

Assisting Victims of Mass Violence  
and Domestic Terrorism

## Integrating Schools and School Districts into Larger Response to Mass Violence

PRESENTED BY: TARA HUGHES KRISTA FLANNIGAN JASON DEWAR

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### ICPTTA Project

- ❖ To augment existing emergency response plans
  - Ensure victims, families, and first responders care after incidents of criminal mass violence (CMV) and domestic terrorism (DT).
  - Local, state, regional, and tribal jurisdictions across the country, including Washington, D.C., and U.S. territories
  - Incorporation into existing exercise structure and calendar
  - Individualized Training and Technical Assistance for selected communities
  - Assigned consultants
  - Subject matter experts for training




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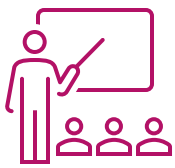
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16 Best Practices in Planning for CMV/DT		
1. Incident Command	7. Volunteer Management Protocol	12. First Responder Support
2. Committee Identification & Engagement	8. Family/Friends Assistance Center (FAC) Plan	13. Planning & Preparedness Grants and Emergency Funding Assistance
3. Up-To-Date Contact List	9. Financial Donation Management Protocol	14. Community Resilience Planning
4. Family & Friends Reception/Notification Center (FRC)	10. Memorial & Special Event Management Protocols	15. Criminal Justice System - Victim Support
5. Victim Identification & Notification Protocol	11. Community Behavioral Health Response	16. Training and Exercise
6. Public Information & Crisis Communications Protocol		

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### Goal of Webinar

- Integration of schools into the larger response to mass violence or domestic terrorism incidents
  - Violence in the schools
  - Violence in the community
- Capitalize on relationships and access schools have with families
- Capitalize on knowledge schools have of families and existing circumstances that might be impacted
- Capitalize on facilities
- Capitalize on awareness of available services.

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**"The only thing harder than explaining why we are preparing for these types of events, is having to explain why we did not."**

-Tom O.

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## Mass Violence and Terrorism

- ◆ MASS VIOLENCE means an intentional violent criminal act that results in physical, emotional, or psychological harm to a large number of people.
  - Mass violence is a predatory act, generally with planned and purposeful violence intended for an identified target, person, place, or institution.
- ◆ Domestic terrorism means activities that:
  - Involve acts dangerous to human life that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any State,
  - Appear to be intended
    - to intimidate or coerce a civilian population;
    - to influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or
    - to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnaping.


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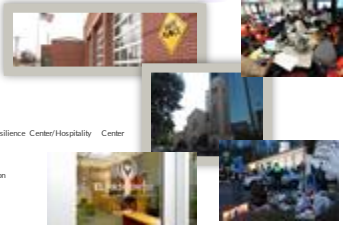

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## Phases of Response to Mass Tragedy

- ◆ PLANNING
- ◆ Immediate (Acute)
  - During incident
  - Immediate aftermath
  - Completion of rescue
  - Information and Notification Center
- ◆ Intermediate (Transitional)
  - Up to first remembrance date
  - Completion of prosecution
  - Family Assistance Center/Community Resilience Center/Hospitality Center
- ◆ Long Term (Recovery)
  - 18 months +
  - Appeals, parole hearings, penalty imposition
  - Memorial dedications and anniversaries
  - Community Resilience Center
- ◆ Evaluation/Assessment and PLANNING


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## Established Factors in Mass Tragedies

- ◆ Multiple victims
- ◆ Multiple agency response
- ◆ Normal agency resources overwhelmed
- ◆ Responder vicarious trauma
- ◆ Political atmosphere
- ◆ Copycat incidents
- ◆ Conspiracy theories
- ◆ Intense media coverage
- ◆ Community and Public vicarious trauma
  - Public outpouring of money, resources, emotions
  - Spontaneous and permanent memorials


