

MENTAL HEALTH & SUICIDE PREVENTION IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

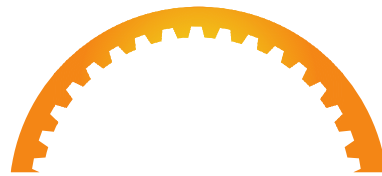
March 10, 2023

Presented by Stuart Binstock

President & CEO

Construction Financial Management Association (CFMA)

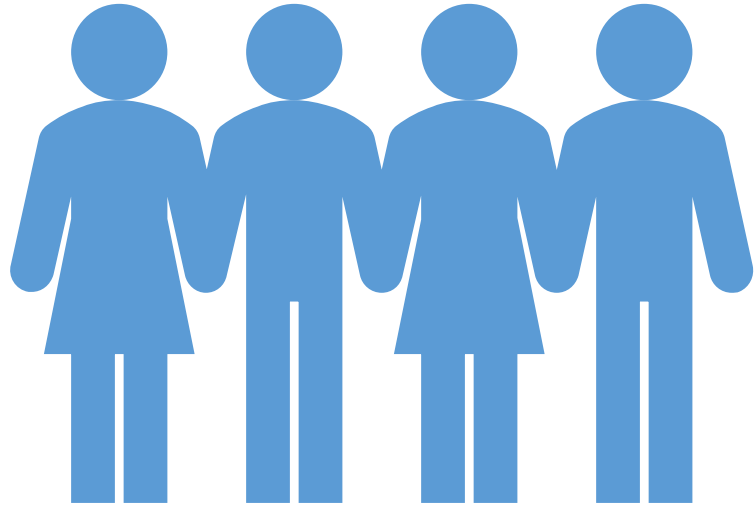
American Subcontractors Association



Objectives

- Why do we need to address mental health and suicide prevention in the construction workplace?
 - How can mental health and suicide prevention be woven into existing safety, wellness and performance management practices?
-
- How does suicide prevention integrate with bringing additional employees into the work force?
 - How can you measure your company's suicide prevention preparedness and culture?
 - What resources are available through the Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention?





“We don’t have a mental health or suicide problem...”





**1008 Construction Worker
Fatalities in 2018**

9.5/100,000 rate

**Estimated 5,242 Construction
Worker Suicides in 2018**

49.4/100,000 rate



45,979 Deaths by Suicide in 2020

13.48/100,000

130 Per Day

25 Attempts for each suicide death

112 Lives Impacted by each suicide

2x times more likely to die by suicide
as a survivor of a loved one who dies by
suicide



WHY IS THE INDUSTRY'S SUICIDE RATE SO HIGH?

Workforce Demographics

- Men, especially white men from their early 20s through their 50s, account for the bulk of suicides
- Male-dominated industries tend to have more suicides
- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 97.4% of the U.S. construction workforce is male and 56.9% of the U.S. construction workforce is Caucasian



WHY IS THE INDUSTRY'S SUICIDE RATE SO HIGH?

Nature of the Work/Work Culture

- Stoic, “old school” and “tough guy” culture
- Fearlessness and “thrill seeking”
- Promotion of supervision without leadership training
- Family separation and isolation with travel
- Sleep disruption/deprivation due to shift work
- Seasonal layoffs and end-of-project furloughs
- Tolerant culture of alcohol and substance abuse
- Chronic pain
- Industry with highest use of prescription opioids
- Performance pressure (schedule, budget, and quality)
- Access to lethal means



The good news – there is HOPE
Suicide IS Preventable





www.preventconstructionsuicide.com



46% of people who die
by suicide have a
known mental health
condition

- Depression is a leading cause of disability & increases risk of other chronic medical conditions
- Mental and nervous conditions are ranked #3 of all disability claims

- Unresolved depression contributes to a loss to the U.S. economy of \$210.5 billion a year in absenteeism, reduced productivity, and medical costs
- When employees are depressed, they miss an average of 31.4 days per year and lose another 27.9 to unproductivity
- 1 in 5 adults — or 52.9 million people — experience mental illness
- 6.7% (17 million people) experienced a co-occurring substance use disorder and mental illness in 2020
- A \$1 Investment in mental health results in a \$4 Return on Investment
- 40% of injured workers felt depressed after one month



What Role Does the Opioid Epidemic Play In All of This?

