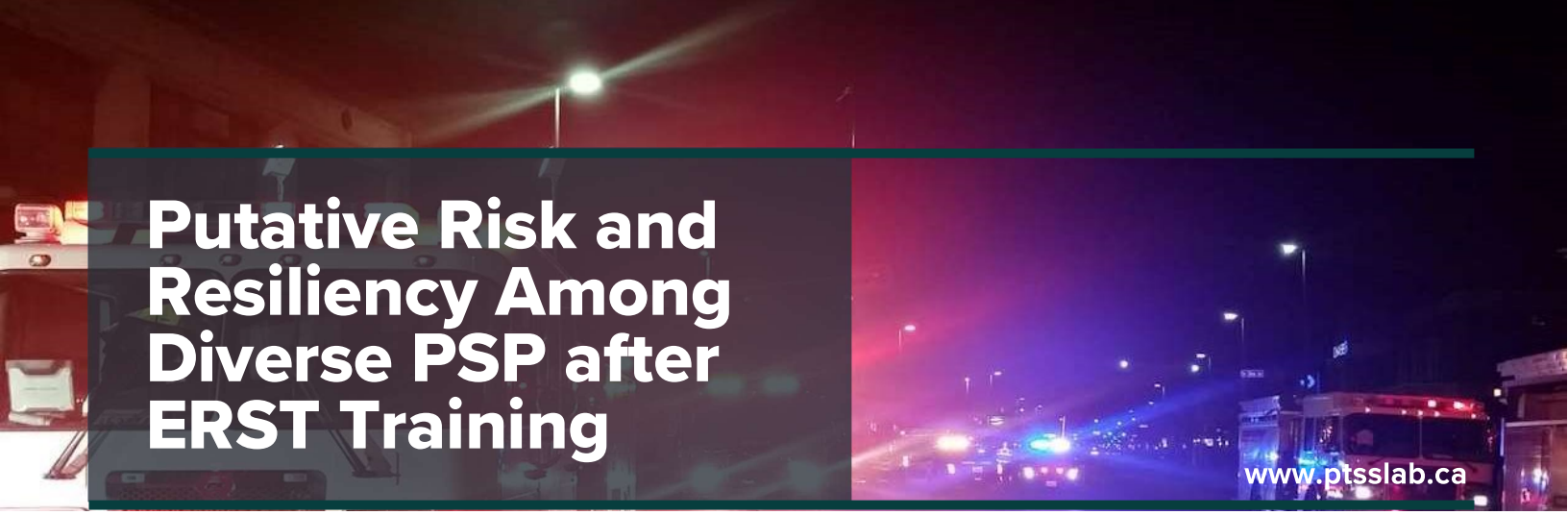

Putative Risk and Resiliency Among Diverse PSP after ERST Training

www.ptsslab.ca

How does studying risk and resiliency variables support Public Safety Personnel (PSP)?

PSP are at an inherently higher risk of experiencing mental health challenges by virtue of the work that they do, but additional factors such as putative risk and self-perceived resilience variables influence the development of mental health challenges.

If we can find ways to reduce putative risk and bolster self-perceived resilience, we can hopefully help mitigate the inherent occupational risk of mental health challenges.

Background

PSP are at a higher risk of developing mental health challenges compared to members of the general population, due in large part to the occupational hazard of frequent exposure to potentially psychologically traumatic events, and as such, exposures are associated with a higher prevalence of mental health challenges.

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

The current study

The current research focuses on assessing the effectiveness of Emotional Resilience Skills Training (ERST) at reducing putative risk factors and increasing resilience among four PSP sectors including: firefighters, municipal police, paramedics, and public safety communicators. Data were collected using a self-report survey administered at three time points over the course of 18 months.

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

Participants reported lower scores on putative risk variables, and higher self-perceived resilience at post-training. All changes that were observed at post-training remained at 1-year follow-up.

Putative Risk
Associated with mental health challenges

Resilience
Associated better mental health

Pre vs Post ERST Training

- ↑ Resilience
- ↓ Anxiety sensitivity
- ↓ Fear of negative evaluation
- ↓ Illness and injury sensitivity
- ↓ Intolerance of uncertainty
- ↓ State anger

Conclusions

The study indicates that ERST is effective at reducing putative risk and increasing self-perceived resilience among diverse PSP, which may in turn reduce the risk of mental health injuries among participating PSP.

The current results help to advance Canada's National Action Plan on Post-Traumatic Stress Injuries, including additional investment to support the health and well-being of first responders and other public safety personnel.

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

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Read the full study here:

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