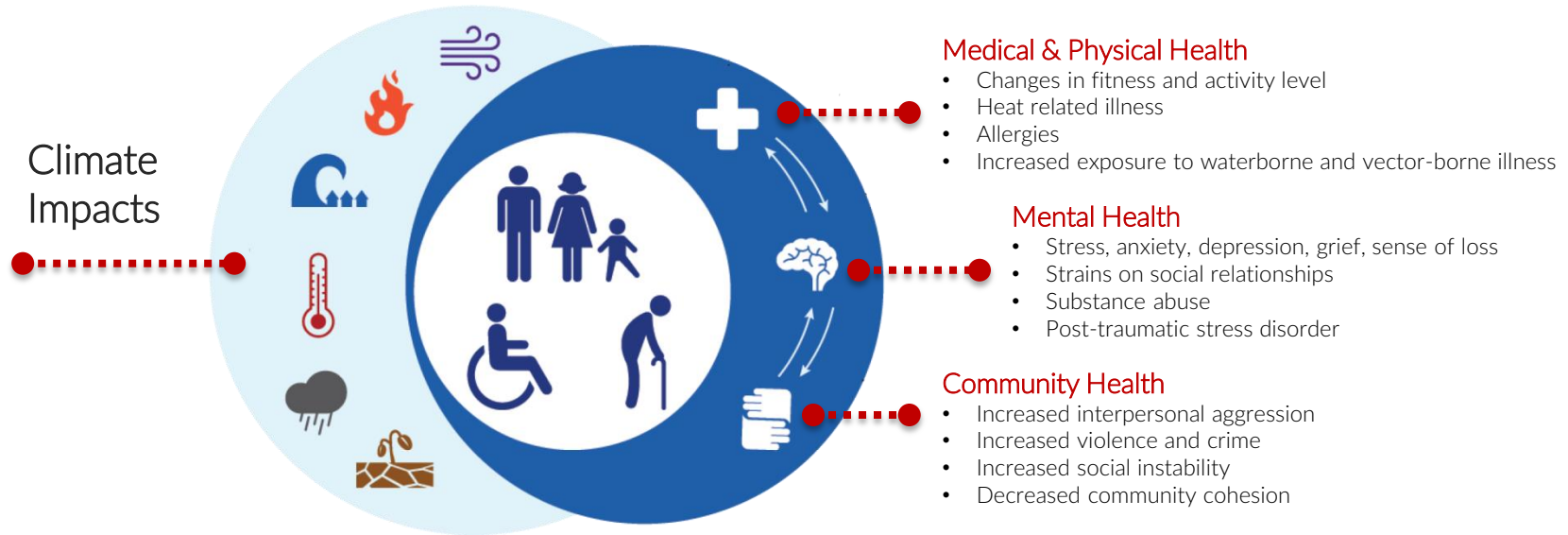
Interesting Statistics:

- 25% - 50% of those exposed to extreme weather are at risk of adverse mental health
- 54% of adults and 45% of children suffer depression after a natural disaster
- High temperatures increase risk of mental health-related hospital admissions & ER visits
- The number of weather-related disasters has increased by five times in the past 50 years



Climate Change can Wreak Havoc!

Impact of Climate Change on Physical, Mental, and Community Health



At the center of the diagram are human figures representing adults, children, older adults, and people with disabilities. The left circle depicts climate impacts including air quality, wildfire, sea level rise and storm surge, heat, storms, and drought. The right circle shows the three interconnected health domains that will be affected by climate impacts—Medical and Physical Health, Mental Health, and Community Health. (Figure source: adapted from Clayton et al. 2014).

How is our mental health impacted?

- Feeling a loss of control
- Feelings of uncertainty
- Anxiety regarding what may happen, or happen again
- Grief and loss
- Depression
- Substance Use
- Worry about the impact on loved ones (especially children)

What else?



Can you relate to this?

Low Mood

Low Temperatures
(below 50°F / 10°C) or
high temperatures
(above [70°F](#) / 21°C)

High Humidity

[Precipitation and Fog](#)



High Mood

Mid-range temperatures,
usually between 50°F and
70°F (10°C and 21°C)

High atmospheric pressure
and clear skies

[Sunlight](#)

Not just about psychological factors, but physiological factors, as well...

