

Mental Health Resiliency In Forensic Science

Background

First responders are often placed in uncomfortable and potentially traumatizing situations. It is important that they can complete their duties and are not easily psychologically impacted by the intensity of the situation. These professionals are trained and are given trauma prevention training to ensure that when they find themselves in the situations, they can function and carry out their job without suffering intensely from PTSD or other trauma symptoms. PTSD is psychological disorder that causes intense feelings of distress and anxiety as a response to previously experienced trauma when triggered. The effects of this disorder can cause damage to a person's personal network and to their personal lives due to them having difficulty in managing the daily stressors they experience.

Current and Future Methods

Data and information for this project is currently being collected through thorough research. Research has been conducted on identifying best practices in PTSD and trauma prevention in military soldiers, police officers, forensic officers, and social workers. In the future, interviews will be conducted with industry professionals in order to understand what type of trauma prevention training they need for their position.

Trauma Prevention Program

Risk Assessment
Tool

Practice
Scenarios

Information
Videos

Risk Assessment Tool

- Analyzes participant's attachment styles
- These are unique characteristics that people have the influence they relate and connect with others
- Identifies potential PTSD risk factors
- Will be beneficial in developing a greater understand of the module participants

Practice Scenarios

- Will provide students with in-person or online methods to practice what they learn in the module
- We have students play the role of a first responder in a stressful situation

Information Videos

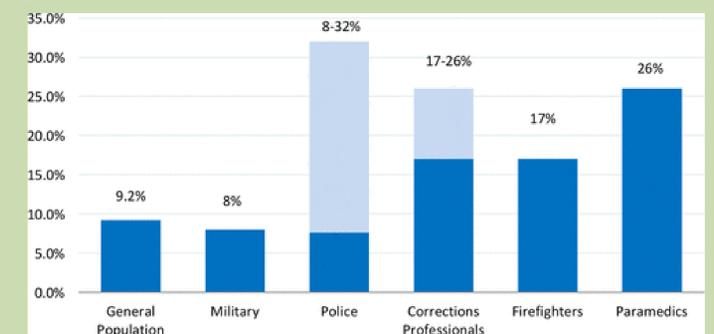
- Provide information on what students may experience in their field of work
- Teach students mindfulness techniques that may improve resiliency
- Inform participants on early signs of PTSD symptoms

Project Goals

The goal of the mental health readiness project is to acquire as much information as possible on existing PTSD prevention programs with the hope to design a module that can build resilience to factors that may cause the development of PTSD in future students engaging in forensic science and first responder careers.

Research Results

Through completing research on already established trauma prevention programs it was discovered that there is a lack of information regarding the efficacy of these programs and there are a lot of knowledge gaps that need to be filled. Other prevention programs mainly used inoculation strategies to better prepare their participants for traumatic situations they may experience while working in their careers. This involved using information briefings, videos, and presentations to highlight all the traumatic events that participants may witness in the future, so that when they witness these sightings, they will be less likely to be traumatized by what they see.



Percentage of first responders who suffered from PTSD in Canada in 2010.

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