

# Working with People in Crisis for First Responders

Intersection of 911 and 988 Lifesaving Options for Crisis and Emergency Situations

## How Does Mental Health First Aid for Public Safety **Empower First Responders?**



Improves the way law enforcement interacts with people facing mental health and addiction challenges.1







1 in 4 people shot and killed by police officers between 2015 - 2020 had

condition3

### Increases mental health and substance use literacy.<sup>1</sup>

#### Common warning signs of emotional distress include: 4

- Eating or sleeping too much or too little
- Pulling away from people and things
- Having low or no energy

sure why

- Having unexplained aches and pains, such as constant stomachaches or headaches
- Feeling helpless or hopeless
- Excessive smoking, drinking, or using drugs,
- including prescription medications Worrying a lot of the time; feeling guilty but not
- Thinking of hurting or killing yourself or someone

### Early warning signs of psychosis:5

- Suspiciousness, paranoid ideas, or uneasiness with
- Trouble thinking clearly and logically
- Withdrawing socially and spending a lot more time alone
- Unusual or overly intense ideas, strange feelings, or a lack of feelings
- Decline in self-care or personal hygiene
- Disruption of sleep, including difficulty falling asleep and reduced sleep time
- Difficulty telling reality from fantasy
- Confused speech or trouble communicating
- Sudden drop in grades or job performance





### Teaches skills to safely address person-first language & language that feeds stereotypes.<sup>1</sup>



PERSON-FIRST LANGUAGE<sup>6</sup>

Instead of this	Try this
Mentally III	Person living with a mental health challenge or use the diagnosis if the person prefers that language (e.g., major depressive disorder)
Crazy/insane/disturbed	Person living with a mental health challenge/trauma
Depressed/schizophrenic	Person living with depression/schizophrenia
Manic-depressive	Person living with biopolar disorder
Addict/junkie/druggie	Person with a substance use challenge or disorder
Alcohol	Person with an alcohol use challenge or disorder
Ex-addict/clean	Person in recovery



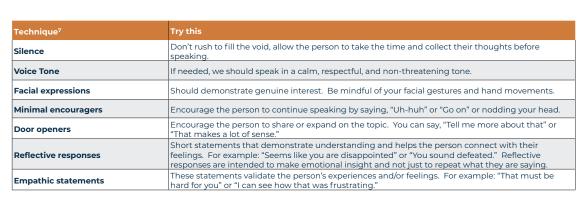
### LANGUAGE THAT FEEDS STEREOTYPES

Instead of this	Try this
mstead of this	is the second se
Mental illness	Mental health challenge or crisis
Drug/alchohol abuse	Substance use challenge or crisis
Committed suicide	Died by suicide or lost to suicide
Failed suicide	Attempted suicide

### Models de-escalation techniques useful when responding to people in crisis safely and effectively. 1

Most of the communication in a crisis is nonverbal. 55% is body language, 38% is the voice tone and 7% is the actual words spoken. Becoming self-aware, practicing non-verbal skills, and responding with wisdom can assist in reducing stress during a crisis.<sup>7</sup>

Active listening is critical during a crisis. When done effectively it helps the person feel understood and validated. In addition, active listening demonstrates that you are present, builds trust, and is naturally calming. A good question to ask ourselves is, "Am I listening to understand or to respond?" Effective listening incorporates the following nonverbal techniques and responsive techniques:





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### References