



Center for Violence Prevention and Recovery

# Community Violence Intervention Program



Beth Israel Deaconess  
Medical Center



A teaching hospital  
of Harvard  
Medical School

*The Community Violence Intervention Program is committed to addressing the impact of violence on patients, providers, and communities by providing support and services for those who have been affected by violence.*

## Who Do We Serve?

- ◆ Those who have been a victim or witness to violence in their community (assault, mugging, witness to violence, etc.)
- ◆ Family members and friends who have experienced the loss of a loved one due to homicide
- ◆ Communities affected by violence (work groups, neighborhoods, colleges, etc.)
- ◆ Providers working with those who have experienced violence

## Services Include:

- ◆ Emergency department services 24 hrs/day offering medical care, forensic evidence collection, and crisis counseling
- ◆ Crisis counseling and trauma focused therapy
- ◆ Homicide bereavement services
- ◆ Support groups
- ◆ Victim advocacy and consultation
- ◆ Secondary traumatic stress consultation and groups for providers
- ◆ Provider consultation

All services are private, confidential, and free.

## How To Contact Our Program:

- ◆ Call 617.667.8141 Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 5:00 pm
- ◆ To page during these hours, dial 617.632.7243, page ID number 31389
- ◆ [www.bidmc.harvard.edu/violenceprevention](http://www.bidmc.harvard.edu/violenceprevention)

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## Common Reactions to Trauma

Some common reactions to trauma are listed below. We encourage you to be gentle with yourself and to reach out to those who care about you for support. Although each person reacts differently, it is normal to experience some or all of the following emotions. These feelings do not disappear immediately; it takes time and support to heal from a traumatic event. Meeting with a counselor or joining a support group is often very helpful in the healing process.

**Shock, numbness, confusion:** comprehending the reality of the trauma may be impossible; you may avoid full awareness of a reality too painful to absorb

**Excessive vigilance:** you are constantly watchful and on guard, as if you are expecting a sudden attack and do not want to be caught unaware

**Increased reactivity:** you are easily startled, others perceive you as “jumpy”, you may lose your temper over relatively minor matters, or be unable to concentrate

**Intrusive recollections:** distressing images, thoughts, and memories of the traumatic event arise spontaneously and get in your way as you try to focus on daily tasks

**Anger, resentment:** rage toward those who committed the crime is normal; however, you may find yourself taking out the anger on others, such as friends, relatives, or strangers

**Guilt:** you may feel responsible for being unable to protect a loved one, or simply for having survived yourself

**Physical complaints:** headaches, sleep and appetite change, nausea, or fatigue

**Withdrawal, isolation, avoidance:** you may feel reluctant to go out, or unable to participate in activities you used to enjoy; you may seek to avoid reminders of the trauma or loss

**Fear, anxiety, panic:** you may feel the world is no longer safe or predictable

**Pessimism:** you may have a sense of a foreshortened future, for example, you may not expect to have a full life span or to reach normal milestones

**Disorganized, distracted:** you may be unable to perform routine activities, such as making out shopping lists or paying bills

**Sudden, temporary upsurges of grief:** you are overwhelmed by intense sorrow and anguish even months or years after your loss, when there are “triggers” such as anniversaries



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