



# MHPSS Bulletin: May

*A bulletin to connect people, networks, and organizations across British Columbia, fostering the sharing of resources and building knowledge in the field of mental health and psychosocial support in emergency settings. Past issues of the bulletin and recordings of Lunch and Learn webinars will be available on our website using the button below.*

Provincial Psychosocial Services

## Education & Learning Opportunities

### Public Online Courses (Free) by Provincial Psychosocial Services

- [Psychological First Aid for Professionals](#)

PFA is intended mainly for HEMBC Disaster Psychosocial Support (DPS) members but may be accessed by other helping professionals interested in learning more about PFA.

- [Supporting Well-being Through Deployments](#)

Provides information that anyone deploying might find helpful for managing stress before, during, and after the deployment.

[Shareable document with QR codes](#)

*All courses and trainings listed in this Bulletin are voluntary and intended to provide additional learning opportunities. They do not replace or fulfill any mandatory training requirements set by an organization.*

### Wellness Exchange Series

The Wellness Exchange consists of five one-hour interactive workshops designed to support mental and emotional well-being.

[Register here](#) or read more information in this [flyer \(PDF\)](#).

### Psychological First Aid (PFA)

Psychological First Aid (PFA) is intended for anyone interested in learning more about how to provide emotional and practical support during emergencies and crises.

- Problem Solving
  - Tuesday, May 6, 2025: 7-8pm (PST)
  - Thursday, May 8, 2025: 12-1pm (PST)
- Positive Activities
  - Tuesday, May 13, 2025: 7-8pm (PST)
  - Thursday, May 15, 2025: 12-1pm (PST)
- Managing Reactions
  - Tuesday, May 20, 2025: 7-8pm (PST)
  - Thursday, May 22, 2025: 12-1pm (PST)
- Helpful Thinking
  - Tuesday, May 27, 2025: 7-8pm (PST)
  - Thursday, May 29, 2025: 12-1pm (PST)
- Healthy Connections
  - Tuesday, June 3, 2025: 7-8pm (PST)
  - Thursday, June 5, 2025: 12-1pm (PST)

#### Next sessions:

**Weekday:** Tuesday April 22 & Wednesday April 23, 2025: 9am-1pm PST, register [here](#)

**Weekend:** Saturdays April 26 & May 3, 2025: 9am-1pm PST, register [here](#)

*(please note that due to high interest, registration on this form does not guarantee spot – a confirmation email will be sent when your spot is secured).*

## Lunch and Learn Webinars

**April Recap:** Cheryl Rogers discussed the **Canadian Disaster Animal Response Team (CDART)**, a volunteer-based organization dedicated to animal welfare in times of a disaster or emergency, by providing sheltering, fostering or rescue of domesticated animals. CDART's dedicated volunteers are mobilized when local authorities request their assistance, and when the Provincial Emergency Program's Emergency Support Services is activated. One of this month's articles is written by Cheryl as a follow-up, discussing **EDMA**.

**Upcoming for June 4th: Climate Distress Across BC Communities** by Dr. Kiffer Card. Kiffer will speak about the prevalence of climate distress, how it is showing up in people's lives, and the importance of engaging communities in finding meaningful ways to support their well-being. Over the past six years, Kiffer's work has been featured in more than 200 publications and over 100 presentations. His research program provides training to future scholars and raises awareness of key social reforms and policies that aim to help Canadian leaders build happier and healthier communities.

**This webinar will be recorded. All previous Lunch and Learn videos are hosted on our website on the [Education page](#).**

The webinar details are as follows, and we can accommodate up to 500 attendees so *feel free to distribute to anyone who may appreciate this opportunity!*

[Register in advance using this link \(click here\)](#)

**When:**

June 4, 2025 12:00-1300 PM Pacific Time

Email Nikki to get added directly to the distribution list for all future webinar invitations [edu.pps@phsa.ca](mailto:edu.pps@phsa.ca)

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## Stay Tuned! Special Movie Screening of *Incandescence*

We are in the process of arranging a special screening for our HEMBC and ESS community members of the film *Incandescence*, filmed here in British Columbia. This will be an online screening facilitated by generous support of the National Film Board of Canada. We will be inviting you to the screening once the details are finalized. Look for invitations in your inbox soon!

**Film summary:**

*Every summer, wildfires increasingly ravage places around the globe, darkening the skies with thick smoke and reducing communities to little more than ash and debris.*

*Award-winning directors Nova Ami and Velcrow Ripper (Metamorphosis) weave together immersive on-the-ground footage with **first-person accounts from Indigenous Elders, first responders, and ordinary people forced to react to a rapidly evolving ecosystem** in the feature documentary *Incandescence*.*

*As climate change continues to escalate, full suppression measures have largely failed, leading to bigger, more intense mega-fires. But there is another way. Indigenous knowledge keepers explain that the First Nations people traditionally used controlled burns to regenerate the land. As one woman explains, fire is like a grizzly bear running to stay alive. But instead of fighting this insatiably hungry beast, working with nature transforms fire's capacity to destroy into a powerful force for growth and renewal.*

*Following the rhythms of the seasons, *Incandescence* takes shape from the ancient patterns embodied in fire: destruction, aftermath, rebirth. Many plants and animals have adapted to use fire in their life cycle. Some trees species require heat to release their seeds, while other fire-activated plants make use of the nutrients released in the soil bank to bloom. Honouring the experience of both human and non-human inhabitants, the film documents extraordinary stories of survival and adaptation in the forest mosaic. From the flightpath of bees to an osprey's aerial perspective, floating over the landscape: the Earth comes back.*

