

The Role of Law Enforcement in Preventing Suicide: VA Memphis and the Memphis CIT Model

**2010 DoD / VA Suicide Prevention Conference:
Building Strong and Resilient Communities**

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**Thomas M. Kirchberg, PhD, ABPP
Chief Psychologist
VA Medical Center at Memphis**

**Randolph Dupont, PhD
Chair/Clinical Psychologist
Department of Criminal Justice
University of Memphis**

**Major Sam Cochran, MA
MPD CIT Coordinator (ret)
Department of Criminal Justice
University of Memphis**

The Role of Law Enforcement in Preventing Suicide

- 1. Describe the Memphis Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Model with a focus on the elements of program development and progress over 20 years to the present;**
- 2. Describe components of VAMC Memphis partnership with CIT;**

The Role of Law Enforcement in Preventing Suicide

- 3. Provide insights from ongoing CIT research;**
- 4. Address options for increasing VA/DoD collaboration between CLOT programs across the country;**
- 5. Provide an opportunity for commentary by VA staff providing police training in several localities.**

2008 Uniform Mental Health Services

- Advance and implement a national campaign to **reduce the stigma** of seeking care and a national strategy for **suicide prevention**.

2003 New Freedom Commission Recommendation 1.1

- Address mental health with the **same urgency** as physical health.

2003 New Freedom Commission Recommendation 1.2

CIT: Outstanding suicide and crisis response model

- American Association of Suicidology

www.suicidology.org

- National Organization of People of Color Against Suicide

www.nopcas.org

- Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network

• www.tspn.org

May 27, 2009

“Law Enforcement Crisis Intervention Teams (CIT) are another promising avenue for connecting justice-involved Veterans with needed mental health and other services. In Memphis, Tennessee, and other communities using the Memphis Model, VA clinicians train law enforcement personnel on Veteran-specific issues, including PTSD and TBI, to inform encounters with Veterans in crisis.”

VA Deputy Undersecretary for Health for Operations and Management

VA Memphis and CIT Training

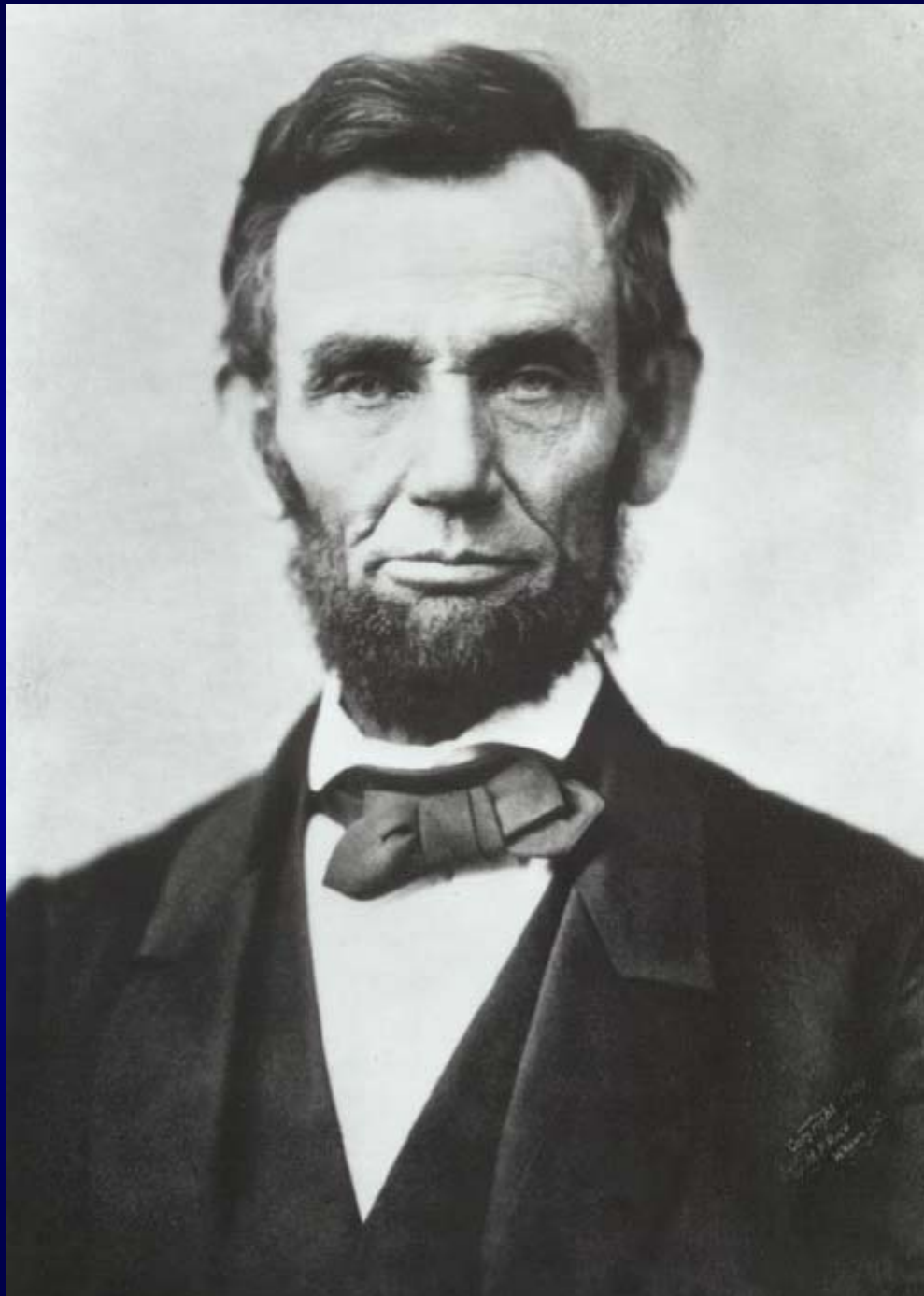
- 1. PTSD didactic**
- 2. Introduction to Verbal Skills**
- 3. Verbal Skills building exercises**
- 4. Combat Veterans and CIT officers dialogue at VAMC Memphis**
- 5. Traumatic Brain Injury didactic**
- 6. Crisis de-escalation training**
- 7. Ride-alongs with CIT Officers**

CIT and the Mission of VA Memphis

- **CIT responds quickly to VAMC calls for assistance—Suicide calls, health and welfare checks, MHICM**
- **VAMC Memphis and Veterans are well-known to CIT Officers**
- **CIT Officers drop by to visit Veterans in non-crisis times**
- **VAMC Memphis Police officers receive CIT Training**
- **CIT Commander calls on VA for consultation**
- **Psychology training program**
- **VAMC recognized as community partner by other mental healthcare facilities**

**Laurel Highlands Region Police
Crisis Intervention Team**

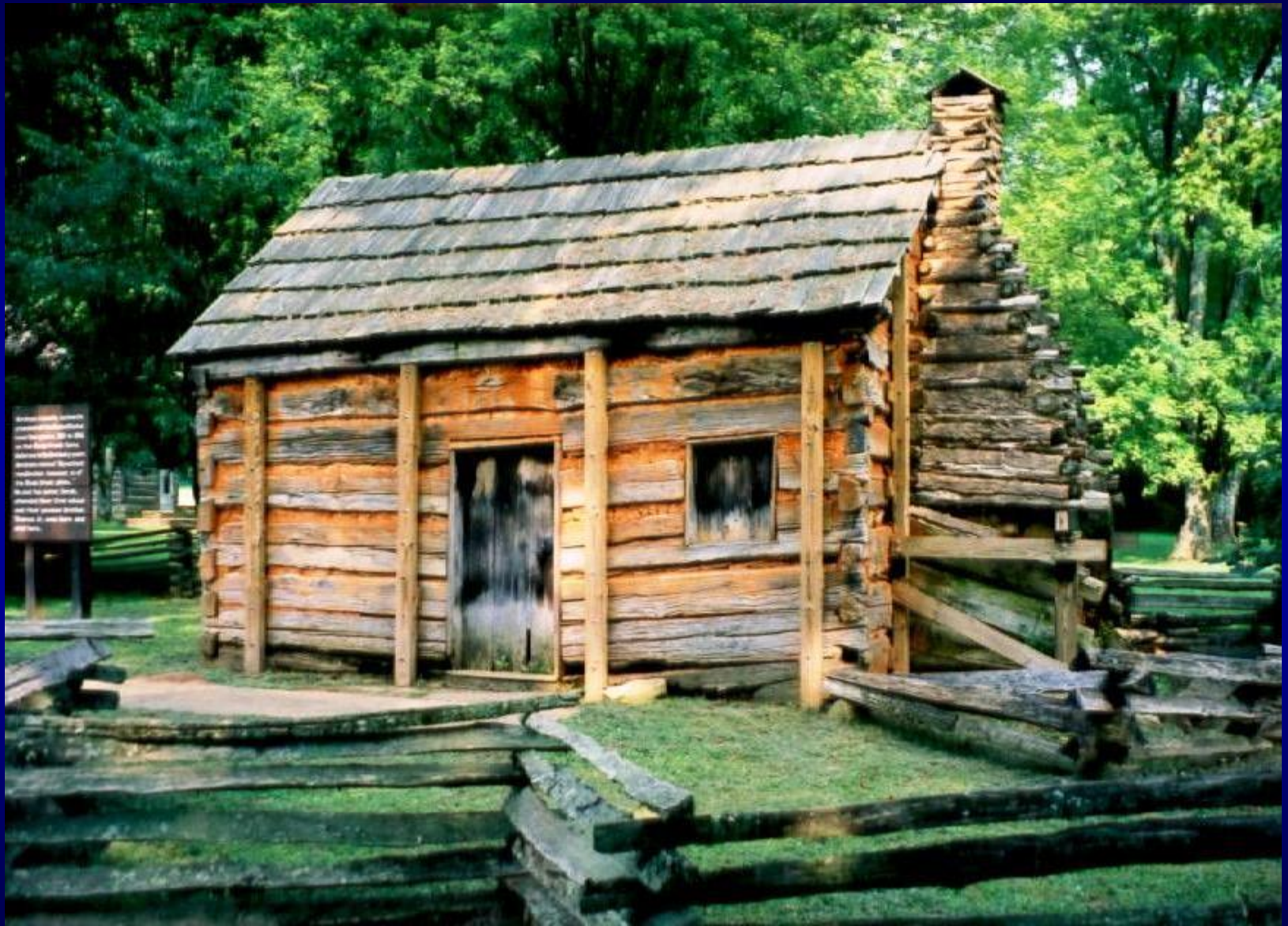
Cambria Valley, PA



President Abraham Lincoln

Second Inaugural Address, March 4, 1865

“With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation’s wounds, **to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan**, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.”



