#NAMICon16

The Mental Health Impact of Violent Tragedies

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July 20, 2012 at 12:40am-Century 16 Theater

- Largest Mass Shooting in Colorado's History
- Emotional/Mental Impact:
 - Emergency responders: Carried victims from the theater and rushed them to local hospitals
 - Crime Lab Personnel: sifted through blood and debris while processing the scene
 - Homicide Detectives: 3 years of trial prep.



Psychological Incident Commander

- Ensure responders are being provided mental health support as they process through the command center
- Provision of Psychological First Aid
 - Active listening; monitor for signs of acute distress
 - Focus on safety and immediate needs
 - Discussion of essential coping strategies
 - Provide a plan for ongoing psychological support for any high-risk individuals or groups
 - Proactive Outreach is essential



Prior to an Event

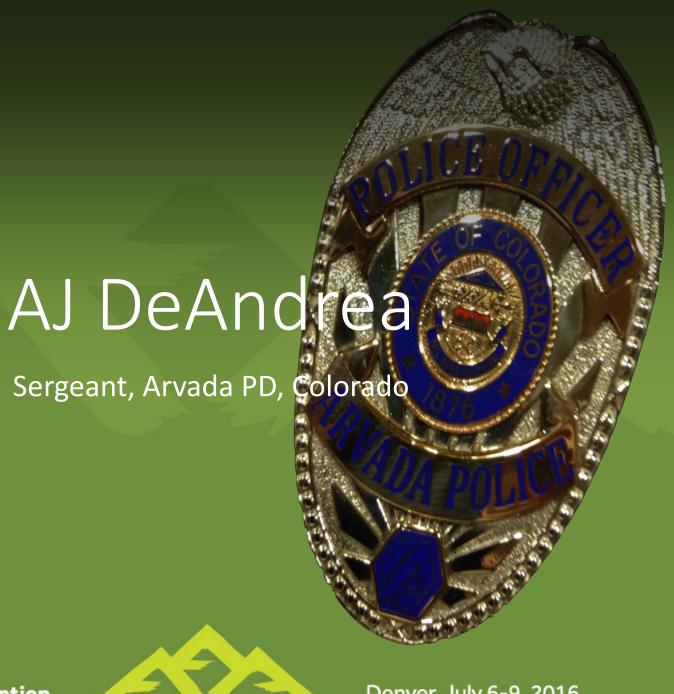
- Stress Inoculation Training
 - What to Expect
 - How to Recover
- Peer Support Teams
 - Lethal Response Team
 - Trauma Response Team
- Employee Assistance Programs



During and After an Event

- Senses are contaminated
- Feeling helpless
 - Distress of victims' physical and emotional trauma vs. responders own
 - Unable to utilize humor, often a "go to" coping strategy for emergency responders
- Post-incident interventions-focus on education of "normal responses" rather than tactical debriefings-give folks a chance to prepare themselves of discussing/learning from the event











Anniversary

















The Impact of a Mass Casualty Incident on the Community: Planning

- Mental Health Recovery Plan
 - **≻**Schools
 - **≻**Community
 - ≥1st Responders
 - ➤ Business Community
 - **≻**Government

➤ Mental Health Incident Manager

The Impact of a Mass Casualty Incident on the Community: Media

















Media, continued



Media



Bereavement Events









Community Responses and Memorials







Unanticipated Impact Events

- Victims' families
- Area schools
- Hospitals
- Churches
- Visiting dignitaries





- Hate groups
- Conspirators
- Internet
- Phone
- Mail
- **Blood donorship**

Management & Coordination of Donations

- 63,000 stuffed animals
- 575 boxes of toys
- 2,075 boxes of school supplies
- 4 Pallets of tissue/paper towels
- 8+ Pallets of books
- 7+ Pallets of backpacks
- 54 Bicycles
- 19,000 sq. feet of warehouse
- 150,000 to 200,000 pieces
- of mail- Cash



Managing Volunteers

- 600 + volunteers
- 3800+ Hours
- Answered phones
- Opened and responded to mail
- Systems logistics
- Long term v. short term



Other Impact Matters

- Investigations
- Reports
- Anniversaries
- Permanent Memorials
- 6 Degrees of Separation
- Future use of mass casualty property
- Possible reduction of population
- Other mass casualty events