

# Effective School Safety, Crisis Prevention, and Intervention



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(Pronouns: He/Him/His)

Panel

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# Session Objectives

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1. Increase participant awareness of best practice considerations related to school safety and crisis prevention, preparedness, and intervention;
2. Augment participant knowledge about implementation drivers that increase effectiveness related to school safety and crisis prevention, preparedness, and intervention;
3. Gain insight into real-world applications of best practices in school safety and crisis work from administrators leading the way in the field.

# Basis for this Presentation

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- ❑ PREPaRE school safety and crisis prevention, preparedness, and intervention curriculum
- ❑ National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)
- ❑ Developed by school professionals for professionals
- ❑ Comprehensive, research-based, evidenced-informed, team approach that fits within an MTSS framework
- ❑ Reflects best practices as well as directives from the U.S. Department of Education

# Why Are We Here Today?

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- ❑ Recovery is the norm BUT...
- ❑ Psychological trauma can lead to
  - ❑ School absenteeism
  - ❑ Academic decline
  - ❑ Exacerbation of preexisting educational problems
  - ❑ School behavior problems (i.e., aggressive, delinquent, and criminal behavior)
  - ❑ Long-term mental health challenges

# Why Do Schools Need this Training?

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- ❑ School crisis management is relatively unique and requires its own conceptual model
- ❑ School climate and safety are associated with academic achievement
- ❑ All schools will experience some level of crisis
- ❑ Federal law [e.g., Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)] includes significant emphasis on comprehensive school safety
- ❑ Good crisis planning and preparation help mitigate traumatic impacts of crisis exposure

# Current Policy and Law

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## **The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)**

- ❑ Requires state assistance to LEA's to address bullying, harassment, and discipline
- ❑ Requires annual reporting of safety, climate, bullying, and harassment data
- ❑ Authorizes funds that may be used to improve school safety, improve crisis planning, and response
- ❑ 33 states require every school and district to have a comprehensive school safety plan
- ❑ Increased trend in the requirement of various emergency drills, including active shooter drills
- ❑ All 50 states and DC have anti-bullying laws

# Five Missions of Crisis Management

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1. Prevention
2. Protection
3. Mitigation
4. Response
5. Recovery



# National Incident Management System

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- ❑ U.S. Department of Homeland Security (2008)
- ❑ NIMS is the framework for crisis response all federal and other entities receiving public monies must adopt
- ❑ Includes the Incident Command System (roles to be instituted during a crisis response)
- ❑ Interestingly, schools were not included in the NIMS adoption mandate



# PREPaRE Model

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<b>P</b>	<b>Prevent</b> and prepare for psychological trauma
<b>R</b>	<b>Reaffirm</b> physical health and perceptions of security and safety
<b>E</b>	<b>Evaluate</b> psychological trauma risk
<b>P</b> <b><u>a</u></b> <b>R</b>	<b>Provide</b> interventions and <b>Respond</b> to psychological needs
<b>E</b>	<b>Examine</b> the effectiveness of crisis prevention and intervention

# Crisis Event Characteristics

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- ❑ Perceived as **extremely negative**
- ❑ Generate feelings of **helplessness, powerlessness, and/or entrapment**
- ❑ May occur **suddenly, unexpectedly, and without warning**

# Crisis Event Characteristics

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**The type of disaster can affect an event's traumatic potential:**