Factors in Depression

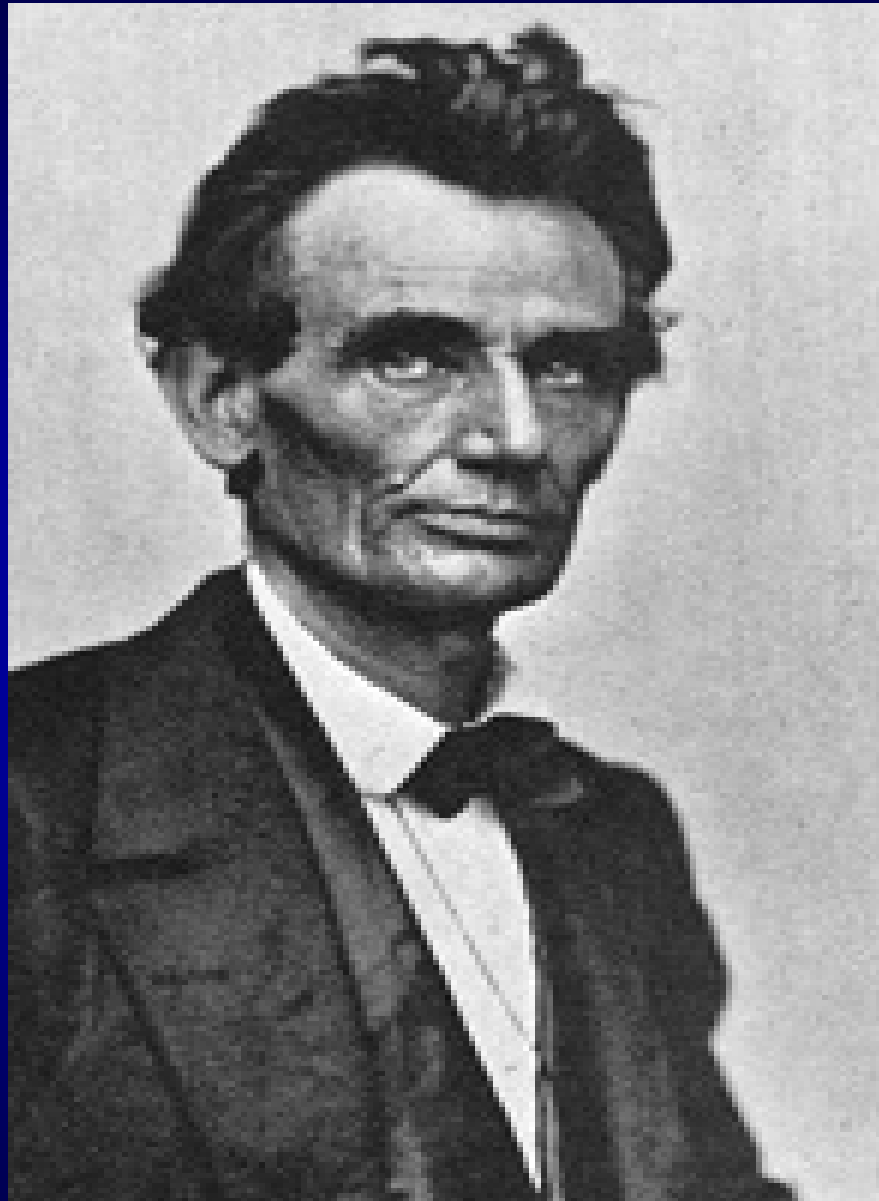
1. Biological Predisposition

- Mother—Nancy : “intellectual, sensitive, sad”
- Father—Thomas : “blues and often alone”
- Uncle—Mordecai : “broad mood swings”
- Cousins: “moody spells and humor”

2. Environmental Influences

- Mother died October 5, 1818
- Father returned to Kentucky to find a new bride
- His sister Sarah died January 28, 1828
- Troubled relations with his father all his life

Lincoln's Melancholy, J.W. Shenk, 2005, pp. 11-15; 107.



Springfield Illinois, 1860 ©Granger Collection

Black Hawk War 1832

- Lincoln was elected captain of the New Salem, Illinois militia company called up to take part in the Black Hawk War.
- Illinois and federal troops routed a small band of Sauk and Fox Indians who sought to return to their ancestral lands
- Lincoln saw no action.

Abraham Lincoln, McPherson, J. M., 2009, pp. 5-6; *Lincoln's Melancholy*, Shenk, J. W., 2005, p. 16.

Lincoln's 1860 Recollection of Militia Service

“...a success which gave me more
pleasure than any I have had since.”

The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln, vol. 3, p. 512 in Shenk, p. 16.

Summer 1835...

- Anna Mayes Rutledge
- Dismal weather
- Lincoln “told me that he felt like committing suicide often...”
- “... Mr. Lincoln’s friends were compelled to keep watch and ward over Mr. Lincoln...he being from the sudden shock somewhat deranged. We watched during storms—fogs—damp gloomy weather...for fear of an accident”

Mentor Graham to William H. Herndon on April 2, 1866 in *Lincoln’s Melancholy*, Shenk, J.W., 2005, p. 19; *Abraham Lincoln*, McPherson, J.M., 2009, pp. 6-7.

...*Summer 1835*

- “After several weeks of worrisome behavior—talking about suicide, wandering alone in the woods with his gun—an older couple in the area took him into their home...”
- “Bowling Green and his wife Nancy took care of Lincoln for one or two weeks. When he improved somewhat, they let him go, but he was quite melancholy for months.”

G. Miles to William H. Herndon on March 27, 1866 in *Lincoln's Melancholy*, Shenk, J.W., 2005, p. 21.

January 1841

- **Mary Todd**
- **Matilda Edwards**
- **Sarah Rickard**
- **Deadline for Illinois debt interest of \$175, 000**

Team of Rivals, Goodwin, D.K., 2005, pp. 92-98.

January 1841

- **Missing votes in legislature**
- **Took razors from his room—took away all knives...it was terrible.”**
- **January 17, Edwin Webb wrote: “He has grown much worse and is now confined to his bed sick in body & mind.”**

Team of Rivals, Goodwin, D.K., 2005, p. 99; *Lincoln's Melancholy*, Shenk, J.W., 2005, pp. 57; 261; *Abraham Lincoln*, McPherson, J.M., 2009, p. 10.

January 22, 1841

Letter to John Stuart

“I am now **the most miserable man living**. If what I feel were equally distributed to the whole human family, there would not be one cheerful face on the earth. **Whether I shall ever be better I can not tell; I awfully forebode I shall not. To remain as I am is impossible; I must die or better, it appears to me.**”

Team of Rivals, Goodwin, D.K., 2005, p. 99.

1841

- July—Farmington near Louisville
- Steamboat *Lebanon*: “*slave trader and 12 negroes in chains*”

Lincoln's Melancholy, Shenk, J.W., 2005, pp. 63-64.

Jacksonville, Illinois, February 11, 1859

“Empathy”

“The inclination to exchange thoughts with one another is probably an original impulse of our nature. **If I be in pain I wish to let you know it. And ask your sympathy and assistance;** and my pleasurable emotions also, I wish to communicate to, and share with you...**What one observes, and would himself infer nothing from, he tells to another, and that other at once sees a valuable hint in it.** A result is thus reached which neither alone would have arrived at. ”

The Portable Abraham Lincoln, Delbanco, A., pp. 176-177.

