The In’s and Out’s of Crisis:
CIT vs. CISM
Objectives

• Identify the concepts of Crisis Intervention Team Programs (CIT)

• Identify the concepts of Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)

• Recognize the similarities and differences in CISM and CIT
What is C.I.T.?

A Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) program is a model for community policing that brings together law enforcement, mental health providers, hospital emergency departments and individuals with mental illness and their families to improve responses to people in crisis.
The History of CIT

It was a tragedy that spurred the coming together of stakeholders to develop the original CIT program in Memphis, Tennessee.

In 1987, 27 y/o Joseph Robinson, who had a mental illness, was shot and killed during an incident with the Memphis Police Department.

In 1988, the Memphis Police Department joined in partnership with the Alliance on Mental Illness, mental health providers, and two local universities in organizing, training, and implementing a specialized unit.
C.I.T. Program Overview

- Police Training
- Community Collaboration
- Vibrant & Accessible Crisis System
- Behavioral Health Staff Training
- Family / Consumers / Advocates / Collaboration - Education
CRISIS INTERVENTION

• Crisis intervention is emotional “first aid” designed to assist the person in crisis to return to independent functioning.

• Crisis intervention is not psychotherapy or counseling.

• The focus of crisis intervention is in dealing with the incident that is occurring now – not on chronic factors.
CIT Curriculum

- Introduction of the CIT Program
- Regional Behavioral Health Agency Overview
- Understanding Psychiatric Disorders
- Suicide Intervention
- Mental Illness – A Family Perspective
- Hearing Voices Exercise
- Understanding Children & Adolescents w/ Emotional & Behavioral Difficulties
- Understanding Post Traumatic Stress & Mild Traumatic Brain Injury
- Memory Loss, Dementia, & Alzheimer’s Disease
- First Responder Engagement / Verbal Intervention & De-escalation
- “In Our Own Voice – Living with Mental Illness”
- Emergent & Non-Emergent Mental Health Petition Process
- Court Ordered Evaluation & Treatment

- Fire & Medical Responses & Resources – Hospital Diversion
- Local Resources & Crisis System Overview
- Homelessness & Resources
- Veterans’ Services & Resources
- Military Veteran – A Personal Perspective
- Understanding Developmental Disabilities & Resources
- Understanding Substance Abuse & Resources
- Review of Case Law & Legal Issues
- Officer Resiliency, Stress Management, Self Care, and Health
- CIT Program – An Officer’s Personal Perspective
- Scenario Exercises (6)
  - Role Player
  - CIT Officer Evaluator
  - Mental Health Professional Evaluator
Specialized Law Enforcement Strategies Can Create Positive Changes for All Individuals Involved

• Improving Officer safety.

• Increasing access to mental health treatment, supports, and services.

• Decreasing the frequency of these individuals’ encounters with the criminal justice system.

• Reducing certain costs incurred by law enforcement agencies.
What is CISM?

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) is a multi-faceted support program that helps manage traumatic experiences within organizations.

It is combination of crisis intervention tactics to:

• Mitigate the impact of a traumatic event for individuals.
• Facilitate normal recovery processes after disastrous event.
• Restore individuals, groups and organizations to adaptive function.
• Identify support resources for further evaluation and continued care.
The History of CISM

CISM concepts were introduced to emergency services in 1974. They were first developed to assist emergency operations personnel, such as police officers, firefighters, emergency medical teams, and military personnel.

Over the past three decades, it has extended to target populations such as school systems, business communities and industrial sectors.

Research conducted to date on the impact of CISM has yielded positive results and outcomes.
CISM Fundamentals

• CISM is a broad collection of support services that can be selected and applied to assist individuals who are experiencing a strong reaction to a traumatic event.

• CISM is **not** psychotherapy or counseling.

• It is based upon four main foundational building blocks:
  • Crisis intervention techniques
  • Group intervention therapy
  • Community psychology
  • Peer Support services
CISM/Peer Support Team

- In first responder organizations, CISM falls under the umbrella of Peer Support.
  - CISM is incident-specific support that follows exposure to a traumatic event.
  - Peer Support includes CISM as well as other forms of one-on-one and follow up support.

- A CISM/Peer Support Team follows the “peers assisting peers” concept.

- A Peer Support Team is a group of selected peers trained in basic critical incident stress management who offer confidential services to fellow first responders.

- A CISM/Peer Support Team provides:
  - One-on-one peer contacts to listen, support, and mentor
  - Critical incident group debriefs without involvement of professionals
  - Advocacy services
  - Follow-up individual and family care
  - Self-care strategies
  - Wellness resources & education
Components of CISM/Peer Support Program

A comprehensive CISM/Peer Support Program consists of:

- Pre-incident planning, policy development, education, training
- Crisis assessment
- Individual crisis intervention plans
- Large group interventions (Demobilization, Crisis Management Briefing)
- Small group crisis interventions (Defusing, CISM Debriefing)
- Pastoral intervention services
- Family support services
- Community supportive referrals
- Post-incident education
- Basic mental & physical health education
- Mindfulness and resiliency techniques
- Assistance with wellness recovery action plans
CISM Overview

The benefits of CISM for first responder organizations are significant.

- Assists in healing and recovering from traumatic-stress incidents.
- Helps identify the signs and symptoms of normal reactions.
- Allows individuals to process events and return to service.
- Provides reassurance and support from peers.
- Provides confidential resources and after-care services.
- Contributes to the prevention of burn-out.
- Provides better coping skills for future traumatic incidents.
Program Differences

- CIT is used for police contacts and not internally.
- CISM is used for first responders.
- CIT addresses only immediate concerns on scene.
- CISM includes on-going support after an incident.
- CIT focuses heavily on resource utilization.
- CISM balances education with referrals.
- CIT is not confidential.
- CISM includes confidentiality protected by state law.
Program Similarities

• Use volunteers who have a passion for helping others.
• Basic education in mental health conditions.
• Both are not psychotherapy, but rather “emotional first aid.”
• Solid knowledge of resources for a variety of crisis situations.
• Develop partnerships with community resources and referrals.
• Substantial training in understanding crisis.
• Empathy for individuals who have experienced trauma.
How can we work together?

- Recruiting
  - With cross-training and similar personalities, programs can recruit from the other for new members.
- Consultations with each other for resources.
- Both utilize suicide intervention strategies:
  - CIT Training teaches techniques/petitions.
  - CISM builds trust and support within agency.

- Both Teams are filled with individuals who want to HELP!
References

http://www.citinternational.org/


