



# On our Minds: Caring for our Mental Health

January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024

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Sr VP, CPO





## OUR PURPOSE

Building better structures,  
building better lives.

## OUR VISION

To be a great place to work  
and a great company to work with.

## OUR CORE VALUES

### PEOPLE

We practice the Golden Rule.

### HONOR

We are dedicated to our word —  
our word is our bond, and we get the job done right.

### GRIT

We approach every project with disciplined tenacity, will and drive.

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**Join at [slido.com](https://slido.com)  
#8039414**

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**In 1-2 words describe how you feel about the 60th Annual Samuel P. Maggard Quality Concrete School.**

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**Is this your first Concrete School?**

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**What is your experience with  
mental health & suicide  
prevention events?**

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**How well is mental health and suicide prevention integrated into your organization's Safety, Health & Wellness programs and practices?**

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**How comfortable is it to talk about mental health and suicide prevention at home or with family members?**

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**How comfortable is it to talk about mental health and suicide prevention at work with co-workers?**

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# Stigma Around Mental Health

Character flaw

Sign of weakness to be  
depressed or anxious

Feelings of embarrassment or shame

Will people think less of me?

**Our shame and embarrassment keep us  
from getting the education and support  
that would help us feel better**



# Stoic Culture



**“BIG BOYS DON’T CRY”**

**“Suck it up, Buttercup”**

“Wipe some dirt on it”

**“BE A MAN”**

**“Pick yourself up by your bootstraps”**

**“GET UP AND DUST YOURSELF OFF”**

“You want something to cry about”

**“Buck up, Princess”**

“Did you come here to work or whine?  
I don’t see any cheese”

