Mental health impact on community members following mass violence incidences

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To improve community preparedness and the nation’s capacity to serve victims and communities recovering from mass violence through research, planning, training, technology, and collaboration.
We serve as the source for best evidence to achieve a social understanding of mass violence upon which civic leaders, mental health professionals, journalists, policy makers, and victim assistance professionals can rely. Our vision is to provide communities access to evidence-based information and resources needed to effectively prepare for and respond to mass violence incidents.

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Mental Health Impact of MVIs

* Posttraumatic Stress Disorder symptoms
  * Intrusion
  * Avoidance
  * Negative alternations in cognitions and mood
  * Alterations in arousal and reactivity

* Depression
* General anxiety
* Increased fears
* Anger
* Decreased perceived safety

- Most victims (~60%) will be resilient (Orcutt et al., 2014)
- Prevalence of related psychiatric disorders will decrease over time (Lowe & Galea, 2017)
Potential MVI Ripple Effects

• Exposure to MVIs increases risk of PTSD and depression among direct survivors. We would expect some other adults in MVI communities to have these disorders due to vicarious exposure.

• 2019 National Gallup Poll found that 48% of U.S. adults were concerned that they or a family member would be victims of mass shooting. We would expect these concerns to be higher in MVI communities than in US as a whole.

• 2019 Gallup Poll found that many U.S. adults took self protective measures and engaged in fear-related avoidance behaviors due to MVI concerns. We would expect protective measures and avoidance behaviors to be higher in MVI communities than among US as a whole.
COMMUNITY SURVEYS FROM THREE MVI-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES
Methodology of Community Surveys

MVI COMMUNITIES: El Paso, Texas; Parkland, Florida; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

SAMPLING STRATEGY: Area probability household sample of adults (age 18 or older) from each community identified using address-based sampling. Invitations mailed and randomly selected adults from each household selected for participation using most recent birthday method. **Total sample size = 2078.**

SURVEY DATA COLLECTION: English or Spanish versions of surveys self-administered online or via paper version.
SURVEY CONTENT: Content was comprehensive, but this presentation focuses on following measures:

• Demographic characteristics
• PTSD and Depression
• Concerns about violent crime and MVI victimization
• MVI fear-related protective measures
• MVI fear-related avoidance behaviors
• Risk and protective factors for PTSD and depression (i.e. prior physical/sexual assault and social support).
Community Surveys: Demographics

**Ethnicity**
- **El Paso**:
  - Hispanic/Latino(a): 20.4%
  - Not Hispanic/Latino(a): 79.6%
- **Parkland**:
  - Hispanic/Latino(a): 23.8%
  - Not Hispanic/Latino(a): 76.2%
- **Pittsburgh**:
  - Hispanic/Latino(a): 2.4%
  - Not Hispanic/Latino(a): 97.6%

**Race**
- **El Paso**:
  - Black: 25.0%
  - White: 3.4%
  - Other/Multiracial: 9.8%
  - Other: 6.2%
- **Parkland**:
  - Black: 16.6%
  - White: 71.6%
  - Other/Multiracial: 73.7%
  - Other: 71.9%
- **Pittsburgh**:
  - Black: 21.9%
  - White: 79.6%
  - Other/Multiracial: 6.2%
  - Other: 97.6%

**Income**
- **El Paso**:
  - $24,999 or less: 38.3%
  - $25,000 - $49,999: 29.2%
  - $50,000 - $74,999: 13.6%
  - $75,000 - $99,999: 10.8%
  - $100,000 or more: 8.1%
- **Parkland**:
  - $24,999 or less: 13.5%
  - $25,000 - $49,999: 16.2%
  - $50,000 - $74,999: 20.2%
  - $75,000 - $99,999: 10.6%
  - $100,000 or more: 8.1%
- **Pittsburgh**:
  - $24,999 or less: 39.5%
  - $25,000 - $49,999: 30.4%
  - $50,000 - $74,999: 22.6%
  - $75,000 - $99,999: 12.7%
  - $100,000 or more: 13.2%
### Percent in Each Community with Past Year and Current PTSD and Depression