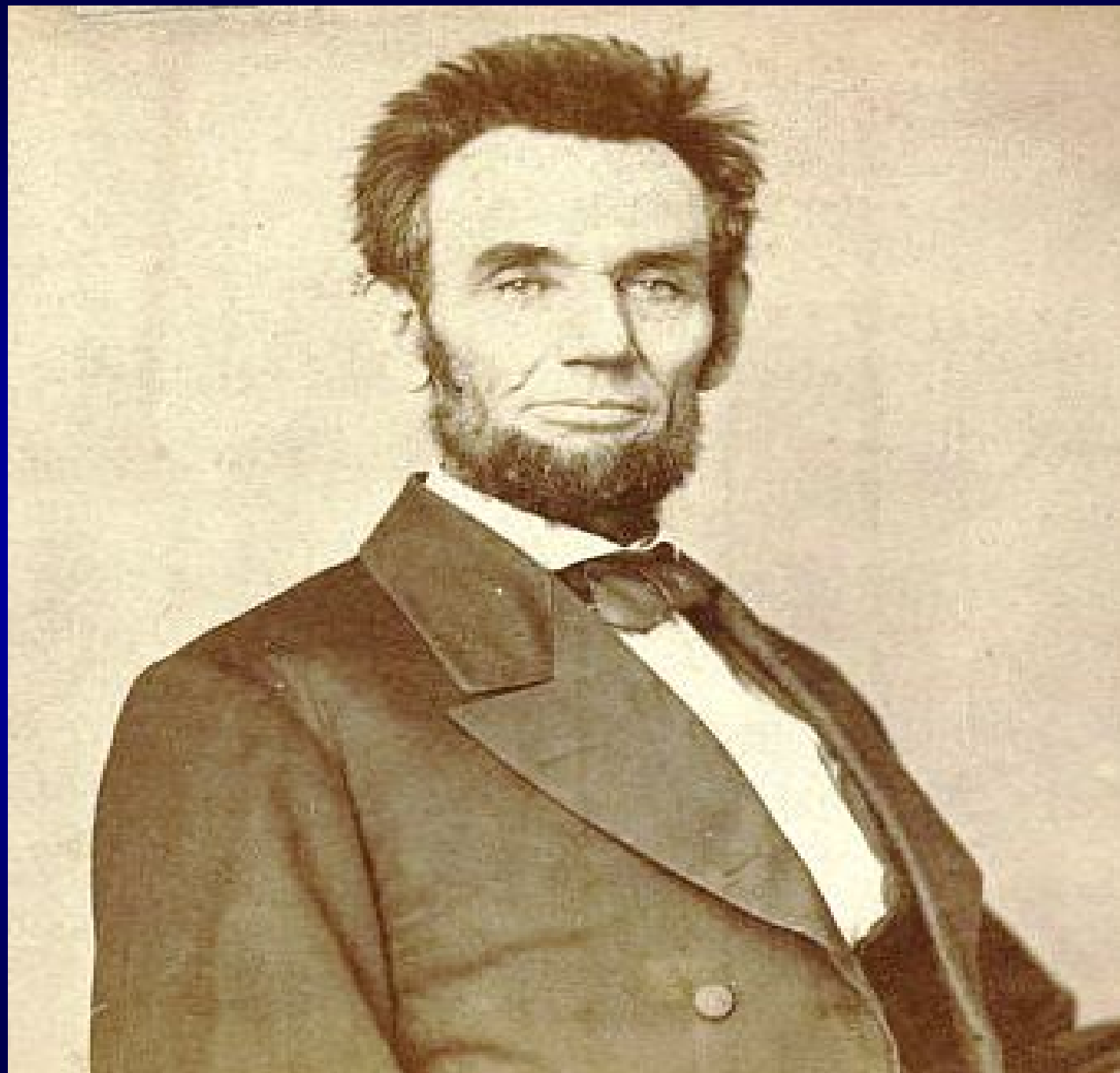
The Civil War 1861-1865



Leadership

- President Lincoln made more than a dozen trips to the front lines
- “He gave himself, night and day to the study of the military situation.”
- Lincoln made frequent visits with his wife to sick and wounded soldiers in Washington hospitals
- John Hay: Dead soldiers on the battlefields “tore at his heart”

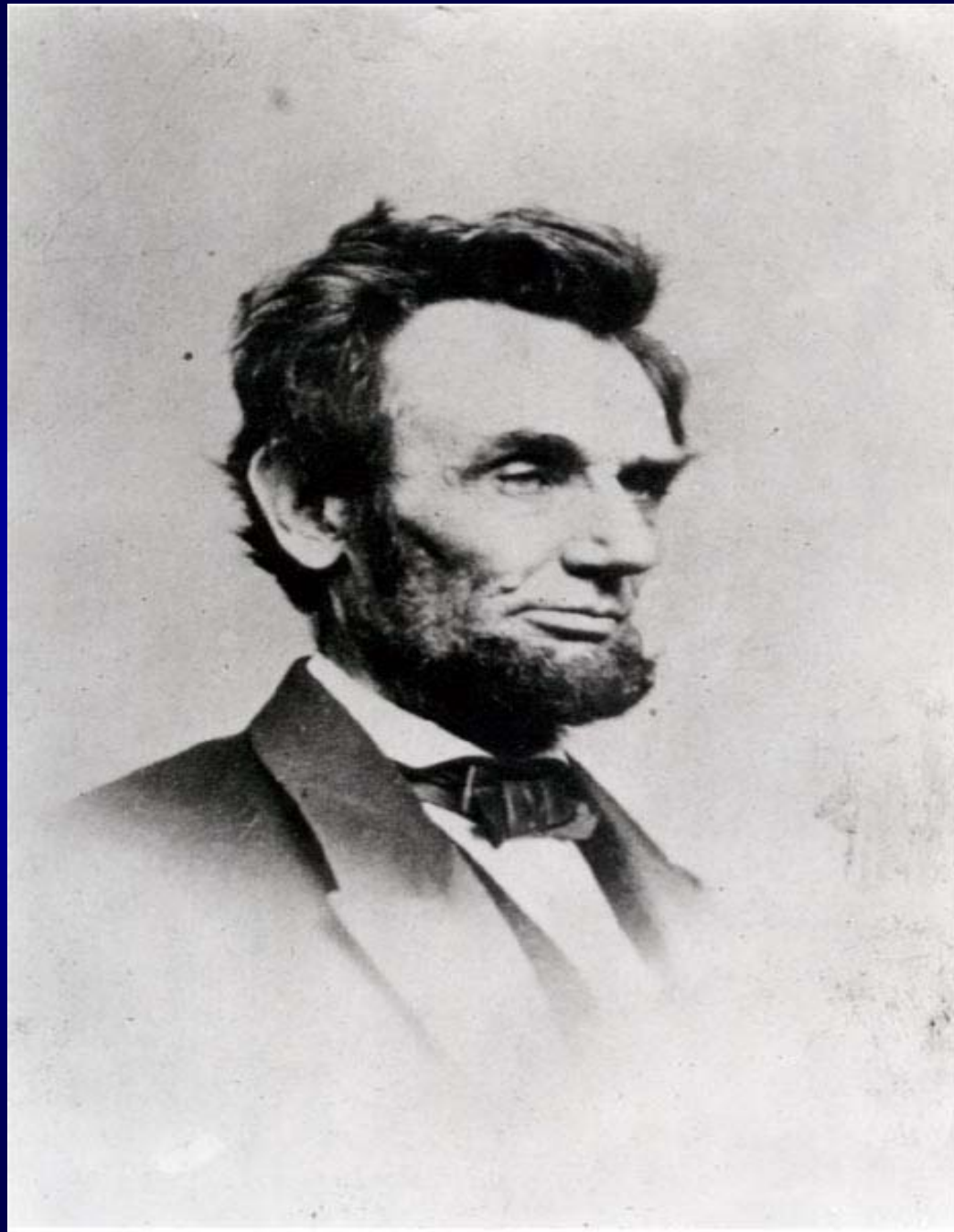
Team of Rivals, Goodwin, D.K., 2005, pp. 536; 539; *Tried by War*, McPherson, J.M., 2008, pp. 3; 249.



Empathy for Soldiers

- “I have not made up my own mind how I should behave when minie-balls were whistling and those great oblong shells shrieking in my ear.”
- “Although officers only see the force of military discipline...a picket so exhausted that ‘sleep steals upon him unawares... a young boy overcome by a physical fear greater than his will.”
- “It would frighten the poor devils terribly to shoot them.”
- John Hay: “...the President caught at any fact which would justify him in saving the life of a condemned soldier.”

Team of Rivals, Goodwin, D.K. , 2005, pp. 536; 539.



