

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) is a system that was developed by Dr. Jeff Mitchell to assist emergency responders with lessening the impact and accelerating the recovery process after a critical incident. According to Dr. Mitchell, a critical incident is defined as "any situation faced by emergency service personnel that causes them to experience unusually strong emotional reactions which have the potential to interfere with their ability to function either at the scene or later."

The Front Range team was developed in 1992 and is currently made up of members from the Great Falls Police Department, the 9-1-1 Emergency Dispatch Center, the Great Falls Fire Department, Malmstrom Air Force Base, the U.S. Marshals Service, and other civilian "peers" and mental health professionals. The Front Range team has been trained in the Mitchell model of CISM and conducts debriefings and defusings for emergency services personnel when requested. The team has responded to several cities and towns in Montana for debriefings, defusings and demobilizations. For additional information on critical incident stress and related topics, view with International Critical Incident Stress Foundation website at www.icisf.org.

The Front Range team can provide the following services:

- Pre-incident education on critical incidents and debriefing service;
- On scene support services at critical incidents;
- One on one peer or mental health support;
- Disaster intervention services (de-escalation);
- Defusings;
- Debriefings;
- Follow-up services after critical incident intervention;
- Support for personnel involved in informal debriefings;
- Command staff support programs;
- Research and development.

A debriefing is recommended for the following situations:

- Death of an emergency services worker in the line of duty;
- Serious injury to an emergency services worker in the line of duty;
- Mass casualty incidents resulting in serious injury or death;
- Suicide of an emergency services worker;
- Death of a civilian as a result of emergency service or law enforcement operations;
- Any other significant event which causes emergency services personnel to experience unusually strong emotional reactions.

The team is activated by calling phone number 791-8021 (Matthews Answering Service). The service will then contact the team's Clinical Director or other Administrative Team member with the information. The team can be contacted by mail at the following address:

The Front Range CISM Team
Great Falls Police Department
P.O. Box 5021
Great Falls, MT 59403

Source URL (retrieved on 01/29/2015 - 9:50pm):

<http://www.greatfallsmt.net/police/critical-incident-stress-management-cism>

