



# Prevention Newslink

July 2025

## SD PREVENTION RESOURCE CENTERS (SDPRC) WPRC

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## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CRISIS SERVICES

In a mental health or substance use crisis, it's important to help people stabilize and connect with ongoing treatment and support.

To meet this need, Short-Term Crisis Centers (STC's) are designed to provide 24/7 services to stabilize acute psychiatric or

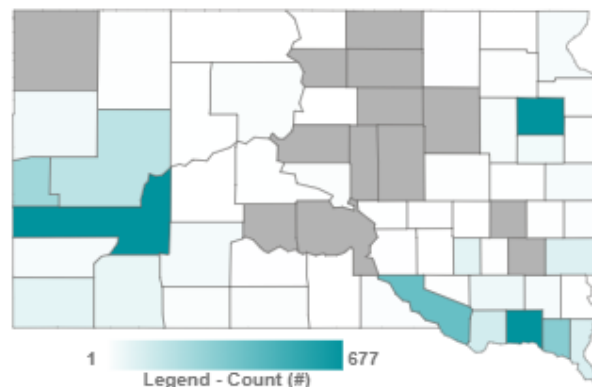
behavioral health symptoms, evaluate treatment needs and develop a crisis stabilization plan affording the ability for individuals to be stabilized closer to home.

Individuals in need of care can walk in themselves or be referred by law enforcement, medical professionals, behavioral health specialists, family or friends. STC's are located in Yankton, Rapid City, Watertown, and Mitchell.

From June 2022 when the first STC opened to June 2025, there have been 3295 unique individuals served with an average length of stay of 2.58 days. Of those served, 82.3% have been stabilized and returned back to their community with 9.2% requiring a higher level of care. The average age of individuals served is 36 with the majority of crises being related to self-harm at 42.2%. Data related to the STC's can be found at [SDBehavioralhealth.gov](https://SDBehavioralhealth.gov).

If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis, please call, text or [chat 988](tel:chat988). To find a STC in your area, please visit [SDBehavioralhealth.gov](https://SDBehavioralhealth.gov).

Client's County of Residence  
June 2022 - June 2025



# SD BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Click [HERE](#) to determine your region's Prevention Resource Center

## UPCOMING TRAININGS & EVENTS

### **Mission: Possible | Advancing Action Against Substance Use Together 2025**

July 23-24 | Sioux Falls

Find more information and register [HERE](#)

### **The Network Trauma Informed Webinar Series: Can We Minimize Trauma With Our Words**

July 28 | Virtual

To learn more, email [kathy@sdnafvsa.com](mailto:kathy@sdnafvsa.com)

### **Your Journey Matters 2025 SD Behavioral Health Conference**

August 4-5 | Sioux Falls

Find more information and register [HERE](#)

### **Emily's Hope: International Overdose Awareness Day Candlelight Vigil**

August 31 | 8pm CT

Greenway Amphitheater, Sioux Falls

Click [Here](#) for more information

### **Health Connect Festival**

September 27 | 11:00-3:00 CT

Sioux Falls Arena | Click [HERE](#) for more  
information

### **SAPST Application for Prevention Success Training (SAPST)**

Fall 2025 - In Person

For registration use the QR Code below



## BE THE PICK-UP MAN: A YELLOW FEATHER WITH A POWERFUL MESSAGE

The Black Hills Round-Up is just one of many rodeos taking place across South Dakota this year, bringing together communities to celebrate tradition, competition, and cowboy grit. Over the 4th of July holiday in Belle Fourche, the grandstands roared as cowboys and cowgirls wrestled steers, raced the clock, and showcased the time-honored skills of rodeo. But amidst the dust and excitement, something small yet powerful stood out—a yellow feather.

In the heart of the rodeo arena, Pick-Up Men play a crucial role. When a cowboy is bucked off or finds themselves in a dangerous spot, the Pick-Up Man rides in—steady, skilled, and ready to help. He's the one who steps in when the challenge becomes too much to handle alone.



That same spirit of support and bravery is at the heart of the Pick-Up Man Campaign, a mental health and suicide prevention initiative gaining ground across South Dakota. The yellow feather is more than a symbol—it's a promise. A promise that you'll be there for someone in need. That you'll listen, reach out, and ride alongside them when life gets hard.

