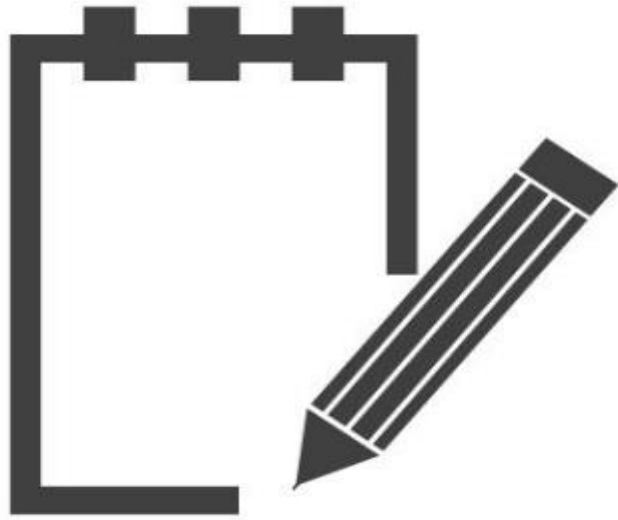


# CIT Team Development

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Law Enforcement and Community:  
Crisis Intervention Team Training

# Module Overview



- Learn about Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Programs and Find Allies
- Make a Commitment
- Understand Your Crisis Response System
- Build the Infrastructure for CIT
- Plan and Deliver Officer Training
- Sustain and Grow Your CIT Program

# CIT Programs and Find Allies



The CIT Core Elements The CIT Core Elements, developed in 2006 by the University of Memphis CIT Center in partnership with CIT leaders around the country, is the definitive guide to the CIT model. The document is brief and you should read it carefully. The 10 Core Elements are comprehensive, describing CIT in detail. They are:

1. Partnerships among law enforcement, advocacy, and mental health systems
2. Community ownership over planning, implementation, and networking
3. Policies and procedures
4. CIT officers, dispatchers, and coordinators

# CIT Programs and Find Allies



5. CIT training for officers and dispatchers
6. Mental health receiving facility
7. Evaluation and research
8. In-service training
9. Recognition and honors
10. Outreach to develop CIT in other communities



# CIT Programs and Find Allies



- Partnerships are the first core element of CIT because they are the foundation of everything else. CIT programs succeed when they have strong, active partnerships.
- Every community starts out small and builds the program at their own pace. Many communities have very few resources and worry that they can't have a CIT program if they don't already have a robust crisis response system. This is not the case. Strengthening the crisis response system incrementally is a long-term goal for CIT programs.
- Officer training is a step along the way, not an end goal. Many programs stall when they have carried out successful training sessions; this guide will help you move forward as a community to address challenges with your crisis response system.

# CIT Programs and Find Allies



## Identifying the Right Allies

- Look for allies who have a different experience of the mental health crisis response system than you. For example, if you are a law enforcement officer, seek out other first responders, family members, people living with mental illness, and mental health professionals. There's nothing wrong with having others with a similar background as allies, but the more perspectives, the better.

# CIT Programs and Find Allies



## **Keep the Conversation Going**

It's possible you will find someone with an interest in CIT who is willing to partner with you after one conversation; however, it often takes more than one meeting to get someone's ongoing commitment. Make sure that you have a reason to stay connected after your first conversation.

Here are a few ways to keep the connection going after an initial conversation:

- Follow up with information or resources.

- Offer your help with a project.

- Ask for advice on something minor.

- Schedule a follow-up meeting at a professional conference.

- Join a shared board or committee.

# Make a Commitment



## Leaders Must Commit to Change

- Once you have a network of allies interested in CIT and educated about how the program works, the next step is to secure the commitment of leaders. Specifically, you need buy-in from:
  - The chief or sheriff of your target law enforcement agency or agencies,
  - The director or CEO of your public mental health service or oversight agency, and
  - The director or CEO of a local mental health advocacy organization.



# Make a Commitment



## Recruit a Champion

A champion is an individual who has a prominent position in the community and can gain the attention of leaders and decision-makers.

A champion might be:

- A prominent sheriff or police chief who can bring other LE leaders to the table,

- A judge or prosecutor,

- A celebrity,

- An athlete, or

- A local elected official, such as a mayor, county council member, or state representative.

# Make a Commitment



## Create a Steering Committee

The steering committee should include representation from both people living with mental illness and their family members.

Some advocacy organizations represent both groups (ie. NAMI); if they do not, the partners may need to reach out to additional advocates to ensure that both perspectives are at the table

# Understand Your Crisis Response System



There are several types of mental health crisis response teams, including:

- Crisis intervention teams (CIT)

A specialized police response that is available in over 2,700 communities across the country. Some CIT teams include mental health professionals in addition to police officers.

- Police co-response teams (CRT)

A specialized mental health response that pairs a mental health worker with a police officer during a crisis.

- Mobile crisis units (MCU)

A mental health-only response that involves mobile teams that respond separately from police.

# Understand Your Crisis Response System



- Mediation Response Unit (MRU)

A non-police response that aims to resolve conflicts between community members without police involvement.

- Mental Health Recovery Teams

A team of experienced professionals that provides assessment and treatment for adults with severe mental health problems.

# Understand Your Crisis Response System



A high-quality crisis response system is built on mental health services. These services are designed to stabilize a person experiencing a crisis and connect them with additional services to address their long-term needs.



# Understand Your Crisis Response System



- Developing an effective crisis response system that reduces law enforcement contact and increases connection to mental health services for people in crisis is at the core of CIT programs.
- The crisis response system must be flexible, to connect resources and services to the individual as their needs evolve, and provide the services in the least intrusive manner.

