



**Mental Health America of Franklin County**  
2323 W. Fifth Ave. Suite 160, Columbus, OH 43204  
Telephone: (614) 221-1441 Fax: (614) 221-1491  
info@mhafc.org www.mhafc.org

## Tips for Dealing With Terrorism

---

### Dealing With The Unexpected

Terrorist attacks are intended to cause physical and psychological harm. In an age when horrific images of events are immediately broadcast across the nation, many more people than those directly involved will suffer psychological harm.

1. Acts of terrorism can naturally cause children and adults to be confused, afraid, angry, or even feel powerless. It is important to acknowledge these feelings but not get stuck in them.
2. People who have suffered trauma in the past are especially vulnerable after terrorist attacks, and should consider reaching out to a mental health professional.
3. Most Americans can fight the feelings of anxiousness, loss and confusion associated with terrorism by staying calm and doing what they can to connect with and reassure their friends, family, neighbors and co-workers.
4. In extreme instances, tragedies can trigger, or retrigger, an extremely debilitating condition called post-traumatic stress disorder. PTSD can occur after exposure to a terrifying event or ordeal in which grave physical harm occurred or was threatened. People with PTSD can experience emotional numbness and sleep disturbances, anxiety, and irritability or outbursts of anger. People who are exposed to trauma—even repeated news coverage of traumatic events—can experience elements of PTSD without having the full-blown disorder.
5. For this reason, children's viewing of media images of terrorist attacks should be limited, and special care should be taken to talk with children and adolescents about their feelings and thoughts following a tragedy like this. Sometimes, in response to children's questions, adults can reassure them that they are safe and give information that is appropriate to the child's age and maturity.
6. During times of stress, people who have depression and other mental illnesses may see their condition worsen. These people should contact their mental health care provider, if they feel it is necessary. Remember that if someone threatens to commit suicide it should be handled as a medical emergency. Take the individual to the nearest hospital emergency room, or call Netcare Access at 614-276-2273.

7. For more information or for a referral to a mental health care provider, call Mental Health America of Franklin County at 614-221-1441. Mental health care is available even for those without insurance through local treatment centers funded by the ADAMH Board of Franklin County.

**Mental Health America of Franklin County** is a private, not-for-profit organization, established in 1956. We help people navigate the mental health system. We are dedicated to promoting mental health in Franklin County through advocacy, education, and support services. Our programs include: information and referral to community mental health and alcohol/drug services; free support groups for people with mental illness and their families; an Ombudsman program that assists clients in navigating the mental health and alcohol/drug system; mental health screenings in English and Spanish; Pro Bono Counseling Program where underinsured and uninsured individuals can receive free counseling; community and professional mental health education including Get Connected; maternal mental health support and advocacy (POEM); and a quarterly newsletter featuring legislative updates and new happenings at MHAFC. We receive funding from the Franklin County ADAMH Board, United Way of Central Ohio, individuals, foundations, and corporations. To become a member or find out more information, please visit us online at [www.mhafc.org](http://www.mhafc.org).