

WORKSHOP SERIES

Emergency and First Responders Partnerships: Post-Crisis Support

March 26, 2026



Funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration



Disclaimer

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Crisis Systems Response Training and Technical Assistance Center

SAMHSA has selected Altarum to provide training and technical assistance (TTA) support to states, territories, Tribal organizations, and community partners across the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline and crisis continuum of care. Along with our partners, W2 Consulting Corporation and Change Matrix, LLC, who have extensive experience with crisis services and technical assistance, the Crisis Systems Response Training and Technical Assistance Center (CSR-TTAC) was formed to support the continued growth of the 988 Lifeline and build a more robust crisis care system.



SAMHSA Team



Jill D. Mays, MS, LPC

Division Director of Crisis System Transformation for the 988 & Behavioral Health Crisis Coordinating Office (BHCCO)

Jill D. Mays is the Division Director for Crisis System Transformation for the 988 & Behavioral Health Crisis Coordinating Office at SAMHSA. She currently leads the evolutionary and collaborative work of pillars two (someone to respond) and three (a safe place for help) of the 988 Behavioral Health Crisis Continuum. Before coming to SAMHSA, Mrs. Mays served as Director of the Office of Behavioral Health Prevention and Federal Grants at the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD), where she most recently oversaw all substance misuse prevention, suicide prevention, and mental health promotion, and served as principal investigator for the agency's multimillion dollar portfolio of federal grants, including 988 and CCBHC grants and as planner for the mental health block grant. Additionally, as Assistant Director of the Office of Adult Mental Health at DBHDD, she was the Project Officer for Crisis Services. Mrs. Mays previously coordinated operation of SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Helpline (DDH) Core Regional Call Center in Atlanta, serving FEMA Regions III & IV. Mrs. Mays is a Licensed Professional Counselor, with over 30 years of experience in the behavioral health field and is a person with mental health lived experience.

SAMHSA Acknowledgment



Tiffany M. Russell, MBA
Chief, Crisis and Justice Initiatives for the 988 & Behavioral Health Crisis Coordinating Office (BHCCO)

As the Chief of Crisis and Justice Initiatives with SAMHSA's 988 & BHCCO, Tiffany serves as an advisor to the 988 Director and other members of SAMHSA's senior leadership in planning and determining policy, programs, and activities that address complex challenges in coordination of 988 crisis centers with law enforcement, 911 call centers, and emergency medical service providers. She also develops, recommends, and implements programs and provisions of guidance related to improving crisis response and fair access to services for individuals with behavioral health needs that minimize unnecessary law enforcement involvement and promote diversion from the justice system.

Before joining SAMHSA, Tiffany directed the Mental Health and Justice Project which focused on improving behavioral health crisis responses in state and local governments for Pew Charitable Trusts. Prior to Pew, she served as the Director of Strategic Planning and Research Development in the District Court Administration for the Superior Court of Fulton County, Georgia, where she was responsible for building the court's capacity by developing policies, programs, and processes to enhance the administration of justice and increase access to justice for all. Tiffany also held several positions in grant management, research, strategic planning, public relations, and communications in nonprofit, government, and education organizations. Tiffany also holds a bachelor's degree in organizational leadership and a Master of Business Administration in Innovation from Mercer University.

Workstream Team



Stephanie Berzkalns



Chizoba Chukwura



Jasmine Little



Stephanie Loo



Meagan MacGregor



Manny Stegall



Elizabeth Woodford

Agenda

- 01** Learning Objectives
- 02** Follow-Up Care as a Best Practice
- 03** Presentation
- 04** Question and Answer

Learning Objectives

By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

Describe	the role of emergency and first responders in post-crisis engagement
Identify	challenges and facilitators to sustaining post-crisis collaboration across sectors
Apply	practical strategies to strengthen cross-system collaboration that builds community resilience

Post-Crisis Follow-up



Guest Speaker: Emily Anderson



Emily Anderson, LCSW
Manager,
Co-Responder Services
Colorado Behavioral
Health Administration
(BHA)

Emily Anderson is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) in the state of Colorado and has been the Manager of Co-Responder Services at the Colorado BHA since 2018. In this role, she is responsible for contractual and programmatic oversight of BHA funded Co-Responder Programs throughout Colorado and also serves as a subject matter expert on law enforcement and behavioral health partnerships. Prior to the BHA, she worked in a variety of settings with justice-involved populations who have behavioral health needs, including 11 years in the community mental health setting where she was a law enforcement liaison, a collaborative partner and course director for a Regional CIT training program, and a principal partner in the development, implementation, and supervision of Co-Responder Programs in three separate law enforcement agencies.



