

Psychological Health and Safety

Interior Safety Conference

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Agenda

- 1 Psychological health and statistics
- 2 Occupational stress
- 3 Individual resilience
- 4 Organizational resilience
- 5 Resources
- 6 Q & A

BC First Responders Mental Health Committee

The mission of the Committee is to actively promote positive mental health and provide the leadership, best practices (resources, awareness, education, training, and supports) that first responders, their communities, and leaders need.



BCFirstRespondersMentalHealth.com

AMBULANCE PARAMEDICS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA	FIRE CHIEFS' ASSOCIATION OF BC
BC EMERGENCY HEALTH SERVICES	FIRST NATIONS EMERGENCY SERVICES SOCIETY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
BC MUNICIPAL CHIEFS OF POLICE	GREATER VANCOUVER FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION
BRITISH COLUMBIA POLICE ASSOCIATION	PROVINCE OF BC
BRITISH COLUMBIA PROFESSIONAL FIRE FIGHTERS ASSOCIATION	ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE
CANADA BORDER SERVICES AGENCY	TRANSIT POLICE
	VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION OF BC
	WORKSAFEBC

Background and Statistics

What are the statistics?

- 1 in 4 people in Canada will experience a mental health problem or illness every year
- 41% of Canadians say their mental health has declined since COVID-19
- Depression is the most common mental illness – and the most treatable, followed by Anxiety Disorders
- People with a mental health condition are twice as likely to have a substance use problem compared to the general population
- At least 20% of people with a mental health condition have a co-occurring substance use problem

Source: Canadian Mental Health Association

Psychological Health by the Numbers

The impact of Psychological Health by numbers in Canada:

Economic cost in Canada is estimated at \$51 Billion per year.

47% of workers consider work to be the most stressful part of daily life.

Approximately 25% **of Canada's working** population is affected by psychological health issues.

Only 23% of workers feel comfortable talking to their employer.

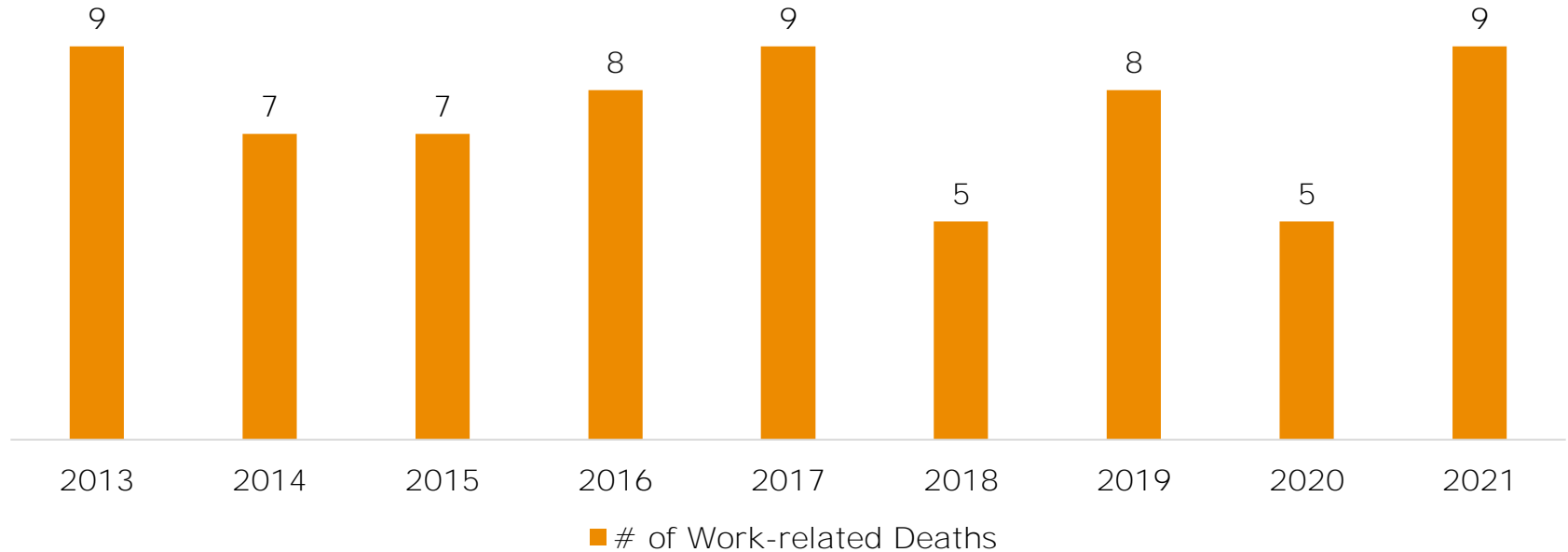
Occupational Stress

Unique occupational stressors – survey themes (2022)

