

Improvements in the Mental Health of PSP after ERST Training

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How does the Emotional Resilience Skills Training support Public Safety Personnel mental health?

Public safety personnel (PSP) are frequently exposed to psychologically traumatic events. The exposures potentiate posttraumatic stress injuries (PTSIs), including posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) Protocol was designed to mitigate PTSIs using ongoing monitoring and PSP-delivered Emotional Resilience Skills Training (ERST) based on the Unified Protocol for the Transdiagnostic Treatment of Emotional Disorders. The current study pilot-tested ERST effectiveness among diverse PSP.

Background

The ERST is a pilot 13-week mental health training program led by a PSP peer and based on the robustly evidenced Unified Protocol for the Transdiagnostic Treatment of Emotional Disorders.



ERST is a 13-week mental health training program based on the Unified Protocol.

The current study

A 16-month longitudinal design engaged serving PSP ($n=119$; 34% female; firefighters, municipal police, paramedics, public safety communicators) who completed PSP-delivered ERST. Participants were assessed for symptoms of PTSIs, including but not limited to PTSD, at pre- and post-training, and 1-year follow-up using self-report measures and clinical interviews.

The current study focuses on evaluating the effectiveness of evidence-informed ERST training and regular self-monitoring at improving and maintaining the mental health of first responders and other PSP.

The current study assessed the mental health of serving PSP ($n=119$; 34% female; firefighters, municipal police, paramedics, public safety communicators) who completed PSP-delivered ERST.

We would like to thank all participating PSP for their involvement in the study. The Study is made possible by a large and diverse team. We thank each team member, past and present for their contributions to the study. A list of participating PSP agencies, PSP knowledge users, and additional information is available in English at www.ptsslab.ca.

Results

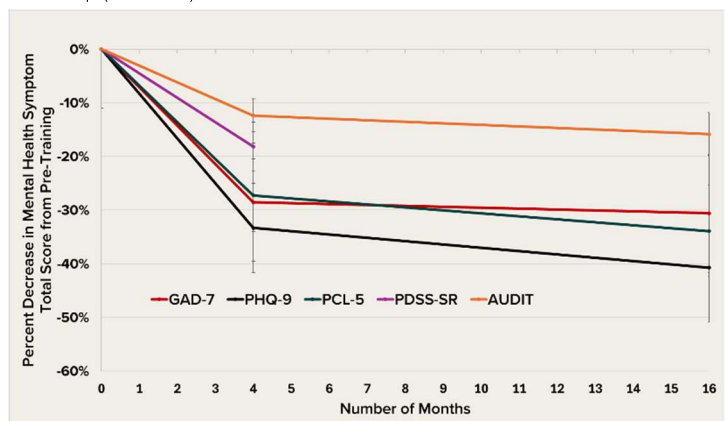
The current study indicates that:

1. ERST has been successfully adapted to serve as evidence-informed training for first responders and other PSP;
2. A set of self-monitoring tools has been tailored to work in coordination with clinical interviews to support the mental health of first responders and other public safety personnel; and,
3. The combination of regular self-monitoring and ERST training appeared to improve and maintain the mental health of first responders and other public safety personnel for at least 1 year.

The pilot results support iterative improvements for the training and tools, as well as replications, extensions, and more advanced research designs.

Highlights

Reductions in mental health disorder symptom severity from pre-training (week 0) to post-training (week 4), and then from post-training to 1-year follow-up (month 16):



**The original wording of the study was changed and condensed for the current research infographic.*

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Read the full study here:

Carleton, R. N., Sauer-Zavala, S., Teckchandani, T. A., Maguire, K. Q., Jamshidi, L., Shields, R. E., Afifi, T. O., Nisbet, J., Andrews, K. L., Stewart, S. H., Fletcher, A. J., Martin, R., MacPhee, R. S., MacDermid, J. C., Keane, T. M., Brunet, A., McCarron, M., Lix, L. M., Jones, N. A., ... Asmundson, G. J. G. (2025). Mental health disorder symptom changes among public safety personnel after emotional resilience skills training. *Comprehensive Psychiatry*, 138, 152580. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.comppsy.2025.152580>



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