



Prevention Newslink

September 2026

WPRC

Youth and Family Services

Rapid City, SD

Bill Elger

welger@youthandfamilyservices.org

(605) 342-1593

SEPRC

Volunteers of America-Dakotas

Sioux Falls, SD

Danielle Bourgerie

d.bourgerie@voa-dakotas.org

(605) 444-6333

NEPRC

Human Service Agency

Watertown, SD

Dodi Haug

dodih@humanserviceagency.org

Stephanie Kinnander

stephaniek@humanserviceagency.org

(605) 884-3516

CPRC

Capital Area Counseling Service

Pierre, SD

Jana Boocock

jana.boocock@cacsnet.org

Amy Hansen

amy.hansen@cacsnet.org

(605) 224-5811

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

Red Ribbon Week October 23-31, 2026



"Make a Difference. Be a Hero. Stay Drug Free.™", was announced as the 2026 [Red Ribbon Week®](#) theme. It was created by Ava Tackett, a student at Griswold Middle School in Griswold, CT, with guidance from Health Teacher Kristen Butremavic. The theme highlights that choosing to live drug-free is an act of leadership and courage—and that everyday decisions can positively influence peers, families, and communities.

Red Ribbon Week was founded in memory of Enrique "Kiki" Camarena, a Drug Enforcement Administration Agent who was tortured and killed in Mexico in 1985. In honor of Kiki's memory and his battle against illegal drugs, friends and neighbors began to wear red badges.



Parents then began to form coalitions using Camarena as their model while embracing his belief that one person can make a difference.

These coalitions adopted the symbol of Camarena's memory, the Red Ribbon. Today, the Red Ribbon serves as a catalyst to mobilize communities to educate youth and encourage participation in drug prevention activities.

This Red Ribbon Week, wear the ribbon and be part of the movement.

- Share Red Ribbon Week prevention messages on your social media or newsletter.
- Display Red Ribbon Week posters or educational resources.
- Talk with youth about healthy choices, coping skills, peer pressure, and the importance of asking for help.
- Host an activity that promotes connection, wellness, leadership, or drug-free living.
- Connect with a local prevention coalition or organization and find one way to support prevention efforts in your community.

UPCOMING TRAININGS & EVENTS

PREPaRE Training

Comprehensive School Safety Planning:

Prevention Through Recovery
September 23 | 8:30 - 3:30 (CST)
Virtual

Learn more and register [HERE](#)

Mental Health Crisis Interventions:
Responding to an Acute Traumatic
Stressor in Schools

February 11 & 12 | 8:30 - 3:30 (CST)
Virtual

Learn more and register [HERE](#)

BREAKTHROUGH: A Convergence on Mental Health

September 29 | 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.
Washington Pavillion | Sioux Falls
Learn more and register [HERE](#)

SD Peer Leadership

October 7 | 9:00 a.m.
ARCC | Aberdeen
Contact [Stephanie](#) to learn more.

October 14 | 9:00 a.m.
Codington Co Extension | Watertown
Contact [Stephanie](#) to learn more.

November 3 | 9:00 a.m.
Larkspur Landing | Pierre
Contact [Amy](#) to learn more.

Healthy Minds, Stronger Communities

October 17 | Brookings
October 24 | Pierre
November 7 | Spearfish
Learn more and register [HERE](#)

Youth Leadership Day 2026

October 21 | 9:00 a.m.
Countryside Church | Spearfish
Contact [Michelle May](#) for more
information

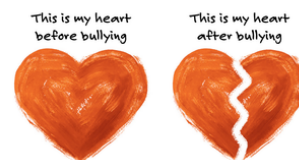
SPF Application for Prevention Success Training (SAPST)

October 19-22
Capital Area Counseling Service | Pierre
Register [HERE](#).

October is National Bullying Prevention Month!

In 2006, PACER Center started a movement to raise awareness about the impact that bullying can cause in our nation's youth. The result was the creation of National Bullying Prevention Month. Each October, PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center leads a campaign that unites individuals around the nation and the world with the message that bullying should never be a part of childhood.

October is National Bullying
Prevention Month



PACER
National Bullying Prevention Center.
Create a World Without Bullying, Learning, Bullying

National Bullying Prevention Month is an opportunity to encourage everyone to act with kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. Now more than ever, it is crucial to join together in creating a world that is kinder, more accepting, and more inclusive.

This month-long event is also a time to show solidarity for the one out of every five students who report being bullied each year. Bullying isn't a childhood rite of passage; it has real implications for a child's education, health, and safety now, and well into their future.

PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center offers age-appropriate resources to help students, parents, educators, and community members address bullying. Opportunities to get involved include:

- Watch the video overview of [National Bullying Prevention Month](#).
- Use the [four-week student activity kit](#) featuring theme weeks and classroom projects to promote kindness, acceptance and inclusion
- Celebrate [Unity Day](#) on October 21 with a simple call to action to wear and share orange to send a universal message that bullying is never acceptable behavior.
- Color our virtual world with a collection of [downloadable](#) promotional images

For more information about National Bullying Prevention Month, check out their [website](#). Contact your local SDPRC to learn about resources available locally to support National Bullying Prevention Month.



