

# Florida Suicide Prevention Symposium

## PREPaRE Curriculum Overview

*Workshop #1 - Crisis Prevention & Preparedness:*  
The Comprehensive School Crisis Team

&

*Workshop #2 - Crisis Intervention & Recovery:*  
The Roles of School-Based  
Mental Health Professionals

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# The **P** | **R** | **E** | **P**a**R** | **E** Model

<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>a</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

# Assumptions

- The skill sets of school mental health professionals are best utilized when they are embedded within a multidisciplinary team that engages in crisis prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery.
  - By virtue of their professional training they are best prepared to address the psychological issues associated with school crises.
  - School crisis management is relatively unique and as such requires its own conceptual model.
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# Guidance and Direction

- U.S. Department of Education (2003) crisis management phases.
    - Prevention
    - Preparedness
    - Response
    - Recovery
  - U.S. Department of Homeland Security (2004).
    - National Incident Management System (NIMS).
      - Incident Command System (ICS).
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**WS1 Handout 1: Illustration of How the Components of PREP<sub>a</sub>RE Work Within Existing Conceptualizations of Crisis Phases, Levels of Prevention and Intervention, and Crisis Preparedness and Response Phases**

<i>Crisis Phase</i> (Raphael & Newman, 2000; Valent, 2000)	<b>Pre-Impact</b> The period before crisis Preparation & Planning   Threat & Warning	<b>Impact</b> When crisis occurs	<b>Recoil</b> Immediately after crisis threats end	<b>Post-Impact</b> Days/weeks after the crisis	<b>Recovery/Reconstruction</b> Months/years after crisis	
<b>PREP<sub>a</sub>RE:</b> School Crisis Prevention & Intervention Training Curriculum	<b>Prevent &amp; prepare</b> for psychological trauma risk					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prevent/Prepare for crisis</li> <li>Foster student resiliency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep students safe</li> <li>Avoid crisis scenes and images</li> </ul>				
	<b>Reaffirm</b> physical health, and ensure perceptions of security & safety					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet basic physical needs (water, shelter, food, clothing)</li> <li>Facilitate perceptions of safety</li> </ul>					
	<b>Evaluate</b> psychological trauma					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate crisis exposure and reactions</li> <li>Evaluate internal and external resources</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make psychotherapeutic treatment referrals</li> </ul>					
	<b>Provide interventions and Respond</b> to psychological needs					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Re-establish social support systems</li> <li>Provide psycho-education: Empower survivors and their caregivers</li> </ul>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide immediate crisis intervention</li> <li>Provide/Refer for longer term crisis intervention</li> </ul>					
<b>Examine</b> the effectiveness of crisis prevention and intervention						
<i>Level of Prevention</i> (Caplan, 1964)	Primary	Primary	Primary & Secondary	Secondary	Tertiary	
<i>Level of Preventive Intervention</i> (Gordon, 1983)	Universal	Universal	Universal & Selected	Universal, Selected, & Indicated	Selected & Indicated	
<i>Levels of Violence Prevention</i> (Dwyer & Osher, 2000)	Schoolwide	Schoolwide	Schoolwide & Early Intervention	Schoolwide, Early, & Intensive Interventions	Early & Intensive Interventions	
<i>U.S. Department of Education</i> (2003)	Crisis Prevention/Mitigation and Preparedness		Crisis Response and Recovery			

## **P** | **R** | **E** | **PaR** | **E** Workshops

Prevent | Reaffirm | Evaluate | Provide and Respond | Examine

- *Prevention and Preparedness – The Comprehensive School Crisis Team (1 day)*
    - Provides a broad overview of the school crisis team’s roles and responsibilities, with a special emphasis on crisis prevention and preparedness.
  - *Crisis Intervention and Recovery – The Roles of School-Based Mental Health Professionals (2 day)*
    - Provides a specific examination of the school-based mental health professionals’ role and responsibilities, with a special emphasis on crisis intervention and recovery.
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# Crisis Prevention & Preparedness Workshop 1 Overview

- **Introduction**
    - What is a crisis?
  - **School Crisis Teams and Plans**
    - Multidisciplinary and hierarchical crisis teams
    - NIMS and the Incident Command System
  - **Crisis Prevention**
    - Physical and psychological safety
  - **Crisis Preparedness**
    - Planning for crises
  - **Exercising and evaluating plans**
-

# Crisis Prevention & Recovery

## Workshop 2 Overview

- **Introduction**
    - Crisis events
    - Crisis reactions
    - Crisis intervention
    - The Incident Command Structure
  - **PREPaRE Model**
    - Prevent and prepare for psychological trauma
    - Reaffirm physical health, and ensure perceptions of security and safety
    - Evaluate psychological trauma
    - Provide interventions and Respond to student psychological needs
    - Examine effectiveness of crisis prevention and intervention
  - **Conclusion**
    - Evaluating and concluding the school crisis intervention
    - Care for the caregiver
-

# Today's presentation will highlight key components of both workshops

- **PREPaRE Model**

- **Prevent and prepare for psychological trauma**
    - What is a crisis?
    - School Crisis Teams and Plans
    - Crisis Preparedness
  - **Reaffirm physical health, and ensure perceptions of security and safety**
  - **Evaluate psychological trauma**
    - Levels of triage
  - **Provide interventions and Respond to student psychological needs**
    - Specific interventions
  - **Examine effectiveness of crisis prevention and intervention**
    - Care for the caregiver
-

