

Mental Health and Suicide Prevention in Construction

The Next Dimension of Safety



What is the Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention (CIASP)?

- Born out of necessity in response to a statistic released in a **CDC study ranking construction and extraction as the #1 occupation for deaths by suicide**
- CIASP was formed in 2018 as a **501(c)(3) nonprofit organization**
- **Vision:** A zero-suicide construction industry
- **Mission:** CIASP exists to save lives by eliminating suicide in the construction industry.



Mental Health Continuum



Let's clear up some language

- Die by vs. Commit
- Has vs. Is
- Weak, selfish

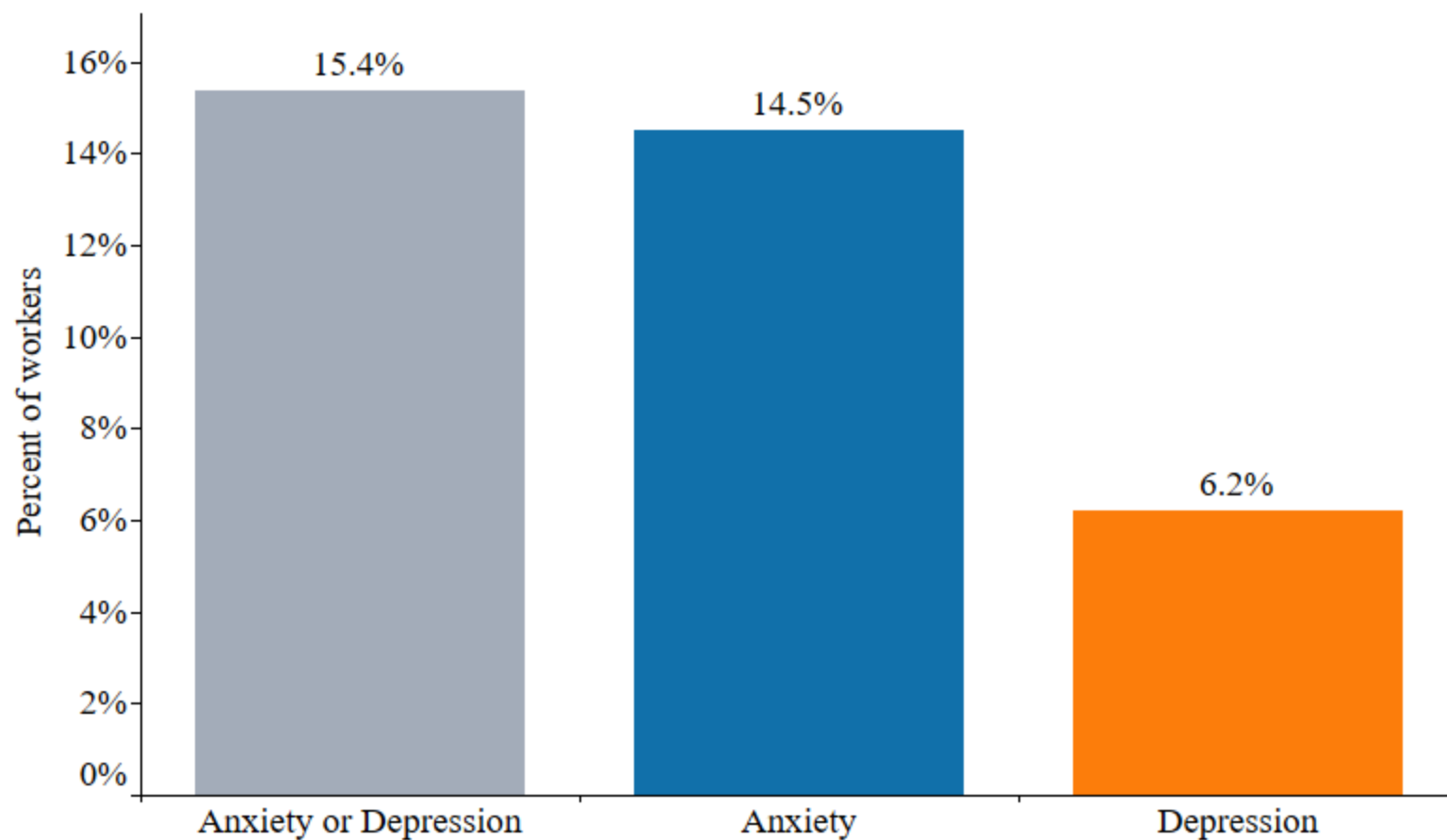


Why do we need to address mental health in the construction workplace?

- In 2022 There were an estimated 6428 suicides in construction
 - 1092 Construction Worker Fatalities (Focus four)
- The suicide rate in the U.S. is rising, but **construction workers are at a greater risk of suicide than the average worker**
- All levels: laborers, skilled trades, operators, management
- Male construction workers die from suicide at twice the rate of workers on average.
- 1 in 7 people aged 16-64 who died by suicide was a construction worker



3. Prevalence of anxiety or depression among construction workers, 2021*



Source: National Health Interview Survey, 2021.