1864

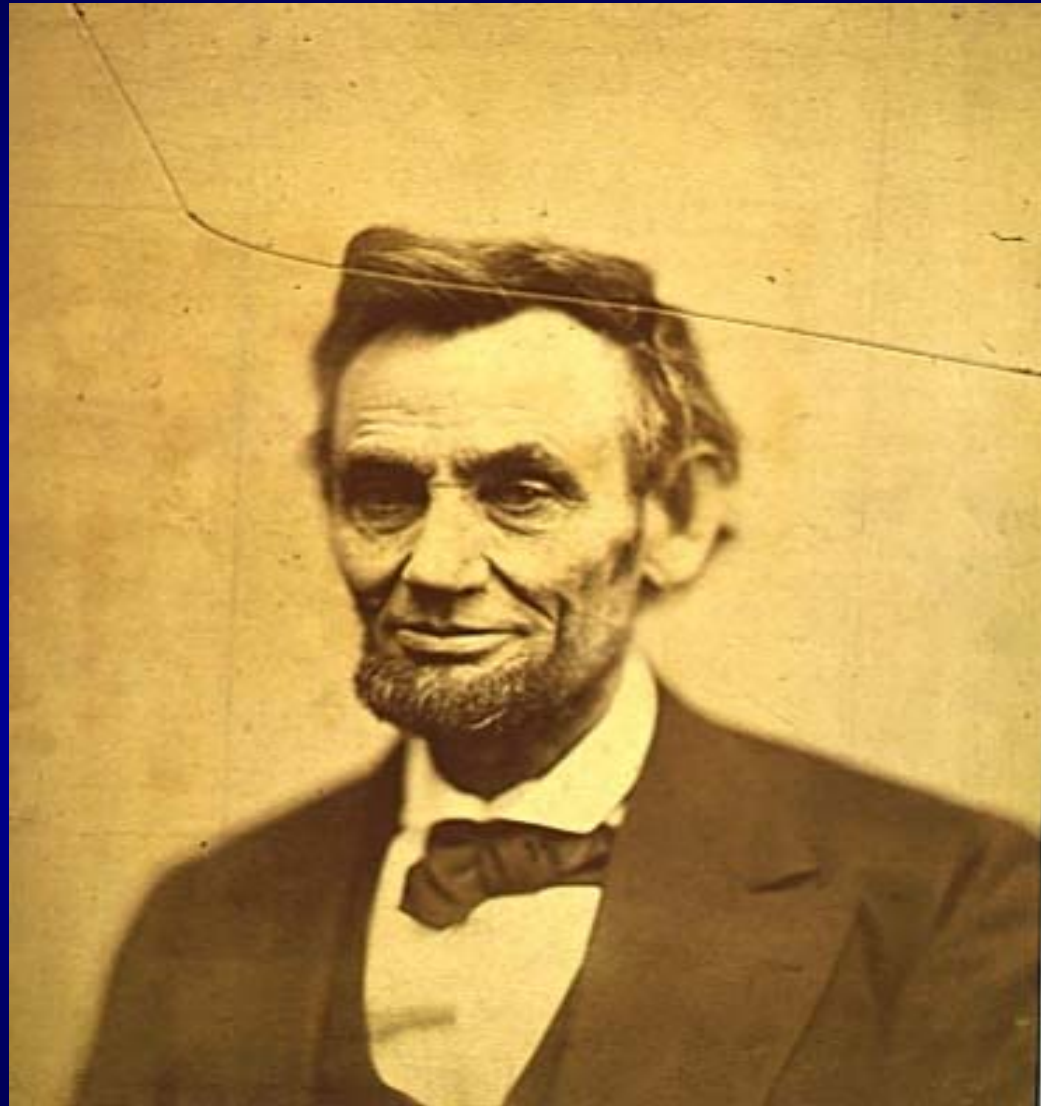
- Empathy for citizen soldiers
- Sought to mitigate military punishments
- Commuted many court-martial death sentences
- Soldiers called him “Father Abraham”

Tried by War, McPherson, J.M., 2008, p. 249.

1864 Election

- Lincoln won 78 % of soldiers' vote
- “Old Abe” was more popular among soldiers than General George B. McClellan
- Lincoln won 53 % of civilian vote

Tried by War, McPherson, J.M., 2008, p. 249-250.



April 14, 1865

Good Friday

- **Patrick Murphy deserted one regiment and joined another under assumed name**
- **Murphy was court-martialed**
- **Found guilty and sentenced to be shot**
- **Court-martial recommended commuting the sentence because the soldier had mental illness**

April 14, 1865

Good Friday

**“This man is pardoned, and
hereby ordered to be discharged
from the service.”**

Records of the Judge Advocate General, National Archives, MM 761 in *Lincoln's Melancholy*, Shenk, J.W. , 2005, p. 210.

“Of Abraham Lincoln, who can say enough? Lincoln was not much of a churchgoer. But **he risked his life and finally lost his life to save the Union and to bring freedom to slaves.** ‘As I would not be a slave,’ he wrote, ‘so I would not be a master.’ There have been few people in the history of the world, or in the history of our country, who better deserved the name ‘father of faith’ than did Lincoln. He delivered this country from its foundational sin: **he led us out of the twin horrors of being slaves or owning slaves.**”

Patrick J. Ryan, S.J., *America*, March 24, 2008

Lincoln's Legacy

“The hope is not that suffering will go away, for with Lincoln it did not ever go away. The hope is that suffering, plainly acknowledged and endured, can fit us for the surprising challenges that await.”

Lincoln's Melancholy, Shenk, J.W. , 2005, p. 216.

Crisis Intervention Team

Memphis Model

- “This is policing for the 21st Century”
Police Chief Charles Moose (1997)
- “This program should be imitated in every city in America”
E. Fuller Torrey (1996)
- “... the most visible pre-booking diversion program in the U.S.”
Hank Steadman and colleagues (2000)

Best Practice Model

- NAMI (1996) National Alliance for the Mentally Ill
- American Association of Suicidology (1997)
- National Association of People of Color Against Suicide (1999)
- Amnesty International (1999) Race, Rights and Police Brutality
- White House Conference on Mental Health (1999)
- Department of Justice (2000)
- Department of Health and Human Service
SAMHSA (2000)
- CUNY, John Jay College of Criminal Justice
Law Enforcement News (2000)

Furor sparks call for crisis team New options needed on handling of mentally ill, says alliance

By William C. Bayne
Staff Reporter

Approached aggressively, a person with severe mental problems may react aggressively — either fighting or fleeing from law enforcement officers or others trying to help.

"There's magic in the manner," said Ann Dino, president of the Alliance for the Mentally Ill of Memphis, the organization that suggested the task force approach for dealing with uncontrollable people with mental illness.

She said a better approach to Joseph Robinson, the 27-year-old man who was shot repeatedly and killed last Thursday by police, might have "prevented the tragedy."

On Monday, Mayor Dick Hackett announced he would speed up plans to create a crisis intervention team, which would include mental health professionals, to deal with people who have mental problems and are violent.

No evidence has emerged to show Robinson had a history of

mental illness. A relative who had called police to subdue him said he was "trying to cut his throat, acting like he's on drugs," police reported.

Mrs. Dino and others with the alliance met with Police Director John Holt before Thanksgiving last year asking for a task force approach to handling the uncontrollable mentally ill.

She said Holt seemed receptive to the idea and assigned Patrolman John Dwyer to research the proposal.

"You have to have the research in order to see what best

will work in connection with the assets you have," she said yesterday. "Los Angeles has the best one in the country. But it took them two years to work out the kinks in their operation."

Part of the research, she said, pointed out changes needed in ordinances and state laws about the handling of emergency commitments.

She praised Dwyer's work as excellent and said the cooperation was tremendous between the Police Department and City Hall. She said the three-year sharp-up costs for the task force would

be about \$700,000, but she did not know the actual operating cost.

John Dwyer's research showed the task force would pay for itself "in savings to the Police Department and other agencies," Mrs. Dino said.

Asked why it took so long for the city to announce the plan, she said, "Sometimes it just takes some hollering and screaming to get something done. It's sad that it took this tragedy for something to happen, but maybe something good is going to come

Please see TUNON, Page B2



Ann Dino

The Washington Post

METRO

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2000

Force of Empathy



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL WELLS/AMONG—THE WASHINGTON POST

As part of a Montgomery training program to improve officers' understanding of the problems of the mentally ill, Sgt. Rodney Hill tries to form shapes with toothpicks while hearing a cacophony of voices on a headset.

Md. Police Are Trained to Respond Better to Mentally Ill

By PHUONG LY
Washington Post Staff Writer

Sgt. Ron Smith's first task was to buy a newspaper, get his change in nickels and ask the clerk her name.

Easy enough, usually. But this day, screaming voices filled his head, channeled through a headset he was required to wear. And when he started talking, the 7-Eleven employee stepped away from him, wondering about his requests.

Other Montgomery County officers—all with voices screaming in their ears—tackled other tasks. Two read a story and then answered questions; another pair slowly composed geometric shapes with toothpicks. One officer recited a list of words, hesitating



Officers Aaron Baller, left, and P.O. Dolan listen to a mentally ill patient.

a little as he spoke. "Here's a situation where you can't blend in," Smith said later, with the earphones off. "You're a public spectacle." The exercises were part of a revolutionary training course for Montgomery police officers

that simulates the everyday reality of many of the mentally ill. The goal is to teach police how to better handle emergency calls involving mentally ill citizens and reduce the use of dead-

See POLICE, B5, Col. 1

Planning Group

Government
Law Enforcement
Judiciary
Advocates
Citizens/Consumers
Health Care
Mental Health



Local Resources



CIT Model

CIT Model

Department/Patrol
Officer/Deputy

Emergency System

Consumer/Family/Advocate

Planning Group



Crisis Intervention Team Model

Dispatch → Officer → Citizen Event → Disposition

Introductory Training
Identify CIT Officers
New Procedures

Volunteer
Patrol Role
New Role
Selection
Specialized Training
Maintain Safety Skills
De-Escalation Skills

New Procedures
Lead Intervention
De-escalation Skills

Officer Discretion
Receiving Facility
User Friendly

Overview of Skill Training

- Basic Strategies
- Basic Verbal Skills
- Stages of Escalation
- One on One Interactions
- Complex Interventions