Miss Rodeo South Dakota, Jordan Jensen, proudly wore a yellow feather in her hat band during the Black Hills Round-Up, standing tall as an advocate for mental health awareness. Her message was clear: we all have the power to be someone's Pick-Up Man. By wearing the yellow feather, you're signaling that you are a safe person, someone willing to help carry the load, someone who won't let others ride through their darkest moments alone.



The campaign's presence at rodeos across the state is helping to open conversations that are too often left in silence. In a place where toughness is a way of life, the yellow feather reminds us that true strength also lies in compassion and connection.

The Pick-Up Man Campaign isn't new. It started in Wyoming and Joyce Glynn and the Michael Glynn Memorial Coalition in White River championed this important cause, bringing the message of hope and help to arenas, schools, and communities across South Dakota. If your organization is interested in partnering with the campaign or learning how to bring the message to your community, reach out to Joyce at [mgmcoalition@gwtc.net](mailto:mgmcoalition@gwtc.net).

So next time you see a yellow feather at a rodeo, know that it means someone cares. It means someone is willing to be the Pick-Up Man. You can be that person too.





August 31 marks International Overdose Awareness Day—a time for us to come together as one united family to take action on overdose.

The overdose crisis is not just an individual tragedy. It doesn't only impact families in South Dakota—it fractures entire communities. Each loss ripples far beyond one person or household, touching classrooms, workplaces, and the shared spaces that connect us all. Overdose reminds us how deeply our lives are intertwined.

In South Dakota, we take pride in protecting our own—our families, our friends, our neighbors. This International Overdose Awareness Day, let's draw on that strength and see ourselves as one big family—not just bound by shared grief, but empowered by a shared responsibility to shape a different future.

No one should carry this grief alone. On August 31, join us in honoring every story, amplifying every voice, and taking steps—together—toward a future free from overdose.

Learn more about International Overdose Awareness Day at [OverdoseDay.com](https://OverdoseDay.com).

#END  
OVERDOSE

## NEW FACE AT THE WPRC

Laisha Ramirez is the newest person to join the Western Prevention Resource Center (WPRC) team. She was born in a very small community in central Mexico. She and her family, which includes two younger siblings, came to the United States and settled into their new home in Keystone, SD.



Lai attended Black Hills State University, where she earned a bachelor's degree in Health and Exercise Science. Following graduation, Lai worked briefly in health services and as a legal aid and assistant at a large Houston-based law firm until accepting the position with YFS' WPRC as a Prevention Specialist. Lai is excited for this opportunity to help others, particularly children, access opportunities and improve the quality of their lives.

In her free time, Lai enjoys time with her family, which will soon expand to include her fiancé and her dog. She enjoys outdoor activities such as hiking, gardening, and wakeboarding. Lai is also working toward becoming a certified yoga instructor.



## NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

National Night Out (NNO) is an annual community-building campaign that enhances the relationship between neighbors and law enforcement while bringing back a true sense of community. Furthermore, it provides a great opportunity to bring police and neighbors together under positive circumstances.

NNO was founded in 1984 through a network of local law enforcement agencies and neighborhood watch groups. It grew to become a celebration on building safer communities. NNO culminates annually on the first Tuesday in August. Millions of neighbors take part in National Night Out across thousands of communities from all fifty states. This year, contact your local law enforcement to find a NNO near you on August 5, 2025.

## AUGUST IS FAMILY FUN MONTH

August is celebrated as Family Fun Month, an opportunity to prioritize and enjoy quality time with loved ones. It's not always easy to make time to have fun, especially if you are extremely busy. It is important to find a balance. Doing simple things such as cooking a meal together, going to the park, and watching a new movie, can ensure your family relationships remain strong. Incorporating a fun element is easy once you realize being together to make memories is the fun part.



# SOUTH DAKOTA SUICIDE PREVENTION



## RESOURCES

**STATEWIDE WEBSITE**  
[SDSUICIDEPREVENTION.ORG](https://SDSUICIDEPREVENTION.ORG)

**THE HELPLINE CENTER**  
[HELPLINECENTER.ORG](https://HELPLINECENTER.ORG)

If you or someone you know needs help with:

- Depression
- Grief
- Relationship Conflicts
- Drugs
- Alcohol
- Suicidal Thoughts

Call/text 988 or [chat online](#)



# 988

## SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

## Listen with Empathy

On July 18 we recognize World Listening Day. While listening improves mutual understanding, empathetic listening is especially important during a mental health crisis. It can calm, reassure, and even help de-escalate tense situations. Quiet, non-judgmental presence builds trust and shows support without rushing to solve the problem. Examples include:

- Focus on conveying empathy and not changing the person or perspective
- Slow down. Distress is often increased with the speed of speech and gestures. Give the person enough time to express themselves first.
- Use relaxed body posture and language. Things as little as tense body posture in front of the person in crisis can make the situation worse. Displaying calm posture can defuse the person or situation. Do not touch the person without asking first.