*Anxious/depressed feelings at least weekly with a level of “a lot” or “somewhere between a little and a lot” and/or reported medication for anxiety/ depression.

Recognize that mental health IS a workplace concern

- 1 in 5 Adults Will Experience Mental Illness →
- 52.9 Million People
- 60% are left untreated
- 6.9% Depression
- 18.1% Anxiety
- Can lead to up to 27 lost workdays per year

6.7% (17 million people) experienced a co-occurring substance use disorder and mental illness in 2020

Depression and anxiety disorders cost the global economy **\$1 trillion each year in lost productivity**

Depression is the **first leading cause of disability** & increases risk of other chronic medical conditions.

When employees are experiencing depression, they **miss an average of 31.4 days per year** and lose another 27.9 to unproductivity

Mental and nervous conditions are ranked #3 of all disability claims



A \$1 investment in mental health results in a \$4 Return on Investment

It's not just construction

Suicide is a societal issue:

11th leading cause of death

49,476 deaths by suicide in 2022

14.21/100,000

1.6 M attempts annually

Source: AFSP.org



Strength. Determination. Grit.

CHARACTER TRAITS THAT GET HARD WORK DONE.

The same traits can be a
barrier to asking for help.

SPEAK UP TO
STANDUP



INFORMATION & RESOURCES AT
preventconstructionsuicide.com



THE NATIONAL SUICIDE
PREVENTION LIFELINE AT
1.800.273.TALK (8255) or
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

