School Crisis Interventions

EDS 246b
Preventive Psychological Intervention
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## The Importance of Being PREPaREd

1. Crisis intervention expectations.

2. Multidisciplinary team membership.

3. Unique needs of students.

4. Unique aspects of schools.

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## The Importance of Being PREPaREd

### Provision of Crisis Intervention Is Expected

*Events in recent years…underscore the importance of school emergency management planning to help protect the approximately 50 million children annually entrusted to the nation's K-12 public schools. It is important for school districts to be prepared to confront a range of threats and hazards, from man-made to natural.*

U.S. Government Accountability Office (2016, p. 12)

**Local Reports**

*The Morning News*

Wednesday, January 9, 2018                                          1 A

School crisis teams respond quickly to teen's death

By Steve Smith

Counselors meet with boy's class

Crisis Team
209-132-4756

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### The Importance of Being PREPaREd

**Provision of Crisis Intervention Is Expected** (cont.)

20 states require plans address recovery

But only 49% of district plans address recovery

U.S. Government Accountability Office (2016, p. 20)

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### The Importance of Being PREPaREd
**Multidisciplinary Team Membership**

GUIDE FOR DEVELOPING
HIGH-QUALITY
SCHOOL EMERGENCY
OPERATIONS PLANS

FEMA

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### The Importance of Being PREPaREd
**Unique Needs Of Students**

*It is generally accepted now that children represent a highly vulnerable population, for whom levels of symptoms may often be higher than for adults.*

*Recent literature also suggests that childhood trauma can have a lasting impact on child cognitive, moral, and personality development, interpersonal relationships, and coping abilities.*

Barenbaum et al. (2004, p. 42)

## The Importance of Being PREPaREd

**Unique Aspects Of School Environments**

*As outside providers enter the school setting specifically to provide mental health services, a clear understanding of the school structure and culture is warranted.*

Brown & Bobrow (2004, p. 212)

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## Workshop Objectives & Outline

**Outline**

1. Background Knowledge
2. Evaluating Psychological Trauma
3. Providing Crisis Interventions and Responding to Mental Health Needs.
   a) Social Support
   b) Psychological Education
   c) Psychological Intervention
4. Examining the Effectiveness of Crisis Preparedness and Crisis Response
5. Caring for the Caregiver

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## Background Knowledge

1. Characteristics and Types of Crises
2. Crisis Event Variables
3. Crisis Intervention Levels
4. Crisis Reactions
5. Crisis Preparedness and Disaster Phases
6. Crisis Response
7. The PREPaRE Model

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Background Knowledge

**Characteristics of Crises**

1. Painful
2. Uncontrollable
3. Unpredictable

*Perception*

cri•sis (ˈkrīsis/)
*Noun*
1.a time of intense difficulty, trouble, or danger
2.a time when a difficult or important decision must be made
3.the turning point of a disease when an important change takes place, indicating either recovery or death
*Synonyms*
emergency, disaster, catastrophe, calamity

Goggle.com

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Background Knowledge

**Types of Crises**

Go to
Pollev.com

• Acts of war, terrorism
• Violent, unexpected death
• Threatened death or injury
• Human-caused disasters
• Natural disasters
• Nonfatal illness or injury

Username
stephenbrock801

Identify variables that help to estimate the number of individuals traumatized by a crisis.
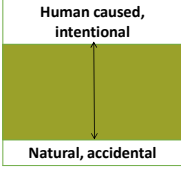
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**Rank order these crises from most to least traumatic**

Non-fatal illness or injury

Natural disasters

Human-caused disasters

Threatened death or injury

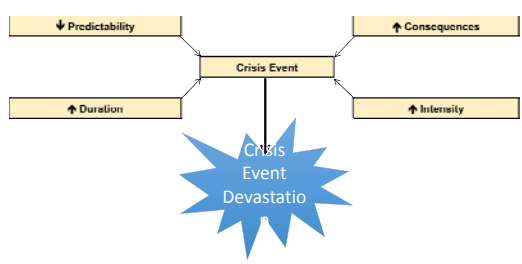Violent/unexpected death

Acts of war/Terrorism

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Background Knowledge
**Types of Crises**

- Acts of war, terrorism
- Violent, unexpected death
- Threatened death or injury
- Human-caused disasters
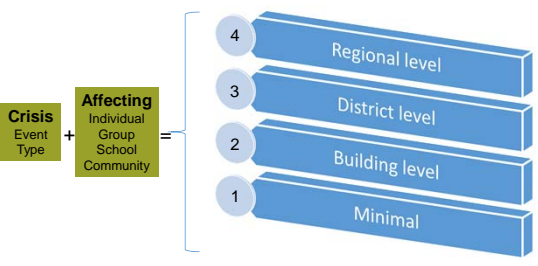- Natural disasters
- Nonfatal illness or injury

**Human caused, intentional**

**Natural, accidental**

Identify variables that help to estimate the number of individuals traumatized by a crisis.

