

Story Workbook

A Hurricane in North Carolina

A resource for people with intellectual
or developmental disabilities (I/DD)
and their care partners



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Mental Health,
Developmental Disabilities
and Substance Abuse Services

About this workbook

This book is created for people with intellectual or developmental disabilities (I/DD) who were affected by a hurricane.

Care partners can use this book to help explain hurricanes to the person with I/DD. It is written in plain language with visuals to support understanding.

This book is adapted from the Maui Wildfire Workbooks by Maya Matheis, PhD, MSW.

How to use this workbook

Story: “A Hurricane in North Carolina”

Read this story with the person with I/DD to help them understand hurricanes and what happens after.

Activity: “How I Feel About the Hurricane”

Use this activity to talk about how the person with I/DD feels about the hurricane. This can be used as a choice board.

Activity: “Ways I Can Care for Myself”

Use this activity to talk about what helps the person with I/DD feel better. This can be used as a choice board.

Activity: “My Hurricane Story”

Complete this activity together to help the person with I/DD process the hurricane.

Information for Care Partners

Learn to identify the signs of stress and trauma for people with I/DD and how you can support them.

Story

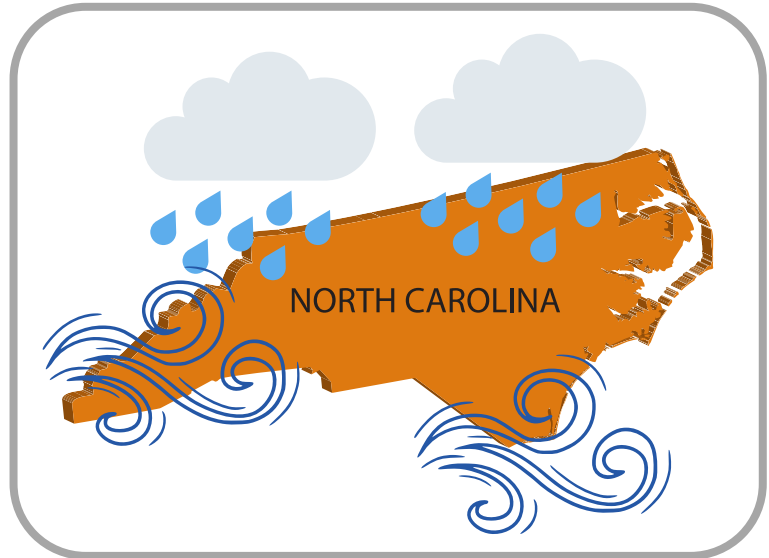
A Hurricane in North Carolina



How to use this story

1. Read this story with the person with I/DD.
2. Pause if they become overly stressed.
3. Let them look at this story on their own.
4. Re-read the story together as often as you need.

A hurricane brought lots of water and wind to North Carolina.



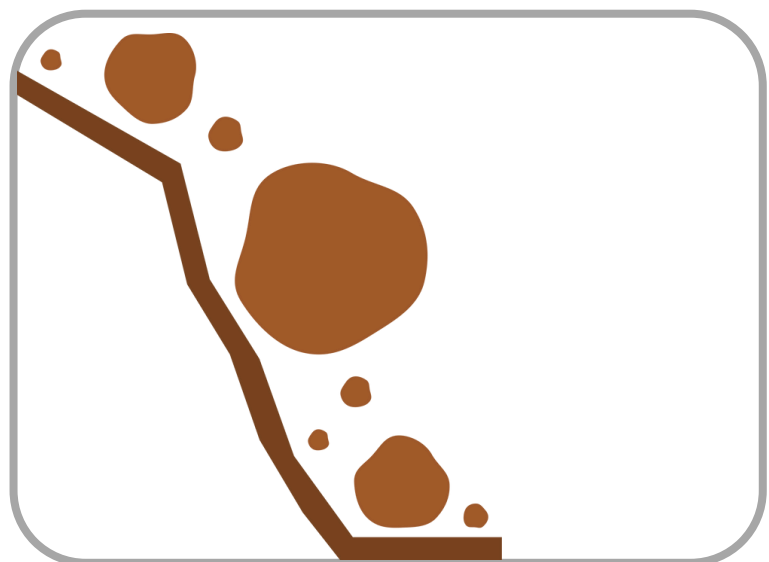
There was a lot of water where it shouldn't be.