## Research/Lessons Learned

- Normal recovery should be the expectation
    - Most people get better on their own when left to their own natural support systems.
  - If we intervene when not indicated, we may do harm.
    - Early interventions should be voluntary and include follow-up screening.
  - Estimating impact and psychological triage are critical. Events that are sudden, violent and have fatalities have greatest impact.
-

## Research/Lessons Learned

- Information helps reduce traumatization.
  - How the adults respond during a crisis has a significant effect on potential traumatization.
  - Students need to have their crisis reactions normalized.
  - Always view crisis response through cultural and developmental lenses.
  - Violent images on TV/in media harms kids.
  - Care for the caregiver is essential.
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# Introduction

All schools will experience a crisis  
of some magnitude.

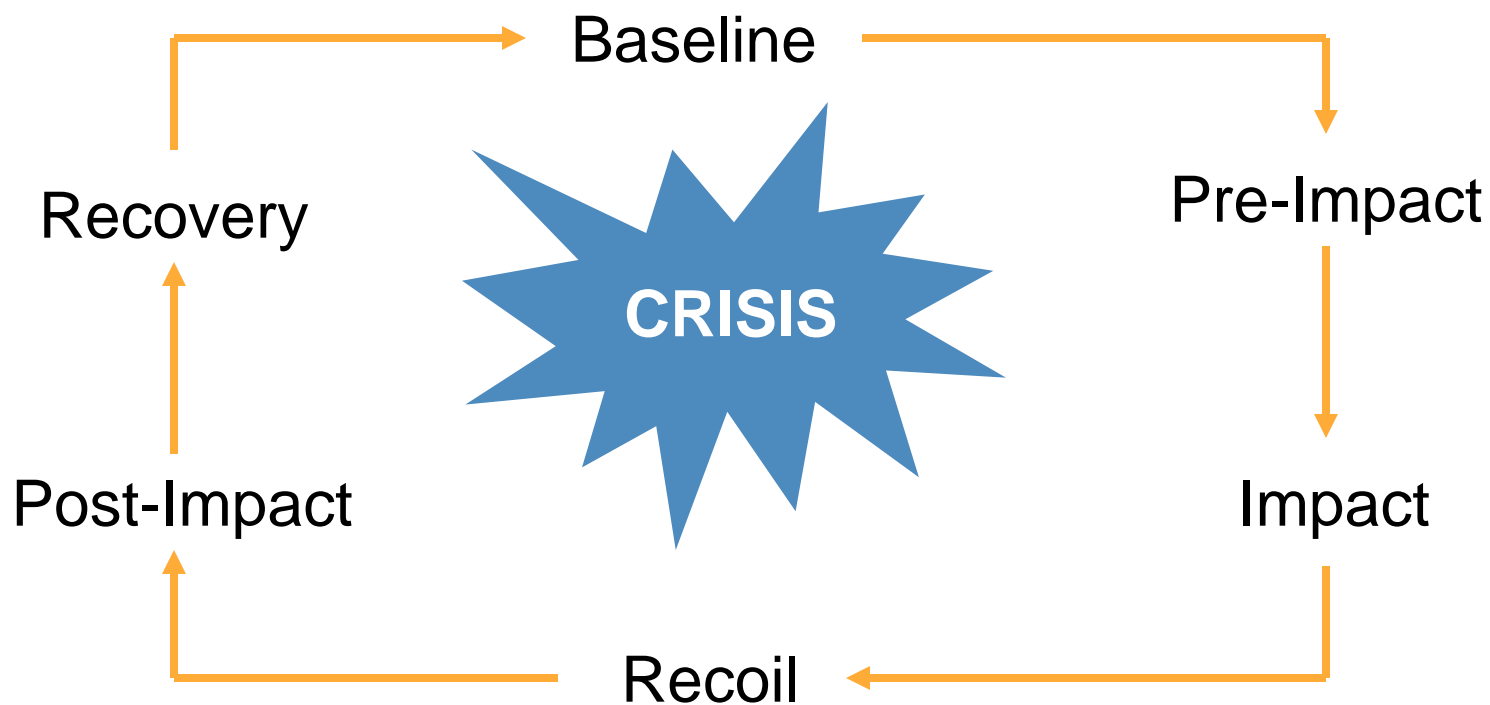
Is your school “prepared?”

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## Crisis Defined

- Sudden, uncontrollable, and extremely negative events that have the potential to impact an entire school community.
- Types of crisis events include:
  - Severe illness and/or injury.
  - Violent and/or unexpected death.
  - Threatened death and/or injury.
  - Acts of war and/or terrorism.
  - Natural disasters.
  - Man-made/industrial disasters.

# Crisis Phases



Brock, Jimerson, and Hart (2004)

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# **Prevent and Prepare: Advantages of a Team Approach**

- Builds specific crisis response capacity.
- Focuses on teamwork/support.
- Increases innovation/creativity and better decisions.
- Improves communication and information flow.
- Regarded by school psychologists as the most effective crisis preparedness strategy.

