

Vicki Hixson, M.Ed.
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Vicki Hixson owns and operates Critical Incident Consulting, LLC; a public safety peer support and wellness consulting firm. Vicki contracts and consults with various public safety agencies in Arizona to design and implement tailored wellness programs for employees while being cognizant of each employers' varied needs. The firm focuses on customized practices such as the building of peer support teams and comprehensive wellness programs, resiliency and advanced peer support training, resource vetting and coordination with community mental health partners, identifying preventative employee care strategies, as well as the developing of written policy. She is also well versed in individual employee crisis situations to include collaborative resource solutions for these often highly complex and dynamic return-to-work circumstances.

She is the co-creator and co-host of the Ride Along Chronicles podcast. A social podcast focusing on the unique challenges of first responder families told through confidential storytelling.

Vicki has been in law enforcement for over 25 years. She retired as a Mesa, AZ Police Detective in 2018. Although Vicki is still currently working as a sworn police detective in a smaller police agency, it is during her tenure with the Mesa Police Department where she developed a unique skillset focused on the mental health and wellness of first responders.

While at Mesa PD she worked as a Patrol Officer, Major Crimes Detective, and Financial Crimes Detective. She was also a Policy and Procedures Detective responsible for the research of industry best practices, policy and procedure development, and writing of policy for almost 4 years. During that time, she also served as a part-time peer support member for 10 years before being selected as the full-time Peer Support and Wellness Coordinator in 2013.

As the Peer Support and Wellness Coordinator, Vicki managed a team of over 40 part-time Peer Support Team members who provided peer support and wellness services to over 1200 public safety employees. She enhanced Mesa PD's program and elevated it to be recognized as top-tier within the state. She facilitated crisis management interventions, conducted post-critical incident debriefs, provided resource identification, treatment coordination, and follow-up employee care. She facilitated and taught a research-based resiliency training program to all sworn and professional staff members within the department and outside agencies. She built employee partnerships with mental health providers, behavioral health/substance treatment facilities, and financial resources. She also designed and implemented a return-to-work program for first responders who experienced a critical incident or crisis event. Vicki created collaborative partnerships with other public safety agencies to enhance their agencies' wellness programs. She is regarded as a Subject Matter Expert in first responder stress and wellness in Arizona.

Vicki holds a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice and Women Studies from Rutgers University, and a master's degree in Education from Northern Arizona University. She has been an Executive Board Member for the Arizona Public Safety Peer Support Association for over 10 years and has been integral in assisting individuals and agencies throughout the state. She has been married to a police officer for over 25 years and has three adult children.