- Financial and job security
- Industry instability
- Home/family issues
- High risk/stress job – production pressures, safety risks, fatigue, inexperience
- Lack of support and/or supervision
- Working away from home/poor camp accommodations
- Long days, mental and physical fatigue
- Risk of serious injury

Work-related Deaths

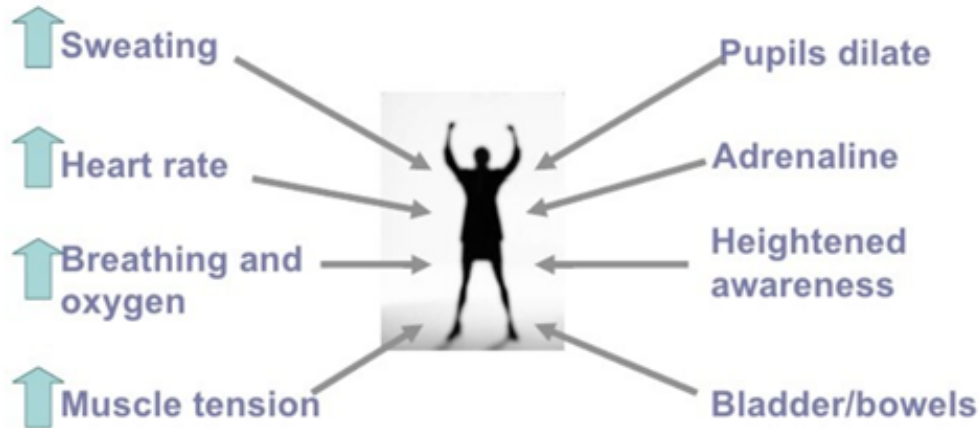
of Work-related Deaths



The Forestry Subsector has the 6th highest number of work-related deaths among all subsectors in B.C., with 12% of all work-related deaths.

Our body's survival response & Stress

● ● ● | Fight / flight / freeze



Individual Resilience

Individual resilience

Mental health:

The level of psychological well-being in an individual. This can be measured by **an individual's functioning on an emotional and behavioral level.**

Individual Resilience:

The process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or **significant sources of stress and the ability to "bounce back" from difficult experiences**

- Two-fold: Prevention and Recovery

The Mental Health Continuum Model

Healthy	Reacting	Injured	Ill
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normal fluctuations in mood, calm, takes things in stride • Normal sleep patterns, few sleep difficulties • Physically well, good energy level • Consistent performance • Sense of humour, in control mentally • Physically active and socially active • Limited or no gambling/alcohol use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nervousness, irritability, impatience, sadness, feeling overwhelmed • Trouble sleeping, intrusive thoughts, nightmares • Tired/low energy, muscle tension, headaches • Procrastination • Displaced sarcasm, forgetfulness • Decreased physical and social activity • Regular but controlled gambling/alcohol use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anxiety, anger, pervasive sadness, hopelessness • Restless or disturbed sleep, recurring images or nightmares • Increased fatigue, aches and pains • Poor performance and concentration or workaholic, presenteeism • Negative attitude • Social avoidance or withdrawal • Increased gambling/alcohol use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excessive anxiety, easily angered, depressed mood, suicidal thoughts • Unable to fall or stay asleep, sleeping too much or too little • Exhaustion, physical illness • Unable to perform duties/control behavior/concentrate, overt subordination, absenteeism • Isolation, avoiding social events, not going out or answering the phone • Alcohol/gambling addition, other addictions
Actions to take at each phase of the continuum			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on task at hand • Break problems into manageable chunks • Identify and nurture support systems • Maintain healthy lifestyle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize limits • Identify and minimize stressors • Engage in healthy coping strategies • Get adequate food, rest, and exercise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and understand own signs of distress • Seek social support and talk with someone instead of withdrawing • Seek help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek consultation as needed • Follow health care provider recommendations • Regain physical and mental health

Common reactions to stress

As humans, we are naturally built to experience an array of emotions in times of uncertainty. We often feel a loss of control and this can lead to increased feelings of worry, fear, and anxiety. Some common reactions include:

- Feelings of helplessness, lack of control, and being overwhelmed
- Fear for your health or the health of loved ones
- Feelings of loneliness
- Hypervigilance, having irrational thoughts, and excessively checking symptoms
- Feeling stressed and concerned for your finances, future plans
- Problems sleeping, physical exhaustion

