PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID & FIRST RESPONDERS

Fifth National Emergency Management Summit
Mini Summit IV - Helping the Helpers and Survivors

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Objectives:

- Psychological impact of disasters
- Psychological First Aid (PFA)
- Benefits of training First Responders in PFA
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Psychological Impact of Disasters:

- No one who experiences a disaster is untouched by it
- Most psychological reactions to disasters are normal reactions to an abnormal situation
- 5 Normal expected reactions
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Psychological First Aid:

➢ Supportive intervention

➢ Reduces the psychological stress

➢ 5 Concepts
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Benefits of training First Responders in PFA:

- Applying PFA in the acute phase
- Communicate more effectively
- Provide peer support and promote self-care
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- The Resilience & Emotional Support Team (REST Team)
- On-site disaster mental health
- Mental Health Agencies
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Things to Remember:

- No one who experiences a disaster is untouched by it
- The “five ways” individuals respond to disasters (Physical, Emotional, Cognitive, Behavioral and Spiritual)
- The 5 concepts of Psychological First Aid (PFA) (Safety, Calm, Connectedness, Hope, and Self-Efficacy)
- First Responders can effectively help survivors manage stress by being trained in and applying PFA
- Learning how to apply PFA can help First Responders support their peers while practicing and promoting self-care.
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Accessible PFA trainings:

1) National Child Traumatic Stress Network Learning Center
   http://learn.nctsn.org/login/signup.php

2) John Hopkins - Psychological First Aid Competencies for Public Health Workers
   http://www.jhsph.edu/preparedness/training/online/dis_mtl_hlth_comp.html

3) University of Rochester - Psychological First Aid: Helping People Cope during Disasters and Public Health Emergencies
   http://www.centerfordisastermedicine.org/disaster_mental_health.html
Questions

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