Human-caused vs. natural

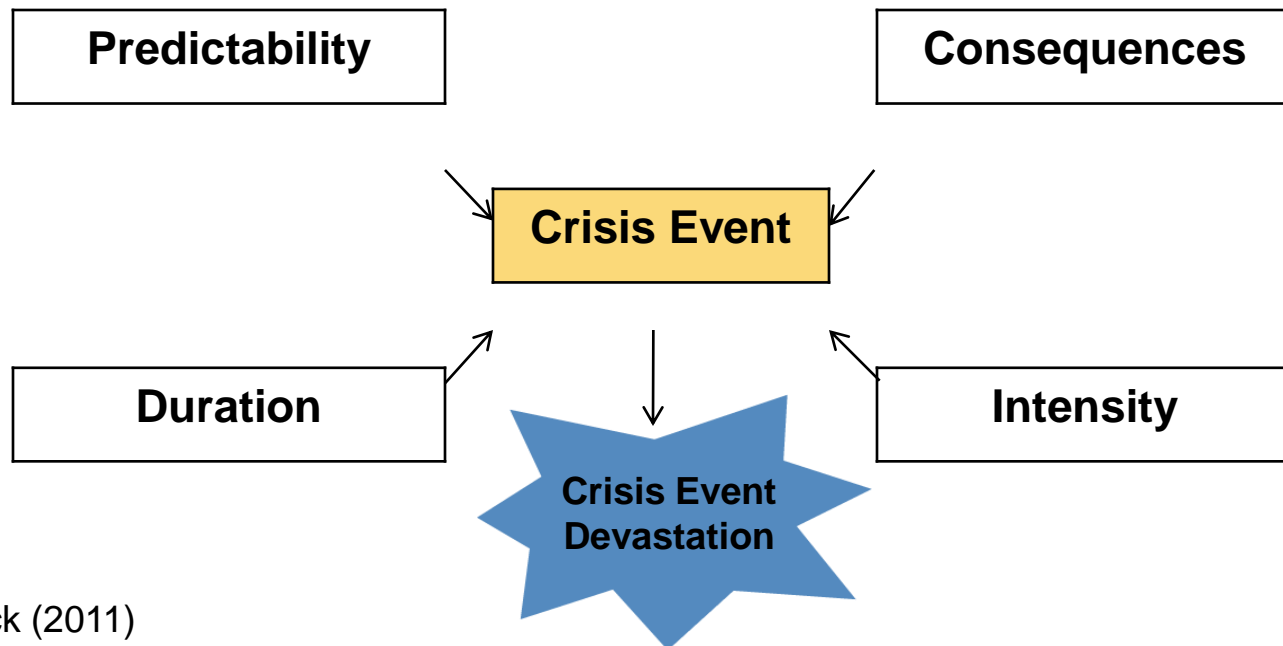
Intentional vs. accidental

Unpredictable vs. predictable

# Crisis Event Characteristics

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## Overall framework for assessing an event's traumatic potential...



# Crisis Event Characteristics

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## **Knowing crisis characteristics helps us respond appropriately:**

- *Minimal response*
  - Example?
- *Building-level response*
  - Example?
- *District-level response*
  - Example?
- *Regional-level response*
  - Example?

**What is the preparation level of many schools?**

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# Crisis Prevention

# Preventing Crises

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Physical **and** psychological safety are critical!

- **Physical Safety**

- Focused on the physical structures of the school environment

- **Psychological Safety**

- Focused on the emotional and behavioral well-being of students and staff members

# Physical Safety

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## Crime Prevention through Environmental Design

### **Natural Access Control**

- Visitor guidelines
- Locked entries
- Other??

### **Natural Surveillance**

- Clear line of sight outside of building
- Student supervision
- Other??

### **Territoriality**

- Clear boundaries on school grounds
- School building and grounds kept in good condition
- Other???



# Psychological Safety

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- ❑ School Connectedness
- ❑ Positive Behavior Supports
- ❑ Social-Emotional Learning
- ❑ Internal Resiliency
- ❑ External Resiliency
- ❑ Anti-Bullying and Bystander Education
- ❑ Home-School Collaboration
- ❑ Diversity, Inclusion, Social Justice

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# Crisis Preparedness

# Crisis Preparedness

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- ❑ Prepare for what is PROBABLE first and for what is POSSIBLE from there
- ❑ Data-based decision-making should prevail
- ❑ Conduct a vulnerable assessment
- ❑ Ongoing analysis of a school's safety, culture, and environment