First Responder Partnerships: Post-Crisis Support

Emily Anderson, LCSW
Manager, Co-Responder Services
Colorado BHA



COLORADO
Behavioral Health
Administration



General Program Structure and Framework

Colorado Co-Responder Programs

The Blueprint

Model and
Program
Structure



On-scene
and Post-
crisis
Response



Other
Program
Elements

Collaboration and
Relationship Building



Program Goals

- Prevent legal system involvement, incarceration, and hospitalization.
- Provide alternate care in least restrictive environment through **a coordinated system-wide approach.**
- Prevent duplication of behavioral health services.
- Facilitate return of law enforcement to patrol activities.



Response Models

Primary Response

- Team or unit model
- Responds together

Secondary Response

- Availability throughout law enforcement agency
- Clinician responds when called

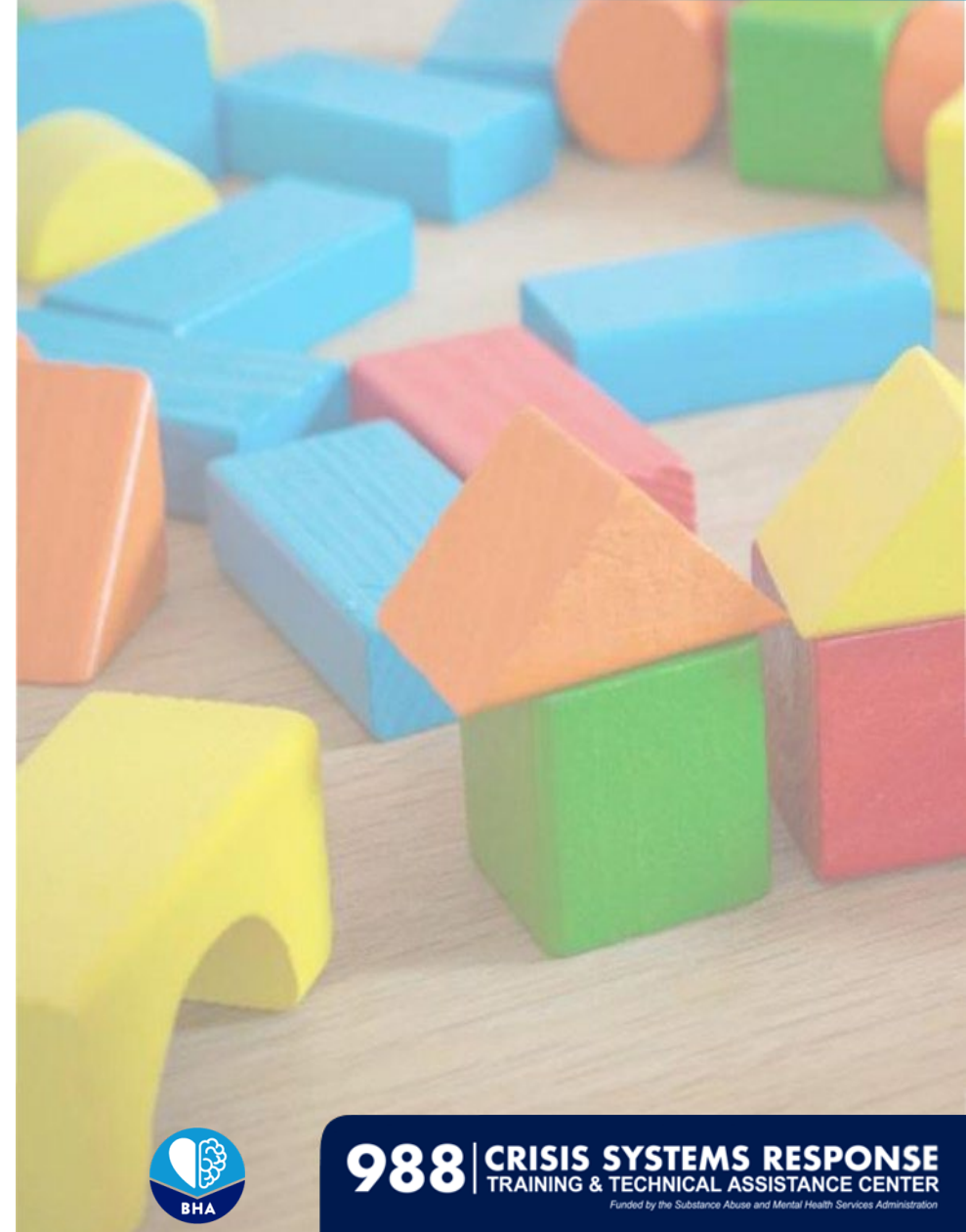
Hybrid or Tailored

- Mix of response and duties



Team Structure

- **Clinical staffing**
 - In-house or contracted community partner
- **Other team components**
 - Emergency Medical Services (EMS) or Paramedics
 - Case Management
 - Peer Support Professionals
- **Decision trade-offs**
 - Not right/wrong or better/worse



Types of Response

On-Scene Response

- Crisis de-escalation
- Behavioral health screening and assessment
- Call disposition planning
- Provide resources and referrals

Post-Response

- Refer, outreach, link
 - Community-based services
 - Family support, when appropriate
- Peer support/engagement
- Coordination with systems of care



Other Program Elements

- Policies
- Team culture and norms
- Training and communication
 - Internal/External
 - Formal/Informal



Collaborative Structure(s)