These reactions are normal and will vary from person to person. Here are some examples of behaviours you may see in your workers during this time:

- Reduced productivity, difficulty concentrating on tasks, easily distracted
- Late to work or absent
- Working too much or too little
- Social isolation, withdrawal from others
- Experiencing agitation, irritability, anger, sadness

Keys to resilience:

Focus on what is in your control

1. Sleep
2. Nutritious diet
3. Exercise
4. Relaxation
5. Social connection



Nutrition



Sleep



Movement



Community



Stress Management

Taking care of your Mental Health

Particularly during times of stress

- Limiting time spent on accessing news, social media
- Taking care of your physical health can help with mental health: exercise, a balanced diet, avoid sleeping too much or too little
- Using healthy coping strategies to avoid falling into problematic patterns, i.e. use of alcohol, cannabis, gambling, etc.
- Practicing stress-reduction and relaxation techniques, such as mindfulness, deep breathing, music, art, hobbies
- Reaching out to your social supports – staying connected.

Organizational Resilience

Organizational resilience

Organizational mental health:

The occupational culture (pattern of thoughts, actions, beliefs, traditions shared by members of the same organization) cultivated in a workplace and its ability **to have a positive or negative impact on an individuals' mental health**

Organizational resilience:

The capacity of an organization to promote and support resilience in its workplace and prevent psychological hazards

What we know

- Mental health is just as important as physical health
 - Taking good care of physical health includes:
 - Good sleep hygiene
 - Healthy diet/nutrition
 - Exercise
- Social support is the #1 predictor of mental health in the workplace
 - Sense of connection
 - Self-awareness/education
 - Knowing where to get help

Employers supporting mental health

Social support is the #1 predictor of positive mental health in the workplace

- Mental health is not a one-size fits all model; create a range of options
 - Peer support team (BC First Responder Mental Health website has program templates)
 - Workplace supports (Employee Family Assistance Program)
 - Extended health benefits provider (for mental health benefits)
 - Grief and bereavement support
 - Spiritual support – chaplain, first nations elder, temple members
 - Fitness or sports team – organized through work or community
 - WorksafeBC – CIR, Social Work/outreach services, Prevention Support Services

Stigma

- Stigma: “a mark of disgrace associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or person”
 - Self-stigma - negative views about self around mental health, i.e. I’m weak, I’m not good enough, I should be stronger, what would people think of me (shame)
 - Social stigma – negative stereotypes held by society about mental health issues and the people that who have mental health issues

Anti-stigma Campaign

Share It. Don't Wear It.

- anti-stigma campaign to help address and reduce stigma



Having the Conversation: to Reduce Stigma

- How are you doing today?
- I know there is a lot changing around us; how are you managing?
- You seem a bit unsettled. Want to talk about what's happening?
- I've been feeling [share personal experience]. How are you feeling?

Not sure what to say? Be honest about that. It's ok not to have all the answers or know the "right" thing to say.

Here are some responses when you don't know what to say:

- It sounds like you're going through a lot. I'm not sure what to say, but I can listen.
- I haven't been through what you're experiencing, but I'm here to support you.
- I don't have the answers, but here are some resources that might help.

Tips for Leadership

- Making mental health part of the safety culture
 - Forming a mental health committee/standing item in safety meetings
 - Making mental health resources easily accessible and visible in the workplace
 - Designating a mental health champion
 - Leading by example – sharing and supporting
 - Mental health training and education

Psychological Safe Workplace

Psychological safety: The situation where hazards and risks to psychological well-being are assessed and steps taken to eliminate, where possible, and minimize where elimination is not possible, the impacts of those risks.

The CSA defines:

A psychologically healthy and safe workplace as one in which:

- Psychological health and well-being are protected and promoted.
- No harm to worker mental health is allowed to occur in negligent, reckless, or intentional ways.