# Understand Your Crisis Response System



A crisis response system includes all the services and resources available to help a person experiencing a mental health crisis.

A high-quality crisis response system offers an array of mental health supports that help stabilize the crisis and connect the person to treatment, services, or support to address their long-term needs.

# Understand Your Crisis Response System



One important goal of CIT is to reduce the frequency that people in crisis encounter police and increase connections to mental health services.

CIT programs also work to improve safety throughout the crisis response and lessen the trauma that individuals experience during a crisis

# Build the Infrastructure for Success



One key to success for CIT is having an infrastructure that supports an improved crisis response system

- Assigning CIT coordinators, the individual(s) who run the program and serve as liaisons among CIT partners,
- Reviewing procedures that dictate the responses to a crisis event, and identifying changes that can improve communication, reduce trauma, and more quickly connect individuals to mental health care,
- Aligning law enforcement and receiving center policies with the goals of CIT, and
- Planning for program monitoring—the process of using data to improve your program's day-to-day operations.

# Build the Infrastructure for Success



The infrastructure for CIT programs includes:

1. CIT coordinators. These individuals manage the program and maintain relationships among all the partners. They know all the partners, solve problems, support officers and front-line mental health clinicians, and reach out to the community.
2. Streamlined procedures across all agencies and organizations. These are designed to improve safety, reduce trauma, and take advantage of every opportunity to connect individuals in crisis to mental health services.



# Build the Infrastructure for Success



3. Revised policies for law enforcement agencies and receiving centers. These updated policies bring all agency staff in line with new procedures, provide program continuity in case of staff changes, improve safety and access to services, strengthen communication, and reduce trauma.
4. Program monitoring. Most CIT programs can collect some data about their day-to-day operations. Trends in the data can be helpful for making adjustments to officer training, staffing, mental health resources, or policy.

# Plan and Deliver Officer Training



## The CIT Officer's Role as a Volunteer-Specialist

- When officers complete CIT training, they return to regular patrol duties with an additional responsibility as a CIT officer who will be dispatched to crisis calls that arise during their patrol shift.
- While CIT training is highly specialized, CIT officers are not dispatched in a special unit, but as regular patrol officers. During a mental health crisis call, the CIT officer will typically assume responsibility for the scene, even if they are not the first responding officer or the most senior
- This model allows law enforcement agencies to have highly-trained, rapidly-responding officers for crisis situations but does not reduce patrol capacity.

# Plan and Deliver Officer Training



When CIT officers respond to mental health crisis calls, they often spend significant time using de-escalation skills. These situations require patience, self-awareness, and compassion.

Once a crisis scene is calm, the officer can problem-solve and use community resources to help the individual (and their family members where possible) get connected to mental health services and supports.

# Plan and Deliver Officer Training



- The CIT Pin "The CIT pin means something to the officers.
- It means something to the family members.
- It means something to the person with lived experience.
- It's about purpose, pride, and ownership."

— Major Sam Cochran (ret.), Co-Chair, CIT International, Memphis, TN

# Plan and Deliver Officer Training



Law enforcement agencies should create a selection process that allows them to choose candidates for CIT training who are experienced, independent, and motivated.

In addition, the selection process should convey to all officers that CIT is a highly-skilled specialization and it's an honor to be chosen.



# Plan and Deliver Officer Training



- CIT officer training is an essential component of a CIT program that brings the partnerships and policy and procedure changes to the front-line officers who respond to many crisis situations. CIT training is unique among law enforcement trainings in that it includes significant community involvement. The training also emphasizes officer safety and practical skills.
- CIT officers are selected and trained for a specific role: the volunteer-specialist who is highly trained for mental health crisis situations but also carries out regular patrol duties. The training is structured to help officers build knowledge, gain empathy, practice skills, and understand their new role. This structure supports the officers' learning and helps them integrate the training with their past experience.

# Sustain and Grow Your CIT Program



## **The goals of CIT during a mental health crisis:**

To improve safety,

To increase connections to mental health services,

To use law enforcement strategically and increase the role of other services and supports, and

To reduce the trauma that people experience during a crisis.

# Sustain and Grow Your CIT Program



## Build Community Awareness and Support

It will help your CIT program if the broader community can see your successes and support your efforts. If there are unexpected shifts in your steering committee or changes in agency leadership, broad-based community support can help keep the program steady. As a steering committee, create a strategy for building community support. It might include some of the following elements:

- Reach out to Local Media and Social Media

- Collect Success Stories

- Raise Awareness so People Know to Ask for CIT

- Participate in Public Events

# Sustain and Grow Your CIT Program



## Sustain the CIT Officer Program

Being a CIT officer can be incredibly rewarding—helping a person get access to services, hearing the gratitude of family members, preventing injury or trauma.

However, it can also be incredibly frustrating and exhausting, because officers are responding to difficult situations and using all of their emotional resources.

In addition to practical support, officers need regular reminders that the community values them and the work that they do.

CIT officers also need ongoing support from their agencies to be effective.

# Sustain and Grow Your CIT Program



## Plan CIT Continuing Education

Continuing education is a core element of CIT. It enables officers to keep their skills current, focus on advanced topics, and receive reminders of their role as a CIT officer. It is vital for CIT officers to reinforce their skills and reinforce their identity as CIT officers.

Advanced CIT classes

Advanced De-escalation classes

Trauma Informed Response class

CIT for Youth class



# Module Wrap-Up

**Questions?**