Extreme Events are Increasing

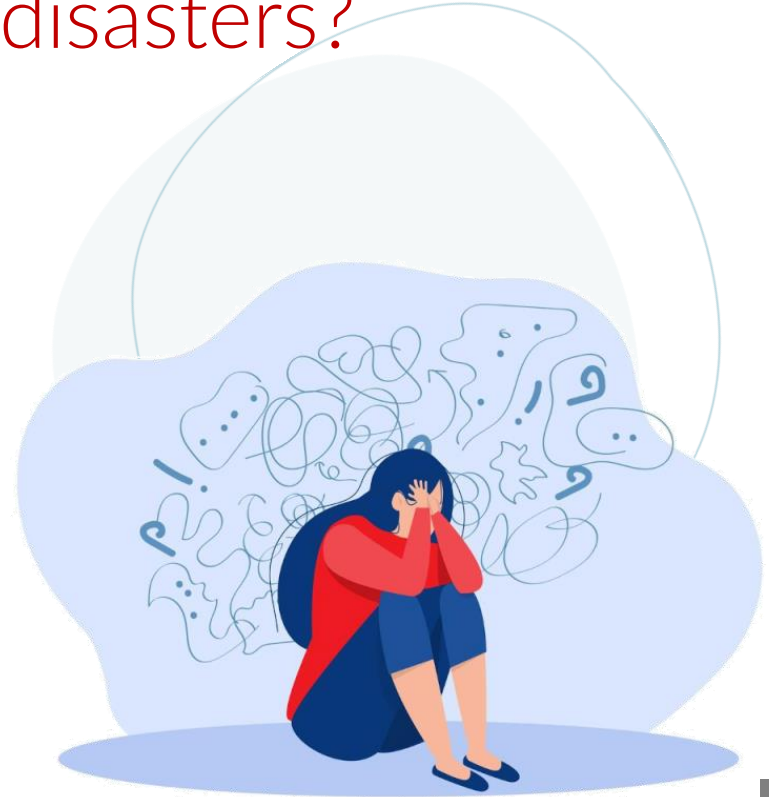
A recent study of 10,000 people ages 16 – 25 showed that:

- **84%** worry about climate change
- Over **45%** said concerns about climate change negatively impacts their daily life and functioning
- **75%** think the future is frightening
- **85%** feel that the government has failed to take care of the climate
- The number of weather-related disasters has increased by five times in the past 50 years



What are the most common mental health disorders following natural disasters?

- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Anxiety disorders including Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) = Eco-Anxiety
- Depression
- Chronic Stress
- Substance Use Disorders



Long-term Symptoms

- Difficulty concentrating
- Sleep problems
- Reduced motivation
- Constant worry about weather, making everyday tasks seem overwhelming
- Feelings of grief and loss (items, safety & security...)
- Feelings of grief over the loss of familiar natural landscapes
- Feelings of powerlessness

What else...?



Coping Strategies

- Proactive self-care; you have been traumatized!
- Counseling; consider cognitive behavior therapy
- Mindfulness
- Increase knowledge – *knowledge is power!*
- Help others impacted by weather
- Build personal and community resilience
- Form community support networks
- Nature can have a calming effect
- Engage in education and advocacy



Knowledge is Power!

- Become well-versed on the specific storms and weather events that impact your geographic area
- Form a support group, or join a disaster preparedness group
- Understand climate change
- Learn about how storms are forecast, what warnings and advisories mean
- Find an app that provides detailed radar data and learn to track storms yourself



Empower yourself!

- Identify what stresses you out – wind, thunder, lightening?
Knowing will help you to manage anxiety
- Construct a tornado and hurricane safety plan
- Plan how you will stay in touch with loved ones in the event of loss of power, or connectivity
- Evaluate your home and consider making fortifications prior to notice of an impending storm
- Edit your news consumption – find sources that deliver accurate news without added drama



Be Prepared!