**“TOUGHEN UP, BUBBA”**

**“Boys will be boys”**

**“DON’T THROW LIKE A GIRL”**



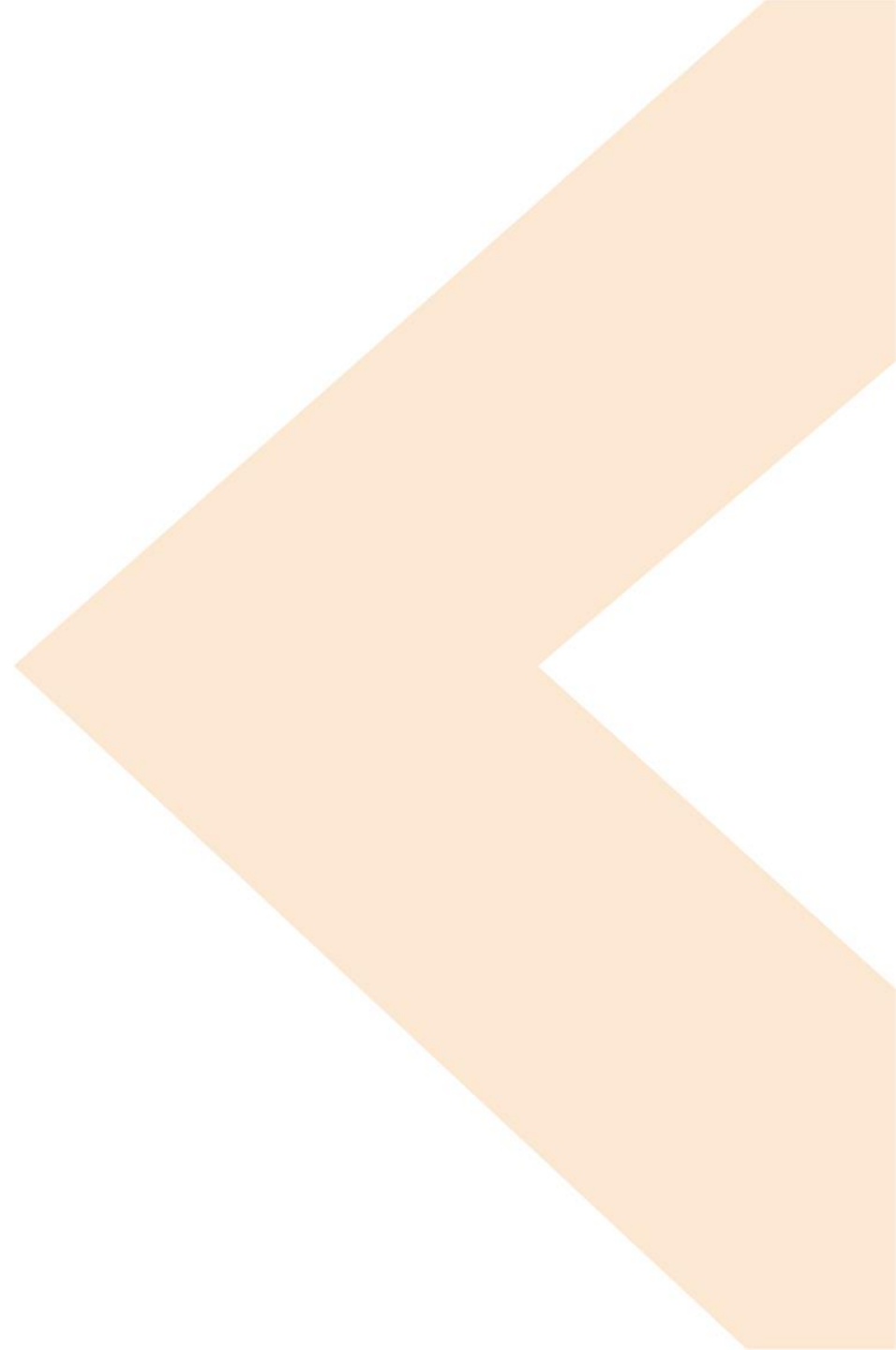
# CONSTRUCTION SAFETY WEEK



- Strong Voices, Safe Choices
- Empowerment
- Recognition
- Partnership
- Impact



# Mental Health





## The Statistics

- It's estimated that **17.8% of the adult population** will experience **clinical depression** at some point in their lifetime.
- An estimated **32.3% of all adults** will experience an **anxiety disorder** at some point in their life.
- One in four Americans suffer from some sort of mental health condition at any given time, but **more than half don't receive treatment**.
- Among the 20.2 million adults in the U.S. who experienced a substance use disorder, **50.5%—10.2 million adults—had a co-occurring mental illness**.

## The Statistics

- Mental health has a **strong connection to physical health**, yet it is often overlooked.
- 2/3 of employers said mental health and substance abuse issues **contribute to absenteeism and tardiness**.



will suffer from a psychiatric disorder in their lifetime, compared with cancer, heart disease, and diabetes **COMBINED**

**Mental health is as important as physical health.**



# Warning Signs of Mental Health

- A drastic change in one's sense of self
- Psychosomatic troubles – headaches, aches, digestive issues
- Changes in sleeping and eating patterns
- Avoiding activities, one used to enjoy
- Suicidal feelings and thoughts
- Excessive fear or worrying
- Problems with concentration
- Difficulties with the perception of reality
- Extreme changes in mood
- Heightened sensitivity

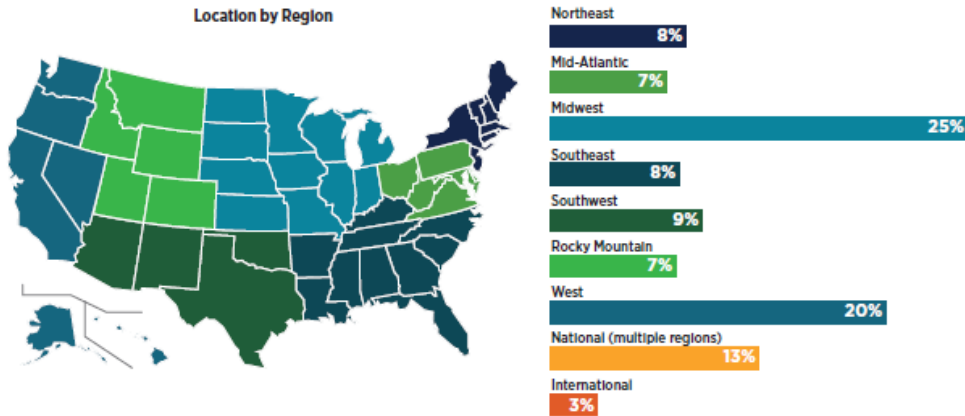


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**What elements comprise your organization's well-being program?**

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**45%** of survey respondents represented C-Suite leaders showing the importance of these issues to construction leadership.

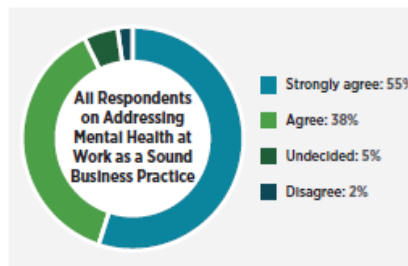
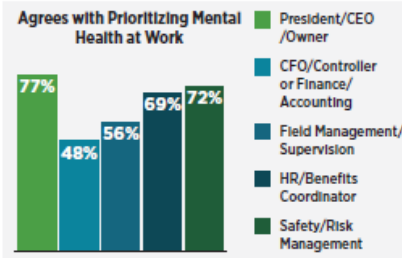
### KEY FINDINGS

#### Leadership Engagement

Leaders play a key role in fostering and building a caring culture that addresses worker well-being, mental health awareness, and suicide prevention in construction. Active and continuous leadership engagement is essential in breaking down barriers in addressing mental health and worker well-being.