Shared Ownership and Shared Responsibility

Local

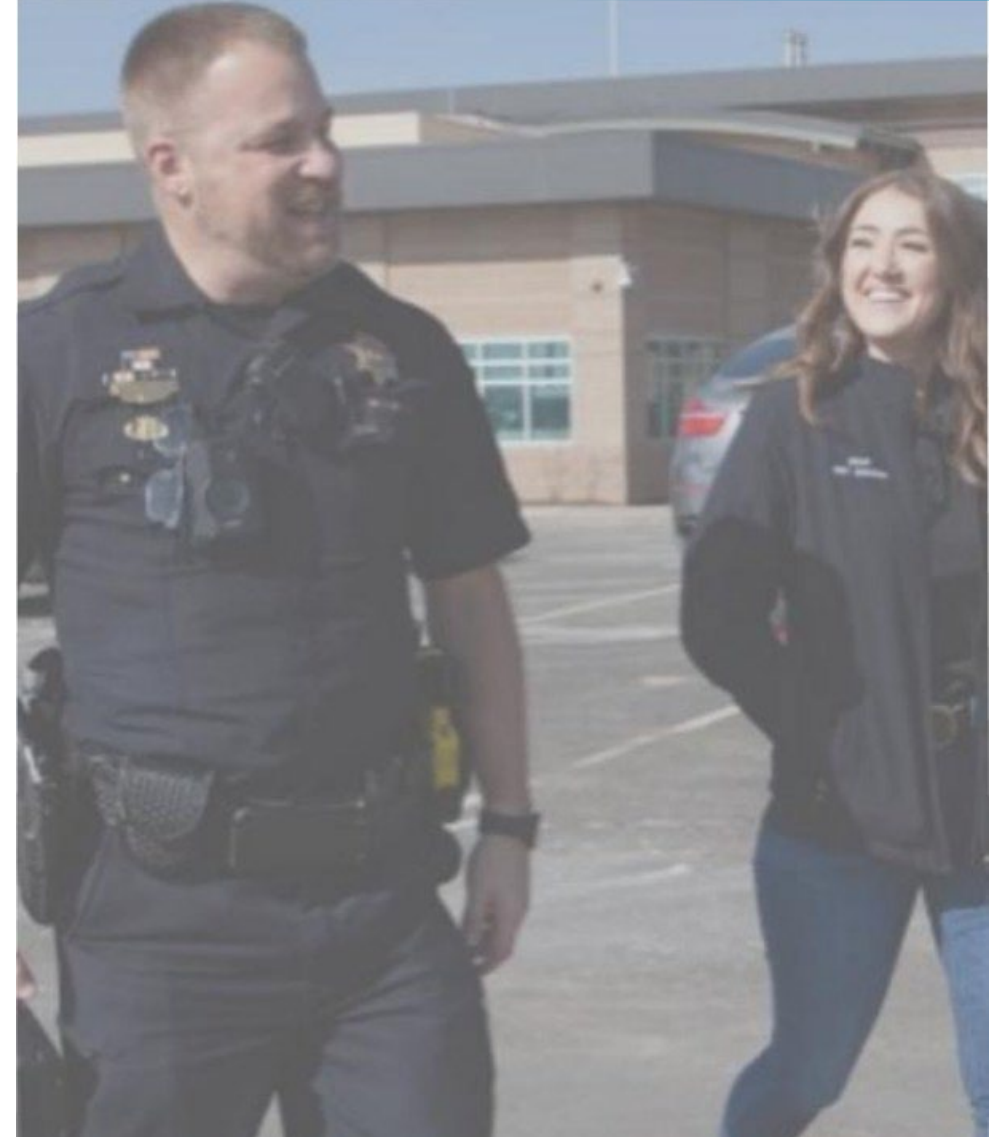
Collaborative oversight groups

Regional

Joint training and consultation

Statewide

Collaborative learning and networking opportunities



Collaboration for Post-Crisis Support