## School Crisis Teams Provide

- Leadership for prevention and preparedness of crises.
  - Structure and organization to immediate crisis response.
  - Student, staff, and family support through immediate, short-term, and long-term interventions.
-

# School Crisis Team Activities

- Crisis Prevention
  - Reduce the incidence of crisis events.
- Crisis Preparedness
  - Ensure response readiness for crises that are not, or cannot be, prevented.

# School Crisis Team Activities

*... Continued*

- Crisis Response
  - After a crisis event minimize crisis impact and restore equilibrium.
- Crisis Recovery
  - Repair crisis damage and return to baseline (or pre-crisis) operation/functioning.

# Role of School-Based Mental Health Professional

- Assume leadership roles in preventing student crises.
- Advise school leaders how to cope with crises.
- Evaluate current crisis response capabilities.
- *However*, < 10% have taken a graduate course in crisis prevention and intervention.
- School psychologists implement crisis response more than they develop and evaluate these efforts.

Allen et al. (2002); Astor, Behre, Wallace, and Fravil (1998), Furlong, Morrison, and Pavelski (2000); Knoff (2000); Nickerson and Zhe (2004)

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## Multiple Hierarchical Levels

- School Crisis Team (Building Team).
- District Team (District Resources).
- Community and/or Regional Teams (Community Groups).

Brock, Sandoval, & Lewis, (2001); Colorado Society of School Psychologists, (2005); Kline, Schonfeld, & Lichtenstein, (1995); Poland, (1994)

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# National Incident Management System (NIMS)

- Developed by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (2004).
  - Provides a common set of concepts, principles, terminology, and organizational processes.
  - All federal departments and agencies are required to adopt NIMS and the Incident Command System (ICS).
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# Incident Command System (ICS)

- A structure designed to be used across agencies and disciplines to manage emergencies.
  - Functions
    - Incident Command (the managers).
    - Planning and Intelligence (the thinkers).
    - Operations (the doers).
    - Logistics (the getters).
    - Finance/Administration (the payers).
-

# School Crisis Team Management

- District Level: Emergency Operations Center Director.
  - Usually Superintendent or designated representative.**and/or**
- School Site Level: Incident Commander.
  - Typically the principal.
  - If law enforcement involved, they are often incident commander.

Situation may necessitate a Unified Command Structure

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# School Crisis Team Planning & Intelligence

- These are the “thinkers.”
    - Gather information for the crisis team.
    - Document crisis needs and status.
    - Write evaluations of school crisis team activities.
    - Relies upon flexible and reliable communication system.
-

# School Crisis Team Operations

- These are the “doers.”
    - Implement intervention, “PREPaREdness,” response, and recovery priorities established.
    - Coordinators:
      - Security and safety.
      - Student care.
      - Emergency medical.
      - Translation and/or cultural mediation.
-

# School Crisis Team Logistics

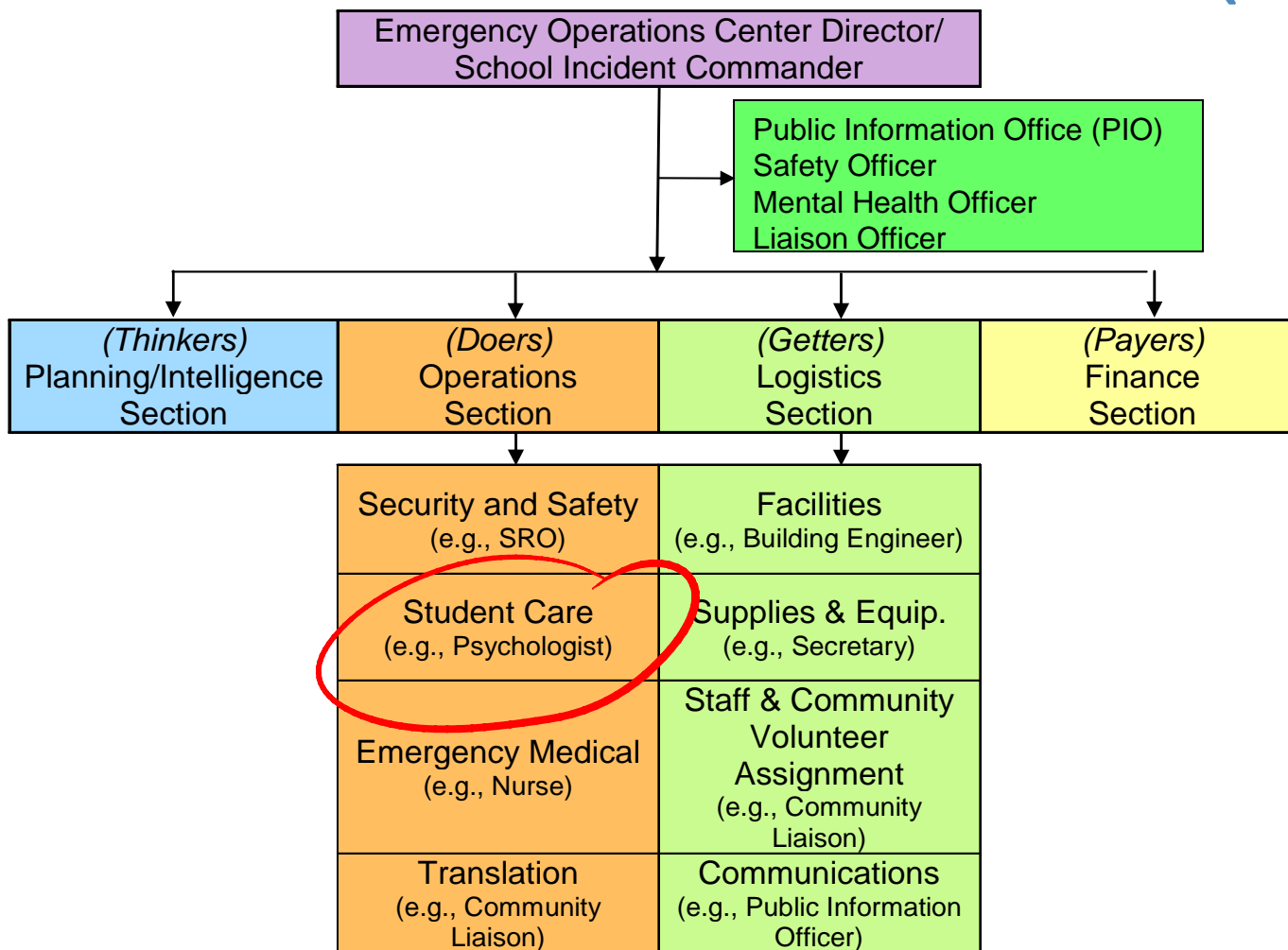
- These are the “getters.”
    - Obtain resources needed to support ICS functions.
    - Coordinators.
      - Facilities.
      - Supplies and equipment.
      - Staff and community volunteer assignment.
      - Communications.
-