Resources

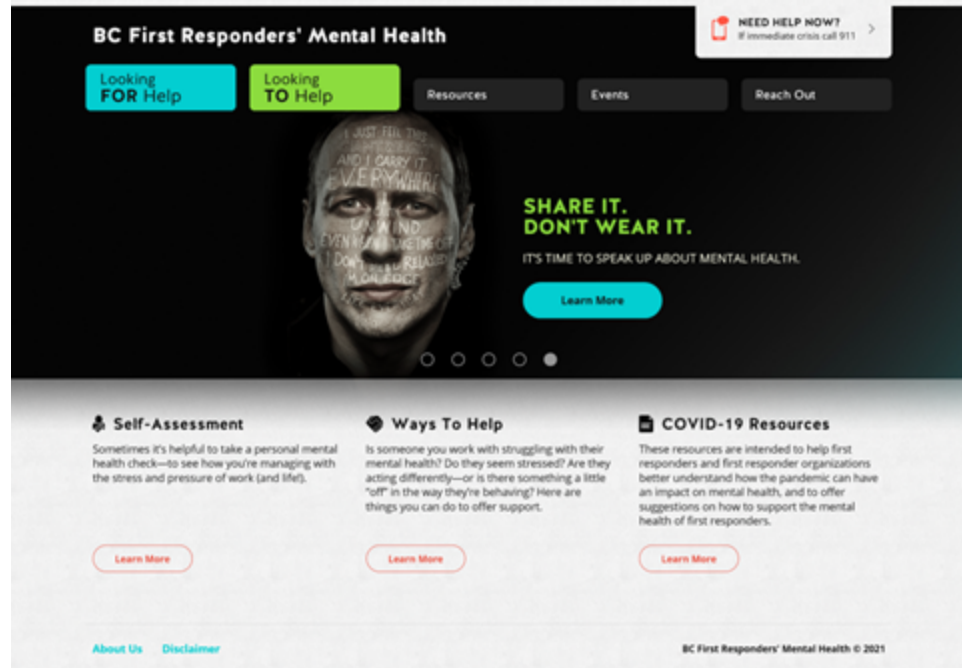
Support and Resources

- heretohelp — Self-assessment tools and strategies to help you take care of your mental health and learn how to support a loved one | heretohelp.bc.ca
- Canadian Mental Health Association - <https://cmha.bc.ca/>
- Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention Centre of BC — This crisis line provides 24-7 support if you or someone you know is having thoughts of suicide | crisiscentre.bc.ca; 1.800.SUICIDE
- Red Book Online — Provides information and referrals to community, government, and social services in B.C. | redbookonline.bc211.ca; 2-1-1
- BC Bereavement Helpline – 1.877.779.2223 [BC Bereavement Helpline \(bcbh.ca\)](https://bcbh.ca)
- Workplace Strategies for Mental Health – resources for employers, workers, leaders on psychological safety www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com

BCFIRSTRESPONDERSMENTALHEALTH.COM

Share It. Don't Wear It.

- anti-stigma campaign to help address and reduce stigma
- Video library – range of topics
- Resources on CISM, peer support, RTW/SAW, family, tools for leadership, etc.



Supervisor's guide: Mental Health



- Understanding mental health
- How to have a conversation
- Recognizing signs and symptoms
- Resources

WorkSafeBC resources

(visit: worksafebc.com)

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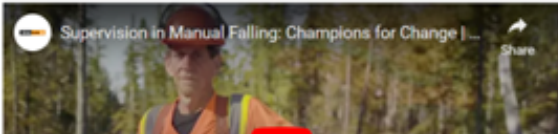
Supervision in Manual Falling

Champions for Change

Manual tree falling is a high-risk activity that has resulted in serious injuries and deaths. In this video, forestry professionals share their personal stories of the long-term impact falling incidents have had on themselves and on their crews. These stories highlight the importance of supervision in identifying and managing risk — no matter the size of the operation — and how supervisors play a key role in making sure fallers return home safe at the end of the day.

Visit our [Manual falling & bucking](#) and [Supervising for health & safety](#) pages for more information and resources.

Other videos in the Supervision in Manual Falling series:
[Challenges for Supervisors](#)
[Developing Effective Supervisors](#)
[Supervising to the Level of Risk](#)
[Support for Supervisors](#)



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Also available in: [Tibet](#), [Vietnamese](#), [Korean](#), [Chinese \(Simplified\)](#), [Chinese \(Traditional\)](#), [Español](#), [Français](#)

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File type: MP4 (487 MB)

Asset type: Video

Play by Chapter

- Champions for Change
- Challenges for Supervisors
- Developing Effective Supervisors
- Supervising to the Level of Risk
- Support for Supervisors

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WorkSafeBC resources

- Crisis Support Line: support for if you or your family is in emotional crisis available 24 hours/7days a week. 1-800-624-2928
- Critical Incident Response Program: support for if you witnessed a workplace accident or fatality. Available 9am-11pm, 7 days/week. 1-888-922-3700
- Claims Call Centre: if you have experienced a workplace injury; access to information on eligibility and claims processes. 1-888-WORKERS
- Prevention Information Line: access to information about occupational health and safety law and processes. 1-888-621-7233

Questions?

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