



*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has."*

MARGARET MEAD

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## CRISIS INTERVENTION TRAINING

May 2009 from

[http://www.facesva.org/pdf/articles/crisis\\_intervention\\_training\\_may2009.pdf](http://www.facesva.org/pdf/articles/crisis_intervention_training_may2009.pdf)

### What it is and how it works

May 2009

The basic goals of the Crisis Intervention Training are to provide immediate response to and management of situations where the mentally ill are in a state of crisis; prevent, reduce, or eliminate injury to both the consumer and the responding police officer; find appropriate care for the consumer; and establish a treatment program that reduces recidivism.

There are a number of CIT programs in United States that range from 16 hours up to 40 hours with training of the entire Police force or with smaller teams of quick responders. Even the locales with limited training and staff have found a major reduction in the number of injuries to the ill person and to their officers. There is also strong evidence that the decrease in the number of persons jailed for their illness has removed the strain on the jail and court systems and allowed better treatment for the consumer. There has also been an increase in trust with families. When families feel they can trust officers to be helpful in crisis situations, they are more likely to call earlier, when intervention can have its best outcome.

All of the Trainings provide some basic skills for the officers:

- Diagnostic concepts and understanding of symptoms of brain disorders, such as depression, bipolar disease, schizophrenia and schizoaffective disorder.
- What medications are used for the various disorders and how they affect the individual.
- Communication techniques designed to keep a situation from escalating, such as gaining rapport and speaking in a calm and non threatening manner.
- Defense weapons training for the times when the situation is already out of control or the delusions prevent connecting with the individual. One solution is the Impact Delivery System (IDS), specifically the Sage Less-Lethal Launcher (SL-6). The IDS is designed for a contained situation, one in which negotiation has failed and the consumer, in danger of harming oneself or others, must be immobilized in a non lethal way.

Partnerships must be formed between the Police, the judicial dept, hospitals, doctors and the community to provide a safe and progressive program for the consumer who is in crisis and the Police Officers who must respond to that crisis.

Money is always going to come into it, but this is not about money, it is about the community. There are grants and special programs that can be accessed for these trainings to take place here in our community. Training in and of itself does not change people. The change in the mental attitude has to start at the top. The leadership sets the standard. Let's hope that in our area it is a standard that we can all LIVE with.

Family members who want to learn these skills can take the **FACES** EDUCATION COURSE which will be offered several times this year. You can register by calling the **FACES** Center at (804) 378-0035.