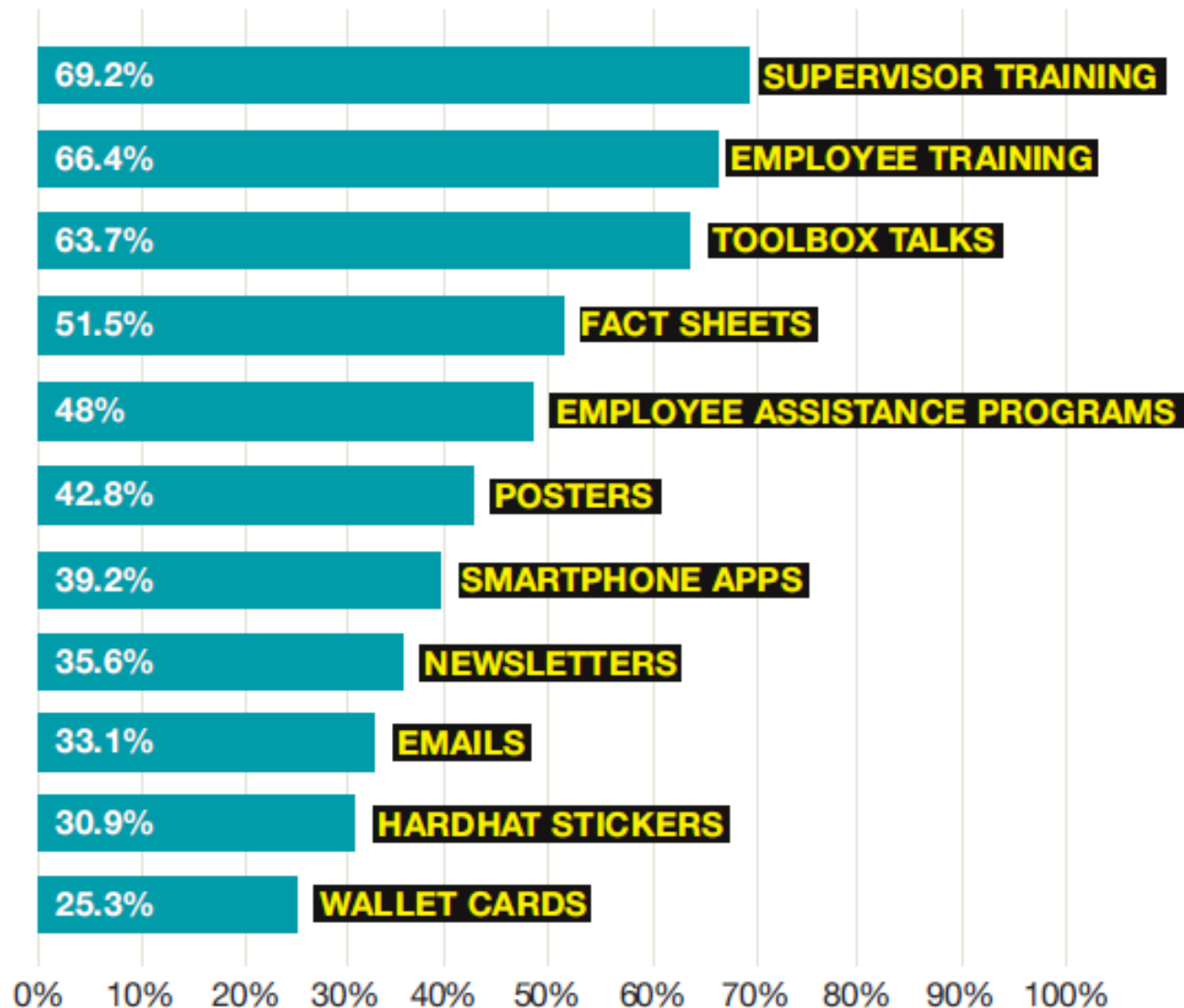
The survey showed that 77% of Presidents, CEOs, and Owners<sup>4</sup> recognized as a priority addressing mental health at work by promoting awareness, helping to reduce stigma, and encouraging people to get help when needed. Whereas CFO, Controller, and Finance respondents agreed at a lower level of 48%. Other respondents were somewhere in the middle in prioritizing these issues, except for Safety and Risk Management professionals, who were closer to CEOs with strong support for prioritizing these issues at 72%.

When asked whether addressing mental health at work is a sound business practice, 93% of respondents agreed.



<sup>4</sup> For purposes of this survey, the term "owners" refers to individuals with an ownership interest in the company and not organizations that hire contractors who perform work on their behalf.

## WHAT RESOURCES WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL TO SHARE WITH EMPLOYEES IN YOUR ORGANIZATION (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)?



