

STRENGTHENING THE CAPABILITIES FOR SUPERVISORS TO LEAD FIRST RESPONDERS FOLLOWING EXPOSURE TO TRAUMA

AN OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH: EPBC 2018

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▶ Why this research matters

▶ “All the kings horses and all the kings men: A Corporal’s story”

▶ A systems perspective of the issue

- ▶ Organizational approaches are alive and well
- ▶ Mentally well first responders are a priority
- ▶ A distinct link between community exists

“One is hard pressed to think of any organization that has sustained some measure of greatness in the absence of goals, values and missions that have become deeply shared throughout the organization” (Senge, 2014)

▶ Study Methodology (Qualitative Action Research)


- ▶ Survey – Set the baseline
- ▶ Learning circle
- ▶ Survey fatigue or apathy?

“A survey may provide a very useful tool for extending the data collection process to a broader range of participants” Stringer (2014)

► Research Questions

- How might the Delta Police Department, British Columbia, strengthen the capabilities of front line supervisors to lead police officers following a critical incident or traumatic event?
 - 1.What are the current capabilities of front line supervisors related to post-trauma leadership?
 - 2.What do supervisors currently understand about the effects of trauma on front line police officers?
 - 3.What initiatives can be introduced in order to enhance supervisors' knowledge of the effects of trauma?


▶ Literature review

- ▶ Resiliency and rabbit holes
 - ▶ Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)
 - ▶ Critical Incident Debriefing (CID)
 - ▶ Emotionally Intelligent Leadership
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► Policy A-M

- CISD policy is relatively consistent
- The unknowns are unknown
- Gaps exist for understanding (The NOK factor)


▶ Study conclusions


- ▶ Consistency is key
 - ▶ Enhanced training for leaders to lead
 - ▶ Stigma continues to be prevalent
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▶ Unintended Consequences


- ▶ Audience is immense
- ▶ Support staff are also affected
- ▶ Inclusiveness is important

▶ Study Recommendations


- ▶ 1. Establish a consistent knowledge base for supervisors related to trauma response.
 - ▶ 2. Incorporate new training initiatives to further expand the capabilities of supervisors.
 - ▶ 3. Explore additional psychological supports for first responders.
 - ▶ 4. Review delivery of a Critical Incident Stress Management program.
 - ▶ 5. Develop a systematic approach to stigma reduction.
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- ▶ Study recommendations
 - ▶ Recommendations accepted in principle
 - ▶ Implementation process to be tiered approach
 - ▶ Further studies resulting
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▶ First Responder Implications

- ▶ Lessons learned are transferable amongst groups
 - ▶ Leadership begins with the first line supervisor
 - ▶ Consistency in application is imperative
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▶ First Responder Implications cont.

- ▶ Training is first step to ensure proper support
 - ▶ Be creative
 - ▶ Beware the bucket
 - ▶ Never underestimate the value of one person
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- ▶ People join the ranks of this profession to make a difference.
- ▶ In the aftermath of a tragedy where human suffering is involved, does anyone take the time to ask the question: What about the first responders who had to respond to that call? I wonder if they're okay?

Leadership following exposure to trauma is about helping those who have seen what no one wants to see.

Questions?

Link to Thesis:

<https://viurrspace.ca/handle/10613/5486>

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