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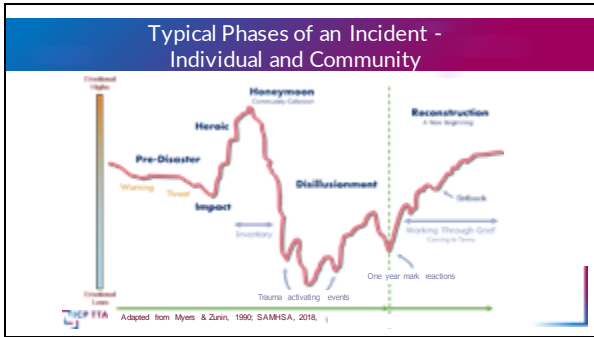
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### School Role in Crisis Response

- ◆ Schools play a critical role in crisis prevention and response
  - Not only needs of students but also of staff, families, and often the local community.
  - Schools are integral to an overall community crisis response in terms of:
    - Providing a safe haven,
    - Disseminating information,
    - Providing mental health services,
    - Linking individuals with community services,
    - Tracking displaced families,
    - Supporting long-term recovery, and
    - Generally serving as a focus of normalcy in the face of trauma (PREPaRE)




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### Resiliency Factors for in School Crisis



- ◆ Access to students
- ◆ Educating students/faculty/staff/parents about trauma
- ◆ Partnerships/connections with other schools
- ◆ Ability to identify vulnerable students/families quickly
- ◆ Appropriate Goals for school/students
- ◆ Students support each other

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### Complicating Factors

- ◆ Decreased academic performance should be EXPECTED
- ◆ Behavioral and emotional & mental health issues (episodic, regressions, etc) should be expected
- ◆ District calendar
- ◆ Lack of preparation
  - "It will never happen here"
- ◆ Belief that situation is "unique"
- ◆ "Circling the wagons"
- ◆ Denial of impact/needs
  - "We've got this"
- ◆ District Crisis teams are often small
- ◆ Unaware of available resources available outside school/district
- ◆ Unaware of Victim Advocacy and Victim


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### Complicating Factors

- ◆ Teachers and staff not taking care of selves...only students
- ◆ Administrators and mental health professionals are often neglected re: trauma
- ◆ If all services in the school, families/parents won't take advantage of them
- ◆ Notifications are a challenge (death, injuries, hostage status, lock down, aive) and the element of the privacy of victims and survivors
- ◆ Challenges of grieving "with an audience"
- ◆ Balancing needs of students and effective triage and assessment of psychological


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### Considerations for Response

- ◆ Timely, separate support groups for students, staff, and families
  - Invite community resources into the school such as victim compensation, victim advocates, resources in the community
  - "Educational forum"
- ◆ Invite trained mental health professionals into the schools for extended period of time
- ◆ Plan for the seniors who may be going off to college and not have a support system there
- ◆ Plan for events that happen during school breaks and holidays and when students return, and for students that do not return
- ◆ Create opportunities for students want to be with each to process


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### Community Incident – Impact on Schools



- ◆ Size, scope, severity of incident
- ◆ Proximity to school/students
- ◆ Targeted population
- ◆ Directly impacted
  - Students, parents, faculty, staff, administration
- ◆ Changes (positive and negative) within community as a direct result of incident (media onslaught, increase in law enforcement, increase of available services, increase in "helicopter" parenting)
- ◆ Parents seeking help in how to talk with their child(ren) about what happen and their feelings




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### Complicating Factors

- ◆ Balancing school, student and community needs
- ◆ Pre-existing and ongoing community violence that doesn't get attention/money (donations/grants)
- ◆ Complicated grief
- ◆ Personal traumas get activated (increase in acting out behavior)
- ◆ High suicide risk for students and parents
- ◆ Lack of in-school and community resources
- ◆ Denial of impact


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### Considerations for Response

- ❖ Provide temporary behavioral health support to students directly impacted and assess for further psychological trauma and interventions
- ❖ Provide venue for community gatherings
- ❖ Monitor students with known concerns and look for students that we do not know known needs
- ❖ Build collaborative partnerships with outside agencies and schools/districts to actively plan for crisis events (not consistent)


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### Best Practices for a Response



