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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **AGPA RELEASES NEW PUBLICATION: *PUBLIC MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE DELIVERY PROTOCOLS: GROUP INTERVENTIONS FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE***

**NEW YORK, April 7, 2008** — The American Group Psychotherapy Association announced the publication of “*Public Mental Health Service Delivery Protocols: Group Interventions for Disaster Preparedness and Response*” edited by Robert H. Klein, Ph.D., ABPP, CGP, DLFAGPA and Suzanne Phillips, Psy.D., ABPP, CGP. The development and distribution of this publication was supported through a grant from the Jacob and Valeria Langeloth Foundation; funding for early stages of the project was also received from The Brown Foundation of Houston, Texas, The New York Times Company 9/11 Neediest Fund, The Time Warner Foundation, and the United States Center for Mental Health Services.

These protocols are a set of best practice clinical interventions, specific to various populations and transferable to any locale, in any type of disaster as well as applicable to the aftermath of war for the military, veterans and their families – their unifying focus is on the beneficial use of groups as a therapeutically and cost-effective community based intervention that attends to the restoration of trust and connection needed in the recovery from trauma. They were produced in a collaborative effort among top mental health professionals, with expertise in trauma and who delivered services in the aftermath of the events of September 11, 2001.

The need for such protocols is dramatically underscored by continuing national and international events including the devastating effects of severe weather such as hurricanes, tornados and floods, community violence, acts of terrorism and public accidents such as building and bridge collapses. The mental health needs of those in the affected areas require coordinated relief efforts for which written protocols are easily shared and implemented. These protocols are already being used in such efforts, as well as provide the basis for a series of national training events to support national and local preparedness efforts.

“The publication of these protocols and the accompanying trainings are contributing to preparing mental health workers, public agencies and others involved in public mental health to help people in future disaster situations,” said Connie Concannon, LCSW, CGP, FAGPA, AGPA President. “The added benefit is that the group focus allows for the healing to take place within the natural and existing support system of local communities in order to foster recovery and resilience.”

The individual protocols in the volume include:

- Children and Families Dealing with a Traumatic Event
- Caring for a Traumatized School Community
- Group Treatment with Traumatized Adolescents
- Responding to the Needs of Uniformed Service Personnel
- Lessons Learned in Group Strategies for Survivors, Witnesses and Family Members
- Support for Disaster Response Helpers and Service Delivery Workers
- Crisis Intervention at the Organizational Level
- Local Community Outreach Programs in Response to Disaster
- The Role of the Philanthropic Community in Disaster Response

For more information on this publication and trainings, please contact Diane Feirman, CAE, at (212) 477-2677 or via e-mail at [dfeirman@agpa.org](mailto:dfeirman@agpa.org).

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### ***About AGPA***

The American Group Psychotherapy Association is the oldest and largest professional association dedicated to the field of group psychotherapy, operating through a tri-partite structure: AGPA, a professional and educational organization; the Group Psychotherapy Foundation, its philanthropic arm; and the National Registry of Certified Group Psychotherapists, a standard setting and certifying body. This multidisciplinary association has over 3,000 members, including psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, nurses, clinical mental health counselors, marriage and family therapists, pastoral counselors and creative arts therapists, many of whom have been recognized as specialists through the Certified Group Psychotherapist credential. The association has 31 local and regional societies located across the country. Its members are experienced mental health professionals who lead psychotherapy groups and various non-clinical groups. Many are organizational specialists who work with businesses, not-for-profit organizations, communities and other "natural" groups to help them improve their functioning.

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