



Responding to Critical Incidents – For Administrators

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Agenda

Key Concepts in Critical Incident Response


Administrator Sharing - Quentin Flokstra

Administrator sharing - David Michel

Key takeaways

Key Terms

Crisis: a time of intense difficulty/danger that disrupts the usual pattern of functioning.



Critical Incident: any incident, whether natural or human caused, that has a strong negative emotional impact on those affected resulting in a state of stress or discomfort and feelings of loss of control.

*Emergency Management Planning Guide for Schools, Districts & Authorities,
BC Ministry of Education 2015*

Types of Critical Incidents

1. Natural
2. Human
3. Accidents
4. Violence
5. Death





Some factors that determine the impact of a critical incident on your school community

1. Pre-incident functioning
2. Number of people involved or impacted
3. Complexity in managing the crisis response
4. Expectedness of the incident
5. Media attention
6. How close those involved are to the school community

Common Reactions After a Critical Incident

1. Emotional
2. Cognitive
3. Physical
4. Behavioural
5. Spiritual



COMMON REACTIONS AFTER A CRITICAL INCIDENT

DON'T ASSUME WHO WILL
BE THE MOST IMPACTED

EMOTIONAL

- feeling overwhelmed
- disbelief
- numbness
- fear
- feelings of helplessness
- strong need for recognition of what they experienced
- guilt and/or shame
- sense of loss
- anger
- denial
- irritability
- depression
- loss of emotional control
- loneliness
- anxiety

COGNITIVE

- difficulty concentrating or loss of focus
- memory challenges
- irrational
- confusion
- reduced attention span
- flashbacks
- troubled thoughts
- searching for blame or responsibility

PHYSICAL

- exhaustion
- lack of energy
- changes in appetite
- changes in sleep patterns
- nausea
- weakness
- difficulty breathing
- rapid heart rate
- heart palpitations
- headaches
- dry mouth
- unusual thirst
- dizziness
- elevated blood pressure

BEHAVIOURAL

- emotional outbursts
- erratic behaviour
- social withdrawal
- pacing and agitation or restlessness
- seeking people to talk to about the experience
- dreams/nightmares

SPIRITUAL

- seeking for meaning
- spiritual confusion
- lack of spiritual connection
- renewed spirituality

Goals of Crisis Intervention

1. Awareness
2. Assessment
3. Intervention
4. Recovery



Critical Incident Response Training

1. Cheri Lovre

- Crisis Management Institute (Oregon)
- 2-day Crisis Response Training

2. Kevin Cameron

- North American Center for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response
- 2-day Traumatic Events Systems Training (through Safer Schools Together)





10 Keys to Help in a Crisis

1. A CIRT has been established & trained
2. All school staff have had orientation to CIR
3. Have a Community Key Contact List & reach out to them
4. Have communication examples on hand
5. Develop a plan for managing media
6. Have effective & regular communication with staff/ families
7. Set up support spaces for students/staff
8. Identify who is impacted & provide counselling support
9. Plan for debriefing
10. Carefully plan remembrance activities

REMEMBER



- Establish a Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT)
- Provide training for your CIRT and orientation for your staff
- Staff need your calm in a crisis
- How you respond during a crisis will impact the recovery of your school community
- Critical incident debriefing for those exposed to traumatic and high-stress events helps to promote resilience and recovery