- Be constantly prepared for any kind of storm that may occur in your area; keeping supplies on hand will guarantee that you won't get shut-out when everyone is out there gathering provisions
- Make sure your strategy includes an evacuation plan
- **FEMA** is a great partner in storm preparation, safety, and relief following severe weather events, as well as managing assistance funds and efforts.



FEMA

Go to: [FEMA.gov](https://www.fema.gov) for more information



FEMA recommends:

- ❑ One gallon of **drinking water** per person, per day (*for drinking and sanitation*); disposable **cups**, **plates** and **utensils**
- ❑ **Food** – A **3-day** non-perishable supply; **infant formula**; **pet food**
- ❑ **Battery-powered** or **hand crank radio** and a **Weather Radio** with alert
- ❑ **Flashlights** and extra **batteries**
- ❑ **First aid kit**, and any **prescription** (*or other*) meds your family will need
- ❑ **Whistle** to call for help, **dust masks**, **manual can opener**, **cell phone chargers**, **plastic sheeting & duct tape**, **garbage bags**, **moist wipes**, **disposable gloves**, **antibacterial sprays** and **wipes**
- ❑ **Fire extinguisher**, **matches** in a waterproof container



Storms are Frightening for Kids...

- Storms are scary, especially for kids who are sensitive to noise or light, or are frightened by thunder & lightning
- The anticipation of a storm can result in stress & anxiety

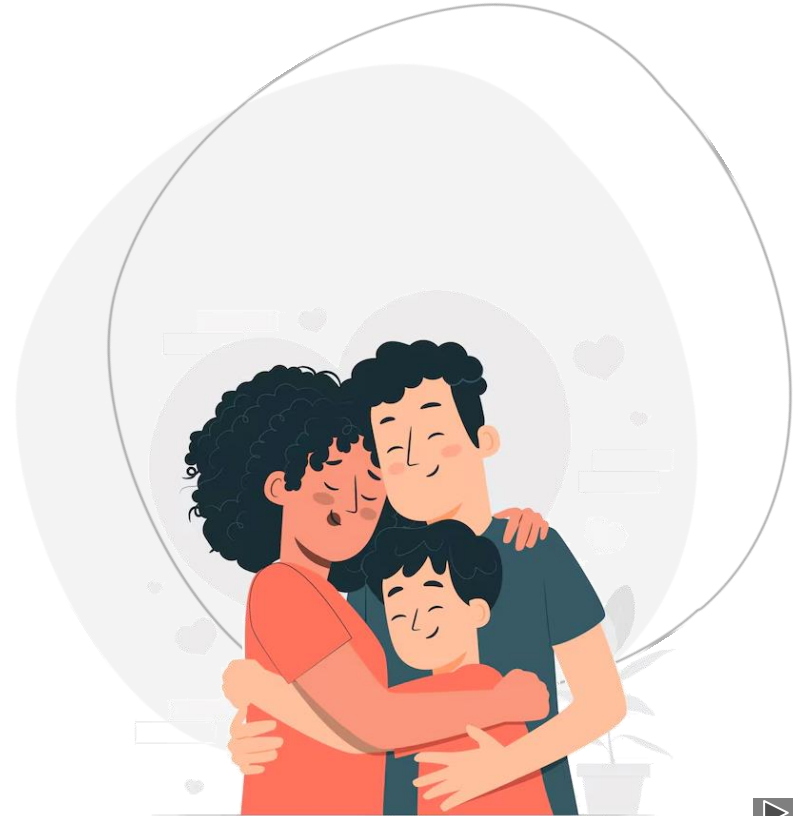
Kids need to know:

- Am I going to be safe?
- Are the people caring for me going to be safe?
- How will this affect my life?



Helping Children Deal with Anxiety & Fear...

- Take care of yourself first
- Tell them in advance that a storm is coming
- Offer reassurance
- Encourage them to ask questions
- Have frequent conversations
- Keep media to a minimum, and be cautious about the delivery
- Model your use of self-care to control your own storm anxiety



Survive and Thrive

- Focus on what you can control
- Avoid information overload
- Practice compassion, for yourself and others
- Take a break from climate news and thought
- Remember, you're not alone!
- Talk to a professional



Thank you for attending today's presentation!

For more valuable information and resources on this topic, visit app.caresquad.com