Working Definition of Collaboration

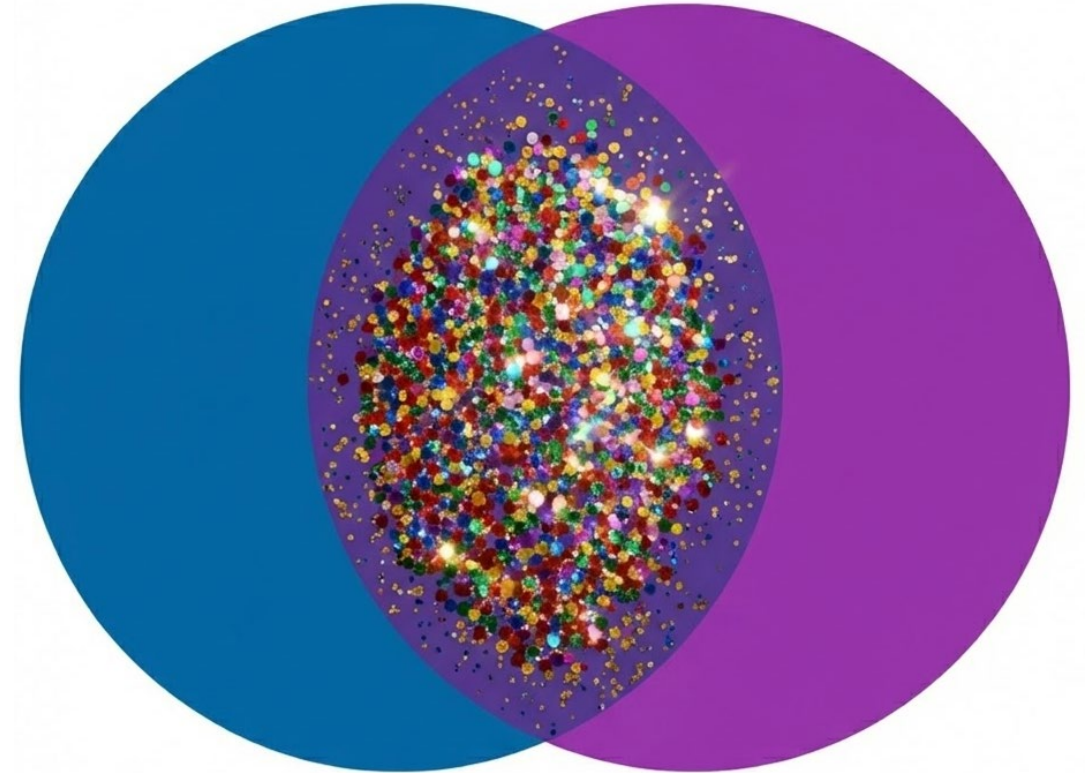
[Collaboration is] “the interactions of interconnected and interdependent agents who work ... toward a common purpose that they could not have achieved alone.”

