

Who may attend?

Only those directly involved in or affected by the event are permitted to attend a stress debriefing. No record is made of what occurs and all discussions are **strictly confidential**.

When and where are the C.I.S.M. debriefings held?

Debriefings are held at places and times determined by the C.I.S.M. Coordinators and first responder agencies/departments officers.

How to request C.I.S.M. Team assistance:

Requests for Critical Incident Stress Management services can be made by contacting the Columbia County 911 non-emergency number, **518-828-4114**. The C.I.S.M. team coordinator will work with the other C.I.S.M. members to schedule the appropriate intervention.



TO REQUEST THE C.I.S.M. TEAM Call Columbia County 911 Non-Emergency 518-828-4114

988 Suicide and Crisis Line

24/7 free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you and your loved ones.

Safe Call Now 1-206-459-3020

24/7 help line staffed by first responders for first responders and their family members.

Fire/EMS Help Line 1-888-731-3473

Also known as "Share the Load", a program run by the National Volunteer Fire Council

Crisis Text Line Text - "start" or "help" to 741-741

People in crisis can speak with a trained crisis counselor

Frontline Helpline 1-866-676-7500

Run by Frontline responder services 24/7 coverage with first responder call takers

Copline (Law Enforcement Only) 1-800-267-5463

A confidential help line for members of US law enforcement

Mobile Crisis Assessment Team (MCAT)

518-943-5555 On site mental health assessments

COLUMBIA COUNTY EMS COORDINATOR'S OFFICE

PJ Keeler – EMS Coordinator
Maria Ostrander - C.I.S.M. Team Coordinator



CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS MANAGEMENT TEAM (C.I.S.M.)

A crisis intervention team for Columbia County, NY, public servants and First Responders.

What is a Critical Incident?

A critical incident is any event which overwhelms an individual's normal coping mechanism to deal with some occurrences. Critical incidents can include:

- Natural disasters
- Mass casualty incidents
- Line of duty death or major on the job injury
- Death or major injury to children
- Death or significant injury to persons known to responding personnel
- Prolonged search and/or rescue efforts with negative outcome
- Attempted or completed suicide

Persons involved in such incidents may suffer from the effects of a syndrome known as "Critical Incident Stress."

What is Critical Incident Stress?

Even though an incident may be over, a person can undergo strong emotional reactions which have the potential to interfere with his/her ability to function now or some time in the future. It is very common, in fact normal, for people to experience emotional aftershocks when they have participated in traumatic events.

What are some of the symptoms of Critical Incident Stress?

Symptoms of Critical Incident Stress may include the following:

- **Physical** nausea, tremors, sweating, chills, rapid heart rate
- **Cognitive** impaired thinking or concentration, confusion or memory loss, hypervigilance, nightmares
- **Emotional** anger, fear, grief, anxiety, frustration, withdrawal, feeling overwhelmed
- **Behavioral** substance misuse, change in activity level, loss/increased appetite, change in sexual functioning, changes in sleep patterns

These symptoms may not be evident right away. They may begin to occur hours, days or even weeks later.

Individuals suffering from Critical Incident Stress can also experience flashbacks, a loss of desire to perform normal functions, and/or depression.

"You don't have to struggle in silence ..."

What is stress debriefing?

Stress debriefing is a free and confidential service provided by the Columbia County C.I.S.M. (Critical Incident Stress Management) Team. Team members are comprised of professional advisors and peer support people in the fields of fire, law enforcement and EMS. The primary goal of the team is to help those who are most affected by the event move beyond the incident and regain normalcy in their lives by helping them understand the emotional and physical symptoms they may be experiencing. An important part of the team's response involves gathering facts about the incident and helping individuals recognize that their reactions are normal and that the situation itself is abnormal. Referral services for further care is offered when necessary.