CRISIS TEXT LINE |

TEXT **HELLO** TO 741741
Free, 24/7, Confidential
crisistextline.org

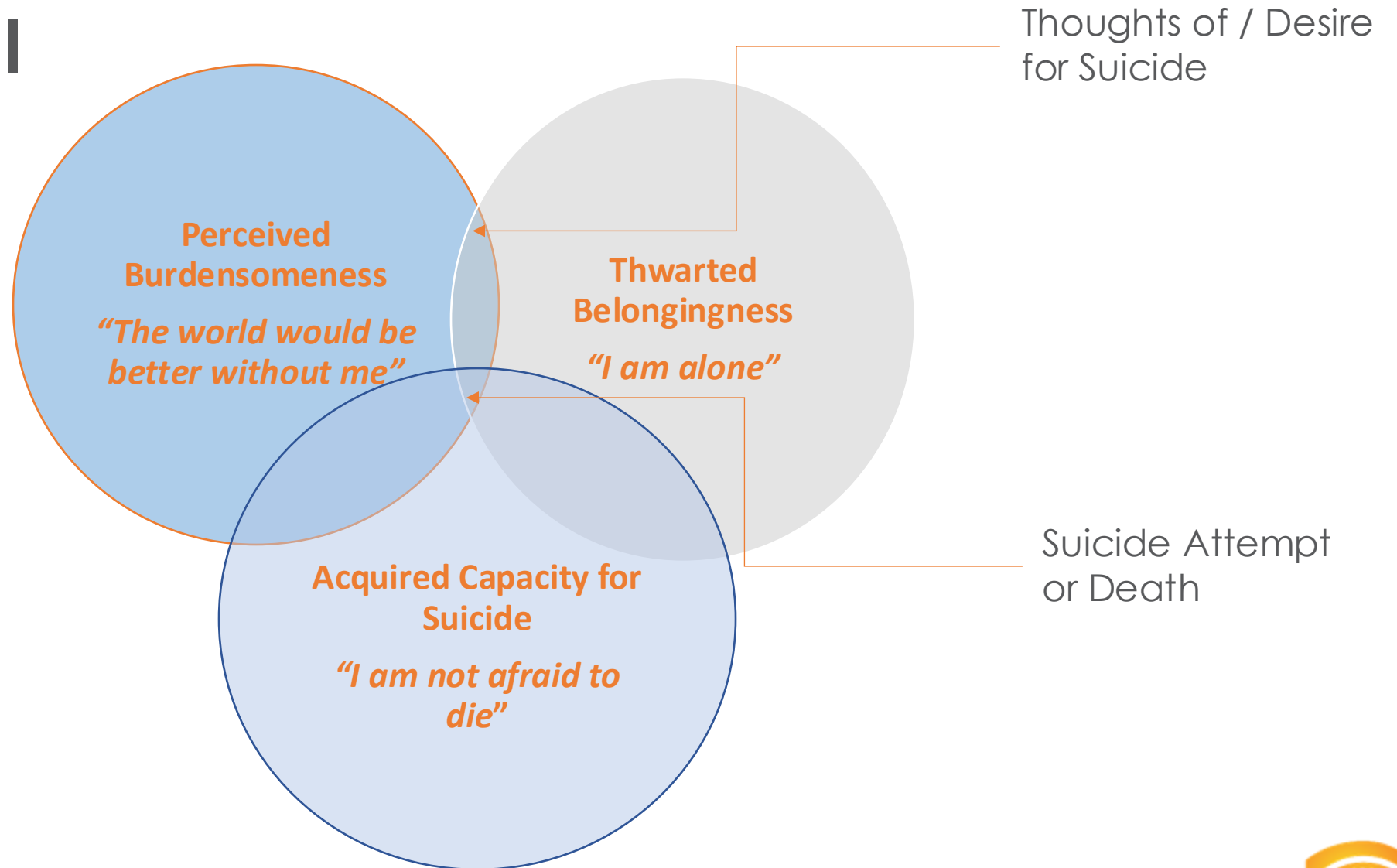
**IT'S OK TO NOT BE OK. BE BRAVE – SPEAK UP
FOR YOUR TEAM. SPEAK FOR YOURSELF.**

Multiple issues... same root cause?