# Crisis in Construction: WHAT?

Pandemic and 2020 unrest:

A “Perfect Storm” in construction:

1. Worsening Mental Health – Isolation, stress, anxiety & depression
2. Substance misuse and addictions
3. Substance use disorders – Risk of relapse leading to overdoses
4. PTS from traumatic experiences and injuries
5. Suicide Risk



## Crisis in Construction: WHY?

- Isolation and loneliness
- Increasing financial and family pressures
- Workplace injuries
- Chronic pain
- Growing substance misuse
- Stigma and other barriers to care seeking
- Lack of treatment and recovery options

# Lingering Effects & Rising Risk Factors

1. Mental Health stress and pressures among workforce
2. “Burnout” leading to early retirements and turnover
3. “Presenteeism” and distractions leading to productivity, quality, and safety incidents affecting profitability
4. Fatigue, chronic pain, and substance misuse
5. Opioids and overdose risk
6. Suicide risk



# Human Capital Risk Management: The Real Business Case

- People are our core strategic asset
- War on Talent: Recruitment and Retention
- Risk of *The Great Resignation*
- The workforce imperative: Becoming and staying an employer of choice
- Caring Culture
  - Respectful workplace
  - Empathy and concern
  - Psychological safety and trust
  - Diversity & Inclusion

**Man Therapy**

[www.ManTherapy.org](http://www.ManTherapy.org)

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WELCOME TO

# MAN THERAPY

Because you can't just rub some dirt on  
your emotions.



USING HUMOR TO BREAK STIGMA OF  
MENTAL HEALTH  
DR. RICH MAHOGANY, MAN  
THERAPIST, IS **NOT** A REAL THERAPIST  
*(BUT HE IS A REAL GUY...)*



## Human Costs

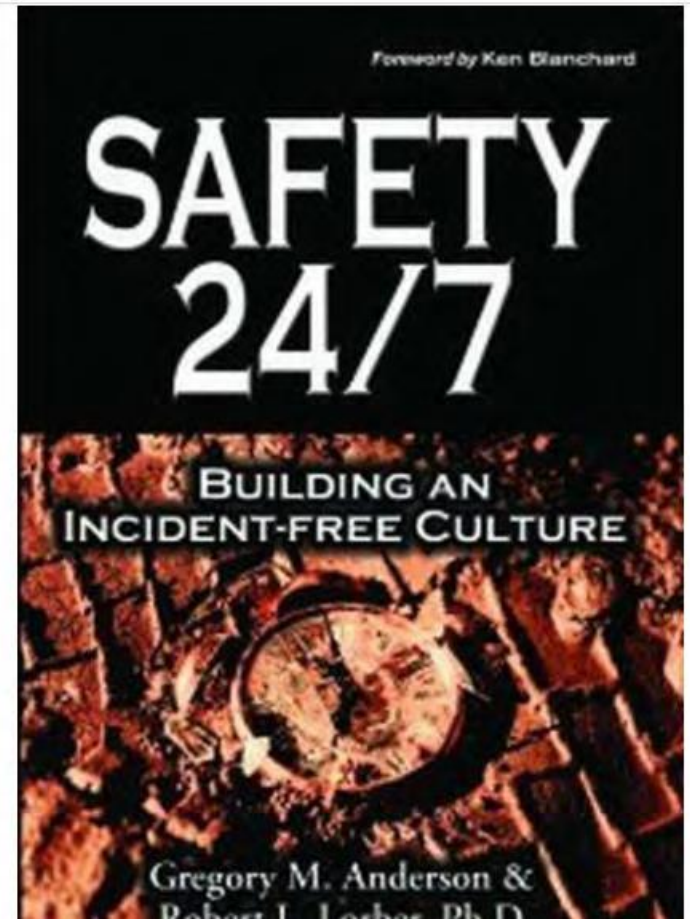
- **Average Delay of 11 years** from the onset of mental health symptoms to receiving effective treatment
- Of those with diagnosable mental health condition **56% do NOT seek treatment**
- **Depression is leading cause of disability** in the United States among people ages 15-44

## Reframe SAFETY 24/7

**Safety and Co-Worker wellbeing  
doesn't  
stop when the Co-Worker goes  
home!**

**We focus on getting everyone  
home safe at the end of  
their shift.**

***Are we focusing on getting  
people back to work safe  
from home?***



# Construction Risk Factors

## Industry Culture

- ✓ Stoic, tough guy/gal
- ✓ Undesirable image
- ✓ Cyclical industry
- ✓ Tolerant of alcohol and substance use
- ✓ 2<sup>nd</sup> highest industry for “heavy drinking” (>16.5% of workers)
- ✓ Drug use increased 14.3% (2023)
- ✓ Accelerated schedules
- ✓ Harsh conditions
- ✓ Family separation & isolation
- ✓ Layoffs/project furloughs

# Construction Risk Factors

## Company/Job Factors

- ✓ Limited supervisory skills training
- ✓ No time off in season
- ✓ Weather and sequence delays
- ✓ Night work or OT
- ✓ Commuting
- ✓ Out of town or out of state travel
- ✓ Humiliation of bad job (daily scorecard)