- ❖ Trained staff for purposes of recovery/response/intervention
- ❖ Training and information to care-givers
- ❖ Re-establishing support systems and affirm physical safety and health
- ❖ School's internal response is coordinated with larger response
- ❖ School's role in larger response when a community incident (to include ICS/NIMS when appropriate)




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### Best Practices

- ❖ Timely, accurate information (advance communication plans/IPO)
- ❖ Access to appropriate resources and effective communication
- ❖ Trauma informed support
- ❖ Advocacy
- ❖ Coordinated and collaborative response
- ❖ Culturally and developmentally appropriate
- ❖ Process and data supporting growth and progress so we know how we are doing and what continues to be areas of concern


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### Best Practices

- ◆ Consistent briefings/de-briefings of crisis team leadership and members and staff meetings
- ◆ Remember that recovery is the norm
- ◆ Recognize the difference of crisis state and mental illness
- ◆ Mental Health is a part of the structure within ICS/NIMS
- ◆ Understand school-associated consequences of crisis
- ◆ Ability to match degree of need with level of intervention



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### Planning Considerations

- ▶ Established school crisis teams
- ▶ Disaster response training
- ▶ School plans integrated into community plans



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### Planning Considerations



- ◆ 16 Best Practices in Planning (ICP)
- ◆ Coordinate with Emergency Management into school to help coordinate (with District coordination/facilitation)
- ◆ Maintain flexibility in coordination
- ◆ Plan to incorporate predictable reactions to high levels of stress into daily school functioning (announcements, paperwork that goes home)



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### Planning Considerations



- ❖ Consistency in training and responding practices
- ❖ Possibly Train school personnel/teams in ICS/NIMS (especially leadership)
- ❖ Train Leadership in mass violence response
  - Leadership
  - Communication
  - Steps for recovery
- ❖ Train/Drill with Victim Advocates (local, federal)
- ❖ Train Behavioral Health in mass violence response (immediate and longer term)
- ❖ Get EAP staff trained in mass violence response




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### Planning Considerations

- ❖ Partnerships and relationships with community and various stakeholders
- ❖ Plan for established factors - commonalities
- ❖ Culturally and developmentally appropriate
- ❖ Resources - local, state and federal
- ❖ Advance Communication strategies (practice and scenarios)
- ❖ Notification and information dissemination plans for all schools (continue to re-assess for appropriateness and viability for various scenarios)


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### Planning Considerations

- ❖ Prevention
  - School culture - Welcoming environment
  - School-wide positive behavior support structures
  - Multi-tiered system of supports in place
  - Social/emotional learning in schools
  - Mental health supports
  - Physical safety measures and vulnerability assessments of schools
  - Effective Threat Assessment process
  - Relationship building between schools and community


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### Creating a Victim Response Plan



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### Benefits of Partnerships & Planning

- ✓Ensures that a **comprehensive** mass violence and terrorism emergency response plan is in place.
- ✓**Essential to Community Readiness** when everyone is at the table.
- ✓**Includes victim assistance strategy**, capacity for an effective response, and sufficient resources.



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### Comprehensive Victim Response Plan

- ❖ Collaborative
- ❖ Multi-disciplinary
- ❖ Recognition of value of each entity
- ❖ Respect needs of each entity
- ❖ **Victim focused**



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## Planning a Victim Response

- ❖ Meeting victim needs
  - Basic needs
  - Information
  - Support and referrals
- ❖ Media management
- ❖ Crime victim compensation
- ❖ Donor management
- ❖ Memorials
- ❖ Remembrances
- ❖ Maintaining integrity of the school and community


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**Planning is bringing the future into the present so that you can do something about it now.**

Alan Lakein

BrainyQuote




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**Recorded Training Webinars**  
 icptta.com (under Training tab)

Additional **Information**  
**Customization** for your community

Please contact ICPTTA at the email below to schedule  
 a follow up specific to this topic.

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 617-218-5384





<https://cotta.application>

[www.icptta.com](http://www.icptta.com)

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Contact  
 Information



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