- Lack of control
- Low perception of skill



Joiner's Interpersonal Theory of Suicide

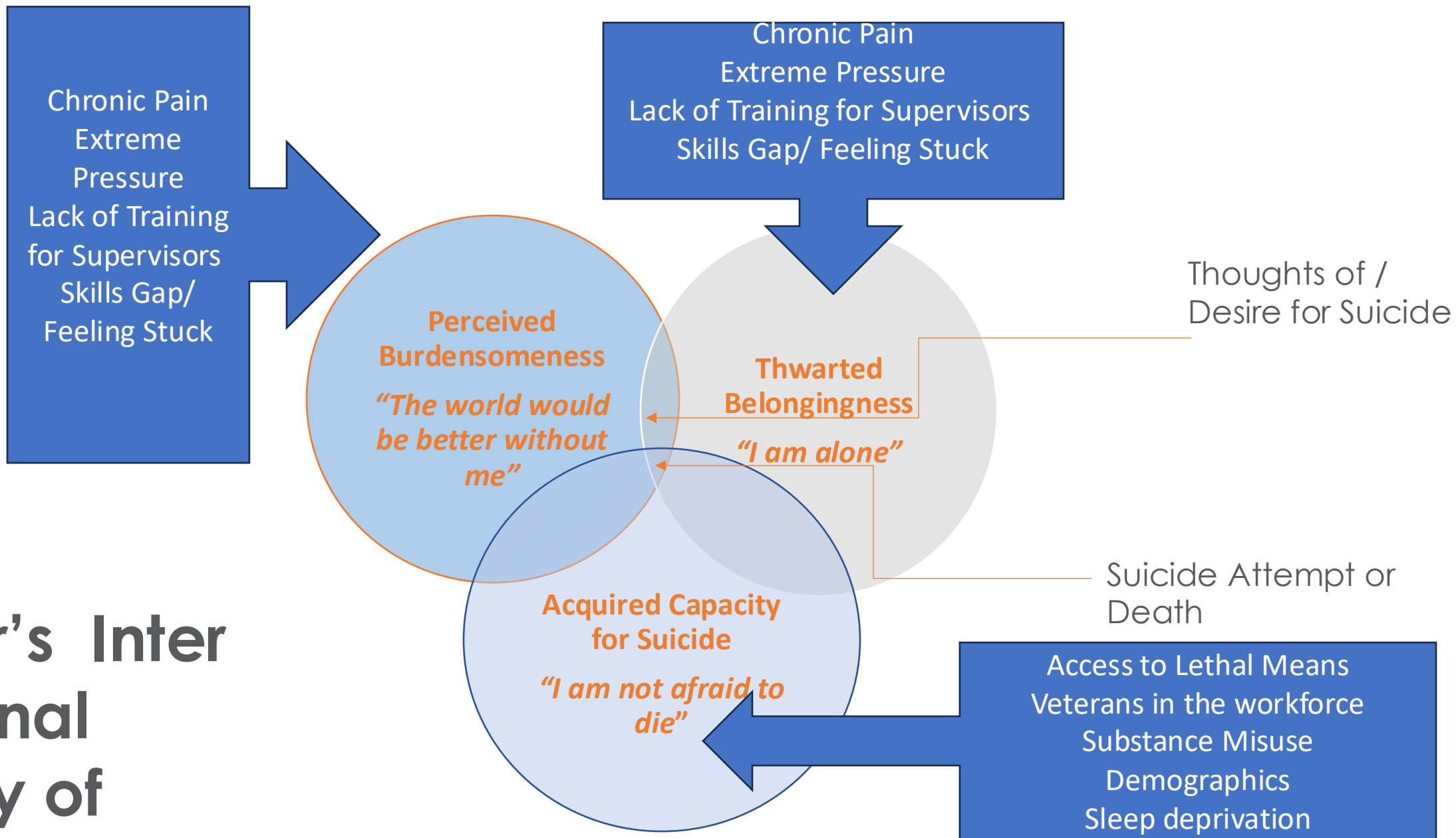




Risk Factors



Joiner's Interpersonal Theory of Suicide



Ignoring is NOT an Answer

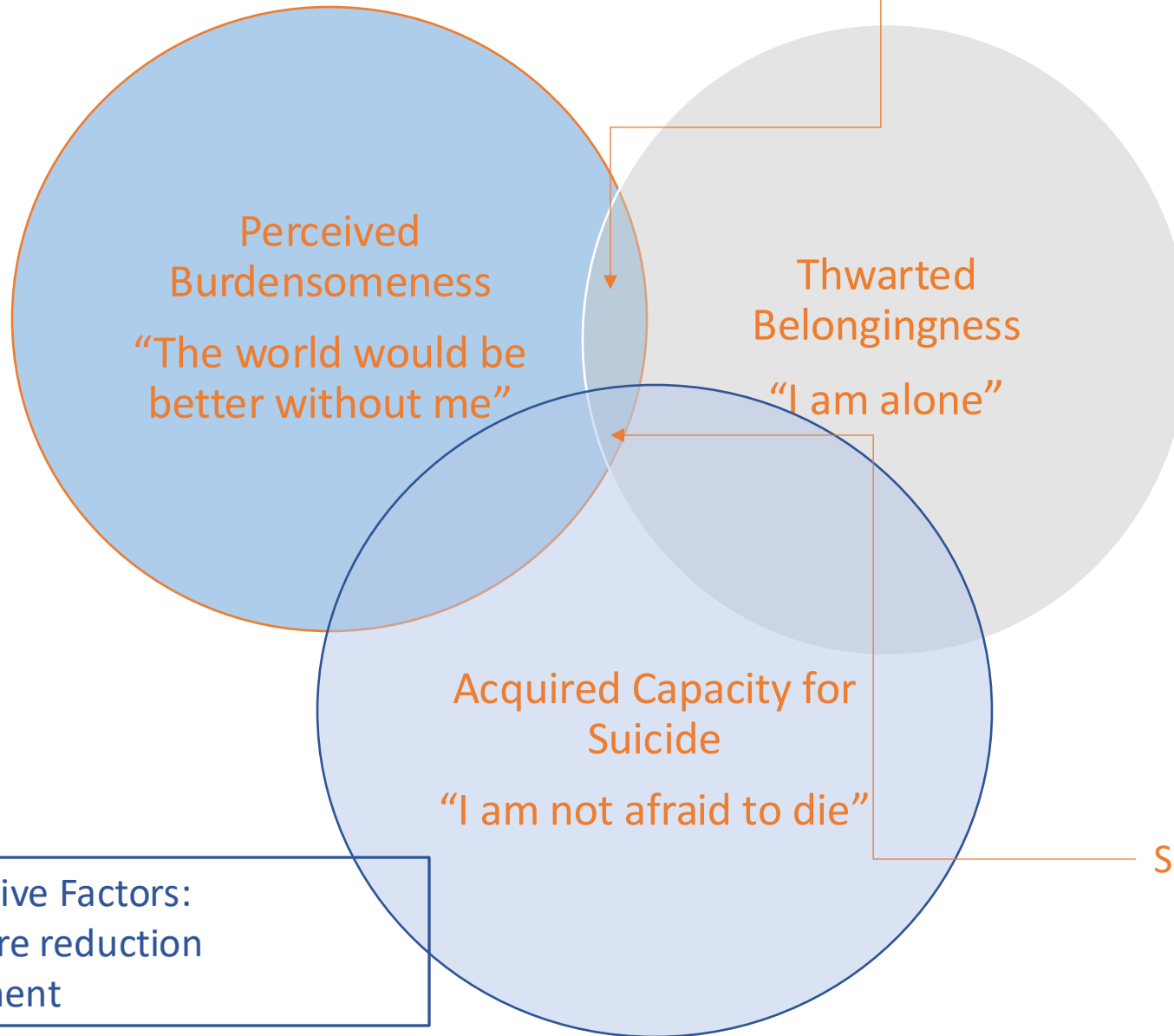
- *“We don’t have a mental health or suicide problem...”*



Joiner's Interpersonal Theory of Suicide

Workplace Protective Factors:

- Management support
- Realistic expectations
- Constructive correctional actions



Thoughts of / Desire for Suicide

Workplace Protective Factors:

- Encouraging peer relationships
- Creating social connectedness
- Watching out for people at times of relationship changes

Workplace Protective Factors:

- Trauma exposure reduction
- Crisis management

Suicide Attempt or Death

Creating a Culture of Care

- Leadership support
- Injury management/return to work programs
- Flexibility with scheduling
- Setting reasonable expectations
- Second chance agreements
- Train management in soft skills and communication
- Ongoing Training on a variety of topics
- Build in protective factors for veterans (understanding how to point veterans in the direction of specific support)



Intangibles and Intuition

- Share your experiences
- Engagement
- Make a phone call
- Invite someone to lunch
- Schedule afterwork and weekend activities
- Include EVERYONE!
- Create a post on LinkedIn/Social Media letting people know they can reach out to you if they need someone to talk to.



