Forensic Research-2013

OMICS Group Conferences
Accelerating Scientific Discovery

2nd International Conference on
Forensic Research & Technology

October 7-9, 2013 Las Vegas, USA

A community response to community trauma

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Abstract

News and media sources suggest there has been no increase in the frequency of school shootings over the last decade. Media attention given to school shootings, however, has increased public awareness of these tragedies and created a perceived reality that frequency of school violence is increasing. A meta-review of current research and literature related to school shootings suggests American people may benefit from a comprehensive approach that responds effectively to community trauma. To date, many models of crisis intervention and trauma counseling seem to focus specifically on, and thereby isolate, a target consumer. More than a response to trauma according to population-victim, survivor, family, first responder-as much as possible, an inclusive response agenda that aims to provide support for all forecasted populations may produce better outcomes as communities recover from traumatic events. Additionally, effective therapeutic responses may reduce the inappropriate stigmatization that is associated with mental illness when an offender is said to have a psychiatric or psychological diagnosis. Accordingly, we propose a comprehensive, inclusive, community approach that strategically, purposefully, and sophically addresses the needs of individuals and families, who constitute the community, affected by a traumatic event. A discussion of evidence-based treatment modalities and suggested service providers, along with challenges to implementation and evaluation, is included.

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