- Injured workers in all industries often receive powerful prescription pain medication, including opioids. According to the CDC, 1 out of 4 people prescribed opioids for long-term pain become addicted.
- One study linked New Mexico workers' comp data for workers injured in 1994-2000 with SSA earnings and mortality/cause of death data through 2013.
 - Among women, lost-time injuries were associated with a **near tripling in the risk of drug-related deaths** and a **92% increase in the risk of deaths from suicide**.
 - For men, a lost-time injury was associated with a **72% increased risk of suicide** and a **29% increase in the risk of drug-related death**
- **Construction workers have one of the highest injury rates compared to other industries**, making them more likely to be prescribed opioids.
- Construction workers also rely on their bodies and often feel the need to **overcome pain** in order to work and get paid.



www.preventconstruction suicide.com

Long term use of opioids leads to:

- Increased sensitivity to/perception of pain
- Increased risk of depression
- Increased risk of suicide

Risks of Opioid Addiction & Misuse

Duration of acute use:

1 Day = 6% chance of still using the drug a year later

7 Days = 13.5% chance

31 Days = 29.9% chance

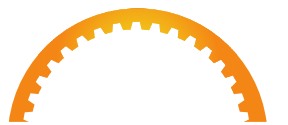


*“We’re focused on other
employee recruitment and
wellness initiatives...”*





*“We don’t know
how to get
started...”*



About CIASP

www.preventconstructionsuicide.com

- The Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention (CIASP) was born out of necessity in response to a statistics released in a [CDC study](#) ranking construction as the #1 industry for deaths by suicide.
- Established by the [Construction Financial Management Association \(CFMA\)](#) in 2016 to shatter the stigma surrounding mental health issues, CIASP became a stand alone 501(c)(3) organization in 2018 to raise awareness about suicide prevention and provide resources and tools to create a zero-suicide industry by uniting and supporting the construction community.
- With a suicide rate that is four times greater than the national average, the construction industry is facing a crisis. Construction workers are at a heightened risk for suicide for a [variety of reasons](#) that can all be addressed – starting with changing the culture in the workplace.
- CIASP is dedicated to changing the statistics by educating and equipping organizations, industry service providers and construction professionals to [STAND Up for suicide prevention](#) and address it as a health and safety priority.



GET HELP.

Encourage your company to:

- Make public the **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** and **Crisis Text Line** information on jobsites and in the office in the event someone is in immediate risk of suicide.
- Learn to **recognize the warning signs** of someone who may be at risk.

The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is now: 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline



CRISIS TEXT LINE |

Support is here for you.
Text **HOME** to **741741** to reach a
volunteer Crisis Counselor. Free, 24/7.

Know the Warning Signs

Recognizing warning signs—through conversations, social media posts or changes in behavior—may help determine if someone you know is struggling.

HAVE YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW EXHIBITED ONE OR MORE WARNING SIGNS?

- Feeling sad or depressed most of the time
- Talking about feeling trapped or wanting to die
- Extreme mood swings
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- Decreased self-confidence
- Feeling hopeless and helpless
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Feeling anxious, agitated or reckless
- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Talking about being a burden to others



Know the Warning Signs

Recognizing warning signs—through conversations, social media posts or changes in behavior—may help determine if someone you know is struggling.

WARNING SIGNS SPECIFIC TO CONSTRUCTION WORKERS INCLUDE:

- Decreased productivity
- Increased conflict among co-workers
- Near hits, incidents and injuries
- Decreased problem-solving ability
- Increased tardiness and absenteeism



Know How to Respond: TASC



www.preventconstructionsuicide.com

Tune in	Tune in: When you notice or sense that a person may need help, focus your attention on them for warning signs
Ask	Ask: Ask if they are thinking about suicide clearly, directly, calmly – and without judgement
State	State: State that suicide is serious and that connecting to help is important
Connect	Connect: Connect the person to a helping resource who knows suicide first-aid skills



This Needs Analysis & Implementation Tool has been developed by the Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention to aid companies in evaluating how they address mental health and suicide prevention in the construction workplace.

It will also help determine how prepared they, and their employees, are to handle a mental health or suicide crisis.

SAFE Creating a culture in which team members feel safe to ask for help if they are having suicidal thoughts or if they are concerned that their fellow workers are at risk of suicide.

