



# New Jersey Crisis Support Toolkit

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NJ DMHAS QPM Meeting

# National Initiative

- Awarded to NJDMHAS through a Transformation Transfer Initiative (TTI) “State Strategies to Improve the Capacity of the Behavioral Healthcare Workforce” (“TTI”) grant, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (“SAMHSA”)



## SAMHSA National Initiative

The SAMHSA National Guidelines for Behavioral Health Crisis Care Best Practice Toolkit<sup>2</sup> outlines the essential elements of a comprehensive crisis care response framed using a three-pronged approach: Someone to Call, Someone to Respond, and Somewhere to Go. Crisis services are defined as universally accessible, available for anyone, anywhere, and anytime. These services

include crisis lines that accept all calls and dispatch support based on the assessed need, mobile crisis teams dispatched to community locations (not hospital emergency departments), and crisis receiving and stabilization facilities serving everyone from all referral sources.

### SOMEONE TO CALL<sup>3</sup>

#### 988 24/7 National and Local Crisis Call Centers:

988 is the three-digit dialing code connecting people to the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, where compassionate, accessible support is available for anyone experiencing mental health-related distress — whether that is thoughts of suicide, mental health or substance use crisis, or any other kind of emotional distress. People can also contact 988 if they are worried about a loved one who may need crisis support. The 988 service ensures that all calls are answered locally by well-trained and experienced staff. These crisis call centers aim to connect individuals to local services, dispatch mobile crisis teams, and schedule follow-up appointments with local providers.

In New Jersey, The Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) has been working with the five current Lifeline member centers to ensure an effective transition to 988. When a person calls or text to 988, or chat through <https://988lifeline.org/chat/>, a trained counselor will respond, understand how the person's problem is affecting them, provide support, and share resources that may be helpful. In New Jersey, DMHAS is funding centers to expand their capacity to respond to the 988 Lifeline system.

### SOMEONE TO RESPOND<sup>4</sup>

#### Mobile Crisis Teams:

Mobile Crisis Teams play a crucial role in crisis response, providing support for individuals who need more assistance than can be offered over the phone. Mobile crisis team services offering community-based intervention to individuals in need wherever they are; including at home, work, or anywhere else in the community where the person is experiencing a crisis. These teams, staffed by mental health professionals and peers, are equipped to de-escalate crisis situations and connect individuals to crisis stabilization programs or other necessary services. Collaboration with law enforcement is a key aspect, with police involvement limited to co-responders in high-risk situations.

### SOMEWHERE TO GO<sup>5</sup>

#### Crisis Stabilization Options:

Crisis Stabilization Options serve as a “safe place to go” for individuals in crisis, offering short-term observation and stabilization. These trauma-informed programs not only provide immediate assistance but also identify additional treatment needs. They facilitate a “warm hand-off” to follow-up support, which may include peer supports, outpatient services, or more intensive options like hospitalization.

# Primary Aim



## New Jersey Crisis Support Toolkit

This New Jersey Crisis Services Toolkit was developed through funding awarded to the New Jersey Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) through a Transformation Transfer Initiative (TTI) "State Strategies to Improve the Capacity of the Behavioral Healthcare Workforce" ("TTI") grant, Grant Number SC-3039.2-NJ-01 from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration ("SAMHSA"). The toolkit was developed by Dr. Peggy Swarbrick and Dr. Amy Spagnolo at Rutgers University in collaboration with DMHAS staff and community advisory team who provided support and content advisement.

Swarbrick, M., Spagnolo, A. (2024) New Jersey Crisis Services Toolkit. Rutgers University.

# Purpose of the Toolkit



New Jersey  
Crisis Support  
Toolkit

- **Resource for the behavioral healthcare workforce providing crisis support and services in the New Jersey Crisis System**
- Useful training tool to contribute to continued professional development for crisis service staff in all roles
- **Resource for organizational leaders to ensure adherence to the best practice model and approaches**
- Guide to emphasize and support the wellness self-care of all staff in these roles



# Toolkit Development & Use

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# Practical Crisis Support Knowledge & Skills

## Crisis Management Skills Checklist<sup>7</sup>

The following Crisis Management Skills Checklist may be useful to help guide your work helping to support someone experiencing a crisis. Certain skills can help you manage a crisis. These include crisis awareness, establishing habits and routines, planning, and control. When you are in the middle of a crisis, and you already feel overwhelmed, however, focusing on these skills can help you resolve

the crisis, and can make you stronger and better able to face the next crisis.

By utilizing this checklist, crisis staff can support people served to strengthen their crisis management skills while considering environmental supports to enhance their wellness and resilience during challenging situations.

<p><b>&gt; Crisis Awareness Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Clearly describe the nature of the crisis.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Objectively describe the meaning and significance of the crisis for yourself.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Freely express feelings, such as tension, anxiety, and frustration.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Gather information and solicit feedback from peers and supporters to enhance understanding of the crisis.</li> </ul> <p><b>Environmental Supports:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Access to information regarding the nature of the crisis.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Activities that provide constructive outlets and promote exploration of feelings.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities for feedback to enhance understanding of crisis and wellness practices.</li> </ul>	<p><b>&gt; Planning Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Clearly identify a specific problem related to the crisis.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> State actions to meet the demands of the problem.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Describe a daily wellness plan.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Outline specific tasks and activities in sequence.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify available resources and supplies needed for the wellness plan.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Gather information on potential obstacles and barriers.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Determine the relevance of information to planning for immediate and short-term goals.</li> </ul> <p><b>Environmental Supports:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Guidance on stressors and problem-solving.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Activities promoting organization and resource prioritization.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Shared decision-making dialogues and practical advice evaluation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>&gt; Establishing Habits and Routines</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Organize a daily routine that includes rest, physical activity, nutrition, and social interaction.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Engage in activities that provide constructive release for emotions arising from the crisis.</li> </ul> <p><b>Environmental Supports:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Activities reinforcing basic health information and wellness practices.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities for peer interaction and support.</li> </ul>	<p><b>&gt; Control Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Assume responsibility to initiate a wellness plan.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Initiate behavioral actions and tasks to implement the wellness plan.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Exert and sustain effort in the face of obstacles and barriers.</li> </ul> <p><b>Environmental Supports:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Assume responsibility to initiate a wellness plan.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Initiate behavioral actions and tasks to implement the wellness plan.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Exert and sustain effort in the face of obstacles and barriers.</li> </ul>

# Crisis Support Community of Practice (CSCoP)

- **Who should join?**

Staff and Leaders working in crisis services programs, including but not limited to, mobile outreach teams, EISS services, and crisis receiving/stabilization centers.



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# Crisis Support Community of Practice (CSCoP)

- **CSCoP Series 1**

Thursday, August 15, 2024 (9:30-10:30)  
Wednesday, August 21, 2024 (3:30-4:30)  
Wednesday, September 18, 2024 (3:30-4:30)

- **CSCoP Series 2**

Thursday September 26, 2024 (9:30-10:30)  
Thursday October 17, 2024 (9:30-10:30)  
Wednesday October 23, 2024 (3:30-4:30)



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# New Jersey Crisis Support Toolkit

## Topics

- Overview of the Crisis Support Services
- **Strength based crisis services and supports approaches**
- Strategies and resources to enhance wellness self-care
- **Strengths based supervision to support staff resilience**



# Questions and Contact

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