Overview of Specialized Training

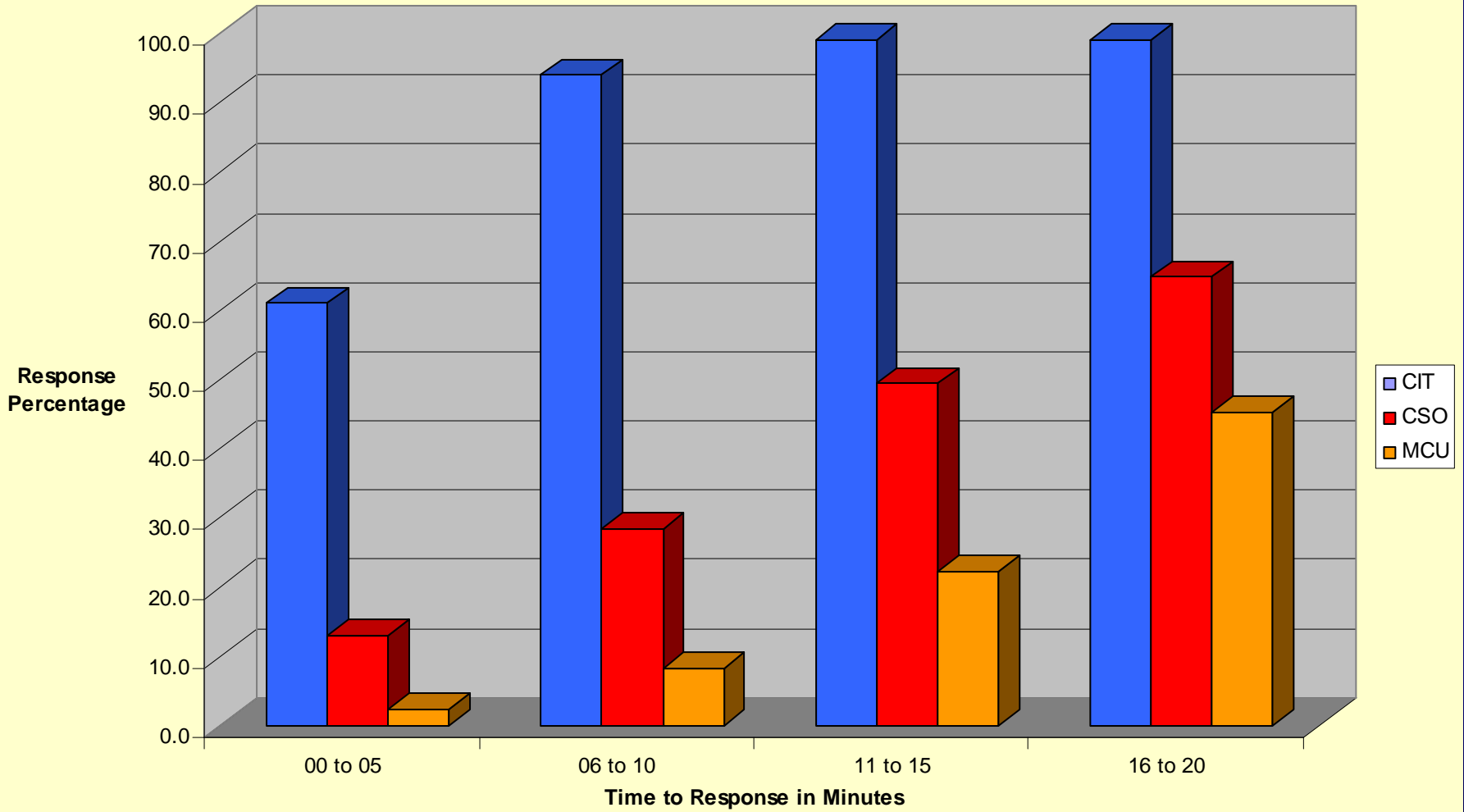
- Mental Health Diagnosis
- Psychotropic Medications
- Treatment Modalities
- Addiction Disorders
- Personality Disorders
- Diversity
- Rights
- Civil Commitment Law

Police Response to Emotionally Disturbed Persons

**Models of Police Interactions with
the Mental Health System**

Policy Research Associates (PRA)

Crisis Response Times Deane et al (1997)



Health Care Referrals, Impact on Arrest and Officer Safety

**Randolph Dupont, PhD
Professor**

**University of Memphis
School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy
Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice**