# Construction Risk Factors

## Worker Lifestyle

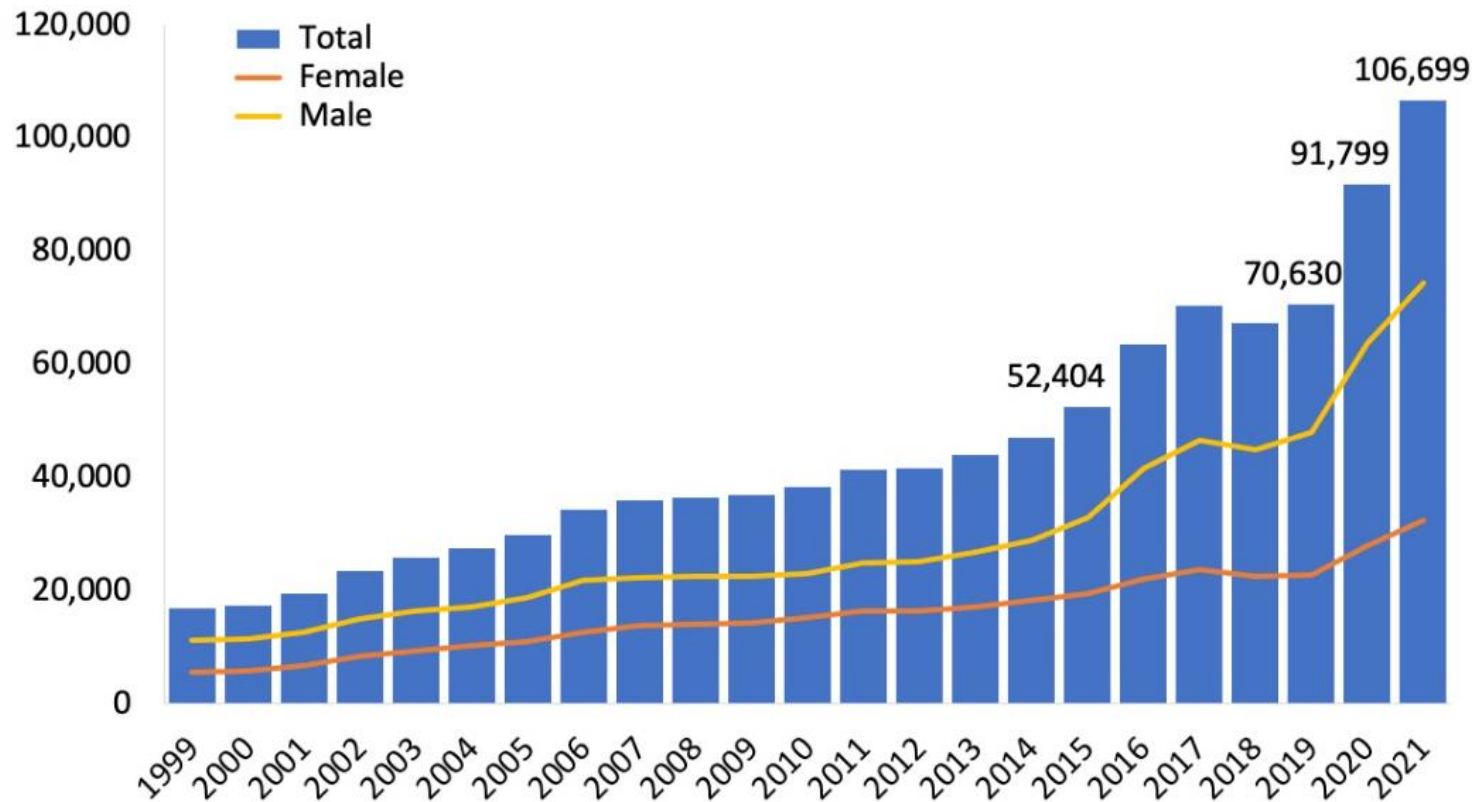
- ✓ Self-pressure and perfectionism
- ✓ Financial pressures
- ✓ Chronic pain from soft tissue injuries
- ✓ Construction had highest rate of prescription opioids
- ✓ Access to lethal means at home
- ✓ Skills gap and feeling trapped
- ✓ Fearless or risk-taking behaviors

# Spotlight on Substance Abuse

- **16 CONSECUTIVE YEARS QUEST DIAGNOSTICS REPORTS INCREASING PERCENTAGE OF POSITIVE WORKPLACE SUBSTANCE USE TESTS**
- **CONSTRUCTION DRUG USE INCREASED >14.3% in 2023(COCAINE & METHAMPHETAMINE)**
- **CONSTRUCTION 2ND HIGHEST RATE OF HEAVY/BINGE DRINKING: 16.5% OF WORKERS REPORTING MORE THAN 5-7 DRINKS IN A SITTING MULTIPLE TIMES EACH MONTH**
- **OPIOID OVERDOSES DOUBLED FROM 2015 TO 2020 – 93,331 OVERDOSE DEATHS IN USA – 28 STATES INCREASED BY >30% IN 2020**
  - **>70% of all overdoses are opioids**
  - **73% of opioid overdoses are synthetic fentanyl**
- **OVERDOSE DEATHS AT WORK FROM NON-MEDICAL USE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL INCREASED FOR THE 9th YEAR IN A ROW IN 2021 (BLS)**

