Effective School Safety, Crisis Prevention, and Intervention

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(Pronouns: He/Him/His)

Panel
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Session Objectives

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

- 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?

- 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

Source: Brock (2011)
Why Do Schools Need this Training?

- 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

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

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

National Incident Management System

- 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P</th>
<th><strong>Prevent</strong> and prepare for psychological trauma</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td><strong>Reaffirm</strong> physical health and perceptions of security and safety</td>
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<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td><strong>Evaluate</strong> psychological trauma risk</td>
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</table>
| P  | **Provide** interventions  
| a | and  |
| R  | **Respond** to psychological needs |
| E  | **Examine** the effectiveness of crisis prevention and intervention |
Crisis Event Characteristics

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

Source: Brock (2011)
The type of disaster can affect an event’s traumatic potential:

- Human-caused vs. natural
- Intentional vs. accidental
- Unpredictable vs. predictable

Source: Brock (2011)
Crisis Event Characteristics

Overall framework for assessing an event’s traumatic potential...

- Predictability
- Consequences
- Duration
- Intensity

Crisis Event Devastation

Source: Brock (2011)
Crisis Event Characteristics

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?

Source: Brock (2011)
Crisis
Prevention
Preventing Crises

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

Source: Reeves, et al (2011)
Physical Safety

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???

Source: Crowe (2000); Crowe & Zahm (1994).
Psychological Safety

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

- 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

- Safety plans and teams
- Crisis plans and teams
- Specialized crisis plans
- Incident Action Plans (IAP’s)
Crisis Response
# Recovery is the Norm

## Indicated Crisis Interventions
- Provided to those who were severely traumatized.
- Typically a minority of crisis survivors; however, depending upon the nature of the crisis can include a significant percentage.

## Selected Crisis Interventions
- Provided to those who were moderately to severely traumatized.
- Following highly traumatic crises, can include an entire school.

## Universal Crisis Interventions
- Provided to all students who were judged to have some risk of psychological trauma.
- Depending on the nature of the crisis, can include an entire school.

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## Tier 1
- Caregiver Trainings
- Classroom Meetings
- Informational Bulletins, Flyers, and Handouts
- Reestablishing of Social Support Systems
- Evaluation of Psychological Trauma
- Endured Perceptions of Security and Safety
- Reaffirmation of Physical Health
- Prevention of Psychological Trauma

## Tier 2
- Individual Crisis Intervention
- Classroom-Based Crisis Intervention
- Student Psychoeducational Groups

## Tier 3
- Psychotherapy
Assessing Student and Staff Needs After a Crisis Event

- 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.

Source: Brock (2011)
Vulnerability Factors

**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

Source: Brock (2011)
Additional Factors

- **Developmental**
  - Early childhood
  - School-age
  - Adolescence

- **Pre-existing conditions**
  - Trauma
  - Mental health issues

- **Cultural considerations**
Triage is Ongoing

- **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

Source: Brock (2011)
Crisis Interventions
How to Provide Assistance to Students and Staff in Need

- **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

Source: Brock (2011)
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

Source: Brock (2011)
Caring for the Caregiver

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

   • 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
Panel Discussion
Questions, Comments, or Needs for Clarification?
References


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