# School Crisis Team Finance

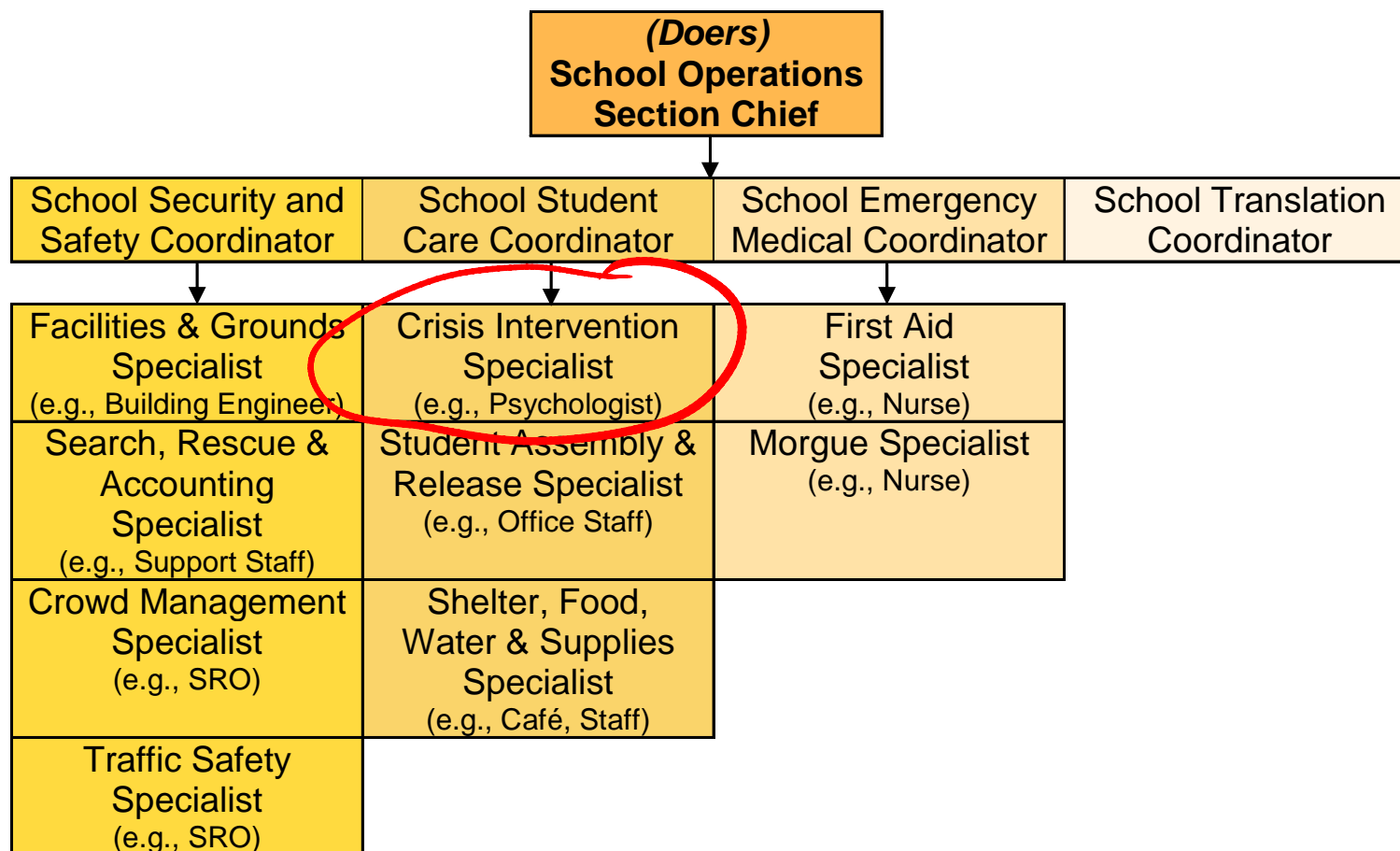
- These are “the payers.”
  - Develop a budget.
  - Authorize purchases.
  - Track costs.



