

**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH...**

**What Local Leaders Need to Know**



**Washington State**  
**Council of Fire Fighters**



**WSCFF**

# Introductions

- Why are we here?
- Who is on a Peer Support team?
- Who has used Peer Support?
- Who here is Local Leadership?
- Why are you here?

# Objectives

- Awareness
  - Define Bias and Stigma
- Education
  - Recruits - Incumbents
- Resources
  - After Incident Process - Resilience
- Statewide Behavioral Health
  - Systemic approach to change



# What is Bias?

# Bias Is:

Prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair.

Cause to feel or show inclination or prejudice for or against someone or something.



# What Bias Do You Carry?



# What is Stigma?

# Stigma Is:

A mark of disgrace associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or person.

“The stigma of having gone to prison will always be with me.”





# Bias Drives Stigma

- Bias is how individuals filter people or things.
- Stigma is when we assign our biases onto people or things.
- A cultural stigma develops within groups of people.

# How do you Eliminate Stigma?

1. Awareness -
  - a. Know your bias
  - b. Watch for Red Flags
2. Educate - knowledge corrects bias
3. Change - cultural change and individual accountability

# What does good culture look like?

- Sharing is normal.
- Having a hard time is not a weakness.
- It is normal to struggle with hard calls.
- Every Firefighter has the potential to suffer behavioral health injuries.
- No one should have to absorb trauma.
- We are responsible to ourselves and others.

# Good Cultural Behavior

- Understanding Symptoms
- Resiliency
- Peer Support
- Resources

# Correcting Culture

## Member Education

- Train new members & incumbent members

## Labor and Admin must work together

- Operations is the bridge to culture shift



# Peer Support Approach

1. Build a team
  - a. Union driven, Admin supported
  - b. Olympia Fire example
2. Build a program
  - a. Grassroots
    - i. Survey your members*
    - ii. Propose policy*

# Thurston County Regional Approach

How are we organized?

Success Stories

- District 13 Infant CPR
- West Thurston Fatality Fire

# WSCFF Statewide Approach

The future is coming...

WSCFF Behavioral Health Committee

Let's do this together



# Questions?

