Reactions of adolescents after a disaster, loss, or trauma:

- Grades dropping (difficulty focusing)
- Intense moods (irritability, more angry, withdrawn)
- Argumentative with adults
- Does not seem to be interested in things they once enjoyed
- Social withdrawal (staying by themselves more)
- Sleep difficulties (going to sleep, staying asleep, or sleeping all the time)
- Not caring about or expecting to have a future
- Does not want to talk about what happened and/or stays away from anything that makes them think about what happened
- Risk taking behavior/self destructive behavior (drug use)
- Guilty feelings about not being able to prevent what happened
- Thoughts, dreams, and/or intense feelings about what happened come back into their minds without wanting them to
- Wanting to get revenge

How parents can help their teen:

- Make time for your teen to ask questions. Provide factual and honest information about what happened. Listen for signs of guilt and let them know it is not their fault
- Provide safety/ask about feelings of revenge. Let your teen know that while it is normal to have these feelings, acting upon them is not acceptable
- Encourage your teen to hold off any major life decisions until reactions decrease
- Limit media exposure. Protect your teen from graphic images and adult conversations about what happened (including TV, newspaper, internet, radio)
- Encourage healthy eating, rest, and exercise
- Encourage age appropriate activities such as spending time with friends, family, and recreational activities
- Create list of “Things I can do to feel better” with your teen
- Give lots of hugs and show your love to them everyday

This handout was developed by Project LAST, which is funded by the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement (Orleans and Jefferson Parish), the Office of Public Health, Maternal and Child Development, the United Way, the Institute of Mental Hygiene and Metropolitan Human Service District (Orleans Parish)
Resources for families:

**Colorado Crisis Line:** 1-844-493-8255 or Text “TALK” TO 38255  
*Walk-In Location:* Littleton Walk-in Crisis Services  
650 S. Santa Fe Drive  
Littleton, CO 80120  
**Phone line and walk-in services are 24/7**

**All Health 24/7 Crisis Intervention:** 303-730-3303

**Sheridan Clinic Behavioral Health:** 303-781-1636

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** 1-800-273-8255

**Juvenile Assessment Center (JAC):** 720-874-3381

**Safe2Tell:** 1-822-542-7233

If you would like more information on the agencies listed above or would like to discuss emotional supports for your child or family further, please contact the mental health team member at your child’s school, or contact the Director of Mental Health, Pat Sandos, at 720-833-6620.