# Incident Command Structure (ICS)



# ICS Operations Section



# Questions to Consider in Establishing A School Crisis Team

- How will size of your district impact crisis team ICS organization/structure/responsibilities?
- How will team members be selected to fill ICS functions and how will they be replaced/given a break?
- How will refresher training occur? How will new team members be trained?
- How will community resources be used to fill ICS functions? Who is included on the list?

# Barriers to Creating Effective Teams

- Lack of commitment from central administration.
- Lack of time and resources.
- Lack of “buy-in” regarding concept that schools are responsible for meeting mental health needs.
- Myths exist that taking action will make the crisis worse.
- Territorial issues about whose job it is.
- Reactive: “Let’s wait until there is a problem.”

Cornell and Sheras (1998), Kline, Schonfeld, and Lichtenstein (1995), McIntyre and Reid (1989), Ruof and Harris (1988)

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# Comprehensive School Safety Plan

**Physical  
Safety**

**Crisis  
Response**

**Psychological  
Safety**

**Intervention**

**Prevention**

**Physical Safety Audits**

**Psychological Safety &  
Climate Assessment**

# Crisis Preparedness

“School officials are reluctant to face this. It’s like a will – people are afraid to write one because they think they will die if they do!”

Jennings, (1989)

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# School Crisis Planning

- A crisis plan structures school prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery efforts.
  - Typically created at the district level and at the individual school building level.



# Guiding Principles for Plan Development

- Build on what is already in place.
- Involve students, parents, teachers, school leaders, public safety agencies, and others.
- Be comprehensive.
- Make data-based decisions.
- Create a user-friendly document.
- Clearly define roles and responsibilities.
- Include staff development.
- Coordinate with nonpublic schools.
- Accommodate for children with special needs.

University of the State of New York, State Education Department (2001)

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## Creating a Crisis Plan

- Conduct a needs assessment to determine potential crises for which the school/district may be at risk.
  - Examine potential crisis events inside schools, on school grounds, and in the community.
  - Include input from school and community stakeholders.
  - Incorporate cultural considerations, including consulting with cultural “broker”.
- Utilize information from the needs assessment to develop a comprehensive crisis plan.

## General Considerations

- Identify the purpose (mission statement).
  - Include definition of crisis.
- Identify team members' roles and responsibilities.
- Describe how the plan was developed.
- Describe how the district and building level plans are linked.
- Indicate that the initial response to an incident will be by the crisis team and specify how county and state resources can supplement these efforts.

## Crisis Plan Components

- Command post
  - Broad array of crises/disasters
  - School floor plans, including utility hook-ups, exits, etc.
  - Crisis drill procedures
  - Alternative shelters
  - Lock-down plans
  - How to activate and deactivate heat, water, air electrical systems
  - Evacuation plans with transportation, without transportation
-

# Crisis Plan Components

*... Continued*

- Primary prevention plans (e.g., discipline codes, violence prevention)
  - Consider students with special needs
  - Short-term and long-term support
  - Crisis response box
  - Collaboration with agencies
  - Guidelines for working with media
-

## Considerations in Plans

- To whom will the plan be disseminated?
  - When will the plan be reviewed and revised?
  - How will crises occurring outside of school hours be dealt with?
  - How can school groups/organizations provide support during crisis response?
  - How will crisis team members stay in touch between crises?
-

## Cultural Considerations

- Identify cultural-related needs of community.
- Gather information regarding composition of school/district community.
- Obtain community resources to meet diverse needs.
- Consider possible solutions to cultural problems that may arise.
- Understand the meaning of suffering, pain, and death relevant to the norms of the community's cultural groups.
- Other issues?

# Following the Plan During a Response

- Identify the type of crisis and appropriate response.
  - Activate the incident command system.
  - Secure physical building.
  - Access crisis box, evacuation plans, and blueprints.
  - Triage and administer first aid needs.
  - Verify student whereabouts; activate procedure for reuniting parents and children.
  - Use procedure for acquiring/managing volunteers.
  - Communicate with all stakeholders.
  - Activate triage procedure.
-

# Exercising and Evaluating Plans

“I learned an important lesson that day ... that I could only run as fast as my slowest child.”

Teacher P.S. 234 after September 11, 2001,  
New York City

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# Reaffirm Physical Health

- **Provide**
    - Shelter
    - Food and water
    - Clothing
    - Other issues?
-

# Ensure Perceptions of Security & Safety

- Adult behavior in response to the crisis is key.
  - Security and safety measures may need to be concrete and visible.
-

## Reaffirm Physical Health and Ensure Perceptions of Security & Safety

“Once traumatic events have stopped or been eliminated, the process of restoration begins. Non-psychiatric interventions, such as provision of basic needs, food, shelter and clothing, help provide the stability required to ascertain the numbers of youth needing specialized psychiatric care”

(Barenbaum et al., 2004, p. 49).

