

Fire Rescue Support exists to support fire rescue personnel before, during and after the call

MCFR Participates in Literacy Week

Firefighters from Marion County Fire Rescue Stations 10 and 30 were part of Literacy Week at Harbour View Elementary School in Summerfield.



CISM Training



The culture of the fire service is changing! Gone are the days where fire rescue personnel were expected to just bury their emotions in response to the tragic events they faced. Now we know there are things we can do to help people process and navigate the stress of the job.

“Assisting Individual in Crisis” and “Group Crisis Intervention” are the two core crisis intervention courses taught through the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (www.icisf.org). We are offering these courses at a variety of locations throughout the state of Florida. [Click here](#) for more information and to register. Contact us if your agency is interested in hosting this training.

- Ocoee – February 21-23
- Tavares – February 28-March 2
- Ocala – March 14-16
- Davie – April 4-6
- Naples – April 18-20
- Tarpon Springs – May 9-11



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A Story from the Real World

Here's a note we received from a firefighter that went through our CISM training.

I wanted to thank you again for the training I received from your wonderful class. I couldn't comprehend prior to attending the reason they said the class was intense. Well after attending and participating and revisiting over 20 years of built up emotions, I got a healthy understanding of just what that intensity was. I was blessed with the opportunity to be a part of something so much bigger than me or anything I have done in my career to date. I can only say WOW!

I went to work on the Saturday following class and was having one of the best shifts I had ever had. Then the bell went off for a possible drowning of 5 year old. As we responded I had a feeling that I was about to be a part of a horrible situation. On the way to the call I was on the radio to get the helicopter launched and secure the closest rescue, getting everything done that I could so that I was ahead of the game if this little boy was indeed not breathing.

We arrived and our worst fears were right in front of us. There were deputies everywhere and I could hear the screams and cries of the mother and father. I was the first medic to reach the lifeless boy as a deputy was desperately trying to give CPR. I knew we needed to get away from the pool so I picked the boy up in my arms and was able to move him to an area where we could begin our treatment. As I laid him down and gave my crew the go ahead to start CPR, I ran through the treatment plan and plan of action that I knew was right and needed to happen.

Suddenly I froze. I don't think anyone saw this. I know no one said anything. Still to this day they may not know, but in the middle of this critical call I froze with absolute devastating emotion. In 24 years of service I have been faced with the worst of

humanity, horrifying events and tragedy, and I always seemed to work better in these situations. But this call gripped my soul. It took every ounce of strength I had to overcome the urge to breakdown and weep as I knew nothing we would do would make a difference. This little lifeless boy was gone.

I guess what felt like forever was only a split second because we began working feverishly to clear his airway and do CPR. The rescue assigned to this call was coming from a distance. They told me later they could hear and feel the call by the tone in my voice on the radio. When they arrived, I grabbed the little boy in my arms and made my way to the back of the rescue where they were waiting to take over care. I managed to give them a basic overview and then shut the door. The little boy died. Actually, he was dead before we got to him which was confirmed by the doctors.

Once I cleaned the scene up, gathered our equipment, and retrieved my crew, I started to become emotional. I realized I was impacted by this event and needed to reach out. I did reach out but I first grabbed the books I had from the 3 days I had just spent with you and I was able to talk to my crew. I got them all together and we talked. I talked with my guys as a group and individually and I followed up every couple of days for a few weeks. Everyone is doing well and we all experienced normal reactions to a very abnormal event.

I cannot thank you enough for your kind gentle nature. You kept us engaged and wanting more knowledge on how to help our brothers and sisters in this job. I use the things I learned in my everyday life. I use them to be a better company officer and a better man.



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CEUs for Mental Health Professionals



Fire Rescue Support is excited to announce that we have become an Approved Education Provider through the Florida Certification Board. This means that we can grant CEU credits to mental health professionals for our crisis intervention training.

The mental health community is an integral part of the continuum of care that must be available to fire rescue personnel. Unfortunately, fire rescue personnel often tell us that mental health professionals do not understand them very well.

When mental health professionals are trained in critical incident stress management they become aware of interventions that work very well with first responders. In addition, when they take this training alongside of those serving in law enforcement, 911 communications, and fire rescue they interact with people they may not know much about. This gives mental health professionals the distinction of being “trauma informed” which allows them to better connect with those in need.

