



## Mission

*The mission of a Crisis Response Shepherd is to ensure that every family impacted by crisis encounters God and finds physical, emotional, and spiritual restoration through the love and support of a trained Shepherd from Ark of Highland Lakes.*

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## Step 1: Reach Out

- Contact your assigned survivor and introduce yourself as a Shepherd from Ark.
- Let them know you're here to walk with them.
- Ask how you can pray for them and if they have any immediate or urgent needs.

**Tip:**

- Take time to discuss both immediate needs (shelter, food, clothing) (most of this has been handled) and long-term needs (housing, employment, counseling).
  - Write these down and share them with our team so we can help fill the gaps.
  - If they aren't answering their primary contact number, you may try the secondary contact number after a few days, but do not contact their "emergency contact" number.
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## Step 2: Physical Supplies or Support

- If they need basic supplies (clothing, toiletries, household items, furniture), send them to our The Ark Warehouse:
    - **Store Hours:** Monday-Saturday 11am-5pm
    - **Location:** 800 Industrial Blvd, Marble Falls TX 78654
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## Step 3: Survivor without a home church

Ask if the survivor is open to being “adopted” by a church. If you and the survivor are different denominations, we want them to be plugged into a home church.

**This may include:**

- Encouragement
- Prayer
- Practical Support
  - For example: You could help or encourage your survivor to make an Amazon wishlist and that church could collectively work together to purchase items from the list

If yes, the shepherd should email: [elyse@arkofhighlandlakes.org](mailto:elyse@arkofhighlandlakes.org)

**Include:**

- Survivor's name
  - Phone number
  - Email (if possible)
  - Preferred language (English/Spanish)
  - Brief summary of their situation
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## **Step 4: Financial Assistance (Casework documents)**

- If they need financial help:
  - Send them this: Survivor Flood 2025: Casework Document Checklist
  - Encourage them to gather all documentation needed for the type of help they're requesting
  - They can email it to [muckout@arkofhighlandlakes.org](mailto:muckout@arkofhighlandlakes.org) and we will contact them after or bring it to the ARK offices, 700 Ave T, Marble Falls, TX 78654
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## **Step 5: Walk With Them**

- Check in regularly
- If not, follow up soon after to let them know you're walking this journey with them

**Important Reminders:**

- Do not make promises about specific help
  - Reassure them that we are here to walk alongside them
  - Keep all shared information confidential
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# Shepherd Toolkit

## 1. Sample Text or Call Script

### Text:

Hi [Survivor's Name], my name is [Your Name] and I'm part of the team at Ark of Highland Lakes. I've been asked to walk alongside you in this recovery journey. I'm praying for you already and would love to hear how you're doing and how I can support you. Let me know a good time to talk or meet. You're not alone in this!

### Phone Call:

"Hi [Survivor's Name], this is [Your Name] from Ark of Highland Lakes. I just wanted to check in, introduce myself, and let you know I'm here to support you. I'd love to hear more about your situation and how we can walk through this together. Is now a good time to talk?"

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## 2. DOs and DON'Ts

### Avoid:

- Asking close-ended questions.
- Monopolizing the conversation. It isn't about you.
- Judging them or comparing them to yourself.
- Rushing them out of the conversation and into the "reason we're here."
- Insisting on visiting them against their will.
- Imposing your perception of their problem on them.
- Promising services you cannot deliver.
  - "We'll definitely get that taken care of."
  - "You're guaranteed to receive help."
  - "We can replace everything you lost."
- Or saying things such as:
  - "I know how you feel..."
  - "Time heals all wounds..."
  - "You'll get over this some day..."
  - "There is always someone worse off than you..."
  - "This will help your family grow closer..."

### Instead:

- Ask open-ended questions.
- Show interest in them.
- Use reflective listening – reflect back what you hear them saying.
- Match their tone, feelings.

- Encourage them in an authentic way.
  - Remember that God often works through relationships, and your purpose is to develop a relationship with this person.
  - **Say things like:**
    - “We’re going to walk with you through this.”
    - “Let’s gather what we can and see what help is available.”
    - “We’ll do our best to fill the gaps.”
    - “I’m so sorry this happened to you...”
    - “Most people who have gone through this react similarly to what you’re sharing...”
    - “If I were in your situation, I’d feel very \_\_\_\_\_ too.”
    - “What you are feeling is a normal reaction for a normal person that has experienced an abnormal event.”
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### 3. Follow-Up Rhythm

When	What to Do
Day 1–2	First contact (text or call)
Week 1	Help them work through the casework checklist and check on needs
After appointment	<i>MOST HAVE ALREADY HAD THIS</i>
Weekly	Quick text/call/prayer check-in/invite them to church
Ongoing	Share needs/updates with leadership

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### 4. Case Closed (*Check in with the shepherding coordinator*)

- Returned to their pre-crisis living standards. Safe and clean home.
  - Not returning phone calls or emails.
  - Not following guidelines or complying with agreed upon terms
  - Email: [elyse@arkofhighlandlakes.org](mailto:elyse@arkofhighlandlakes.org), Shepherding Coordinator
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### 5. Optional Debrief & Support for You

If you have any questions, feel overwhelmed or need to process anything, please reach out to Elyse Sellmann @ 325-423-3662. *You are not expected to carry this alone.*

### Know your limits:

- Acknowledge that you don't have all the answers.
- Know when to rest.
- Be kind to yourself and forgiving of mistakes in these situations.
- Know when you have done all you can do.

### Safety first

- In the case of emergencies, call 9-1-1.
  - Take steps to ensure safety for everyone involved (meet in public places).
  - Pray and invite God into every situation.
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### 6. Greater than 50% damage disclosure

- *The City* should have already met with survivors to go over next steps.
  - We do not do any rebuilding until *The City* checks off on it.
  - Please let them know to wait before rebuilding.
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## Contact List

- Shepherding Coordinator: Elyse Sellmann 325-423-3662
  - Long Term Rebuild: Nubia Kosoglow, Kim Holtzclaw 325-423-3662
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## Encouragement

- **Galatians 6:2** *"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."*
- **Matthew 11:28-30** *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."*
- **Isaiah 41:10** *"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."*