Once you've listened to what they have to say, respond to show understanding by saying:

- "Let's see if I have this right. Are you saying that...?"
- "Can you tell me more about ...?"
- "If I heard you correctly, you said that ... Is that right?"

Nonverbal responses can be used as well like nodding or making eye contact. Note that the person may or may not want to make eye contact. This may be part of setting physical limits and expectations during the conversation.

When it comes to mental health, listening is helping. Developing good listening skills can help you identify early signs of a mental health issue – It can also have a big impact on how someone else feels. When someone calls 988, trained professionals at the Helpline Center provide compassionate support by listening empathetically. Visit the Helpline Center website at [helplinecenter.org](https://helplinecenter.org) for more information.

References:

<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/2017/07/quiet-power-listening/>  
<https://montarebehavioralhealth.com/resources/therapeutic-listening/>

## Beyond the Screen



The Helpline Center will host two in-person events on Thursday, November 6, 2025 in Sioux Falls with film and television actor and mental health advocate Sean Astin. You probably know him from Rudy, The Goonies, Lord of the Rings and Stranger Things, and we are pleased to welcome him to our community. He'll share his personal stories of living with a mother who lived with bipolar disorder (the late Patty Duke).

You'll have two options to see him in Sioux Falls that day. First he'll speak during a ticketed luncheon event at The Catelin Hotel (formerly Hilton Garden Inn downtown). Then that evening he'll speak at a free event at O'Gorman High School. Both events are open to the general public and Sean will do photos and autographs afterwards. Click the [HERE](#) for additional details on each event. The Helpline Center's speaker series is made possible through funds raised from The 437 Project.

## SOUTH DAKOTA TOBACCO CONTROL PROGRAM

**Hilary Larsen**

Tobacco Program  
Coordinator

[Hilary.Larsen@state.sd.us](mailto:Hilary.Larsen@state.sd.us)

**DOH Team:**

[DOHTobaccoControl@state.sd.us](mailto:DOHTobaccoControl@state.sd.us)



**Quittobaccosd.com**

Click [here](#) to order our  
FREE materials and  
resources.

### Benefits of School Policies & Engaging Youth

Exciting News!

We've recently updated our **Tobacco-Free K-12 Model Policy**!

Reviewing and updating your school's tobacco-free policy is a critical step in supporting tobacco prevention and cessation efforts. A strong policy helps protect students, staff, and visitors from exposure, reinforces classroom education, and reduces liability for schools by eliminating tobacco use on campus.

Visit [QuitSD's Policy Support Materials](#) to:

- Learn about the benefits of tobacco-free policies
- Download the updated K-12 Model Policy
- Explore our new Implementation Checklist (found under *Implementing Tobacco-Free Policies*)
- Use our Policy Rubric Evaluation Tool to assess your school's current policy (also found under *Implementing Tobacco-Free Policies*)

### It's Hard to Believe—Back-to-School Season is Almost Here!

As you prepare for upcoming school events, don't forget to include tobacco education materials on your checklist! We offer free resources for everyone—whether they use tobacco or not.

Whether you're:

- Promoting your school's tobacco-free policy
- Sharing cessation information for those thinking about quitting
- Preventing youth tobacco use
- Or simply helping someone stay informed about today's tobacco products

**We've got you covered.**

Browse our [materials online](#) or reach out to our team—all materials are free and ship at no cost!

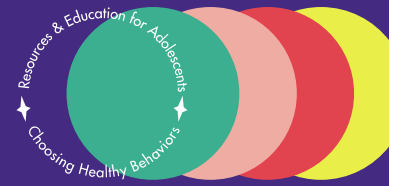
### UPCOMING EVENTS AND TRAININGS

- Teen Outreach Program training in Sioux Falls on August 27-28! See next page for further details.

