



Oakland Community Health Network

Developmental Disabilities • Mental Health • Substance Recovery

Main Office
5505 Corporate Dr.
Troy, MI 48098

Critical Incident Stress Management

Inspire Hope, Empower People, & Strengthen Communities

Critical Incident Stress Management

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) is a formal crisis intervention meant to address the impact of unusual, traumatic, or stressful events. CISM includes education, prevention, and mitigation techniques implemented to reduce stress and prevent longer-lasting mental health concerns such as PTSD. CISM has multiple components that can be used before, during, and after a crisis.

What to Expect Following a Critical Incident

You have experienced a traumatic event or a critical incident. Even though the event may be over, you may now be experiencing or may experience later, some strong emotional or physical reactions.

Sometimes emotional aftershocks (or stress reactions) appear immediately after the traumatic event. Or they may appear a few hours or a few days later. And, in some cases, weeks or months may pass before the stress reactions appear.

The signs and symptoms of a stress reaction may last a few days, a few weeks, a few months, or longer depending on the severity of the traumatic event. Occasionally, the traumatic event is so painful that professional assistance may be necessary. Common signs of a stress reaction are:

Physical

Chills
Thirst
Fatigue
Nausea
Fainting
Grinding teeth
Twitching
Dizziness
Weakness
Chest pain
Headaches
Elevated BP
Rapid heart rate
Sweating

Cognitive

Confusion
Nightmares
Uncertainty
Hyper-vigilance
Intrusive images
Poor concentration
Poor attention
Disorientation
Poor problem solving
Blaming
Altered alertness

Emotional

Fear
Guilt
Grief
Panic
Denial
Anxiety
Agitation
Depression
Anger
Outbursts
Feeling overwhelmed
Emotional shock
Apprehension

Behavioral

Withdrawal
Antisocial acts
Restlessness
Pacing
Erratic movements
Change in social activity
Change in speech
Change in appetite
Increased alcohol consumption
Change in habits
Change in communication

Stress Management

Below are some basic stress management principles that have been shown to help ease or moderate some of the reactions to a critical incident.

- Eat nutritious foods: fresh fruits, vegetables, and a balanced diet.
- Get plenty of physical exercise to reduce some of the physical/psychological effects of stress.
- Moderate your intake of caffeine.
- Avoid alcohol or other depressants.
- Keep rested; remain on a schedule for sleep and other relaxing activities.
- Avoid changes in your daily routine.
- Find a friend or a support source to talk to about the incident.
- Do not make any significant life altering decisions for at least 30 days.
- Try to find time, perhaps just an hour to do something that you enjoy.
- If the symptoms of stress do not lessen, seek additional assistance.

Critical Incident Stress Management Information for Spouses, Families, etc.

Your loved one has been involved in an emotionally charged event, often referred to as a critical incident. They may be experiencing stress responses to this event. A stress response to a traumatic or critical incident may occur a few days, a few weeks, or a few months following the event.

Some important things to remember about critical incident stress:

- The signs of critical incident stress are physical, cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and spiritual.
- Your loved one may experience an immediate stress or grief response, or a variety of stress response signs and/or symptoms or may not feel any of these reactions at this time.
- The effects of critical incident stress are completely normal.

Helpful tips to support your loved one include:

- Share the gift of your time.
- Listen carefully and non-judgmentally.
- Offer help with the everyday tasks, i.e., cleaning, cooking, and caring for family and/or children.
- Give them more opportunities for personal time.
- Encourage a routine and healthy choices i.e. eating well, exercise, etc.



Emotional or physical reactions to a traumatic event are normal. If you or a loved one experience a prolonged stress response or are unable to manage your symptoms, seek additional help.

OCHN's Non-Emergency Access can be reached at
(248) 464-6363

For immediate assistance, call or text the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988.



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Services Offered

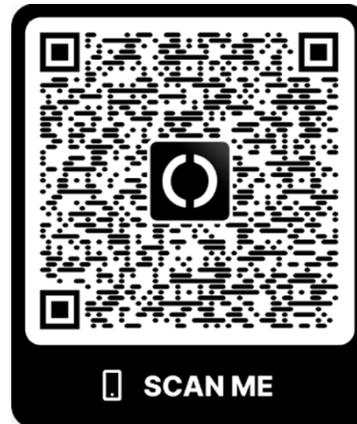
OCHN funds and manages a service provider network that assists approximately 29,000 Oakland County citizens at more than 400 service sites across the county.

- Adult Mental Health
- Applied Behavioral Analysis
- Crisis Resources
- Children's Mental Health
- Serious Emotional Disturbances
- Employment & Skill Building
- Housing
- Intellectual / Developmental Disabilities
- Jail Diversion / Criminal Justice
- Peer Support
- Substance Use Disorder
- Veteran's Services

For a comprehensive list of providers visit www.oaklandchn.org

Keep OCHN in Your Contacts!

1. Scan the QR code with a smartphone
2. Select "Save Contact"
3. Scroll down and tap "Create New Contact"



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