

A note from Cheri to participants:

I look forward to meeting you all! This in-depth training is rewarding, reassuring and rigorous. It helps to have a sense of some of it before you arrive.

Administrative participation: A critical component in whether crisis team members can be effective rests with administrative support and understanding of steps to be taken by both administrators and team members. Site and Central Office Administrators attend at least the first and last morning of the three days. It is extremely helpful if a few can attend the whole training so they can be a sounding board for any administrator facing a response. Teams can only do what administrators agree to, and they need to have the insights for why some of the requested actions of the team are effective and helpful.

Those invited to attend: Most crisis response teams are made up of counselors, school psychologists and other mental health specialists. We recommend that you broaden that list to include nurses, bilingual aides, clerical staff and others who are an important part of supporting all students and parents. Some districts also include community members who would mobilize for a major event (faith-based youth educators, local mental health providers). Cast a wide net.

No sharing of training “slots”: It is counter-productive for two people to “share” a training by each attending different days or different parts. Training builds on what has been presented earlier, so participants for the team training need to plan on attending all three days.

Activities: The training has a range of activities requiring a variety of seating arrangements, from small groups of five to fishbowls in the center of the room with participants’ chairs in concentric circles around those in the middle. We will be moving chairs and the seating arrangement during the day.

Comfort: These sessions are not easy; they are taxing both intellectually and emotionally. Most of you are used to moving around more than we may during the training. Dress comfortably. Bring pillows or back support or whatever will help you feel comfortable.

Cell phones: Some of you may be in positions where your buildings need you to be available for emergencies. I totally understand that. Please put your cell phones on vibrate mode and refrain from screen use in the workshop room. We’ll have breaks, so handle what you can then. If you have to take that call, please quietly step all the way outside of the workshop room and far enough away that the participants aren’t distracted. We tend to raise our voices when speaking in cell phones, and we don’t realize how far that carries. If you need to check email, step outside. Please, no screens in the room.

Computers and Tablets: Please come to the training ready to *participate*, not just to learn. Although many feel compelled to get every word and take notes on concepts, your handout will have an outline of every concept covered with room for notes if you wish to take them. The most critical part of the training is your participation in the small groups and other activities. No need for computers or tablets.

***Welcome! Your participation is part of what will make this valuable to the whole team.
Glad to have you aboard!***