Jail Arrest Evaluation Data

- *National Estimates*

- Shridan & Teplin, 1986; Borum et al, 1998 20%

- *CIT*

- Steadman et al, 2000 2%

- *Reports to County Government*

- *Daily Census Count*

- Zager (1990) 2.5%; Dupont (1998) 3.5%

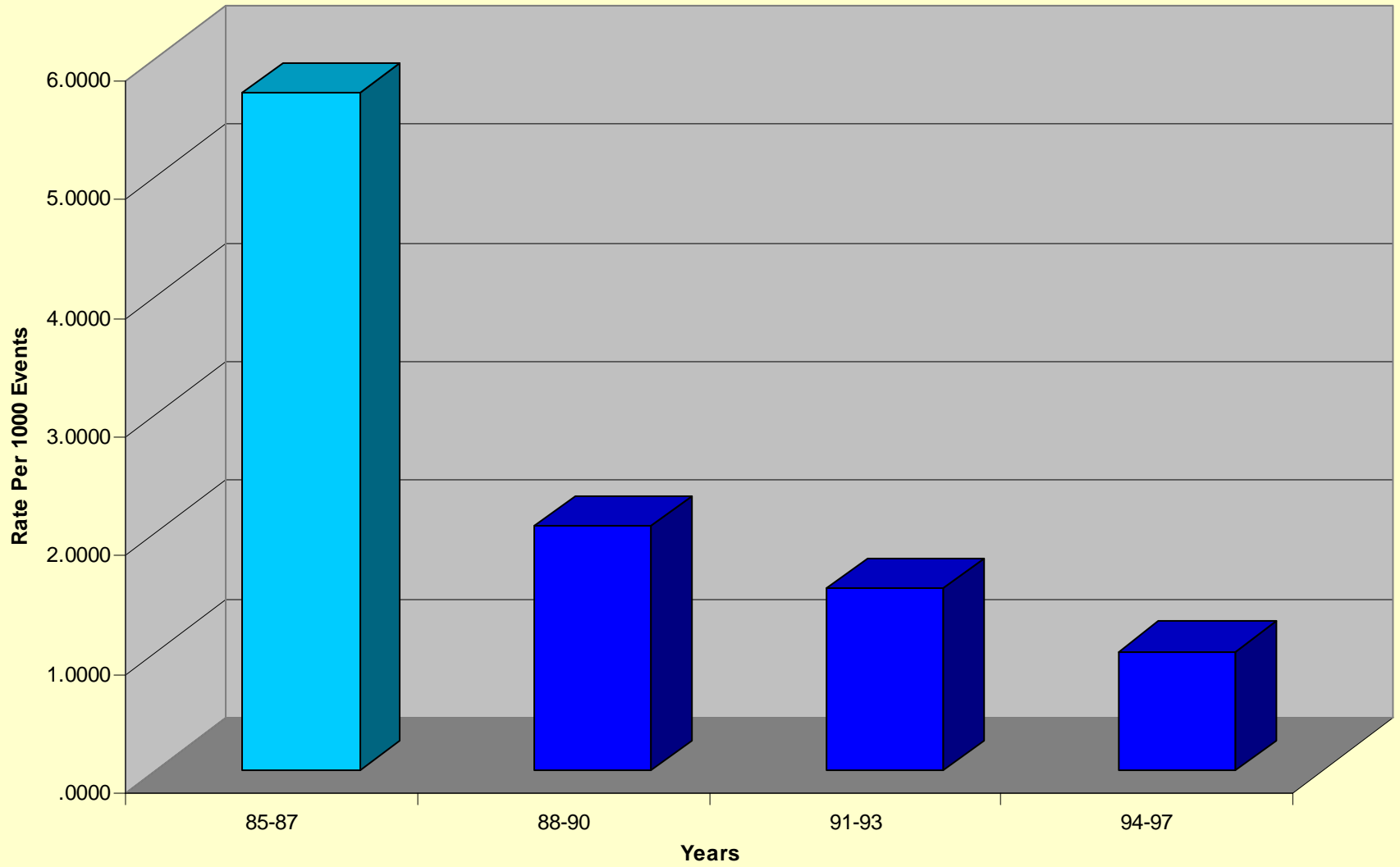
- *Monthly Arrests Screened for MI*

- Dupont (1998) 5.0%, CMS (1999) 5.2%

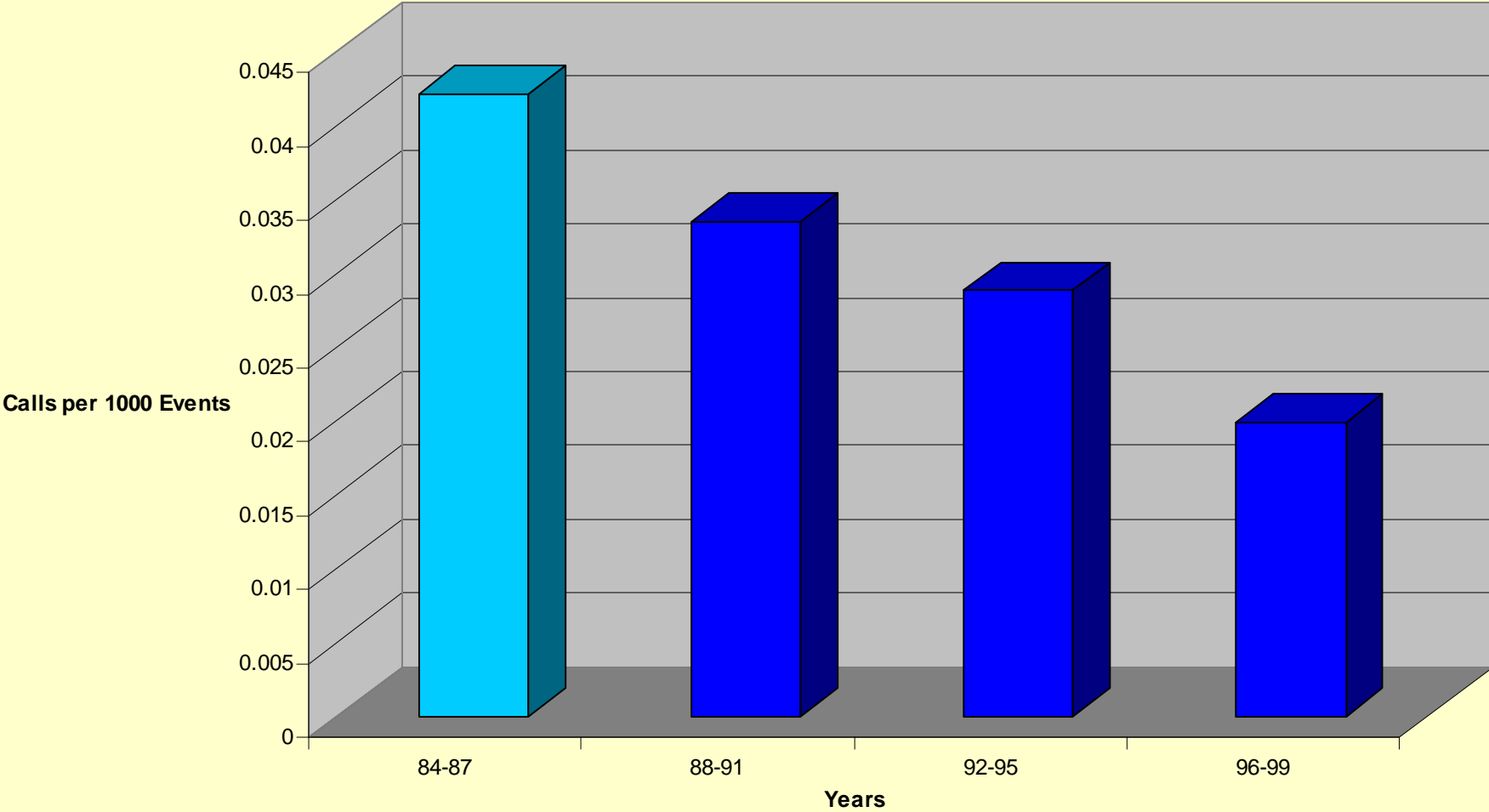
- *Individuals Eligible for ROR*

- Pretrial Services (1999) 0.5%

Officer Injuries During MI Events



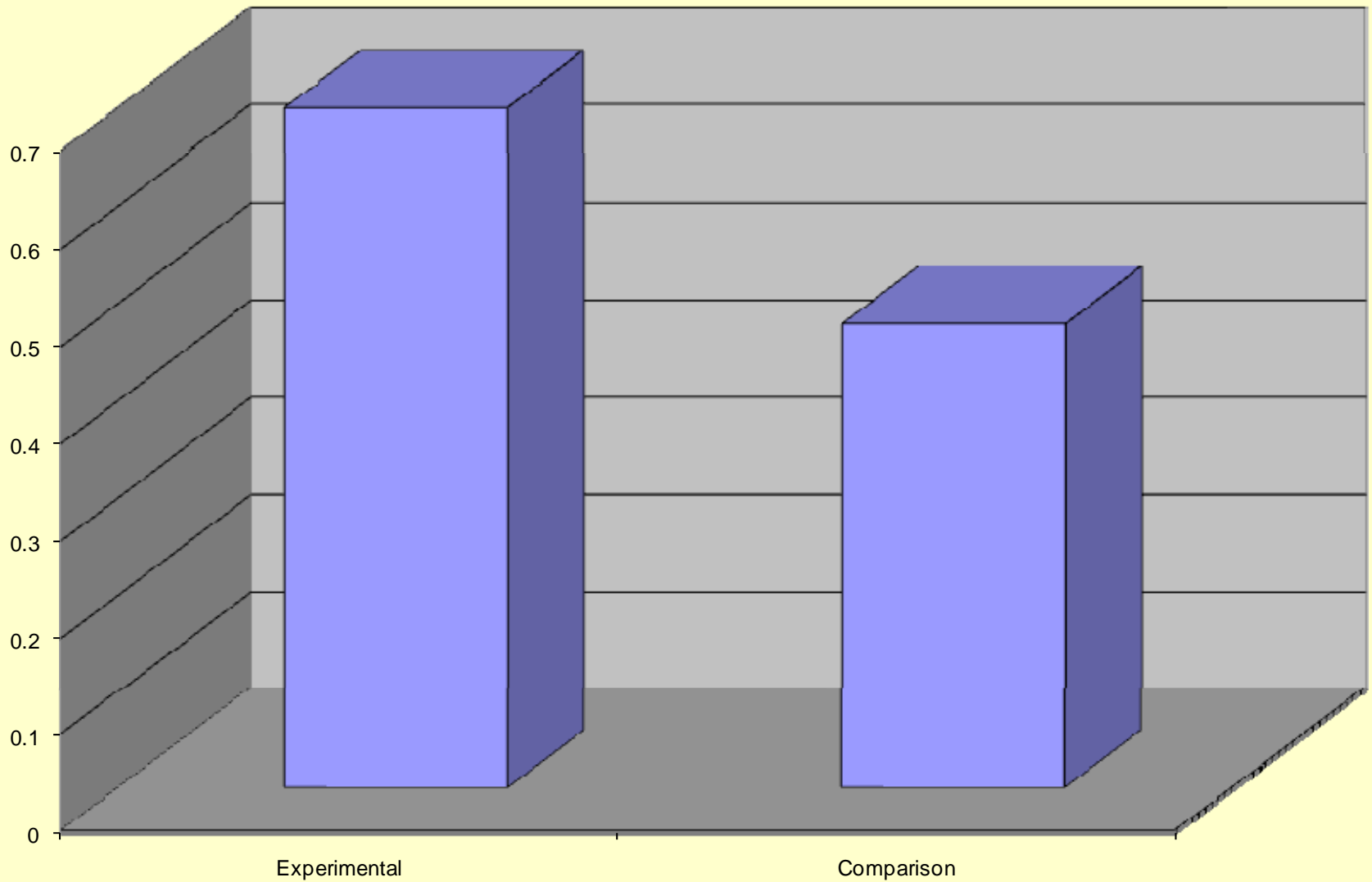
TACT Barricade Calls



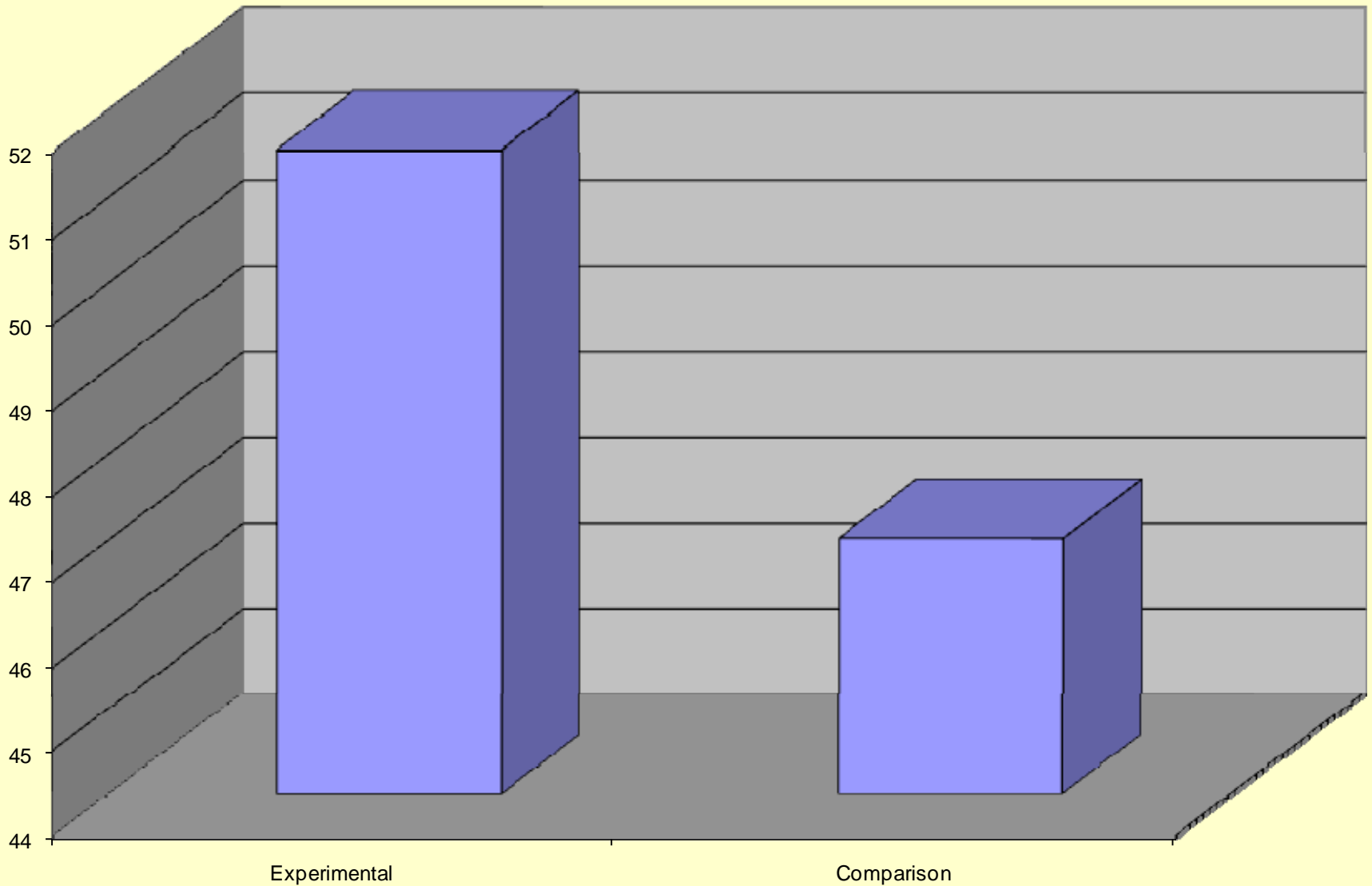
SAMHSA

- The following research was funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration Criminal Justice Jail Diversion Project grant SM 53274.
- Appreciation for their assistance in this project is gratefully acknowledged.