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Background Knowledge
**Crisis Event Variables**

↓ Predictability      ↑ Consequences

Crisis Event

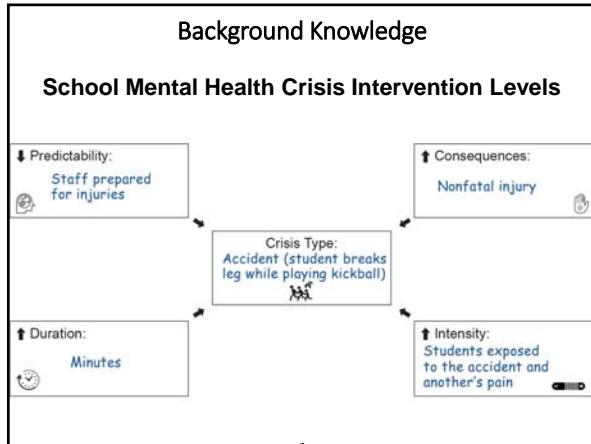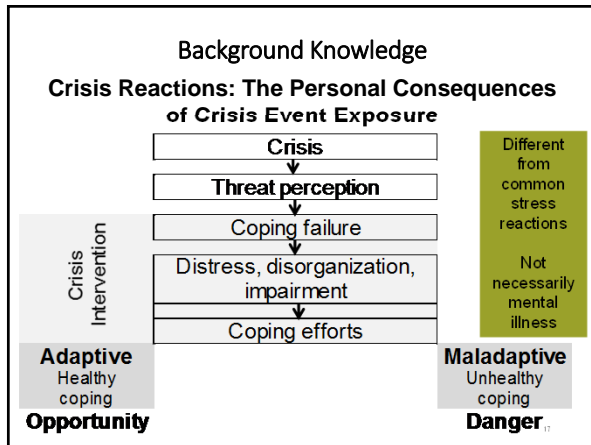↑ Duration           ↑ Intensity

Crisis Event Devastation

Identify variables that help to estimate the number of individuals traumatized by a crisis.

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Background Knowledge
**School Mental Health Crisis Intervention Levels**

**Crisis** Event Type + **Affecting** Individual Group School Community =

4 Regional level
3 District level
2 Building level
1 Minimal

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## Background Knowledge

**School Mental Health Crisis Intervention Levels**

↓ Predictability:
Staff prepared
for injuries

↑ Consequences:
Nonfatal injury

Crisis Type:
Accident (student breaks
leg while playing kickball)

↑ Duration:
Minutes

↑ Intensity:
Students exposed
to the accident and
another's pain

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## Background Knowledge

**Crisis Reactions: The Personal Consequences of Crisis Event Exposure**

Crisis Intervention

Crisis
↓
Threat perception
↓
Coping failure
↓
Distress, disorganization, impairment
↓
Coping efforts

Different from common stress reactions

Not necessarily mental illness

**Adaptive**
Healthy coping
**Opportunity**

**Maladaptive**
Unhealthy coping
**Danger**

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## Background Knowledge

**Crisis Reactions: The Personal Consequences of Crisis Event Exposure** (cont.)

• Mental illnesses
  • Trauma- and stressor-related disorders
  • Depressive disorders
  • Anxiety disorders
  • Dissociative disorders
  • Sleep–wake disorders

• All have **symptom duration** requirements

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Recognize the difference between common crisis reactions and mental illness.

## Background Knowledge

**Crisis Reactions: The Personal Consequences of Crisis Event Exposure** (cont.)

- School adjustment difficulties
  - Behavioral challenges
  - Absenteeism
  - Academic decline
  - Poor performance
  - Decreased verbal IQ
  - Exacerbation of preexisting difficulties

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## Background Knowledge

### Activity: Crisis Reactions

- Crisis event opportunities
  - In small groups, identify some of the opportunities (or positive outcomes) that may result from crisis exposure.
  - Identify potential opportunities for both (a) individual students and (b) the school or school systems.

