

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)

Critical Incident Stress Management is a comprehensive, integrated multi-component crisis intervention system. CISM services provide a framework for the application of education and crisis intervention during the acute stage following a critical incident. These services enhance and compliment the delivery of traditional mental health services and include:

- 1. Pre-crisis preparation:** Working with schools to help set expectations for what to do when a critical incident occurs.
- 2. Individual consultation:** A structured one-to-one technique used by a trained counselor or professional after a critical incident.
- 3. Briefing:** A presentation to groups following a crisis or critical incident to share information, reduce and dispel rumors, and provide details of action plans.
- 4. Defusing:** A group crisis intervention technique conducted by a trained facilitator, usually occurring in the first 12-24 hours after a critical incident.
- 5. Debriefing (a.k.a., Critical Incident Stress Debriefing or CISD).** A structured small-group process targeted toward mitigating or resolving the psychological distress associated with a critical incident or traumatic event, usually occurring in the first 10 days following an event.
- 6. Parent/family/organization consultation:** A group process conducted to provide ongoing education and support to families, parent groups or organizations following a critical incident.
- 7. Referral/follow-up:** A process to assure that individuals experiencing intense symptoms and who need ongoing support will be referred for appropriate mental health services.