# Spotlight on Substance Abuse

Figure 1. National Drug-Involved Overdose Deaths\*, Number Among All Ages, by Gender, 1999-2021



\*Includes deaths with underlying causes of unintentional drug poisoning (X40–X44), suicide drug poisoning (X60–X64), homicide drug poisoning (X85), or drug poisoning of undetermined intent (Y10–Y14), as coded in the International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision. Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Multiple Cause of Death 1999–2021 on CDC WONDER Online Database, released 1/2023.

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**Does your organization have  
an Employee Assistance  
Program (EAP)?**

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**I have called the company's  
EAP to request support  
services for myself or my  
family**

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**Do you have key contact information for the EAP pre-loaded in your cell phone?**

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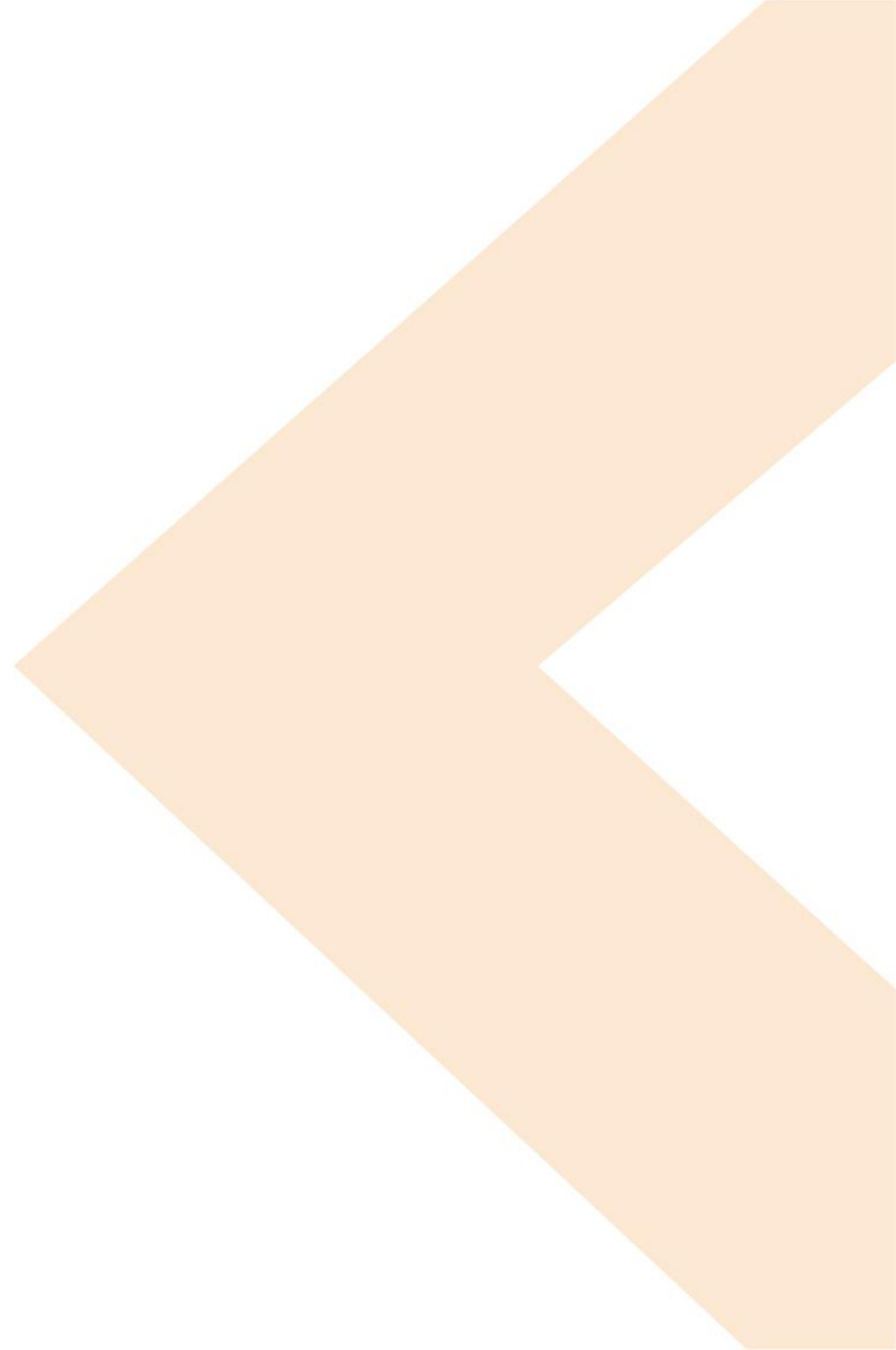
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**Our company has had the EAP attend a Senior Leadership Meeting to strategize mental health and well being support for our employees?**