	QUESTIONS TO ASK	NOT AT ALL	DISCUSSED BUT NOT INTEGRATED	INTEGRATION IN PROGRESS	FULLY INTEGRATED
1	Does company leadership promote a caring culture and provide support for those experiencing a mental health or personal crisis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Do our policies (attendance, performance, conduct, drug and alcohol testing) make it prohibitive for an employee to seek assistance for themselves or a co-worker in dealing with a personal, mental health or addiction crisis? Do we consider mental health in performance management?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Do we have support systems in place for employees who are experiencing overwhelming life challenges?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Do we consider peer support systems and relationship building when forming and scheduling crews?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Do we consider personal or family needs, commitments and limitations when scheduling out-of-town, night, or irregular shift work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

CONSIDER SOME OF OUR RECOMMENDED ACTION STEPS! KEEP IT UP! GREAT WORK!

<p>Build the case to obtain leadership support</p> <p>DONE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>WHO IS RESPONSIBLE: _____</p> <p>WHO IS INVOLVED: _____</p>	<p>Review company policies and update as needed to remove prohibitive factors from reporting/asking for help</p> <p>DONE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>WHO IS RESPONSIBLE: _____</p> <p>WHO IS INVOLVED: _____</p>	<p>Educate HR to alleviate concerns regarding ADA/HIPAA</p> <p>DONE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>WHO IS RESPONSIBLE: _____</p> <p>WHO IS INVOLVED: _____</p>	<p>When performance or attendance issues arise, consider underlying causes and check in with the employee before taking a disciplinary approach</p> <p>DONE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>WHO IS RESPONSIBLE: _____</p> <p>WHO IS INVOLVED: _____</p>
---	---	--	--

<p>Incorporate second chance agreements</p> <p>DONE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>WHO IS RESPONSIBLE: _____</p> <p>WHO IS INVOLVED: _____</p>	<p>Include discussion of the company's attention to mental health during employee orientation and on-boarding</p> <p>DONE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>WHO IS RESPONSIBLE: _____</p> <p>WHO IS INVOLVED: _____</p>	<p>Encourage supervisors to consider the "whole person" when scheduling and forming crews</p> <p>DONE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>WHO IS RESPONSIBLE: _____</p> <p>WHO IS INVOLVED: _____</p>	<p>Provide events/outings where employees can get to know each other at a deeper level—include families when possible</p> <p>DONE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>WHO IS RESPONSIBLE: _____</p> <p>WHO IS INVOLVED: _____</p>
--	--	--	--

GET INFORMED.

- Understand why construction is the most at-risk industry for suicide.
- Incorporate training, such as [LivingWorks Start](#), an online training program that teaches people what to look out for and how to connect someone to help.
- Take a brief, anonymous online screening to check-in on one's behavioral health, connect to local resources, and work toward recovery.



QUICK LINKS

[Build Awareness](#)
[STAND Up for Suicide Prevention](#)
[Get Help](#)

BUILD AWARENESS

WHY IS CONSTRUCTION THE MOST AT-RISK INDUSTRY FOR SUICIDE DEATHS?

Male-dominated industries tend to have more suicides. The macho, tough guy, and stoic nature of construction workers can even discourage those who are most at risk for suicide from seeking help. Men, especially white men in their early 20s through their 50s, account for the bulk of suicides.

According to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), 97 percent of the U.S. construction workforce is male and according to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, 38 percent of construction workers in the U.S. in 2018 were between the ages 45 and 64.

With their mission-oriented mindsets, many veterans choose construction as a career. With an estimated 22 suicides per day, veterans are also at a higher risk of suicide than the general population.

Moving from jobsite to jobsite can create an environment in which workers are not as connected to their families, each other, or a workplace community. Coupled with working long or irregular hours, sleep patterns can be impacted, causing sleep deprivation and mental and physical exhaustion.

Layoffs due to seasonal work or economic downturns can have significant consequences. Not only does this increase the stress related to loss of income, but job loss also means employees may lose medical benefits and/or access to Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs).

GET STARTED.

Encourage your company to **pledge to STAND up for suicide prevention** and address it as a health and safety priority by creating **safe** cultures, providing **training** to identify and help those at risk, raising **awareness** about the suicide crisis in construction, **normalizing** conversations around suicide and mental health and ultimately **decreasing** the risks associated with suicide in construction.