This is called flooding.



And it caused mud to slide down hills very quickly.

These are called mudslides.



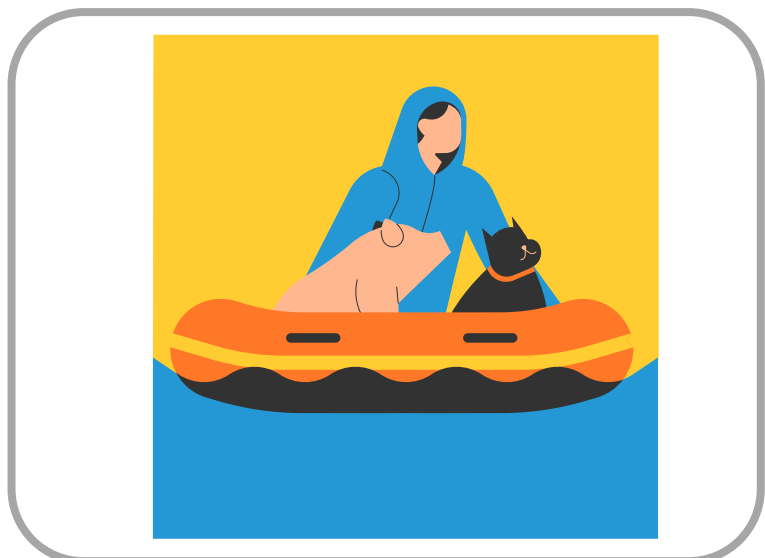
**Homes, buildings,
and roads were
damaged by the
flooding and
mudslides.**



**Many people
and animals
were hurt and
some died.**



**People and
animals had to
leave their homes.**



**People may
have big
feelings after a
hurricane.**



**They may feel
sad or worried.**



**They may
feel nervous.**



They may feel overwhelmed.



Any feelings are ok.



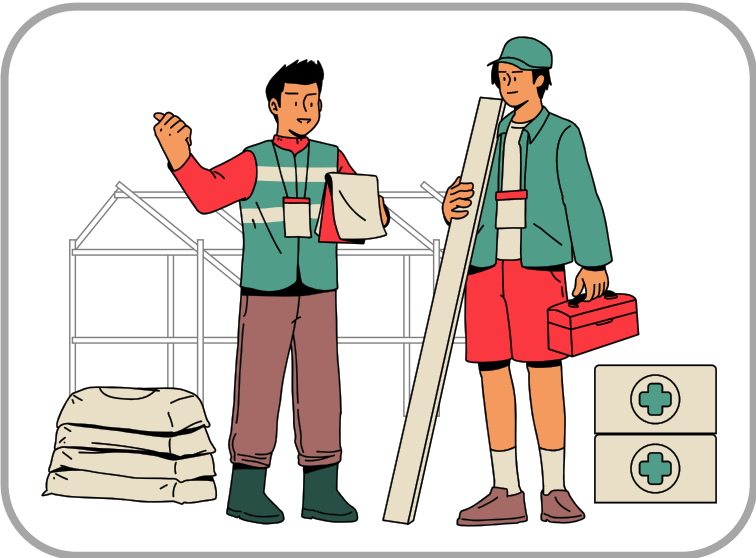
People are helping.



People are helping people and animals stay safe.



People are helping fix homes.



People are sharing water, food, and clothes.