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# Evaluating Psychological Trauma

## Psychological Triage Defined

“The process of evaluating and sorting victims by immediacy of treatment needed and directing them to immediate or delayed treatment. The goal of triage is to do the greatest good for the greatest number of victims”

([NIMH, 2001](#), p. 27).

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# Evaluating Psychological Trauma

## Rationale

- 1) Not all individuals will be equally affected by a crisis.
    - One size does not fit all.
    - Some will need intensive intervention.
    - Others will need very little, if any intervention.
-

# Evaluating Psychological Trauma

## Rationale

- 2) Recovery from crisis exposure is the norm.
  - Crisis intervention should be offered in response to demonstrated need.
  - “Not everyone exposed to trauma either needs or wants professional help”

([McNally et al., 2003](#), p. 73).

**EXCEPTION:** Students with pre-existing psychopathology.

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# Evaluating Psychological Trauma

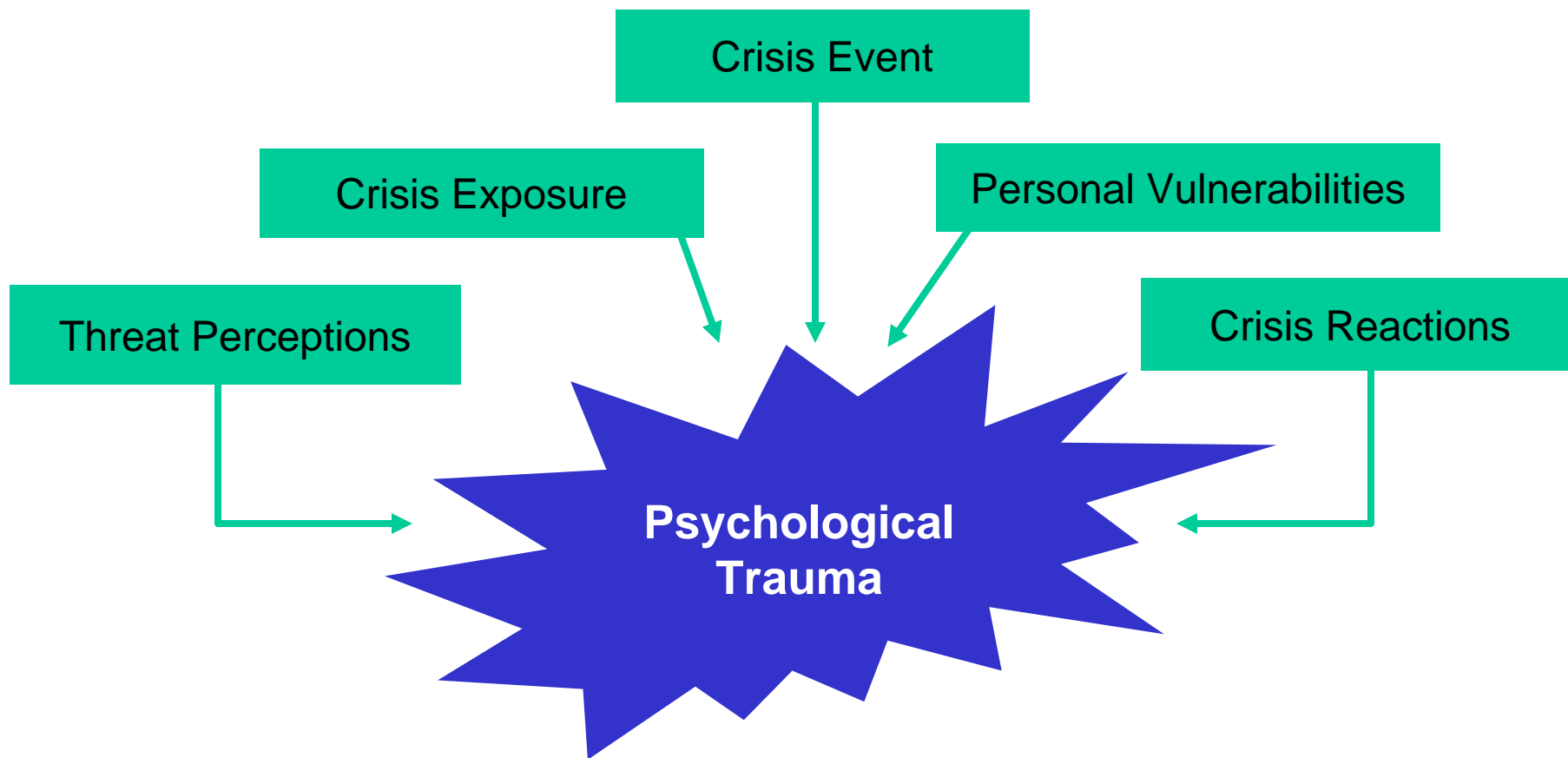
## Rationale

- 3) There is a need to identify those who will recover relatively independently.
  - Crisis intervention may cause harm if not truly needed.
    - i. It may increase crisis exposure.
    - ii. It may reduce perceptions of independent problem solving.
    - iii. It may generate self-fulfilling prophecies.