Warning Signs



Recognize the Signs to Speak Up

WHAT ARE THEY SAYING?

- ◆ Talking about feeling trapped
- ◆ Saying they want to die
- ◆ Feeling like they are a burden to others
- ◆ Expressing hopelessness or helplessness
- ◆ Conflict or confrontations with co-workers

WHAT ARE THEY DOING?

- ◆ Increased tardiness or absenteeism
- ◆ Decreased productivity and problem solving
- ◆ Near misses, hits or other safety incidents
- ◆ Misusing drugs or alcohol
- ◆ Acting anxious, agitated or reckless
- ◆ Withdrawing from social groups and interactions
- ◆ Extreme mood swings

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THEIR LIVES?

- ◆ Relationship issues
- ◆ Major life changes
- ◆ Loss of a loved one
- ◆ Financial difficulties
- ◆ Illness or injury

STANDUP
FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

RESOURCES

HELP IS WITHIN REACH



INFORMATION & RESOURCES AT
preventconstructionsuicide.com

NATIONAL
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LIFELINE**

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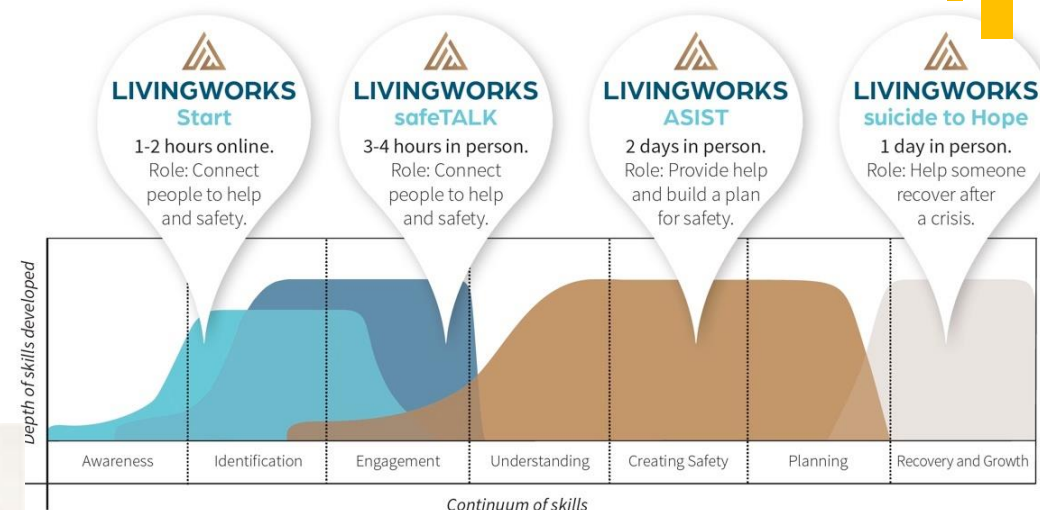
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Performance Issues That Can be Warning Signs

- Decreased problem solving ability
- Decreased self confidence
- Decreased productivity
- Increased tardiness & absenteeism
- Increased conflict among co-workers
- Increased near hits, incidents, injuries



How do you educate your workforce?



