



# **CSKA and CPKN**

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## Research Symposium

# Agenda

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Exploring and Implementing  
Trauma-Informed Policing

February 25 - 27 | Hilton Toronto Airport Hotel & Suites

*Please note this agenda is subject to changes and updates.*

# February 25 | Day One

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6 – 7 p.m.                      Registration Desk

# February 26 | Day Two

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7:30 – 8:30 a.m.              Breakfast and Registration Desk

8:30 – 8:45 a.m.              Opening Remarks

8:45 – 9:45 a.m.              Trauma Informed Sexual Assault Investigations: What Police Need to Know

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of trauma-informed approaches in various fields, including law enforcement, healthcare, and social services. Understanding the neurobiology of trauma is a critical component of this shift, particularly when it comes to investigating sensitive cases such as sexual assault.

Trauma often triggers a complex response within the brain that can significantly affect how individuals react during and after a traumatic event. Key areas of the brain involved in these responses can alter a person's ability to make rational decisions. It can also affect memory encoding, resulting in fragmented recollections of the event and its aftermath.

Ongoing training on the neurobiology of trauma is part of professional competence for responding to sexual assault victims. It is vital that investigators adapt their investigative and interview techniques, to integrate insights about the neurobiology of trauma.

Enhanced knowledge enables police to conduct more empathic and effective investigations, ultimately leading to a greater chance of obtaining accurate information. As police shift towards trauma-informed practices, they not only improve their investigations but also contribute to a more compassionate judicial system that prioritizes the well-being of sexual assault survivors and increases access to justice.

*Presenter: Dr. Lori Haskell*



# February 26 | Day Two

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9:45 – 10:45 a.m.      **Presentation – The Brain Story and Resilience Scale in Action: From Awareness to Implementation**

Resilience can be defined as the ability to respond positively in the face of adversity. In this introduction to the Brain Story and Resilience Scale Framework, we will be exploring the main metaphors of the Brain Story, including the Resilience Scale, in the context of how they apply at the individual, organizational, and systems level.

Join us to explore how the application of a common language and knowledge base can be used to inform policy and practice to build resilience and improve outcomes for children, families, and communities.

*Presenters:*

*Nancy Mannix, Chair and Patron of the Palix Foundation*

10:45 – 11 a.m.      **BREAK**

11 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.      **Panel – Using the Brain Story and Resilience Scale Framework to Support Better Outcomes for Communities**

The Brain Story and Resilience Scale have been thoroughly tested and used throughout the province of Alberta to evaluate and measure change in resilience at the individual, organizational, and community level.

In this panel, delegates will hear how this knowledge has been incorporated into the panelists' training programs and daily practice, the impact it has had on them and their department, and how this work can be implemented to affect systems change. Practical applications of the Brain Story and Resilience Scale Framework as a common knowledge base and common tool will be showcased, as well as actionable items for other jurisdictions interested in implementation.

*Presenters:*

*Adam Smith, Director, Recruitment and Learning, Calgary Police Service*

*Anna Sinclair, Inspector, Community & Youth Response Branch, Edmonton Police Service*

*Mike McCauley, Superintendent, Crime Reduction Strategies with the Alberta Royal Canadian Mounted Police*

*Shahin Mehdizadeh, Chief of Police, Lethbridge Police Service*

*Moderator: Claire Niehaus, Scientific Associate, Palix Foundation*

12:15 – 1:15 p.m.      **LUNCH**

# February 26 | Day Two

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1:15 – 2:15 p.m.

## Lighting the Fire Within: Culture and Trauma Informed Policing Operationalized

Over the past two years, the UCCM Anishnaabe Police Service has implemented a culture and trauma-informed curriculum in their service. This was based on the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) approach, and the Missouri Model: a developmental framework for a trauma informed approach. This initiative aims to create transformational change within the police service as part of their Lighting the Fire Within project.

Developed through research and feedback, the curriculum helps staff understand and apply trauma-informed approaches in their communities. Its effectiveness is assessed through surveys, feedback, and community interactions, showing positive impacts despite some challenges.

Join this session to learn more about the impacts, outcomes, and evaluation of this transformative approach.

### *Presenters:*

*Detective Sergeant Todd Fox, UCCM Anishnaabe Police Service*

*Teresa Nahwegahbow, UCCM Anishnaabe Police Service*

*Taylor Sayers, UCCM Anishnaabe Police Service*

*Marion Maar, PhD, Northern Ontario School of Medicine*

*Lorrilee McGregor, PhD, Northern Ontario School of Medicine*

2:15 – 3:30 p.m.