Berkowitz (2003), Everly (1999)

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# Evaluating Psychological Trauma

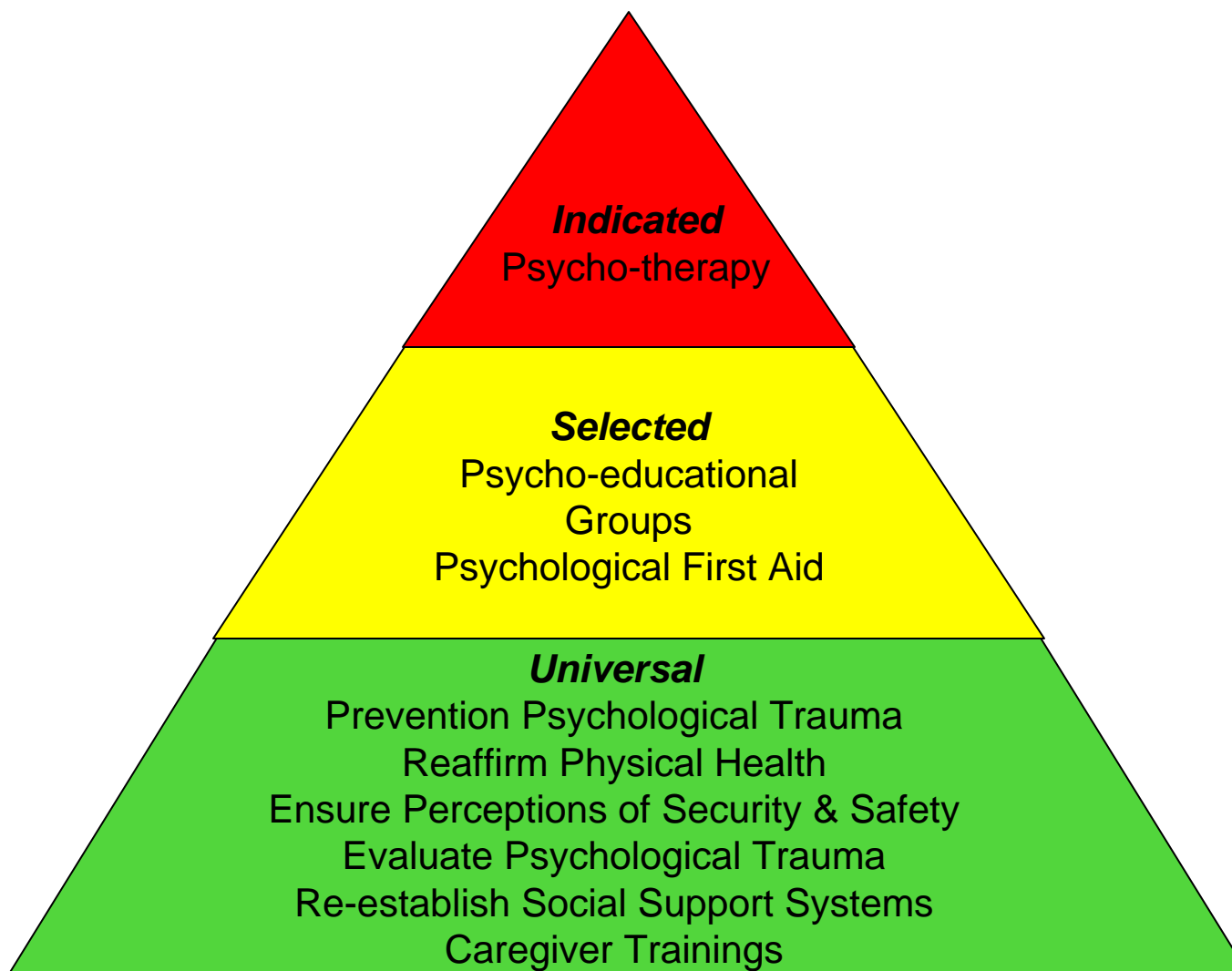


# Conducting Psychological Triage

## A Dynamic Process

- Levels of triage
    - 1) Primary assessment of psychological trauma.
    - 2) Secondary assessment of psychological trauma.
    - 3) Tertiary assessment of psychological trauma.
-

# Levels of School Crisis interventions



# **PROVIDE INTERVENTIONS and RESPOND TO PSYCHOLOGICAL NEEDS**

- Recognize signs of students in need of more direct crisis intervention.
  - Be aware of populations predisposed to risk for psychological trauma.
  - Maintain a calm presence when providing any crisis intervention.
  - Be sensitive to culture and diversity.
-

# Re-establish Social Support Systems

## The Primary School Crisis Intervention

- Being with and sharing crisis experiences with positive social supports facilitates recovery from trauma.
- Lower levels of such support is a strong predictor of PTSD.
- This support is especially important to the recovery of children.