*Inside this intense and lushly realized cinematic experience, something else begins to emerge. A febrile spirit rising from the ashes with a collective and resilient approach to our*

*mutable future, Incandescence transforms our understanding of fire from destruction and disaster into a kind of profound illumination, lighting the way towards new life and hope."*

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## Engaging and Useful Links to Explore

For a wide range of helpful resources – including local supports near you as well as articles and courses by topic - please take a moment to check out the Canadian Emergency Response Psychosocial Support Network (CanEMERG) at

- <https://canemerg-urgencecan.com/>

*Have a training or resource you would like to share? We can help spread the word by posting it here. Simply send it to [edu.pps@phsa.ca](mailto:edu.pps@phsa.ca).*

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## Two Articles This Month!

### Article One: ANIMALS IN EDMA

#### (WHAT IS EDMA? IT'S NOT YOUR AUNTY)

Author: Cheryl Rogers of CDART

On November 8, 2023, British Columbia's new Emergency and Disaster Management Act (EDMA) came into effect. The Act is designed to improve how emergencies are handled, shifting from a focus on response to now include all four phases of emergency management: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. AND, for the first time, animals are included in the legislation!

**Animals defined in the Act include:** pets; guide and service dogs; animals used in law enforcement; livestock; animals in zoos, sanctuaries, rehabilitation centres, and education/research facilities; and lawfully possessed wildlife.

The powers and duties outlined in EDMA pertaining to animal care specify that animals must be included in emergency management plans; measures must be taken to mitigate adverse effects on animals; and local authorities must include plans for the evacuation and care of animals in their jurisdiction.

The Minister may order the use of emergency resources or the use of land for animals that are evacuated from another jurisdiction, and may order the evacuation of animals from the area. If the order is made, the Minister may arrange for the adequate care and protection of the evacuated animals.

**Information on the Act can be found at**

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-management/emergency-management/legislation-and-regulations>

CDART (the Canadian Disaster Animal Response Team) was established in 2003 and is the EMCR (Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness) lead agency for

animals. We provide training, public education, and mobile support throughout the province.

Information on animals and disasters can be found at [cdart.org](https://cdart.org) or you can email us at [info@cdart.org](mailto:info@cdart.org)

## Article Two: Psychological Health and Safety: Supporting Teams During Emergencies (and Every Day)

Author: David Hutton

**Psychological Health and Safety** refers to creating a work culture where people feel mentally and emotionally safe – free from bullying, discrimination, fear of speaking up, or excessive stress. It means your well-being is respected as much as your physical safety. In a psychologically safe environment, people can express concerns or ideas without fear of embarrassment or retaliation, make mistakes and learn from them without feeling ashamed, ask for help when overwhelmed, and be treated with respect and fairness. For example, if you're in a workplace where it's okay to say, "I'm feeling burnt out and need support," and you're met with understanding instead of judgment, that is psychological safety in action.

The core elements of psychological health and safety in the workplace go well beyond self-care. These include fostering an organizational culture that prioritizes mental well-being, offering psychological support, and promoting civility and respect in all interactions. Clear leadership, fair workload management, and opportunities for growth help team members feel confident and capable in their roles. Recognition, involvement in decision-making, and support for work-life balance further enhance engagement and reduce stress. It is also essential to ensure a good fit between a team member's skills and job demands while providing transparent, supportive communication during times of change. Together, these elements create a workplace where psychological well-being is not only safeguarded but actively encouraged.

# THE FIVE TENETS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

A Visual Guide to Psychological Safety in the Workplace



GEMMA BULLIVANT  
www.gemmabullivant.co.uk

Psychological health and safety helps people protect their mental well-being and function at their best – emotionally, socially, and even physically. This becomes even more important during emergencies, when teams are working under greater pressure, putting in long hours, and facing heightened emotional and physical stress. In times of crisis like natural disasters or sudden disruptions, psychological safety helps people maintain a sense of balance and be at their best. Being able to say, “I need a break” or “I’m not okay right now”, without fear of being judged, allows people to take care of themselves before they become overwhelmed.

Emergencies also heighten the need for teamwork and connection, and psychological safety keeps communication open and supportive. It can also help in making quick, honest decisions. When team members feel safe to speak up, critical concerns aren’t left unspoken, which can prevent bigger problems. Additionally, it reinforces both immediate and long-term well-being by reducing fatigue and the risk of burnout. Ultimately, leaders and teams who foster psychological safety perform better under pressure because they are more resilient and supportive of one another when it counts most.

You can learn more and access resources about the **Canadian National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace** at

<https://mentalhealthcommission.ca/national-standard/>. The content in this article was edited with the support of artificial intelligence (ChatGPT).

## Definitions

**Psychosocial:** The term ‘psychosocial’ refers to the dynamic relationship between the psychological dimension of a person and the social dimension of a person. The *psychological* dimension includes the internal, emotional and thought processes, feelings and reactions, and the *social* dimension includes relationships, family and community network, social values and cultural practices. ‘Psychosocial support’ refers to the actions that address both psychological

and social needs of individuals, families and communities. (Psychosocial interventions. A Handbook, page 25.)

*The title "MHPSS" in this bulletin refers to a broad approach to mental health and psychosocial support in emergencies. It does not signify the endorsement or inclusion of specific services or organizations.*

**Provincial Psychosocial Services**

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