



Canadian Centre for  
Threat Assessment &  
Trauma Response



## ALERT

# Humboldt, Saskatchewan Broncos Tragedy April 6, 2018

## Traumatic Aftermath

### High Profile Trauma

On April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018, at least 15 lives were lost, and many others were injured in a tragic collision involving the well-loved Humboldt Bronco's Hockey Team. All were part of the Humboldt family and the local response to the tragedy is unfathomable. Several players on the team are from outside Saskatchewan including Alberta and Manitoba making this a Western Canadian traumatic event. However, with hockey being so dear to the hearts of Canadians combined with other similar tragedies from the past we are already seeing a "rekindling" of trauma symptoms across the country. In addition, the number of recent trauma events that have occurred globally have elevated societal anxiety.

As a standard we say that "high profile trauma intensifies already existing symptoms in individuals struggling with their own trauma histories", but we have also seen how it can rekindle historical trauma in entire human systems like families, schools, communities and even Nations. The more individuals caught within the impact zone that can relate to the details reported by mainstream media, the more it will intensify trauma symptoms. Additionally, social media is a double-edged sword as some posts can lower anxiety and be helpful while other posts may elevate anxiety and fuel hurt and anger.

**Professionals, parents (caregivers) and adult mentors (coaches etc.) must be mindful of what our children and youth are posting online.** We consistently find that in the age 30 and under category, our youth will verbally say to adults "I'm fine" and then post their true fears of anger, pain and confusion online.

**Tip:**

Become familiar with your young person's use of Twitter, Snapchat and Instagram as these are the most common areas where the more private side of a youth's life is made available and publicized to their peers. The rest of communication will likely occur through private messages and group chats.

Ask your children and youth:

"What is being posted on social media about this?"

"Did (so and so) Tweet about the .....?"

"What are people saying on Twitter?"

"What are people posting on Snapchat?"

"What are people posting on their Snapchat Stories?"

"Has anyone posted on Instagram?"

"What are you seeing on Instagram?"

Facebook is not completely irrelevant to young people but their use of it tends to be more for the sense of self that they want to portray to parents and caregivers. It will not be the location where we will find their most intimate and vulnerable thought disclosures. Beyond all else, paying notice to any change and direction of a young person's digital baseline behaviour is very important.

For those feeling the weight of this tragedy we encourage you to reach out to trusted family members, friends, spiritual leaders and professionals.

If personal supports are unavailable to you or others that you are aware of that are experiencing an acute emotional response, the following resources are available:

**Crisis Lines:**

CHIMO Crisis Line: 604-279-7070 (until midnight)

Vancouver Crisis Centre: 604-872-3311 (24 hours)

Mental Health Support: 310-6789

**Additional Support:**

Online Crisis Support: [www.YouthinBC.com](http://www.YouthinBC.com)

Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868 (live chat)

Youthspace.ca: online chat (6:00pm - midnight) or text at 778-783-0177