Source: Salignac F, Marjolin A, Noone J, Carey G. Measuring dynamic collaborations: Collaborative health assessment tool. *Aust J Publ Admin* 2019;1–23. doi.org/10.1111/1467-8500.12386



Magic in the Middle

The **space between** first responders and behavioral health **is the magic.**



The Tension of the Middle

- Get comfortable with discomfort and ambiguity.
- Balance between scope rigidity and scope creep.
- Maintain focus on the shared goals.
- Focus on complementary strengths.
- Use your networks—capitalize on disparate connections and contacts!



Building Mutual Respect

*“Politeness is the
poison of
collaboration.”*
- Edwin Land

- Conflict isn’t bad—it’s about *how* you engage.
- Be curious and open.
- Engage with empathy and to understand.
- Communicate within team and with chain of command to fix resource gaps.
- Hold yourself, your team, and system partners accountable.
- Don’t be afraid to course-correct or admit mistakes.



Two Sides of a Coin

“Reciprocity cascade”



Cooperation *begets* cooperation.

“Defection cascade”



Building Your Resource Network

- Identify your community's resources.
 - Don't overlook the "small" things.
 - Observed behavior vs. implicit needs being met by the behavior (iceberg).
- Think creatively with interventions and what you consider resources.



Relationships Matter

“Relationships matter: the currency...for change was trust, and trust comes through forming healthy working relationships. **People, not programs, change people.**”

– Dr. Bruce D. Perry*

***Source:** Bruce D. Perry, Maia Szalavitz (2017). *The Boy Who Was Raised as a Dog: And Other Stories from a Child Psychiatrist’s Notebook—What Traumatized Children Can Teach Us About Loss, Love, and Healing.*”



Guest Speaker: SGT Amil Alwan



SGT (Ret) Amil Alwan

**Community Service
Team Lead**

**Kalamazoo Department
of Public Safety (KDPS)**

SGT Alwan has been employed with the KDPS for over 25 years. SGT Alwan serves on the Critical Incident Stress Management Team (CISM), Peer Support Team, and Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) as a CIT Trainer/Coordinator, Behavioral Health Emergency Trainer, and Team Leader for the Kalamazoo Metro SWAT Hostage Negotiation Team.

In 2021, Kalamazoo implemented a Community Service Team (CST) to assist the unhoused population and individuals with mental health challenges while still acting in accordance with laws. Comprised of an officer and social services coordinator, the CST helps navigate crisis situations through coordination with community partners. SGT Alwan currently serves as the CST Command. In addition to his role as a police officer, SGT Alwan is a certified Firefighter (1&2) and Medical First Responder to meet KDPS' role as a true public safety department where officers respond to all emergencies – police, fire, and medical.

Kalamazoo Public Safety

Kalamazoo Michigan houses a true “public safety” department

- Police, Fire, and EMS co-located



Laying the Groundwork

Addressing the post-crisis needs of the community requires a shift in perspective and philosophy.



Having empathy, while still being tactical

Kalamazoo Follow-Up Innovations

The impact of critical incidents are felt beyond the help-seeker. The community is often affected, but how can the community be supported post-crisis through collaborative response?

- CISM Teams
 - Building partnerships
- 988 Contact Centers
 - Alerting local resources aware of critical incidents for proactive outreach
- Pastors on Patrol
 - Leveraging faith-based community to provide follow-up through their communities and spread factual information and resources.

Questions



Upcoming 988 CSR-TTAC Events



[CSR-TTAC Upcoming Events](#)

Trusted Messengers: Faith Community Partnerships to Strengthen the 988 Crisis System

March 31

2:00pm ET

Ethical Decision-Making in Crisis Response

April 2

1:00pm ET

Boundaries in Crisis Work

April 16

2:00pm ET

We Value Your Feedback!

Please take a minute to complete the evaluation poll on your screen.



Certificate of Attendance

[Available by Request](#)



988 CRISIS SYSTEMS RESPONSE

TRAINING &
TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE
CENTER

SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

Funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Thank you for attending!

Have additional questions? Email us!

support@988crisisttac.org

This project is supported by SAMHSA, the agency within HHS that leads public health efforts to advance the behavioral health of the nation. The CSR-TTAC works in conjunction with the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. In 2020, Congress designated the new 988 dialing code to be operated through the existing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. SAMHSA sees 988 as a first step towards a transformed crisis care system in America. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of SAMHSA or the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