GET HELP ▾ GET INFORMED ▾ **GET STARTED ▾** ABOUT ▾ DONATE ▾ CONTACT US

STAND UP FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

INTEGRATION RESOURCES



QUICK LINKS

- Build Awareness
- [STAND Up for Suicide Prevention](#)
- Get Help

STAND UP FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

There are approximately three jobsite fatalities in construction every day and an estimated 10 to 12 suicides among construction workers. In the construction industry, [mental health awareness](#) and suicide prevention are just as important as job safety issues.

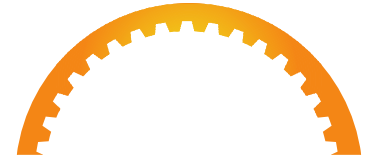
Now is the time for the industry to STAND up for suicide prevention and address it as a health and safety priority by creating **safe** cultures, providing **training** to identify and help those at risk, raising **awareness** about the suicide crisis in construction, **normalizing** conversations around suicide and mental health, and ultimately **decreasing** the risks associated with suicide in construction.

Contractors, unions, industry associations and service providers must work together. Pledge to STAND up for suicide prevention. Promote the principles outlined in the pledge. Connect your people with the resources so they know how to safely ask the right questions and get the right help.

Pledge to STAND up for suicide prevention today.

[Contractor Pledge](#)

GET STARTED.



www.preventconstructionsuicide.com

Integrate suicide prevention into your company culture.

- Incorporate **toolbox talks** on psychological safety topics.
- Print and distribute **wallet cards** with warning signs and helplines.
- **Hang posters** in work trailers, breakrooms or on company billboards that address suicide and mental health, Employee Assistance Programs, and other mental health services.

**RECOGNIZE THE
WARNING SIGNS**

Appearing sad or depressed most of the time	Talking about feeling trapped or wanting to die
Increased tardiness and absenteeism	Decreased self-confidence
Near hits, incidents, and injuries	Feeling hopeless and helpless
Decreased productivity	Sleeping too much or too little
Increased conflict among co-workers	Acting anxious, agitated, or reckless
Extreme mood swings	Withdrawing from family and friends
Increased use of alcohol or drugs	Talking about being a burden to others
	Decreased problem-solving ability

COVID-19 Resources



www.preventconstructionsuicide.com

The Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention shares the global concerns over the COVID-19/Coronavirus impacts being experienced by many. Employers have a key role to play in not only taking care of their employee's physical health and safety, but also their mental health. This is a stressful event and not everyone is able to cope with the added stress, worry, and confusion. Please use these resources to educate yourself and equip your employees.

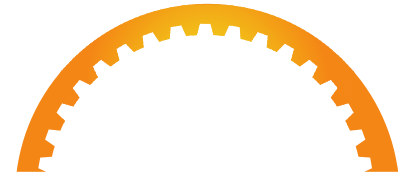
QUICK LINKS

[General COVID-19 Resources](#)

[Resources from the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](#)

[Labor Union Information and Resources](#)

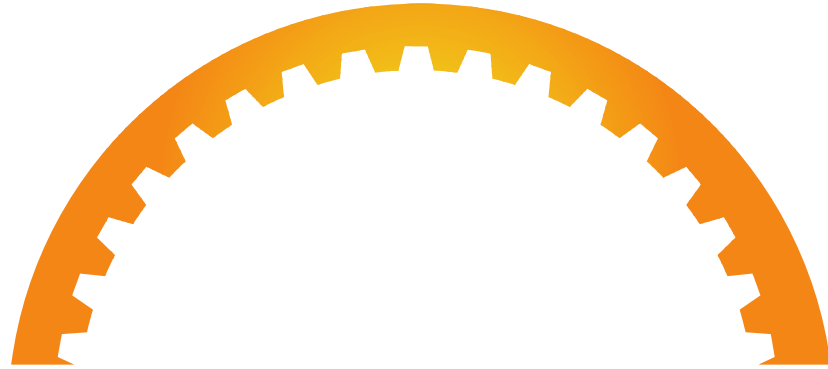
[Laborers' Health & Safety Fund of North America \(LHSFNA\) Resources](#)



www.preventconstructionsuicide.com

What can your company do?

- Take the [pledge to STAND up for suicide prevention](#)
- Host a suicide prevention [Toolbox Talk](#)
- Take advantage of discounted education through [LivingWorks Start](#) program
- Take 5 minutes to talk about suicide prevention and mental health during monthly meetings
- [Donate](#) to the Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention



www.preventconstructionsuicide.com

THANK YOU!