CISM Monthly Training



Each month we'll discuss a topic relative to crisis intervention. We hope this will serve as a refresher for those who have been trained, as well as something to create interest for those who have not.

Empathy

“People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.” There is no place where this is truer than the world of crisis intervention. In the midst of walking with people through their difficulties, connecting well relationally is key to your ability to help them.

However, because we tend to be fixers and problem solvers, we can rush to resolve the issue without engaging the person. In the end, we will find this to be very ineffective.

Our ability to connect deeply, which is called empathy, must be the foundation on which we build an understanding, trusting relationship. From here, we will be able to provide the assistance that we have been trained to give; the assistance that someone in crisis needs.

[Click here](#) to see a great video that clearly describes what empathy is.



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Push-in Ceremony at FSFC



The Florida State Fire College recently took delivery of two new E-One fire trucks. These vehicles replace vehicles that were nearly 30 years old (see the truck on the far left in the above photo)!

Continuing a fire service tradition, the new trucks were blessed, then pushed into the station by those in attendance

We pray these vehicles would serve well as they help prepare future generations of Florida firefighters.



Help for Firefighters



I recently met a man in Central Florida with a passion to help firefighters succeed on the job and in life. James Geering (www.jamesgeering.com) is a firefighter/paramedic who has been on a personal journey to health and wholeness. Now, he is passing on what he has learned in two ways.

First, James hosts a podcast called Behind the Shield. By interviewing wellness advocates, James allows us to learn about exercise and nutrition from some of the best.

In addition, James created The Darkside Project on Facebook (www.facebook.com/thedarksideproject). Here, first responders are able to share about their personal struggles with PTSD.

James is creating wonderful places for us to discuss the challenges we face, as well as providing solutions along the way.

Everyone is a moon, and has a dark side which he never shows to anybody.

Mark Twain



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The Greatest Conversation

The world of the fire service in Central Florida and beyond has been rocked in recent months due to the deaths of two well-loved and well-known members. The passing of Chief David Dangerfield and Chief Matthew Ngedly have reminded us of the emotional and mental toll that this job can have on those who serve. Much needed conversations are beginning to take place around the topics of stress management, crisis intervention, suicide prevention, and PTSD.

But there is another conversation that needs to be had as well. A conversation that gets to the root and heart of some of the challenges we are facing. It's a conversation about how you see yourself and, more importantly, about how God sees you.

I talk all the time about the passion I see in the fire service. Far beyond a job, even beyond a career, you enjoy the deep satisfaction of knowing you have responded to a special calling on your life. It's this calling that drives you to be there to make a difference in the lives of those around you. It's this same calling that exposes you to the tragedies you see day in and day out; tragedies that can take their toll on you over time.

While I do not minimize the powerful impact that job-related and life-related events have on you, these events do not have to be given the ability to define you. Your fears and struggles, although very real, can be placed into a much greater context. And it's in this greater context that you can truly know peace even in the midst of the storms of life.

This greater context is found in knowing that you are more than your fears; more than your struggles. It's found in knowing you are more than a firefighter. This greater context is found in knowing you have great value and worth not based on your personal success or failure, but based on the value and worth placed in you by your Creator.

You're having some great conversations these days; conversations to help you navigate the difficulties of the job. But the greatest conversation that needs to take place is the conversation about how you see yourself and, more importantly, about how God sees you.





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Amazon Donates to Charity



For eligible purchases at Amazon Smile, the Amazon Smile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to the customer's selected charitable organization. You can make Fire Rescue Support your organization by [clicking here](#). Then every time you order through the Amazon Smile website you'll be helping Fire Rescue Support continue its mission of supporting fire rescue personnel before, during and after the call.



Thank you!

Thanks for your interest in and partnership with Fire Rescue Support. Because of you, we have the opportunity to support fire rescue personnel before, during and after the call. Visit www.firerescuesupport.com for more information or to donate. You can also find us on Facebook. And please don't hesitate to contact me if I can be of assistance personally or professionally. You can reach me at 352-425-1643 or joe@firerescuesupport.com.

