



Firefighter Mental Health Check-In



The Importance of Mental Health

Mental health fitness is every bit as important as staying in shape physically.

Why Mental Health Check-Ins?

- The firefighters requested check-ins.
- Firefighters and Police Officers are more likely to die by suicide than in a line of duty death.
- Firefighters and Police Officer are more likely to suffer from depression, PTSD and substance abuse.
- To be healthy to serve the community and their family.
- Cost saving in time off and sick leave.

Mental Health Outcome

	Firefighters	Police Officers	General Population
PTSD	14.6% – 22%	35%	6.8% (in one's lifetime)
Depression	11%	9% - 31%	6.7%
Thoughts of Suicide	46.8% (ever)	7.8% (pervasive)	Unknown

Resource: Ruderman Family Foundation White Paper on Mental Health and Suicide of First Responders, April 2018

Timeline of Sandy City Fire Department's Mental Health Wellness Program

- 2019: A grant was received for St. Petersburg College to conduct a suicide training.
- May 2020: With the help of the grant, Train the Trainer was offered for people to identify and understand suicidal behavior. Also, to help decrease the stigma by developing strategies to train personnel in suicide prevention.
- 2020: We have trained peer support members on all platoons.
- January 2021: We held mandatory mental health check-ins with the Intermountain Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

Actions Taken

Mental Health Wellness Program

- Ingrid Brown with the Intermountain Employee Assistance Program (EAP) introduced the program to our department and provided statistics about mental health.
- Paramedic Emma Weatherhead spoke about suicide prevention.
- Each employee completed a questionnaire which allowed them to do a mental health check-in of themselves.
- Then they meet one-on-one with Ingrid Brown, to evaluate the results from the questionnaire which opened the door to the services of EAP and put a face to someone who is willing to help and listen.



Questionnaire

First Responders
Police
Firefighters
Emergency Medicine

Please answer the following questions as best you can, identifying changes from the norm.

- | | | | |
|---|-------|-----------|-------|
| 1. Are you having difficulty sleeping (more than affected by your shifts)? | Never | Sometimes | Often |
| 2. Have you noticed an increase in irritability or quickness to anger? | Never | Sometimes | Often |
| 3. Are you having trouble concentrating? | Never | Sometimes | Often |
| 4. Are you NOT feeling like yourself (loss of energy or motivation)? | Never | Sometimes | Often |
| 5. Have you had intrusive memories/repeating of a memory? | Never | Sometimes | Often |
| 6. Are you withdrawing from family or loved ones? | Never | Sometimes | Often |
| 7. Have you been struggling with substance abuse? | Never | Sometimes | Often |
| 8. Do you feel life is pointless or hopeless? | Never | Sometimes | Often |
| 9. Are you separated, divorcing or going through a breakup? | No | Yes | |
| 10. Have you had a life change within the past 6 months: health/work/money/family/home? | No | Yes | |

Intermountain EAP
801.442.3509
800.832.7733

EAP Utilization by the City as a Whole

- 89 requests for counseling services by employees or family members
 - 85 actually followed through with appointment

Primary Problems Addressed:

- Relationships
- Mood
- Life Stress
- Child Concerns
- Family/Parenting
- Grief/Loss
- Workplace Concern
- Trauma



[Links:](#)

[Ring the Bell Safety Campaign](#)

[‘You Were Macho’: Sandy Fire
Department Places Priority On
Mental Health](#)

THANKS!

Any questions?

You can contact me at BCline@sandy.utah.gov
or (801) 568-2930.