**It is important
to take care of
yourself, too.**



**You may need to
ask for help if:**



- You don't feel
like eating.**



You may need to ask for help if:

- **You are sleeping more or less than usual.**



- **You have trouble making safe choices with your body.**

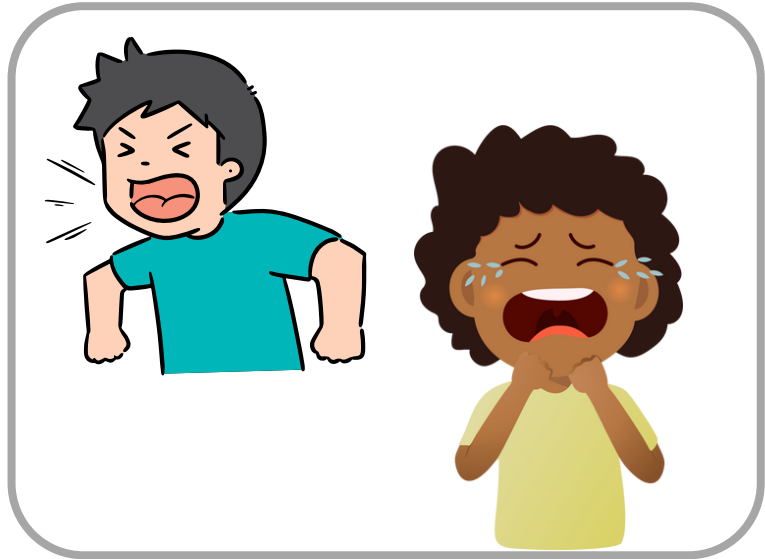


- **You do not want to talk or be with other people.**

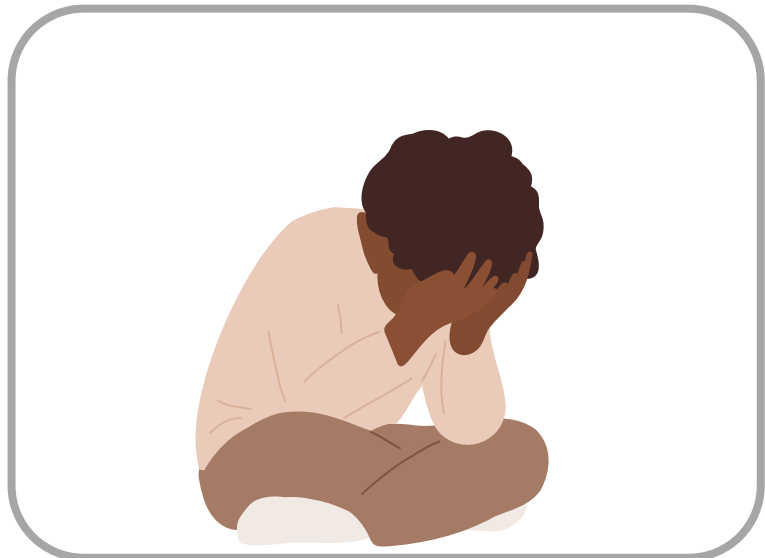


You may need to ask for help if:

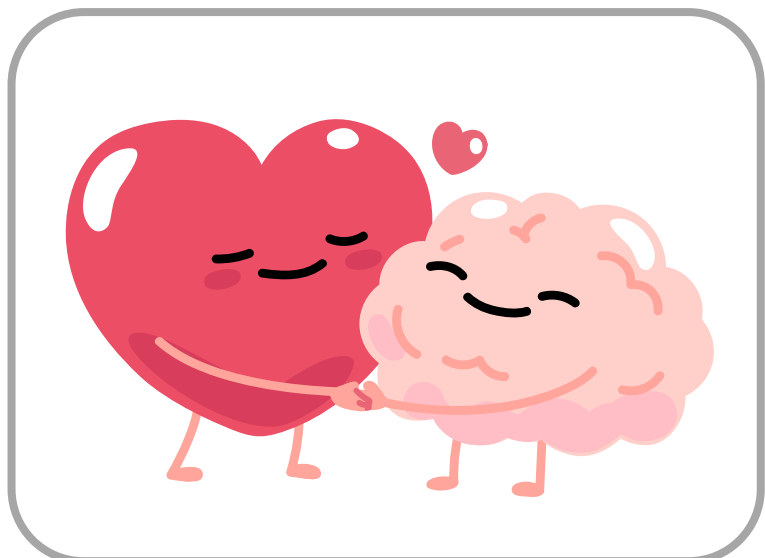
- **You are crying or yelling a lot.**



- **Your big feelings do not let you do things you normally do.**



It is important to take care of yourself. This includes your body and your feelings.