A crisis can …
☑ Destroy you
☑ Define you
☑ Make you stronger

**STOP**

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## Background Knowledge

### Crisis Preparedness and Disaster Phases

- School crisis preparedness levels
  - Five emergency management mission areas

    1. Prevention: Avoid, prevent, or stop crises
    2. Protection: Safeguard against crises
  WS 1
    3. Mitigation: Reduce losses by lessening impact
    4. Response: Reduce traumatic stress and meet basic needs
  WS 2
    5. Recovery: Return to precrisis functioning

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## Background Knowledge

### Crisis Preparedness and Disaster Phases (cont.)

• Disaster phases

WS 1
WS 2

1. Preimpact: Period before crisis
2. Impact: During crisis
3. Recoil: Immediately after crisis
4. Postimpact: Days to weeks after crisis
5. Recovery/reconstruction: Months to years after crisis

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## Background Knowledge

### Crisis Response

• The Incident Command System and the multidisciplinary crisis response team

• PREPaRE advocates placing a Mental Health Officer in the Command Staff

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                    Incident
                    Commander

Public                          Safety
Information                     Officer
Officer

Liaison Officer        Mental Health
                       Officer

Operations      Planning     Logistics     Finance
"doers"         "thinkers"   "getters"     "payers"
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## Background Knowledge

### The PREPaRE Model

| P | **Pr**event and prepare for crises |
|---|---|
| R | **Re**affirm physical health & welfare and perceptions of safety & security |
| E | **E**valuate psychological trauma risk |
| P | **Pr**ovide crisis interventions |
| a | **a**nd |
| R | **R**espond to mental health needs |
| E | **E**xamine the effectiveness of crisis preparedness |

Identify the elements of school crisis preparedness specified by the PREPaRE acronym.

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**Background Knowledge**

**The PREPaRE Model** (cont.)
- Workshop 1: Comprehensive School Safety Planning
  - P = Prevent and prepare for psychological trauma
    1. Promote school safety
    2. Develop crisis plans and functional annexes
    3. Develop crisis intervention resources
    4. Develop psychotherapeutic resources
    5. Promote student resiliency
    6. Minimize crisis exposure

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**Background Knowledge**

**The PREPaRE Model** (cont.)
- Workshop 1: Comprehensive School Safety Planning
  - R = Reaffirm physical health and welfare
    1. Activate functional annexes
       - Examples: Evacuation, Lockdown, Reunification
    2. Address "special needs"
    3. Address acute distress
    4. Ensure physical comfort

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**Background Knowledge**

**The PREPaRE Model** (cont.)
- Workshop 1: Comprehensive School Safety Planning
  - R = Reaffirm perceptions of safety and security
    1. Monitor adult reactions
    2. Minimize exposure
    3. Locate and reunite significant others
    4. Provide facts and adaptive interpretations
    5. Return to school
    6. Take action

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## Background Knowledge

**The PREPaRE Model** (cont.)
- Workshop 1: Comprehensive School Safety Planning
  - R = Reaffirm perceptions of safety and security
    *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)

    *When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, "Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping." To this day, especially in times of 'disaster,' I remember my mother's words and I am always comforted by realizing that there are still so many helpers – so many caring people in the world.*
    Fred "Mister" Rodgers

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## Background Knowledge

**The PREPaRE Model** (cont.)
- Workshop 2: Crisis Recovery
  *A successful recovery process addresses the full range of psychological and emotional needs of the community as it recovers from the disaster through the provision of support, counseling, screening and treatment when needed. These needs range from helping individuals to handle the shock and stress associated with the disaster's impact and recovery challenges, to addressing the potential for and consequences of individuals harming themselves or others through substance, physical and emotional abuse. Successful recovery acknowledges the linkages between the recovery of individuals, families and communities.*
  U.S. Department of Homeland Security (2011, p. 11)

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## Background Knowledge

**The PREPaRE Model** (cont.)
- Workshop 2: Mental Health Crisis Interventions
  - **E** = Evaluate
  - **PaR** = Provide and Respond
    - Facilitate adaptive coping
  - **E** = Examine

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## Next Meeting

- Read:
  - Brock et al. (2016), Chapters 13 & 14
- Activity:
  - Conducting Psychological Triage

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