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>El Paso</th>
<th>Parkland</th>
<th>Pittsburgh</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PTSD</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Past year</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Past month</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Depression</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Past year</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past month</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
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Summary of PTSD and Depression Findings

• Prevalence of past year PTSD higher than national rates:
  • 4.7% national compared to 67%
  • Past year PTSD was 5.8 times

• Prevalence of past year Depression higher than other national rates:
  • 8.5% national rates, compared to 15%
## Prior Physical or Sexual Assault and Risk of PTSD

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<th>El Paso</th>
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<th>Parkland</th>
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<th>Pittsburgh</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prior assault</td>
<td>No prior assault</td>
<td>Prior assault</td>
<td>No prior assault</td>
<td>Prior assault</td>
<td>No prior assault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Year</td>
<td>39.7%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>35.2%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Month</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
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Prior history of physical or sexual assault increases risk of PTSD and depression in the past month and year.

In El Paso, almost four in 10 adults with prior assault had PTSD in the past year. In Parkland and Pittsburgh, more than three in 10 with prior assault had PTSD in the past year.

Compared to those with no prior assault, those with prior assault were 9.2 times more likely to have current PTSD.

Impact of prior assault on depression showed similar pattern but was of lessor magnitude than for PTSD.
Take Home Points

• Clear evidence of mental health ripple effects – percent with PTSD and depression higher than in nation as a whole.
• Most adults in MVI communities were resilient and did not have PTSD or depression, but many do have problems and need some services.
• Prior physical or sexual assault victimization huge risk factor for PTSD and depression after MVIs. An MVI may exacerbate preexisting crime-related mental health problems.
• Good social support is a critical factor for reducing the impact of MVIs.
• Findings across the 3 MVI communities were similar, but there were many meaningful differences. One size may not fit all!
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www.nmvvrc.org
Over 50 Tip Sheets developed for:

- MVI victims, survivors and witnesses
- Victim service professionals
- Mental and behavioral health professionals
- First responders
- Criminal justice professionals
- Community and civic leaders
- News media professionals
Quarterly National Town Halls

* Identify subject matter experts from the field and from NMVVRC staff who can provide important and timely information and resources to Town Hall participants.

* Sponsor quarterly, virtual 90-minute National Town Hall meetings that include educational presentations; opportunities for participant questions and input; and an online evaluation process to continually improve Town Hall topics and meetings.

* Summarize discussions and findings from National Town Hall meetings to identify cutting-edge issues relevant to MVIs for review by the USDOJ Office for Victims of Crime and the NMVVRC.
Transcend NMVC

The NMVVRC has developed the free Transcend NMVC app to assist with recovery from the psychological and behavioral response that can occur following direct or indirect exposure to mass violence incidents.

Although the app was developed specifically for mass violence victims, people exposed to other types of stressful events are also likely to find the strategies and techniques in the app to be useful in their recovery, as well.
Mass Violence Podcast

• Over 20 podcasts from various experts in the field
• Range of topics including:
  • Civil vs. Criminal Trials and a Brief History of Victims Rights
  • Rights, Access, Equity, Resilience for all victims: 160 years of experience assisting crime victims and survivors
  • Incorporating cultural awareness and mental health care for mass violence survivors
  • Balancing victims’ rights and defendants’ rights during mass violence court cases
  • Hate crimes and mass violence
  • Mass Violence effects on children and teens
Resource Sheet Distribution

• List of resources

• Resources posted on social media and distributed to key stakeholders and partners

• #CityName
  #CityNameStrong

Following the tragic deaths of five people, the physical injuries to at least 48 people and regardless of the perpetrator’s intent in Waukesha, Wisconsin on November 21, we at the National Mass Violence Victimization Resource Center believe the resources below may provide some guidance for the community in the coming days and months.