How I Feel About the Hurricane

The hurricane is a big event.

People can have big feelings about it. How do you feel?



Angry



Confused



Scared



Worried



Embarrassed



Lonely



Nervous



Sad



Stressed

What other emotions are you feeling?



Ways I Can Care for Myself

These are some ways to feel good and take care of yourself.
Which ones do you like?



Eat healthy foods



Dance



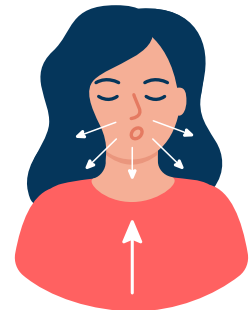
Sing



Get enough sleep



**Talk to people
you trust**



**Take deep
breaths**



Listen to music



Go outside if safe



Hug yourself

Ways I Can Care for Myself

These are some ways to feel good and take care of yourself.
Which ones do you like?



**Ask to go
somewhere quiet**



Stretch



Draw



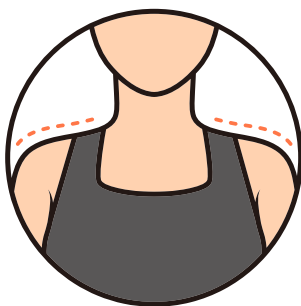
**Squeeze a
stress ball**



Drink water



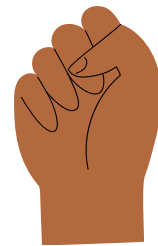
**Count to 10 and
back to 1**



**Roll my neck and
shoulders**



**Close my eyes
and rest my head**



**Make a fist,
squeeze and
hold, then relax**

Ways I Can Care for Myself

These are some ways to feel good and take care of yourself.
Which ones do you like?



**Ask someone
for help**



**Smile or laugh
(even faking it!)**



**Push palms
together**

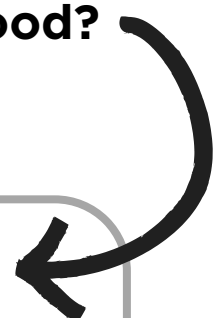


**Rub or tap
my temples**



Spin in a circle

**What are other
ways that make
you feel good?**



My Hurricane Story

Write or draw about your experience with the hurricane.
What did you see, hear, smell or feel?

What is happening now?

What can you do to feel safe?

Information for Care Partners

Common Signs of Trauma or Stress for People with I/DD

- Increase in physical complaints, such as stomachaches or headaches
- Increase in stimming behaviors, including vocalizing
- Decreased ability or interest to engage in typical activities
- Changes in interest in being with other people
- Increases in crying or yelling
- New or increase in behavioral needs
- Experiencing flashbacks or nightmares
- Repetitive statements about the hurricane or its effects
- Changes in energy and activity, including changes in sleep patterns

PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID

Simple Ways to Support
Individuals with I/DD

 LISTEN	Listen to stories and needs with empathy.	"I'm here for you."	"What do you need right now?"
 PROTECT	Ensure physical and emotional safety.	"Let's adjust the sensory environment."	"I think it's best not to watch the news right now."
 CONNECT	Build social connections and refer when needed.	"Let's sit with your family and read a story."	"I think this resource will help you."
 MODEL	Model coping skills and hopefulness.	"I'm going to take some deep breaths to calm myself."	"Things will get better soon."
 TEACH	Teach coping skills and provide information.	"Everyone is working together to rebuild."	"Let's listen to some calming music."

Adapted from Psychological First Aid for Schools (PFA-S)

Source: Maya Matheis, PhD, MSW

We're here to help

Crisis Services

988 Suicide and Crisis Hotline

Call or text **988**

Chat online at 988lifeline.org

Disability and Disaster Hotline

Call or text **+1 (800) 626-4959**

Email hotline@disasterstrategies.org

A 24/7 hotline by The Partnership to provide information, referrals, and resources to people with disabilities.

Weathering the Storm

Disaster response safety, mental health support, and disability-related resources

ncdhhs.gov/weathering-the-storm



Inclusion Connects

Connecting you to I/DD resources and services

ncdhhs.gov/inclusion-connects

