



MHPSS Bulletin: March

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 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](#) for Wellness Exchange 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, March 11, 2025: 7-8pm (PST)
 - Thursday, March 13, 2025: 12-1pm (PST)
- Positive Activities
 - Tuesday, March 18, 2025: 7-8pm (PST)
 - Thursday, March 20, 2025: 12-1pm (PST)
- Managing Reactions
 - Tuesday, March 25, 2025: 7-8pm (PST)
 - Thursday, March 27, 2025: 12-1pm (PST)
- Helpful Thinking
 - Tuesday, April 1, 2025: 7-8pm (PST)
 - Thursday, April 3, 2025: 12-1pm (PST)
- Healthy Connections
 - Tuesday, April 8, 2025: 7-8pm (PST)
 - Thursday, April 10, 2025: 12-1pm (PST)

Weekday PFA Training March 2025: March 18 & 19, 2025: 9am-1pm, register [here](#)

Weekend PFA Training March 2025: March 22 & 29, 2025: 9am-1pm, register [here](#)

**Note due to high demand for PFA, registering does not guarantee a spot. You will receive a confirmation email in early March to confirm your spot.*

Lunch and Learn Webinars

March Recap: Police Victim Services- Kim Gramlich provided key insights on responding to police-involved incidents, offering guidance for social service and victim support professionals. The webinar covered the role of police-based victim services, important considerations during investigations, on-scene do's and don'ts, and best practices for communicating with victims and witnesses. [Click here to view.](#)

Upcoming for April: Pets welcome on camera! Join Cheryl Rogers as she discusses 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 Support Services is activated. They have well-trained, established teams in specific communities, but will answer requests for help from local, provincial and federal government agencies.

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:

[April 2, 2025 12:00-1300 PM Pacific Time \(US and Canada\)](#)

Email Nikki to get added directly to the distribution list for all future webinar invitations nikki.doherty@phsa.ca

Engaging and Useful Links to Explore

Check out the newly released *Climate Change and Health in British Columbia: From Risk to Resilience Report* at

- [Health | ClimateReadyBC](#)

Interested in learning more about climate change and mental health – and receive regular updates and resources - you can subscribe to the *Mental Health and Climate Change Alliance (MHCCA) Newsletter* at

- <https://mhcca.ca/>

If you have not already seen this awesome pocket guide for those working in emergency operations centres, you will want to have a look at *Wellness in the EOC*. This is a BC product.

- [Mental Wellness in the EOC](#)

This is not a BC product, but the *MHPSS International Resource Hub* is a wealth of information.

- [Resources - MHPSS Hub](#)

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.

Article of the Month: Why Psychological First Aid (PFA) Makes Sense for Everyone

Did you know that Psychological First Aid (PFA) is practiced worldwide and is a vital approach to supporting individuals in distress? PFA has also been translated into multiple languages and is used by teachers, caregivers, first responders, and other community members.

At its core, PFA is about being there for someone in the moment. This can take many forms, such as offering a listening ear, providing reassurance with kind and understanding words, or

helping someone find practical solutions to ease their burden. Even small gestures—like ensuring a person has a safe place to rest or assisting with immediate needs—can make a meaningful difference.

Unlike clinical psychological interventions, Psychological First Aid (PFA) was never intended to be practiced solely by professionals. Instead, it was designed to be accessible to everyone, providing immediate emotional support to individuals in distress while respecting their dignity, cultural background, and personal strengths. Whether someone is facing a personal crisis, an emergency, or difficult news, PFA can be used by anyone and anywhere, to offer support in a compassionate and practical way.

So why might PFA make sense to you? Because at some point, everyone experiences difficulties in their lives that create emotional pain, stress, and uncertainty. Having the ability to offer support in a meaningful way can help ease emotional distress and provide reassurance that no one needs to go through difficult times alone. By practicing PFA, communities can create a culture of compassion, support, and emotional well-being, ensuring that people feel cared for and connected during challenging moments.

If you are interested in taking PFA, contact the Provincial Psychosocial Services Education Team at edu.pps@phsa.ca

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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