## Trauma-Informed Policing and Employee Wellness Programs: Why Prioritizing Psychological, Emotional and Physical Well-being of Employees is Critical to Service Delivery and Organizational Sustainability

In the realm of trauma-informed policing, the necessity of looking internally at how services support their employees through investments in Employee Wellness Programs for both sworn and civilian members cannot be overstated. This panel discussion aims to underscore the critical importance of these programs, extending the conversation to encompass the well-being of employees' families as well.

Drawing from a wealth of experience, our distinguished panel will explore innovative programs that offer a comprehensive range of support mechanisms. These programs include re-integration strategies for officers returning from leave, early intervention measures designed to identify and address issues before they escalate, peer support networks that provide a sense of camaraderie and understanding, integrating health professional expertise into program design and delivery, spiritual guidance to help navigate personal and professional challenges, and proactive programming aimed at maintaining wellness in all areas of life.

The ultimate goal of this discussion is to highlight and share wellness program practices that foster a healthier, more resilient workforce capable of effectively serving the community while ensuring their own well-being and that of their loved ones.

# February 26 | Day Two

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Join us as we delve into the transformative potential of trauma-informed care and robust wellness programs in the policing profession.

*This session is being hosted by MNP. MNP.ca is a leading Canadian firm that focuses on industry expertise, support in risk management, data analytics, and more to provide consulting to businesses and law enforcement agencies.*

*Presenters:*

*Dr. Kyle Handley (CPSYC), Senior Director York Regional Police Wellness Bureau*

*Ryan Martin, Staff Sergeant Ontario Provincial Police, Healthy Workplace Team*

*Tiffany Fassnidge (RSW, MSW), Executive Director Calgary Police Service, Wellness and Resiliency Branch*

*Moderator: Caitlin Brown (MBA, B.Sc), Senior Manger MNP Consulting Services, Community Safety & Well-Being Practice*

3:30 – 3:45 p.m.

## **BREAK**

3:45 – 4:45 p.m.

### Tasmania Police: Trauma Informed Practice

Join us to learn about the relationship between the University of Tasmania and the Tasmania police, in regards to trauma-informed policing. The relationship holds many facets, but one of significance includes the teaching of trauma-informed awareness and practice to different levels of the organization, from police recruits to senior executives.

This presentation will discuss teachings, results, anecdotes, as well as an update of student evaluations being run alongside session.

*Presenters:*

*Isabelle Bartkowiak-Théron, PhD, University of Tasmania*

*Joanne Stolp, Commander, Child and Youth Safe Reform Project*

4:45 – 6:30 p.m.

### Networking Event [Optional]

Join us for light refreshments and networking following the first day of the symposium in the Vista Salon.



# February 27 | Day Three

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7:30 – 8:30 a.m. Breakfast

8:30 – 9:30 a.m. Keynote Presentation – The Royal Canadian Mounted Police Study: An Overview with Recent Results and Opportunities for all Police

Police officers, their teams, their leaders, and their families frequently face diverse stressors that have been associated with numerous complex mental health challenges. These require tailored, evidence-based solutions to support their mental health that differs from the general population and military. Currently, police experience various barriers to access this evidence-based care.

The presentation will provide a brief background describing current Canadian challenges, followed by contemporary applied research efforts with *The Longitudinal Study of Operational Stress Injuries for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police*. This study has provided tools, training and results that can help bolster mental health resilience, reduce barriers to care, and support better mental health, during training and after deployment for all police.

This presentation will dive into early results from that study that provide evidence, underscore the impacts, and outlines important directions for future research. It will conclude with current research initiatives, as well as recommendations for long-term solutions to support police, their teams, their leaders, and their families.

*Presenter: Nicholas Carleton, PhD, University of Regina*

9:30 – 10:30 a.m. Beyond Resilience: The MAGNUSity of Preemptive Strength Through the 11 Rings of Performance and Wellbeing

This presentation will introduce the MAGNUS OVEA Theory, a proactive framework for Trauma Informed Policing. This approach focuses on preparedness and preemptive strength, emphasizing mental, emotional, and physical readiness to act before stress, trauma or crises can take hold.

Leveraging extensive research and data from U.S. law enforcement, this presentation will delve into the significant stressors officers face and highlight the urgent need for preventive strategies. The data illustrates the critical importance of building elasticity—a dynamic, enduring form of resilience that empowers individuals to recover from challenges more substantially, more adaptably, and purposefully.