# Re-establish Social Support Systems

## Challenges

- Extremely violent and life-threatening crisis events (e.g., mass violence).
  - Chronic crisis exposure.
  - Caregivers significantly affected by the crisis.
  - The presence of psychopathology.
-

# Re-establish Social Support Systems

## Specific Techniques

- Reunite students with their caregivers
  - Reunite students with their close friends, teachers, and classmates
  - Return to familiar school environments and routines
  - Facilitate community connections
  - Empower with caregiving/recovery knowledge
-

# Psychological Education

## **Empowering Crisis Survivors and Caregivers**

- Psycho-education is designed to provide students, staff and caregivers with knowledge that will assist in understanding, preparing for, and responding to the crisis event, and the problems and reactions it generates (both in oneself and among others).
-

# Psychological Education

## Rationale

- Children often have incorrect beliefs about the crisis event.
  - Children are more likely than adults to use avoidance coping.
  - Facilitates a sense of control over the recovery process.
  - Capitalizes on strengths and promotes self confidence.
  - Provides connections to mental health resources (without stigma).
-

# Psychological Education

## Limitations

- Not sufficient for the more severely traumatized.
  - Must be paired with other psychological interventions and professional mental health treatment.
  - Limited research.
-

# Psychological Education

## Specific Techniques

- Psycho-Educational Groups
  - Caregiver Trainings
  - Informational Bulletins, Flyers, and/or Handouts
-

# Psychological Interventions

- a) Immediate Psychological First Aid Interventions.
    - i. Group
    - ii. Individual
  - b) Long Term Psychotherapeutic Treatment Interventions.
-

# Psychological Interventions

## Group Psychological First Aid

- Actively explore individual crisis experiences and reactions.
  - Strive to help students feel less alone and more connected to classmates, and to normalize experiences and reactions.
  - A psychological triage tool.
  - Cautions/limitations.
-

# Psychological Interventions

## Group Psychological First Aid

- Goals
  - a) The crisis event is understood.
  - b) Crisis experiences and reactions are understood and normalized.
  - c) Adaptive coping with the crisis and crisis problems is facilitated.
  - d) Crisis survivors begin to look forward.

\*in 2-day workshop, you learn how to conduct a group psychological first aid session

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# Psychological Interventions

## Psychotherapeutic Treatment Interventions

- Empirically Supported Treatment Options (Feeny et al., 2004).
  - Cognitive-Behavioral Approaches.
    - a) Imaginal and In Vivo Exposure.
    - b) Eye-Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR).
    - c) Anxiety-Management Training.
    - d) Group-Delivered Cognitive-Behavioral Interventions.
-

## Concluding the School Crisis Intervention

- The school crisis response can be concluded when all individuals have obtained the knowledge and/or support they need to cope with crisis generated problems.
-

# **EXAMINE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CRISIS PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION**

## **Outcomes reflecting effectiveness.**

1. Crisis interventions indicated by psychological triage have been provided.
  2. Individuals with psychopathology have been provided appropriate treatment.
  3. Individuals with maladaptive coping behaviors (e.g., suicide, homicide) have been referred to the appropriate professional(s) and lethality has been reduced.
-

# Evaluating and Concluding the School Crisis Intervention

## Outcomes reflecting effectiveness

*...Continued.*

4. Students attend school at or above pre-crisis attendance rates.
  5. School behavior problems (i.e., aggressive, delinquent, and criminal behavior) occur at or below pre-crisis levels.
  6. Student academic functioning is at or above pre-crisis level.
-

# Caring for the Caregiver

**We often forget to take care of ourselves!**

**•Recommendations**

- Debriefing with other crisis responders.
- Ongoing professional development.
- Mentor/Mentee relationships.
- Maintain normal routines and comfortable rituals.
- Exercise.
- Rest/Sleep.
- Avoid excessive use of alcohol and drugs.

[http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/pfa/Self\\_Care\\_for\\_Providers.pdf](http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/pfa/Self_Care_for_Providers.pdf) for a psycho-educational handout addressing the topic of self care.

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## Lessons Learned

- Recognize it could happen to you; crisis situations occur even in the best schools.
- What you learned in one crisis situation will help you in the next situation, although no two situations are alike.
- Crisis team members must understand their duties and crisis plans must be updated and reviewed at least annually.

## Questions and Comments

- Today's presentation:
    - *(Add in your Contact name and email address)*
  - About the Crisis Prevention & Intervention (CPI) Workgroup:
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## Training and Resources

- To schedule 1 & 2 day workshop trainings on PREPARE curriculum
    - contact Melissa Reeves, [mereev@aol.com](mailto:mereev@aol.com) or Ted Feinberg, [tfeinberg@naspweb.org](mailto:tfeinberg@naspweb.org)
  - Online Crisis Intervention Resources
    - <http://www.nasponline.org/NEAT/crisismain.html>
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# Authorship of PREPaRE Curriculum

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  - Adapted from the California Association of School Psychologists' Crisis Intervention Specialty Group's *School Crisis Intervention Workshop* & Colorado Society of School Psychologists Crisis Intervention Curriculum
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  - Other Crisis Intervention Topic Group members who participated in this project included: Wendy Carria, Arlington Public Schools, VA; Deborah Crockett, Fayette County Board of Education, GA; Elliot Davis, Brandywine School District, DE; Michelle Demaray, Northern Illinois University, IL; Kimberly Knesting, University of Northern Iowa, IA; Stephanie Livesay, Montgomery County Public Schools, MD; Christine Malecki, Northern Illinois University, IL; Joe Nail, Clayton County Public Schools, GA; Kris Rodriguez, San Joaquin County Office of Education, CA; Denise Snow, Woodinville High School, WA and Rosemary Virtuoso, Clark County School District, NV.
-

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