Additional events and trainings are currently being drafted. If interested in requesting a training contact [DOHTobaccoControl@state.sd.us](mailto:DOHTobaccoControl@state.sd.us).



# REACH



## TEEN OUTREACH PROGRAM

**RESOURCES FOR YOUTH** 12-19 years old, middle school and high school

### KEY FEATURES

Wyman's evidence-based Teen Outreach Program® (TOP®) is a positive youth development program designed to build teens' educational success, life and leadership skills, and healthy behaviors and relationships. As a result, teens are better able to navigate challenges during their teenage years- a time when decisions matter.

### WHAT TO EXPECT

Caring, responsive, and knowledgeable TOP facilitators will build strong, supportive relationships with teens and create engaging and empowering classroom experiences, providing at least 12 lessons from the TOP curriculum with content tailored to teens' needs and interests, taught in 45-minute modules. TOP teens complete at least 10 hours of meaningful community service learning, which includes planning, action, and reflection.

### IMPACT

- Teens build and hone social and emotional skills, like managing emotions, problem-solving, decision-making, and empathy that are proven to help them be successful during the teenage years, and also later in life.
- Teens improve academic performance, and lower risky behaviors like truancy and suspension that leads to dropout.

### TRAINING DETAILS

Wednesday August 27<sup>th</sup>, 9am-5pm CST

Thursday August 28<sup>th</sup>, 9am-5pm CST

Location: LSS office- 705 E 41 St, Sioux Falls, SD

### TRAINERS

Seth Voorhees [Seth.Voorhees@LssSD.org](mailto:Seth.Voorhees@LssSD.org)

Questions and registration, email: Seth Voorhees [Seth.Voorhees@LssSD.org](mailto:Seth.Voorhees@LssSD.org)





# SD SUICIDE PREVENTION NEWSLETTER



## National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month

July is recognized as Minority Mental Health Awareness Month, a time to raise awareness about the unique mental health challenges faced by racial and ethnic minority communities in the United States. In South Dakota, Native American communities are especially impacted, experiencing suicide rates that are 2.6 times higher than the white population. Find Native American specific resources and information here: <https://www.sdsuicideprevention.org/risks/populations/american-indian> By shining a light on these urgent concerns during Minority Mental Health Awareness Month, we can better uplift and support culturally diverse and high-risk groups in need of mental health care and equity.



## Suicide Prevention Month

September is Suicide Prevention Month, a dedicated time to raise awareness about mental health and the importance of suicide prevention. Throughout the month, individuals, communities, and organizations unite to foster understanding, provide support, and share vital resources aimed at saving lives. It's a powerful reminder that mental health matters and that by opening up conversations, offering compassion, and reducing stigma, we can create a supportive environment where people feel safe to seek help.

This month is an important opportunity to educate, advocate, and show solidarity with those affected by suicide. Everyone has a role to play—by listening, reaching out, and showing care, we can help prevent suicide and support those who may be struggling.

To amplify your efforts, make use of the [SD Behavioral Health Suicide Prevention Month Toolkit](#), which offers a variety of resources including social media content, blog and image assets, HR email templates, and printable materials. If you would like to be involved in a walk or event in your community for, see the list under "Events". Let's come together this September to spread hope, raise awareness, and save lives.

## Honoring a Year of Hope & Healing with 988



The Division of Behavioral Health partnered with the Helpline Center to create an art installation. The installation featured over 13,000 sticky notes, each one representing a call, text, or chat received through the 988 crisis line in 2024. The installation, inspired by positive affirmations, aimed to destigmatize mental health, promote resilience, and encourage open conversation. The installation was up throughout the month of May, for Mental Health Awareness Month.

To hear real stories from South Dakotans that have contacted 988 or to leave a digital note of support, visit <https://sdbehavioralhealth.gov/988-wall>

## EVENTS

For more information or to add an event, Visit the [SDSP Calendar](#)

### July

10<sup>th</sup> - Helpline Center's [Mental Health First Aid training](#), 8:30AM - 5:00 PM, Sioux Falls

### August

3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> - ["Your Journey Matters" Behavioral Health Conference](#) - Sioux Falls  
18<sup>th</sup> - Helpline Center's [QPR \(Question, Persuade, Refer\)](#), 10:00AM - 11:30AM, Rapid City  
19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> - [Helpline Center's Mental Health First Aid training](#), 9:00AM - 1:00PM, Rapid City

### September

6<sup>th</sup> - [AFSP's Out of Darkness Walk](#) - Aberdeen  
6<sup>th</sup> - [Capital Area Counseling Service's Walk of Hope](#) - Pierre  
9<sup>th</sup> - [Helpline Center's Surviving After Suicide Class](#) - Sioux Falls  
13<sup>th</sup> - [AFSP's Out of Darkness Walk](#) - Sioux Falls  
20<sup>th</sup> - [AFSP's Out of Darkness Walk](#) - Belle Fourche

For information on Survivor Support Groups in various communities across South Dakota, click [here](#).

