

## Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Toolbox Talk

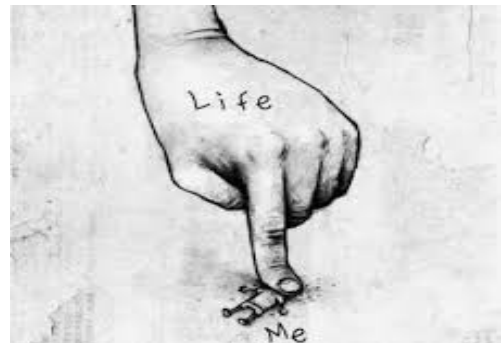
### The Facts:

The Construction industry has the second highest rate of suicide in the United States at 53.3 per 100,000 workers according to the Center for Disease Control (CDC). In the U.S. there are approximately 123 suicides per day that breaks down to 1 death every 12 minutes. SafeBuild Alliance wants to keep construction industry workers safe, healthy and alive.

*In 2014, a 33-year-old Oregon construction worker was found at his work site with fatal injuries consistent with falling 150 feet from a crane tower. The worker had called in sick a few days earlier and was last seen around 10pm the evening before at the construction site. This death has been classified as suicide by medical examiner.*

### What makes construction workers vulnerable?

- We work in roles that are isolating
- Employment is dependent on economy
- Spending large amounts of time away from family and friends
- Chronic pain caused by manual labor
- Stress due to time constraints, work environment & poor sleep.
- Use of alcohol and mood altering substances to cope
- Stigma of mental illness encourages secrecy & isolation



*The list can go on and on. We want to provide you with a way to address these issues and to recognize the signs and symptoms. Once recognized you can then get the proper help to make sure that we all go home to our friends and family every day*

*If this is how your life feels, please talk with a friend, family member, co-worker or call a support hotline*

### You don't have to be a mental health worker to help someone who is struggling

#### WARNING SIGNS

- Talking about self-harm
- Self criticism, self hatred
- Withdrawing from others
- Self-destructive behavior
- No hope for the future
- Decreased productivity
- Talking about being a burden
- Extreme mood swings
- Increased tardiness
- Absenteeism

**1-800-273-TALK (8255)  
Text HELLO to 741741**

**Help for crisis or suicide prevention is a call or text away. It is free, confidential, and always available.**



**SAFEBUILD ALLIANCE** 

#### PREVENTION TIPS

- Don't ignore it – Speak up if you're 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/coworker is in crisis.
- Offer help and support
- Call the suicide prevention hotline or crisis text line for ideas to help your coworker

## Notes for the presenter

Construction tool box talks usually focus on preventing a physical injury. As an industry, we are concerned about your physical **and** mental health. Today's toolbox talk is about mental health; yours, your coworker, your family or your friend. By talking about mental health and suicide prevention we are able to provide information and options, and it lets others know they are in a safe environment to do so.

The construction industry has the second highest suicide rate in the US. Suicide is the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of death for men 25-54 in the US. Women are at risk as well. The time is now to talk about mental health and suicide prevention.

### Why construction workers are vulnerable?

This toolbox talk lists several factors that make workers in construction vulnerable. These factors cannot always be controlled by the worker and can contribute to a range of behaviors.

### Warning Signs and Prevention Tips

**It may be nothing, and there is no way to know without asking. You cannot plant the idea of suicide into someone's head – but you can potentially stop them by asking about it. You don't have to be a mental health worker to help someone who is struggling.**

If a coworker, friend or family member talks about hurting themselves or wanting to die, take the information seriously. Reach out. Ask if they would like to talk. Listen. Suggest the 1-800-273 TALK (8255) or the TEXT HELLO to 741741 if they need someone to talk to. Follow up.

Connectedness is crucial to people who may be experiencing distress or who might be considering suicide.

Reaching out to those who have become disconnected from others and offering them support can be a lifesaving act.