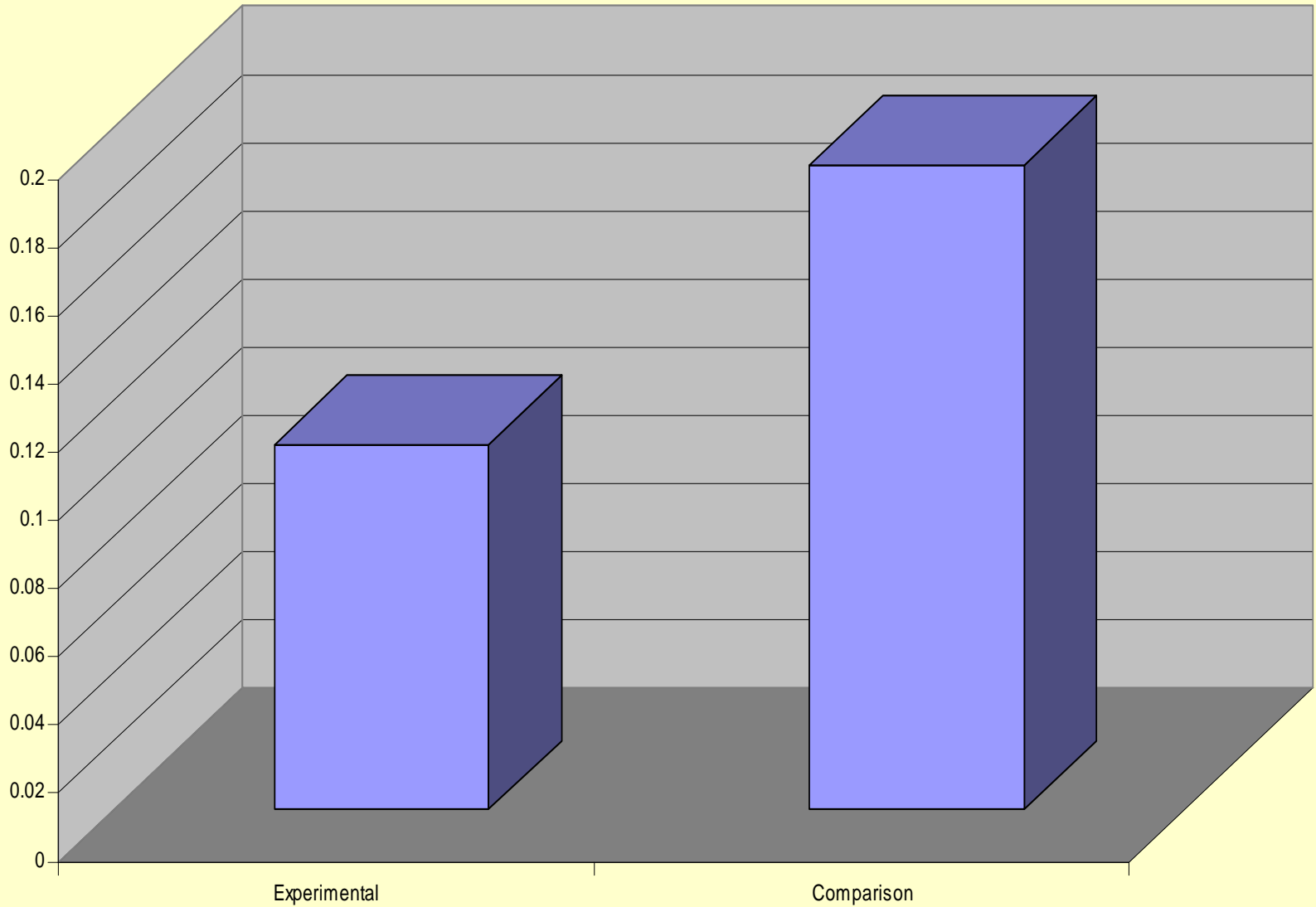
Staying in Treatment (P<.0001)



CSI: Mental Status Symptoms (P<.0001)



Re-Arrest Probabilities at 3 Months: During Past 30 Days ($P < .05$)



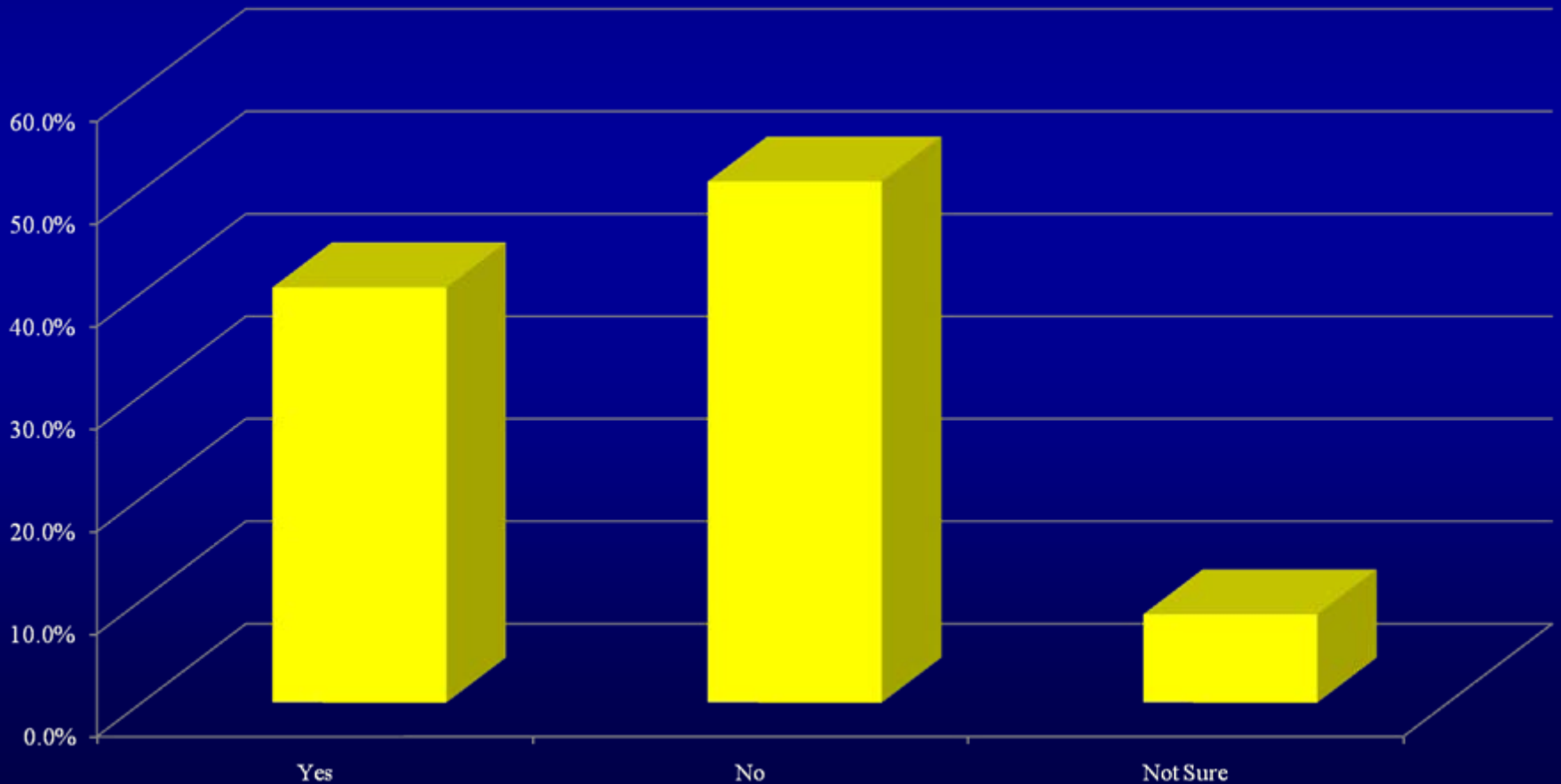
CIT Diversion - Compared to Jail (after 90 days)

- better connection to community treatment
- improved mental status symptoms
- lower rate of re-arrest

