

# CORRECTIONS WORKER STRESS, TRAUMA AND SUICIDE

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# Occupational Sources of CO Suicide Risk

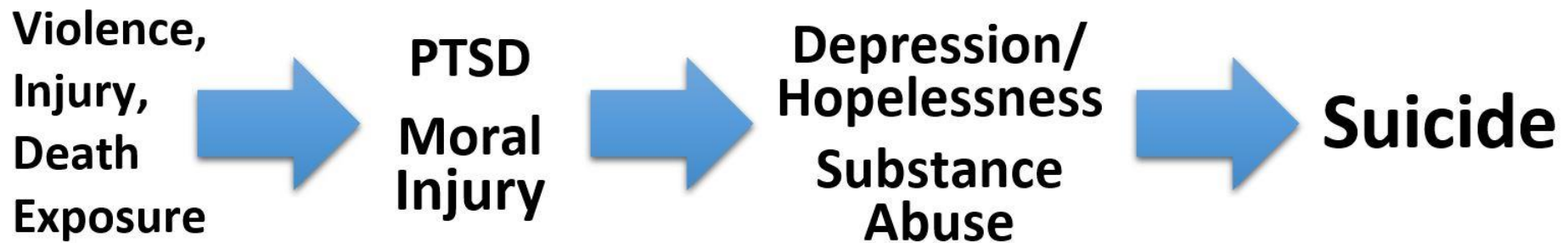
- Multiple and interacting factors increase corrections officers' suicide risk and rate.
- Long-term vulnerability to suicide increased by:
  - Occupational exposure to violence, injury and death
  - PTSD, Depression, Moral Injury, SUD

# 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



# Corrections Staff Causal Sequence Model of Suicide



## Acute Stressor-Activated Cognitions:

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

(Rudd, 2006)



**Acute  
Stressor(s)**

# Data-Supported Protective Factors

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

# Data-Supported Protective Factors

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

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