



Great Lakes Critical Incident Stress Management Team

Letter of Introduction

Dear Community Member,

The Great Lakes CISM Team has been serving communities in Bay and Arenac counties for three years. This letter of introduction is intended to communicate the presence and availability of the Great Lakes CISM Team to provide critical incident stress management (CISM) services in the event of a critical incident in the community. CISM services are available for individuals, as well as small and large groups. Services are available upon request 24 hours a day and can be provided within hours or days of a critical incident.

Critical incidents are unanticipated crisis events which can overwhelm a person emotionally or physically. A few examples of critical incidents are natural disaster, death or suicide of a co-worker, plant closing or downsizing, and robbery. Negative effects of a critical incident can significantly alter a person's perspective in life and inhibit their ability to cope with daily activities if left unattended. Physical symptoms following exposure to a critical incident can include fatigue, nausea, headaches, and thirst, whereas emotional symptoms could present as anxiety, guilt, grief, denial, fear, emotional shock, intense anger, or irritability. Still other symptoms could present cognitively, behaviorally, or spiritually.

The goal of CISM services is to mitigate the impact of an individual's or group's exposure to a critical incident by focusing on individual or group response to the crisis event. Secondly, CISM services help to facilitate normal recovery processes in normal people who are having normal reactions to abnormal events. Lastly, CISM services are intended to restore adaptive functioning following a period of extreme emotional distress.

To determine if CISM services are needed in the event of a critical incident, community members are encouraged to contact the Bay-Arenac Behavioral Health 24/7 Hotline at 989-895-2300 or 800-327-4693. A Bay-Arenac Behavioral Health Emergency Services Worker will collect some basic information and then contact the Team Coordinator for Great Lakes CISM Team for follow-up.

If your agency or organization would be interested in learning more about CISM services, please contact Michael Swank, Team Coordinator to request a brief presentation. Michael can be reached at 989-891-3675 or by e-mail at mswank1955@charter.net. A electronic copy of our team brochure has been attached for your convenience.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Swank, Team Coordinator
Great Lakes CISM Team

The Team

All team members receive critical incident stress management training through the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF), which is the national standard for CISM teams.

Joining the Great Lakes CISM Team

Steps to becoming a team member:

✓ Call or email Michael Swank
@ 989-891-7536 /
mswank1955@charter.net

OR Ann Tinney
@ 989-220-7869 /
annie1403@charter.net

- ✓ Complete the ICISF Group Crisis Intervention Course
- ✓ Complete a Great Lakes CISM Team application
- ✓ Complete a Great Lakes CISM Team memo of understanding
- Acceptance of applicants are determined through a Great Lakes team review

Fees

There are no fees for our CISM services, and the team is available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week.

Please email questions & comments to:

mswank1955@charter.net

OR annie1403@charter.net

Call Bay Arenac Behavioral Health 24/7 Hotline to Request Services:

989-895-2300, 800-327-4693,
or 989-891-7536/
989-220-7869
****CALL ANYTIME**

Helping normal people cope with normal reactions and stress produced by an abnormal situation.

Recognized by the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (<http://www.icisf.org>) and members of the Michigan Crisis Response Association (www.mcrainc.com)

Revised February 16, 2016

Great Lakes

Critical
Incident
Stress
Management

Team



Mission Statement

The purpose of the Great Lakes CISM Team is to provide and coordinate quality critical incident stress management services to emergency responders, organizations, agencies, and community members, in and around Bay, Arenac, Saginaw and Genesee counties, who have experienced a critical incident. This includes, yet not limited to:

- Schools
- Businesses
- Communities
- Fire departments
- Emergency responders
- Mental health agencies
- Medical staff
- Law enforcement
- 911 Dispatchers
- Disaster volunteers

What is a Critical Incident?

Critical incidents are unanticipated crisis events, which can overwhelm a person emotionally or physically.

Negative effects of a critical incident can significantly alter a person's perspective on life and inhibit their ability to cope with daily activities if left unattended.

Examples of A Critical Incident

- Natural disaster
- On the job death
- Multiple fatalities
- Shooting/ hostage situation
- Line of duty death
- Serious injury to co-worker or emergency provider
- Death of a co-worker
- Multiple-casualty accident
- Death of a child
- Suicide of a co-worker
- Tragic death
- Plant closing or downsizing
- Robbery
- Victim known by rescuer
- Incident with intense media coverage
- Prolonged rescue/recovery incident
- Any critical incident that produces above average stress

It may be difficult to determine whether CISM services are needed; however, do not hesitate to call and request services.

What Does a CISM Team Do?

- **Pre-crisis preparation** - Includes CISM education for individuals, agencies, and organizations
- **Debriefings** – Structured group process, usually conducted 24-72 hours after a critical incident
- **Defusings** – 25-30 minute group process, conducted within the first 8 hours of a critical incident.
- **Community Management Briefing** – Conducted anytime after a critical incident, and is designed to disseminate information and mitigate critical incident stress for large or small groups.
- **One-on-One Intervention** – For first responders and general public, and can be conducted on the scene of a prolonged critical incident, or in other settings.
- **Follow-up services** - May include (yet are not limited to) individual crisis intervention, family debriefings, and referrals to mental health services.