* SAMHSA: Final Report, Dupont (2003)
Criminal Justice Jail Diversion Project

Crisis Intervention Team VA Involvement

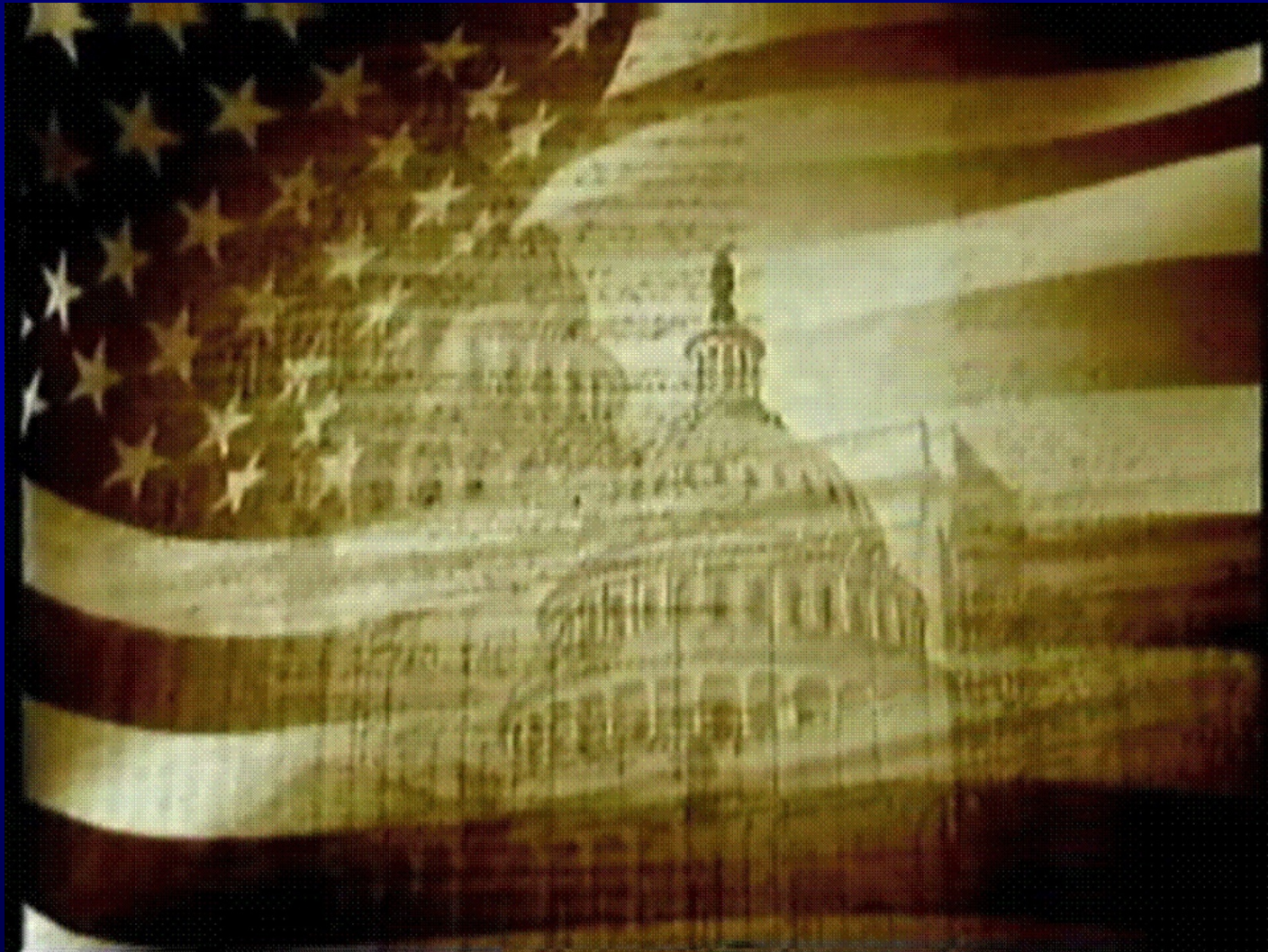
Active CIT Coordinators: Internet Based Survey
Response Rate: 117/150 (78%)



I see a growing need for the services of the VA, especially in dealing with returning Vets from the current wars. I believe our contacts with Vets in crisis situations will rise dramatically.

This is a very important issue. As a veteran myself, I am very supportive of CIT and VA mental health.

CIT is “Not” a law enforcement program:
It’s a Community Program

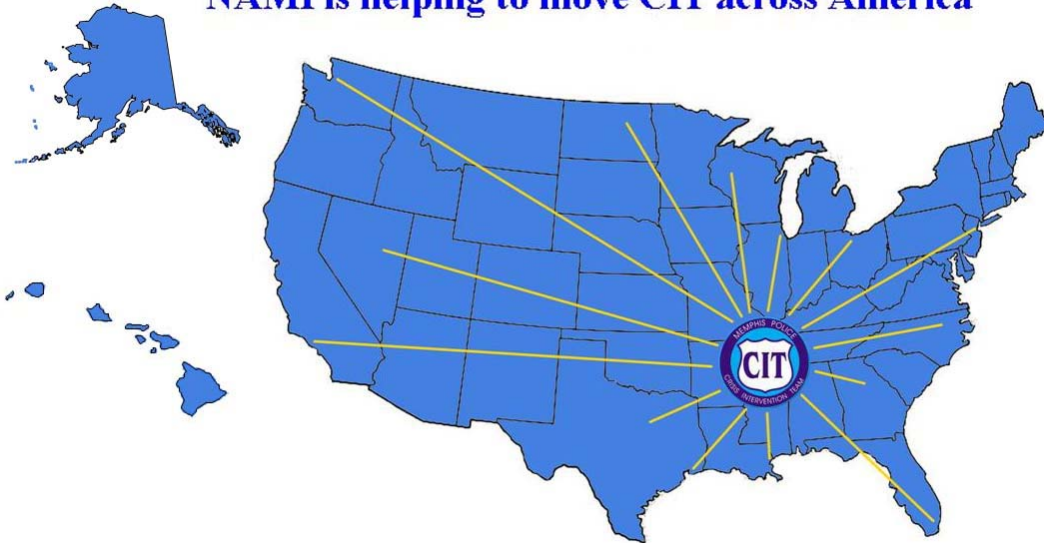


CIT is about “Systems” - - “Infrastructure” of Services

- Relationships – working together



NAMI is helping to move CIT across America



- Building Roads & Bridges

CIT is about “Community Empowerment”



CIT is about Law Enforcement “Partnerships”

CIT is about MH Provider “Partnerships”



CIT is about Advocacy “Partnerships”

CIT is about “Understanding & Patience”



CIT is about “Leadership”



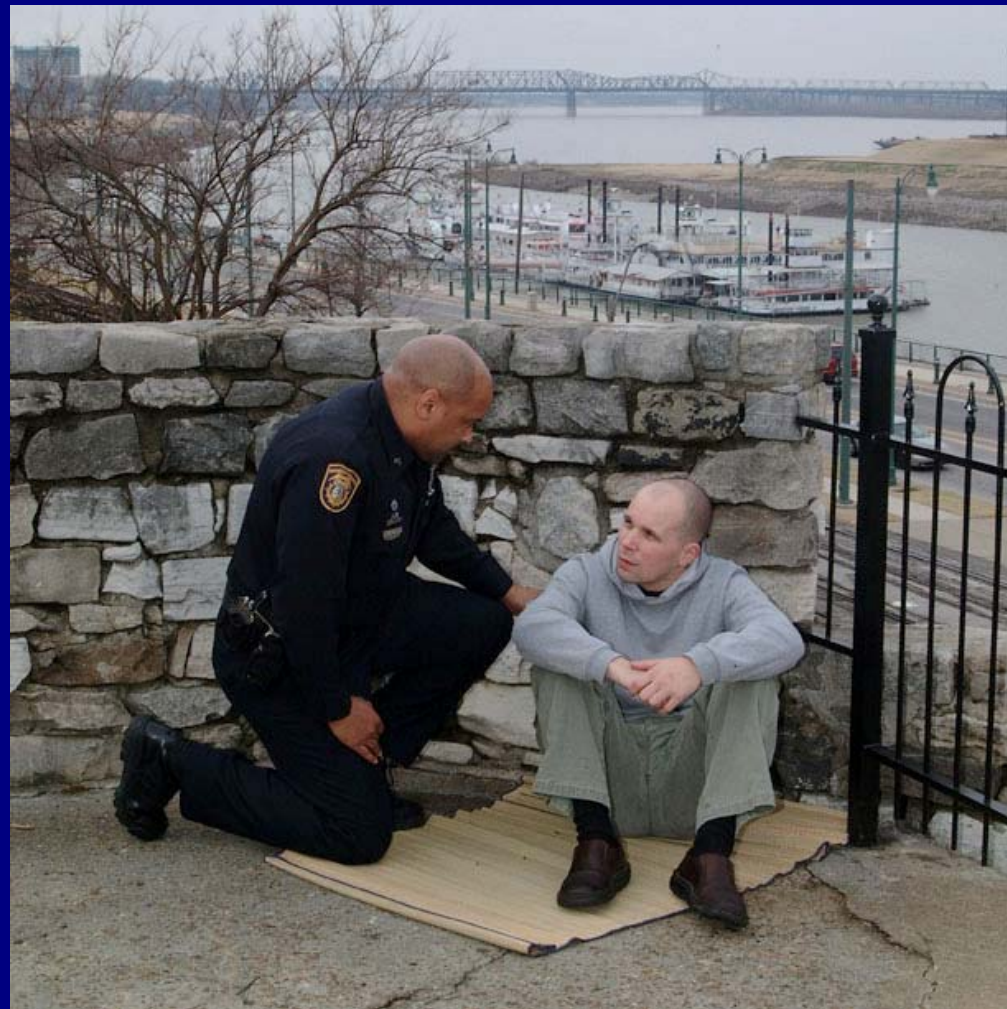
CIT Officers



Support Officers



Stabilize the crisis & make referrals



Emergency Commitment



Suicide Awareness Training



CIT is about “Hope”



CIT Awards



CIT Awards



CIT is about “Passion” and “Peace”



