

Helping Japanese youth bounce back from disaster

February 25 2015, by Emily Anderson



Children are particularly vulnerable to traumatic events as they are still developing physically and cognitively

University of Queensland experts are working with Japanese schools to help identify and reduce the long-term effects of trauma in children after a disaster.

Professor Justin Kenardy and Dr Robyne Le Brocque prompted the initiative when a UQ delegation visited Japan after the 2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami, which claimed 16,000 lives and caused damage worth an estimated \$A270 billion.

"Children are particularly vulnerable to traumatic events as they are still developing physically and cognitively," Dr Le Brocque said.

Professor Kenardy and Dr Le Brocque had earlier developed Australian child trauma resources, as part of their work at the Centre of National Research on Disability and Rehabilitation (CONROD), a joint research centre of The University of Queensland and Griffith University.

The [CONROD Child Trauma Program](#) has been adopted as Australia's national response following a disaster. It has been delivered to schools, teachers and child mental health specialists around the nation.

Professor Kenardy and Dr Le Brocque presented workshops to academics, psychologists, teachers and other professionals in Japan late last year.

Their resources have been translated into Japanese and are available online.

"We were honoured to hear the stories of struggle and survival," Dr Le Brocque said.

"We look forward to continuing to help people in Japan, either through the online resources or further face-to-face training."

Recent events, including a landslide in Hiroshima and volcanic eruptions, have caused additional impact on the health and wellbeing of Japanese people.

"We believe this work is incredibly important and we are passionate about continuing it," Dr Le Brocque said.

The CONROD Child Trauma Program has been adopted and used in

other countries around the world, and Dr Le Brocque is returning to Japan in June to continue the program and to attend the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies Board meeting.

CONROD was established in 1997 and funded by the Motor Accident Insurance Commission to produce breakthrough research so that better health and lifestyle outcomes are achieved after road traffic injury.

CONROD's research includes studies on recovery from [psychological trauma](#) after a road traffic crash.

Provided by University of Queensland

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