Participants will gain access to a series of actionable strategies that strengthen mental preparedness, improve decision making, foster emotional balance and cultivate resilience in high-performing teams and communities.

Attendees will receive complimentary access to the MAGNUS Leader APP, featuring an audiobook version of MAGNUS OVEA Theory: A General Theory of Human Performance and Wellbeing (Javidi & Ellis, 2024), providing ongoing tools and insights for their leadership journey.

*Presenter: Chief Sam Spiegel (Ret.), National Command and Staff College*



# February 27 | Day Three

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10:30 – 10:45 a.m. **BREAK**

10:45 – 11:45 a.m. **Best and Worst: The Dual Perspective of Police Citizen Interactions**

Join us for an insightful presentation that delves into the complex dynamics of police-citizen encounters. This research, based on interviews with both detained individuals and frontline police officers, uncovers how both parties interpret these potentially contentious interactions and perceive their counterparts.

This presentation will focus on the best and worst experiences from both perspectives, highlighting the critical role of empathy and compassion in mitigating trauma during arrests. Discover how affirming shared humanity can transform police-community relations and why building trust and understanding is essential for effective, trauma-informed policing.

This session promises to shed light on the "makers and breakers" of these crucial interactions and offer valuable insights for fostering a compassionate approach to law enforcement.

*Presenter: Holly Campeau, PhD, University of Waterloo*

11:45 a.m. –  
12:45 p.m. **LUNCH**

12:45 – 1:45 p.m. **Neurodiversity in Policing: Building Better Practices for Safer Interactions**

Join us for an engaging session on the crucial role of recognizing autistic behaviors in policing. This research highlights how identifying autism—whether through observation or disclosure—can transform police interactions, reducing blame, negative emotions, and enforcement actions like arrests.

To address these findings, a training module on recognizing autism was developed, modeled after Canadian Police Knowledge Network (CPKN) programs. Participants trained to recognize autism showed greater awareness, assigned less blame and anger, and chose less enforcement solutions compared to those who did not receive the training.

This research is integral to trauma-informed policing, empowering officers to respond with empathy, avoid unnecessary escalation, and ensure safer interactions with vulnerable individuals. Don't miss this transformative discussion on enhancing policing through empathy and informed responses.

*Presenter: Alisha Salerno-Ferraro, PhD, York University*

# February 27 | Day Three

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1:45 – 2:30 p.m. **Presentation – Who is the Justice Client: The Victim Offender Overlap**  
This is the first installment of two sessions being presented exploring the impact of trauma on Canada’s incarcerated population.

This session will begin to unpack the issues of trauma, look at the social detriments of the similarities between health and crime, and how the different approaches to addressing these issues have significant impacts on the outcomes for the people involved. By diving into these topics, we will be able to discuss how the justice system can evolve to meet the needs of the justice client, who often experiences the system from both the offender and victim lens, for a way forward for safer communities.

This initial presentation will provide valuable context on the discussion of victim offender overlap that will prepare delegates for the following panel where they will hear from those affected directly.

*Presenter: Dan Jones, Norquest College*

2:30 – 2:45 p.m. **BREAK**

2:45 – 3:30 p.m. **Panel – Who is the Justice Client: The Victim Offender Overlap**  
The second installment of this presentation will welcome Conrad Johnson and Bridgette Bruyere, two individuals serving life sentences who have been granted parole. They will share their experiences in the justice system, where they have spent a significant portion of their lives incarcerated. We will hear how the efforts for their reintegration when sent into society did not provide them with the support they required.

These panel participants will also discuss the ongoing stress of surveillance for those incarcerated. They will reflect on how the trauma from the justice system impacts the execution of positive reintegration.

Delegates will be introduced to the book *Homeward*, authored by Bruce Ward. Ward does significant work on reintegration in the U.S., and it will be shared how the University of Alberta is replicating that work in the Canadian context.

*Presenters:*  
*Dan Jones, NorQuest College*  
*Joey Taylor*  
*Brigitte Bruyere*

# February 27 | Day Three

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3:30 – 4 p.m.

Group Discussion – Where Do We Go From Here

To close out the symposium participants are encouraged to reflect on the discussions from day one and bring any new thoughts or perspectives to the combine with the day two presentations for an open discussion. Let's aim to make significant progress and outline clear action steps moving forward.

*Facilitator(s): CSKA/CPKN*

4 – 4:15 p.m.

Closing remarks