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Suicide



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**Has your organization had anyone die from suicide?**

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## The Statistics

|         |         |
|---------|---------|
| Drugs   | 106,699 |
| Suicide | 48,183  |
| Alcohol | 52,000  |

Data from 2021

- Overdose deaths surged to 106,699 in 2021, up 15% from 2020. (CDC Data)
- Suicide rates among those aged 10-24 declined 18%, respectively from 2021-2022, rates increased for all age groups 35 and older. (CDC Data)
- 21.7% of people deemed essential workers had previously considered suicide. (CDC Survey 2020.06)

# Construction Industry

- 56 suicides/100,000 men
- 10.4 suicides/100,000 women
- Twice the rate of any other occupation

Five times greater than all other construction fatalities combined in 2023 according to the CDC



## Rates for trades vary | TOP 9

1. Ironworkers = 79
  2. Millwrights = 78.7
  3. Brick/Block Masons = 67.6
  4. Roofers = 65.2
  5. Laborers = 62
  6. Carpenters = 54.7
  7. Equipment Operators = 52.8
  8. Construction Managers = 45.7
  9. Electricians = 44
- Trades First-Line Supervisors = 44





## Contributing Factors

- Physically demanding work
- Chronic pain
- Long hours
- Deadlines
- Shift work and disrupted or decreased sleep
- Difficult work conditions - loud noise, low light, bad weather
- Employment is dependent on economy
- Traveling and spending large amounts of time away from family and friends



## Warning Signs

- Increased alcohol or drug use
- Aggressive behavior
- Social withdrawal
- Decreased productivity
- Dramatic mood swings
- Talking about being a burden
- Talking about self-harm
- Comments about wishing you weren't here
- Increased tardiness or absenteeism
- Giving away possessions



# What can YOU do?

When someone talks about death, suicide, or feeling badly, **take it seriously**.

- Give full attention
- Listen and try to understand from their perspective
- Avoid rushing, judging, condemning
- Avoid minimizing or changing the subject
- Don't ignore it – Speak up if you are worried
- Show your concern – That you've noticed they are acting differently and inquire why they don't seem like themselves
- Respond quickly if you believe your friend/co-worker is in crisis



## What can YOU do?

### If Actively Suicidal:

- Don't leave them alone
- Ask them to go with you to the emergency room
- Tell them you want them to live and ask them to please stay alive until we can get help
- Tell them you may not understand exactly how they may feel, but you know you want to help them in any way you can
- Call 911 if needed

# Communicating with Empathy & Concern

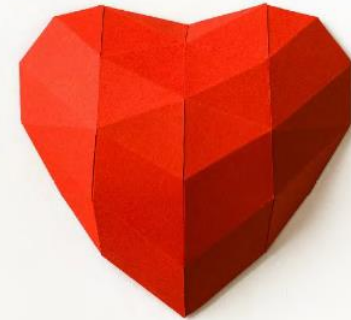
Acknowledge goal of a mentally healthy culture

Demonstrate a caring culture in words and actions

Communicate with reassuring language and empathy

Integrate mental and physical wellbeing in practices

Share “lived experience” to model vulnerability



# Cleveland Clinic Video on Empathy



# Mental Health Resources: Construction Industry

## Cal Beyer

- VP of Workforce Risk & Worker Wellbeing for Holmes-Murphy
- Director of Risk Management at construction company Lakeside Industries from 2014-2020
- One of the Top 25 Newsmakers for 2016 by ENR – the leading voice of the construction industry, for his work promoting mental health and suicide prevention
- Authored/Co-authored over 40 articles on suicide prevention focusing on the construction industry





# 5 Tips for Promoting Well-Being and Mental Health in Construction

1. Reduce Stress
2. Monitor and Moderate Alcohol & Drug Use
3. Communicate Openly About Mental Health
4. Seek Professional Guidance & Utilize Resources
5. Foster a Positive Workplace Culture

Resource: Contract Connect 2022



# Mental Health Resources: Construction Industry

## CFMA

<https://cfma.org/suicideprevention>

- Deeply involved in suicide prevention since the first article on the topic, written by Cal Beyer and Dr. Sally Spencer-Thomas, was published in CFMA Building Profits in 2015
- Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention (CIASP) started as a CFMA task force, led by Cal Beyer in 2016



# Mental Health Resources: Construction Industry

## Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention

[www.preventconstructionsuicide.com](http://www.preventconstructionsuicide.com)

Our mission is to provide and disseminate information and resources for suicide prevention and mental health promotion in construction with the goal of creating a zero suicide industry.



