Corrections Worker Stress, Trauma and Suicide

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Multiple and interacting factors increase corrections officers’ suicide risk and rate.

Long-term vulnerability to suicide increased by:
- Occupational exposure to violence, injury and death
- PTSD, Depression, Moral Injury, SUD
Occupational Sources of CO Suicide Risk

- Culture of “toughness”
- “False resilience”—based on avoidance and denial
- Relative lack effective coping skills
- Relative lack or low use of resources
- Access to firearms
Acute Stressor(s) - Activated Cognitions:

- Worthlessness/Unlovability
- Situation-specific helplessness
- Situation-specific hopelessness
- Perceived burdensomeness
- Perceived inability to tolerate distress

(Rudd, 2006)
Data-Supported Protective Factors

1. Effective self-care skills
2. Effective emotional regulation skills
3. Effective cognitive skills
4. Effective use of social support
5. Physical fitness

6. Sense of **mastery, self-efficacy, personal control, competence**

7. Use of resources
In Conclusion

Suicide risk of corrections staff **CAN** be reduced.

Strategies for reducing suicide risk include:

- **Skills-based education on factors reducing suicide risk**
- **Corrections-informed mental health services, esp. targeting suicide-related cognitions**
- **Systemic provision of social support by staff, leadership, and through data-supported peer intervention**
References


References


