

Psychological First Aid

Psychological First Aid (PFA)

- **PFA** is part of an organized disaster response effort designed for delivery by disaster response workers who provide early assistance to children, families and adults affected by disaster.
- **PFA** also assists emergency service workers by providing a framework for helping them understand and cope with their own emotional reactions.
- **PFA** is not mental health therapy, but is a manner of engagement based on an evidence-informed modular approach to providing supportive intervention on behalf of others.



Bolante.NET

285 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
info@bolante.net
503.714.5499

Threat Assessment and Disaster Behavioral Health Services

Psychological First Aid

Core Action Goals

1. Contact & Engagement

Initiate contact with person in a non-intrusive, helpful manner. Identify yourself, the organization you are with, and ask the person if you may talk with them.

2. Safety & Comfort

Goal is to enhance immediate and ongoing safety, as well as providing physical/emotional comfort. Ensure the situation is safe for both of you. Whenever possible, work in pairs.

3. Stabilization

Calmly orient people who are overwhelmed and distraught. Keep talking with them and let them know you are there for them. Reassure them you will do what you can to help them get whatever help/resources they need.

4. Information Gathering

Identify immediate needs and concerns, and gather any needed additional information. Ask them who they are, what the problem is, what specific help they need at that particular moment, etc.

5. Practical Assistance

Offer practical help to the person in addressing immediate needs and concerns.

6. Connection with Social Support

Help establish ongoing contacts with primary support. If person is going through heightened mental health crisis which requires immediate attention, contact a behavioral health resource.

7. Information on Coping

Provide information about stress reactions and coping to reduce distress and promote adaptive functioning.

8. Linkage with Collaborative Services

Link people with needed services.



**Note: This list of Psychological First Aid Core Actions is from the PFA certification course.*