**STAND** for Suicide Prevention

At Baker, we are committed to the **STAND** model for Suicide Prevention and will use it and share with others in the industry.

- SAFE**  
Creating a culture where employees feel safe to ask for help if they are having suicidal thoughts or if they are concerned their co-workers are at risk of suicide.
- TRAINING**  
Training for suicide prevention is available to all co-workers so they can recognize the warning signs.
- AWARENESS**  
We are committing to raising awareness through safety meetings, toolbox talks, newsletters, social media, and more to spread the message of suicide prevention.
- NORMALIZING**  
Normalizing the topic of suicide prevention as a health and safety priority by regularly talking about suicide, suicide prevention, and mental health.
- DECREASE**  
Decreasing the risk of suicide in concrete construction by helping to ensure access to and awareness of EAPs, behavioral health benefits, community crisis support, the Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800.273.8255), and Crisis Text Line (741741).

To get help or for more information go to [www.preventconstructionsuicide.com](http://www.preventconstructionsuicide.com)

#ConstructionSafetyWeek

# September: Construction Suicide Prevention Awareness Week 9-9 thru 9-13,2024

## Topics from 2023

Day 1 Sept 4: Construction and Suicide

Day 2 Sept 5: Reduce the Stigma

Day 3 Sept 6: Recognizing the warning signs

Day 4 Sept 7: How to listen and how to seek help



# Construction Suicide Prevention Partnership

## CONSTRUCTION SUICIDE PREVENTION PARTNERSHIP



**Download Take Action Guide**

[https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.safestates.org/resource/resmgr/business/C\\_SPP\\_NotToday\\_Interactive\\_Ac.pdf](https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.safestates.org/resource/resmgr/business/C_SPP_NotToday_Interactive_Ac.pdf)



# Working Minds

Suicide Prevention in the Workplace

[ConstructionWorkingMinds.org](http://ConstructionWorkingMinds.org)

*Construction*

Stressed,  
Depressed,  
Suicidal

Impacted  
By  
Suicide

A  
Construction  
Association

Worried  
About  
Someone

A  
Safety  
Manager

A  
Workplace  
Leader



# Register Now



**CONSTRUCTION  
WORKING MINDS**

Mental Health Promotion, Suicide Prevention  
and Addiction Recovery at Work

[www.ConstructionWorkingMinds.org](http://www.ConstructionWorkingMinds.org)

**3rd Annual Construction  
Working Minds Summit**

Westin Kansas City at Crown Center  
Kansas City, Missouri

**February 26-29, 2024**

Mental Health Promotion, Suicide Prevention,  
and Addiction Recovery at Work

[www.ConstructionWorkingMinds.org](http://www.ConstructionWorkingMinds.org)

# Mental Health Resources: Construction Industry

## Suicide Prevention Week

<https://constructionsuicideprevention.com>

Every year, during September — National Suicide Prevention Month — the construction industry will dedicate a week to raising awareness about the unique challenges workers face in construction that lead to suicide and what we can do to prevent it. Together, we can save lives.

September 4-8, 2023



**SUICIDE  
PREVENTION  
WEEK**

**EVERY 12 MINUTES,**  
a construction worker dies by suicide.

**HELP IS AVAILABLE.**  
Call, text or chat  
**988**  
for the **NATIONAL SUICIDE  
PREVENTION LIFELINE.**



**CONSTRUCTION SUICIDE  
PREVENTION WEEK**

Call, text or chat  
**988**  
for the **NATIONAL SUICIDE  
PREVENTION LIFELINE.**



**CONSTRUCTION SUICIDE  
PREVENTION WEEK**  
ConstructionSuicidePrevention.com

# Mental Health Resources

Take out your cell phone and load 2 numbers:



International Association  
for Suicide Prevention



National Alliance on Mental Illness

■ <https://www.nami.org>

NATIONAL

**SUICIDE**  
PREVENTION  
**LIFELINE**<sup>TM</sup>

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

[suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)



**American  
Foundation  
for Suicide  
Prevention**

■ <https://afsp.org>

**In Crisis?  
Text HELLO to 741741**

CRISIS TEXT LINE |

Free, 24/7, Confidential



**Veterans  
Crisis Line**

1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**



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**Describe the current state of  
addressing mental health in  
your organization**

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**I openly encourage senior leaders in my organization to address mental health and wellbeing?**

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**I am comfortable openly modeling  
that it is ok to not be okay  
"through visible, vocal and  
vulnerable support?**

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## In Conclusion

- Depression, anxiety, suicide are more common than you think.
- In many cases suicide can be prevented. Depression, anxiety can be improved.
- Most people who live after a suicide attempt are glad they did.
- There is professional help available.

»» PEOPLE . HONOR . GRIT .

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