# Plans and Teams

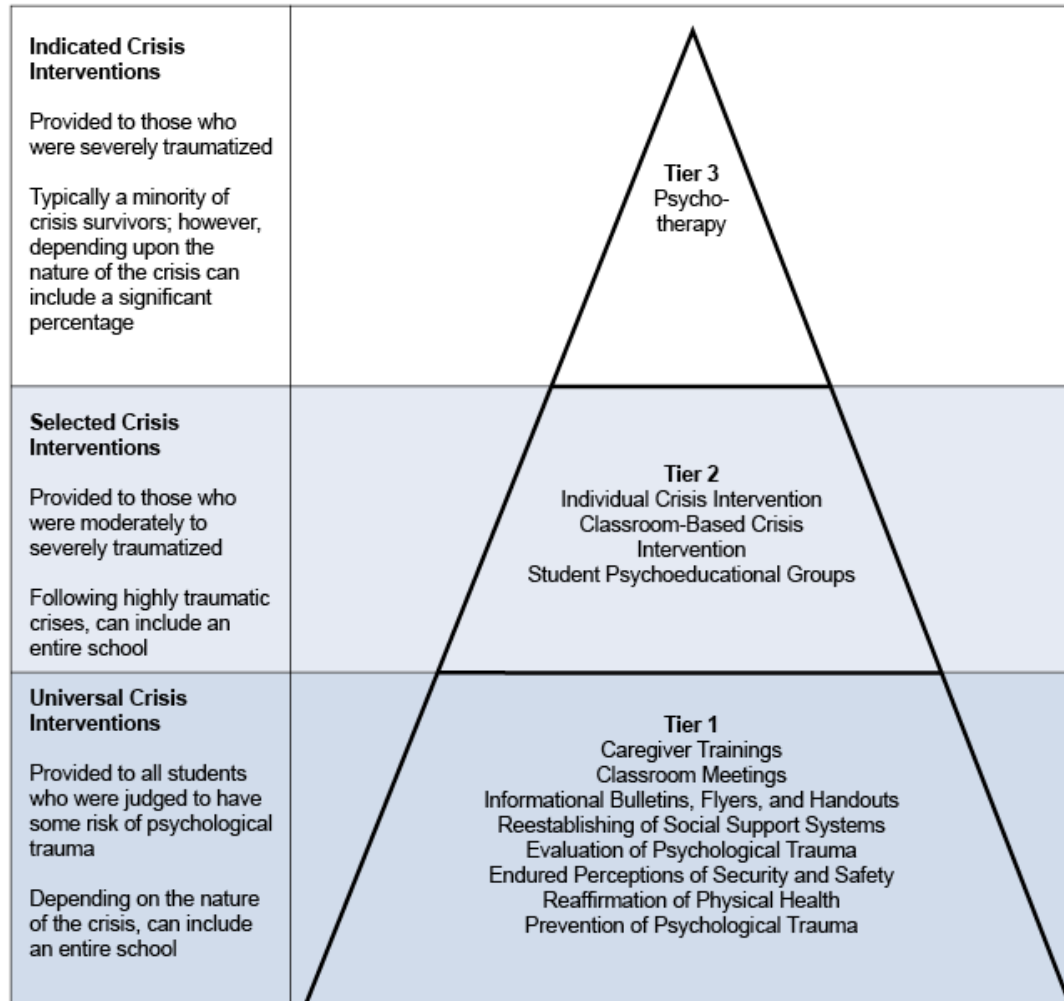
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- ❑ Safety plans and teams
- ❑ Crisis plans and teams
- ❑ Specialized crisis plans
- ❑ Incident Action Plans (IAP's)

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# Crisis Response

# Recovery is the Norm



# Assessing Student and Staff Needs After a Crisis Event

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- Triage based on risk factors
  1. **Physical Proximity**
  2. **Emotional Proximity**
  3. Vulnerability Factors
  4. Developmental Factors
  5. Pre-existing Conditions
  6. Cultural Variations



*Not everyone needs mental health support after a crisis.*

# Vulnerability Factors

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## **Internal Vulnerability Risk Factors - Examples**

- Avoidance coping style
- Low developmental level
- History of prior psychological trauma

## **External Vulnerability Risk Factors - Examples**

- Family dysfunction (e.g., alcoholism, violence, child maltreatment, mental illness)
- Poverty or financial stress
- **Social isolation**



# Additional Factors

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- Developmental
  - Early childhood
  - School-age
  - Adolescence
  
- Pre-existing conditions
  - Trauma
  - Mental health issues
  
- Cultural considerations

# Triage is Ongoing

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- **Primary Triage**
  - Begins right away after an event
  - Crisis exposure; personal vulnerabilities
- **Secondary Triage**
  - Begins after intervention begins
  - Some reactions are delayed
- **Tertiary Triage**
  - As school interventions conclude
  - Assess for longer term needs

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# Crisis Interventions

# How to Provide Assistance to Students and Staff in Need

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- **Minimal need (Tier 1):**
  - Reestablish social supports
  - Psychoeducational approaches
- **Moderate need (Tier 2):**
  - Group psychological first aid
  - Individual psychological first aid
- **Significant or longer-term need (Tier 3):**
  - Refer on for psychotherapy

# Caring for the Caregiver

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## Sampling of effects of responding to school crises

- Recurrent or intrusive crisis thoughts or distressing dreams
- Chronic fatigue, exhaustion
- Disturbance in sleep and eating habits
- Extreme anger at co-workers or loved ones



# Caring for the Caregiver

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## What to do?

- ❑ Limit shifts and rotate responders
- ❑ Monitor higher risk responders (e.g., survivor of another crisis)
- ❑ Promote a self-care culture
- ❑ Back to the basics: Adequate sleep, nutrition and exercise

Source: Brock (2011)

# PREPaRE Workshops

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- 1. Crisis Prevention & Preparedness – Comprehensive School Safety Planning**
  - Provides a broad overview of school safety and crisis team's roles and responsibilities, with a special emphasis on crisis prevention and preparedness.
  - 1 Day
- 2. Crisis Intervention & Recovery – The Roles of School-Based Mental Health Professionals**
  - Provides a specific examination of the school-based mental health professional's role and responsibilities, with a special emphasis on crisis intervention and recovery.
  - 2 Days

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# Panel Discussion



# Questions, Comments, or Needs for Clarification?

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# References

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# Presenter Contacts

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