Mountain Plains (HHS Region 8)

PTTC

Prevention Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

The Mountain Plains PTTC is conducting a study to better understand the needs of the Region 8 prevention workforce. This survey seeks input from prevention professionals across the Mountain Plains region to help identify training and technical assistance needs. Questions focus on your views and opinions about the prevention system in Region 8 and how the PTTC can best support, strengthen, and empower the prevention workforce. Your participation is anonymous. Participate in the survey [HERE](#).

SOUTH DAKOTA TOBACCO CONTROL PROGRAM

Hilary Larsen

Tobacco Program Coordinator

Hilary.Larsen@state.sd.us

DOH Team:

DOHTobaccoControl@state.sd.us



Quittobaccosd.com

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

Youth Tobacco Prevention Mini-Funding Available!

The Youth Tobacco Prevention Mini-Funding Application is now open. This funding opportunity supports schools and youth-serving organizations in implementing tobacco prevention education, curriculum-based initiatives, and culturally centered learning experiences within their classrooms, organizations, and communities. Applicants may apply for one or more categories, provided the total funding request does not exceed \$5,000. Applications are due by **October 7, 2026**. All approved spending and activities must be completed by April 30, 2027. For complete program details, please refer to the [Request for Application](#).

Youth Tobacco Survey 2025 Data Released

The [2025 South Dakota Youth Tobacco Survey](#) is now available on the Department of Health website and shows encouraging declines in youth tobacco experimentation, particularly in the "ever use of e-cigarettes and smokeless tobacco." While fewer young people are trying tobacco products, current use is not decreasing at the same pace—and in some cases has slightly increased—indicating that those who do initiate may be using more regularly. E-cigarettes remain the most commonly used product, and despite reductions in ever use, exposure to vaping at school, in homes, and online continues to be widespread. Persistent racial disparities, especially among American Indian youth, appear across multiple measures, including tobacco use, exposure, and household smoking. The survey also highlights strong links between tobacco use and truancy, lower grades, peer behavior, social media exposure, and household tobacco environments, alongside the continued normalization of vaping and rising awareness of newer products like nicotine pouches. Prevention indicators such as school-based education, provider messaging, and parental conversations show no improvement since 2023, suggesting a need for renewed outreach strategies. Overall, the findings reinforce the importance of sustained youth tobacco prevention efforts, targeted racial equity initiatives, stronger school policy enforcement, and expanded support for tobacco-free homes.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND TRAININGS

The South Dakota Tobacco Control Program invites your school to help educate students on the dangers of vaping and nicotine use by implementing CATCH My Breath, the first evidence-based youth e-cigarette and vape prevention curriculum for grades 5–12. This free national program has been shown to significantly reduce the likelihood of student vaping in the year following implementation. Upcoming CATCH My Breath Virtual Trainings:

- **Thursday, September 17** - 3:00–5:00 pm CST / 2:00–4:00 pm MST
- Delivered via Zoom- [Registration](#)
- **Tuesday, October 6** - 3:00–5:00 pm CST / 2:00–4:00 pm MST
- Delivered via Zoom- [Registration](#)

SOUTH DAKOTA SUICIDE PREVENTION



RESOURCES

STATEWIDE WEBSITE
SDSUICIDEPREVENTION.ORG

THE HELPLINE CENTER
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

September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month

September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness, reducing stigma, and promoting resources that support mental health and suicide prevention. It is an opportunity for communities, organizations, and individuals to come together and share messages of hope, help, and healing.

One of the most important resources available is the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. This is a free, confidential support resources that is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for anyone experiencing a mental health crisis, emotional distress, or concerns about a loved one. By increasing awareness of 988, we can help ensure that people know where to turn when they need support most.

To help communities promote suicide prevention and the 988 Lifeline, the Helpline Center offers a variety of free marketing and awareness materials. These materials can be used by schools, healthcare providers, businesses, faith communities, first responders, and community organizations to help spread awareness and connect individuals to lifesaving support.

Order free materials today:
www.helplinecenter.org/about/free-marketing-materials/

Upcoming Events

Journey Beyond Loss to Hope
Saturday, October 10
9:00am - 3:30pm
Hilton Garden Inn South - Sioux Falls

The Suicide Survivor Symposium is designed to provide support, education, and connection for individuals who have lost a loved one to suicide. This one-day event brings survivors together in a safe, understanding environment where grief is honored and shared. Participants will have the opportunity to connect with others who understand the unique journey of suicide loss, learn coping strategies, and gain resources that support healing and hope.

For more information: www.helplinecenter.org/events/survivor-symposium/

Register for the Suicide Survivor Symposium:
www.helplinecenter.jotform.com/260815357258059



JOURNEY BEYOND LOSS TO *Hope*

A SYMPOSIUM FOR SUICIDE LOSS SURVIVORS

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2026

Hilton Garden Inn South

5300 S Grand Cir, Sioux Falls, SD

9AM–3:30PM

\$25 per person | Includes Lunch

Keynote Speaker: Don Belau

Healing from Suicide Loss

Breakout Sessions

Survivor Wellbeing | Veterans | Role of Forgiveness in Grief | LOSS Teams

Q&A Panel



RSVP ONLINE

helplinecenter.org

Or by emailing grief@helplinecenter.org


helpline
center

988
SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE