

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) is an effective approach because it empowers individuals, in the context of their workplace, to define and maintain their own and others' health through education, communication, and enhanced social support. The CISM approach allows individuals to verbally express stress reactions and share coping strategies after a traumatic incident.

While the evidence is still varied about whether the CISM approach prevents PTSD, it should be maintained in the workplace as part of a broader approach to health promotion. Debriefing also provides an opportunity to explore lessons learned and what could be done differently in the future. Organizations need to determine their own policies as to when CISM is mandatory and when it is voluntary. There should also be a distinction made between defusing and debriefing and when one or the other is appropriate.

The following links can assist your organization in creating a CISM program.

Critical Incident Response Program Guidelines

The WorkSafeBC Critical Incident Response (CIR) Program is an early intervention initiative that provides critical incident intervention to workers and employers who have experienced a traumatic event in the workplace. The goal is to reduce the distress that workers and employers may experience immediately following an event, and to mitigate the development of further, more serious difficulties.

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/claims/guides/critical-incident-responseprogram-guidelines?lang=en>

Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD), aka the "Mitchell Model"

Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) is a specific, 7-phase, small group, supportive crisis intervention process. It is just one of the many crisis intervention techniques which are included under the umbrella of a Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) program.

<http://www.info-trauma.org/flash/media-f/mitchellCriticalIncidentStressDebriefing.pdf>

The International Critical Incident Stress Foundation

The International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF) provides training for individuals interested in becoming a part of a crisis management team, or for an organization that is dedicated to helping individuals or groups recover from incidents.

<https://www.icisf.org/>

The Crisis Response (CISM) Team: General Guidelines for Team Development

https://icisf.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Starting-A-CISM-Peer-Support-Team-2022-revised-5_31_22.pdf

A Primer On Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)

<https://www.icisf.org/a-primer-on-critical-incident-stress-management-cism/>