## Save the Date!

The 2025 "Your Journey Matters" Behavioral health conference will be held August 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> at the Sioux Falls Convention Center. Registration closes July 25<sup>th</sup>, so register today to secure your spot! For more information and to register, click the graphic below.



# New tool aims to improve workplace mental health

Organizations that want to support their employees' mental health can now access a new tool to help them create more supportive and resilient workplaces.

The tool, called the [Workplace Resilience Index](#) (WRI), was developed by Lost&Found with support from Marsh McLennan Agency.

"This strategic tool enables organizations to assess the effectiveness of their current employee support initiatives and identify opportunities for creating a more psychologically supportive work environment," according to Lost&Found Executive Director Carrie Jorgensen.

The result of the assessment process is a comprehensive view of workplace wellbeing and an evidence-based action plan to make the workplace's mental health support systems better over time.

This tool was adapted for workplaces from Lost&Found's [Campus Resilience Index](#), which [has been used by area college and tech school campuses](#) to improve mental health support systems since 2021.

## Why the WRI Is Needed

Two trends in mental health data pointed to the need for this kind of a tool.

The first trend is in [South Dakota's suicide statistics from 2014 to 2023](#), which show that the age group with the highest rate of suicide deaths are those who are 20 to 29 years old, followed closely by those 30 to 39.

For Lost&Found, which has as its mission preventing suicide among youth and young adults, reaching some in those age groups required thinking beyond the educational institutions where Lost&Found has typically implemented its programming. Most youth through age 18 can be reached in schools, and more than half of those age 18-22 can be reached on college campuses. But that leaves out young adults who don't go to college, and those older than college-age. The place to find those young adults is in the workplace.

And looking at workplaces shows a clear need for mental health support, which is the second significant trend in mental health data.

"We developed the WRI in response to rising concerns about workplace stress and its impact on mental health," Jorgensen said.

Among the concerning statistics:

- "Nearly half (44%) of employees reported being more stressed than five years ago, driven by financial pressure (56%), workload stress (44%), and work-life balance challenges (44%)." ([Forester survey, 2025](#))
- "Each year, untreated workplace-related mental illnesses cost the country \$3.7 trillion." ([Health Canal, 2023](#))
- "Despite increased investment, only 55% of employees said they were very or extremely likely to use their employer-provided benefits, and 74% reported feeling only moderately supported at best." ([Forester survey, 2025](#))

## The CDC's strategies to achieve and sustain substantial reductions in suicide

The Workplace Resilience Index is based on the seven evidence-based suicide prevention strategies identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in their [Suicide Prevention Resource for Action](#). Lost&Found designed indicators that match each strategy and provide suggestions on how workplaces can address each strategy to help their employees.



### 1 Strengthen Economic Supports



### 2 Create Protective Environments



### 3 Improve Access and Delivery of Suicide Care



### 4 Promote Healthy Connections



### 5 Teach Coping and Problem-Solving Skills



### 6 Identify and Support People at Risk



### 7 Lessen Harms and Prevent Future Risk

## How the WRI Works

Lost&Found's Research & Evaluation Services team implements the WRI in collaboration with a workplace contact and others identified as critical to workplace mental health efforts. Data is collected in a variety of ways, including by an employee survey, and compiled into a summary report and recommendations. The data and action plan are presented to the organization by Lost&Found staff, and organizations have full control to decide what to do with that information.

Lost&Found can provide additional support through trainings and policy services. Workplaces are encouraged to repeat the process annually to evaluate and celebrate progress.

For more information, go to <https://resilienttoday.org/programs/research-evaluation/workplace-resilience-index/> or email Carrie Jorgensen at [cjorgensen@resilienttoday.org](mailto:cjorgensen@resilienttoday.org).