Resources for Victims, Survivors, Families and Community Members:
• The NMVRC’s self-help app, Transcend NVMC, is available on both iOS and Android mobile phones
• Twelve Self-Help Tips for Coping with the Aftermath of Mass Violence Incidents | Read here
• Managing Distress: Grounding Tips for Crime Victims, Survivors and Family Members: Of Mass Violence Incidents (MVIs) | Read here
• Tips for Survivors: Coping With Grief After A Disaster Or Traumatic Event via the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration | Read here
• Mass Violence Resources from The National Child Traumatic Stress Network | Read here
• Mindfulness and Meditation to Support Resilience after Mass Violence | Read here
• Suggestion For Parents - Mass Violence Incidents | Read here

Resources for Community and Civic Leaders:
• Timeline of Activities to Promote Mental Health Recovery: Recommendations Before, During and Following a Mass Violence Incident | Read here
• Tips for Community Leaders: Managing Donations | Read here
• Tips for Community Leaders: Managing Volunteers | Read here

Crime Victim Compensation:
• Wisconsin Crime Victims Compensation Program | Read here
• Victims only toll-free call: (800) 486-6566; Local: (608) 264-5667; Fax: (608) 264-6668

United for Waukesha Community Fund:
• Waukesha County Community Foundation and United Way of Greater Milwaukee & Waukesha County have created a fund to support the needs of impacted families. More info here

About the NMVRC:
The National Mass Violence Victimization Resource Center is located at the Medical University of South Carolina, Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences, and receives funding from the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office for Victims of Crime. Learn more about us on www.nmvrc.org

Frequently Asked Questions About the Transcend NMVRC Mobile App
What is the Transcend NMVRC Mobile App?
This free app was developed by the National Mass Violence Victimization Resource Center to help those who have been affected by mass violence. Designed to help reduce the risk of developing problems and enhance recovery if you already have problems, Transcend NVMC:
• Provides information on common reactions to mass violence, crime, and other highly stressful events
• Guides you through step-by-step strategies to reduce the risk of stress-related behavioral health problems and promote recovery if you already have problems
• Connects you with access to victim/survivor services, financial, legal, and mental health resources

Is the Transcend NMVRC app just for survivors of mass violence?
The app was designed for those directly affected by mass violence and their families and friends, but it may also be useful for:
• Victim service providers, law enforcement officials, other first responders and health care professionals who respond to mass violence incidents, mass casualty incidents, or other violent crimes
• Others in communities that have experienced mass violence
• People who have had an extremely stressful experience with which they are having trouble coping

What topics are covered? Transcend offers written explanations, active exercises, and animated videos that highlight strategies to help reduce stress and mental health difficulties for mass violence survivors. Topics include:
• About - An overview of common reactions to mass violence and steps to recovery
• Calm Your Body - Highlights the impact of mass violence on your body and provides ways to promote relaxation, sleep and physical well-being
• Ease Your Mind - Explains how mass violence can affect the way you think and strategies to ease your stressed mind
• Get Up and Move - Explains the importance of remaining active and involved with others, while also helping to generate ideas for re-engaging with people and the world around you
• Give-with Less - Provides coping strategies and activities to help those who are grieving a loss
• Reach Out - Highlights the role of social support in recovery and ways through personal strategies you can use to increase your social support network as you recover
• Help Others - Provides information and strategies about how to help survivors of mass violence
• Get Help Now - Provides information about accessing victim, financial, and legal assistance. This section can also help you get immediate help or connect you with a therapist in your area

How can I find the app? From a smartphone or tablet, download the Transcend app from the Google Play Store or Apple App Store. As mentioned, it’s free.

How do I get started? Once you create your account, you can get started in one of two ways:
• The “Personalized Recovery Plan” option: If you select the “Personalized Recovery” plan option, you will be asked to complete a brief assessment. You can complete this assessment immediately, come back to it later, or skip it altogether. When you complete the assessment, the app generates a recovery plan that addresses your specific needs. Then, just follow the plan that is recommended for you.
• The “Explore on Your Own” Option: You can also choose to navigate the app on your own. If you opt out of the assessment, you will go to the main dashboard and explore what’s most interesting to you.
Questions & Comments
Acknowledgements

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