



# Coffee Break Training - Management Science Program

## Curbside Manner: Stress First Aid for the Street

No. MS-2013-4 June 5, 2013

**Learning Objective:** The student shall be able to explain how Curbside Manner: Stress First Aid for the Street can be used to assist the citizens whom fire and rescue organizations serve, and to identify each of the five core principles.

**C**urbside Manner: Stress First Aid for the Street is a series of simple, supportive actions that can be used when assisting distressed or disoriented individuals and families.

These actions should be integrated into your duties in a natural, seamless way and used only when they do not interfere with your primary responsibilities and actions. They involve only a small amount of effort on your part, but these actions can make a huge difference in how the citizens you serve recover from the stress of what has happened to them.

Curbside Manner is based on five principles to help accident and disaster survivors recover from those experiences.

1. **Cover** means helping people to regain a sense of safety after a traumatic event. This can involve removing them from the scene, protecting them from onlookers, or simply letting them know that you are there to help them.
2. **Calm** implies helping people return to a calm equilibrium quickly. Responders can assist by staying calm themselves, showing understanding for their situation, and coaching affected individuals in ways to calm themselves.
3. **Connect** means helping people gain access to sources of social support. This can involve reconnecting people with their family and pets, or enlisting neighbors or friends to assist.
4. **Competence** implies helping people to meet their own needs by promoting their access to resources. This can be done by helping people secure basic needs such as water or blankets, or transferring them to social service agencies that can assist.
5. **Confidence** involves supporting affected individuals in ways that will help them to regain a sense of hope and confidence about themselves and the future. Helping them to reduce self-blame and guilt can help, as can letting them know that you might have made the same choices in a similar situation.



Taking just a few moments to help those who have suffered an emergency can go a long way toward defusing their anxiety.

The principles taught in Curbside Manner are also the core principles of the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation's Stress First Aid for Fire and EMS Personnel course. SFA was initially developed as a peer support model for use in military operational settings as Combat and Operational Stress First Aid. SFA was adapted from the military support model to be used by fire and rescue organizations; it was intended to help firefighters and their leadership care for their own in times of acute distress such as following a line-of-duty death, a multiple fatality incident or another potentially traumatic event. Both Curbside Manner and SFA support **Firefighter Life Safety Initiative 13**, which states that firefighters and EMS personnel must have access to behavioral support.

Curbside Manner: Stress First Aid for the Street is available as a one-hour continuing education course at [www.fireherolearningnetwork.com](http://www.fireherolearningnetwork.com).

This Coffee Break Training item was submitted by the NFFF.