WWW.preventconstructionsuicide.com

[ABOUT US](#) ▾[GET HELP](#) ▾[GET INFORMED](#) ▾[GET INVOLVED](#) ▾[DONATE NOW](#)[PLEDGE TO STAND UP](#)[CALENDAR](#)

TAKE ACTION

- **Incorporate** **CIASP ToolBox Talks** into your safety plan.
- **Ask your Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** provider to present sessions or lunch and learns on mental health and coping techniques.
- **Promote** the free, anonymous **MindWise screening tool** (available in Spanish) to your employees.
- **Incorporate** these **short videos** into your safety training.
- **Distribute** hardhat stickers, poker chips, and wallet cards with warning signs and helplines. **Request a supply** from CIASP.
- **Display** posters in trailers, break rooms, or on company message boards. **Download here.**
- **Complete** the **LivingWorks Start online training program.**
- **Read and Share:** **Educate Workers About Employee Assistance Programs to Address Behavioral Health**



Know How to Respond: TASC

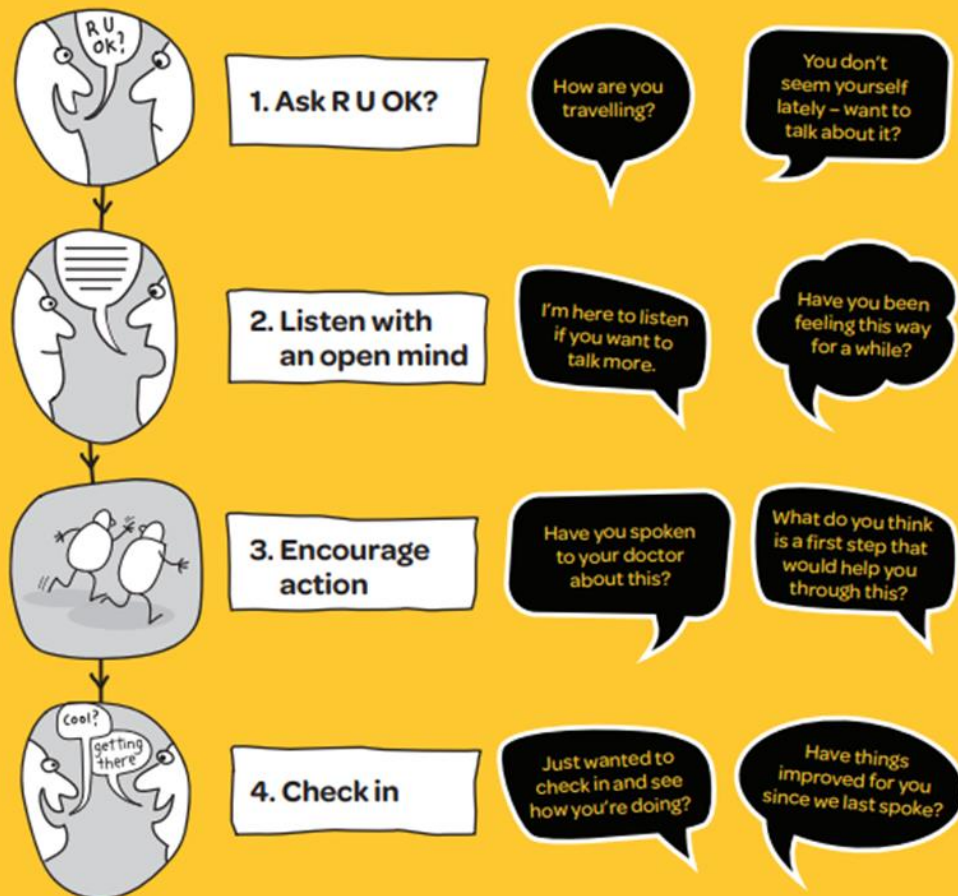
Tune in	Ask	State	Connect
Tune in: When you notice or sense that a person may need help, focus your attention on them for warning signs	Ask: Ask if they are thinking about suicide clearly, directly & calmly – and without judgement	State: State that suicide is serious and that connecting to help is important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

Ask

RU OK?

Have a conversation
using these 4 steps

No qualifications needed



Learn more at ruok.org.au

Ask

RU OK?

Make staying connected
and asking R U OK?
part of your everyday.

No qualifications needed



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Mental Health and Substance Abuse

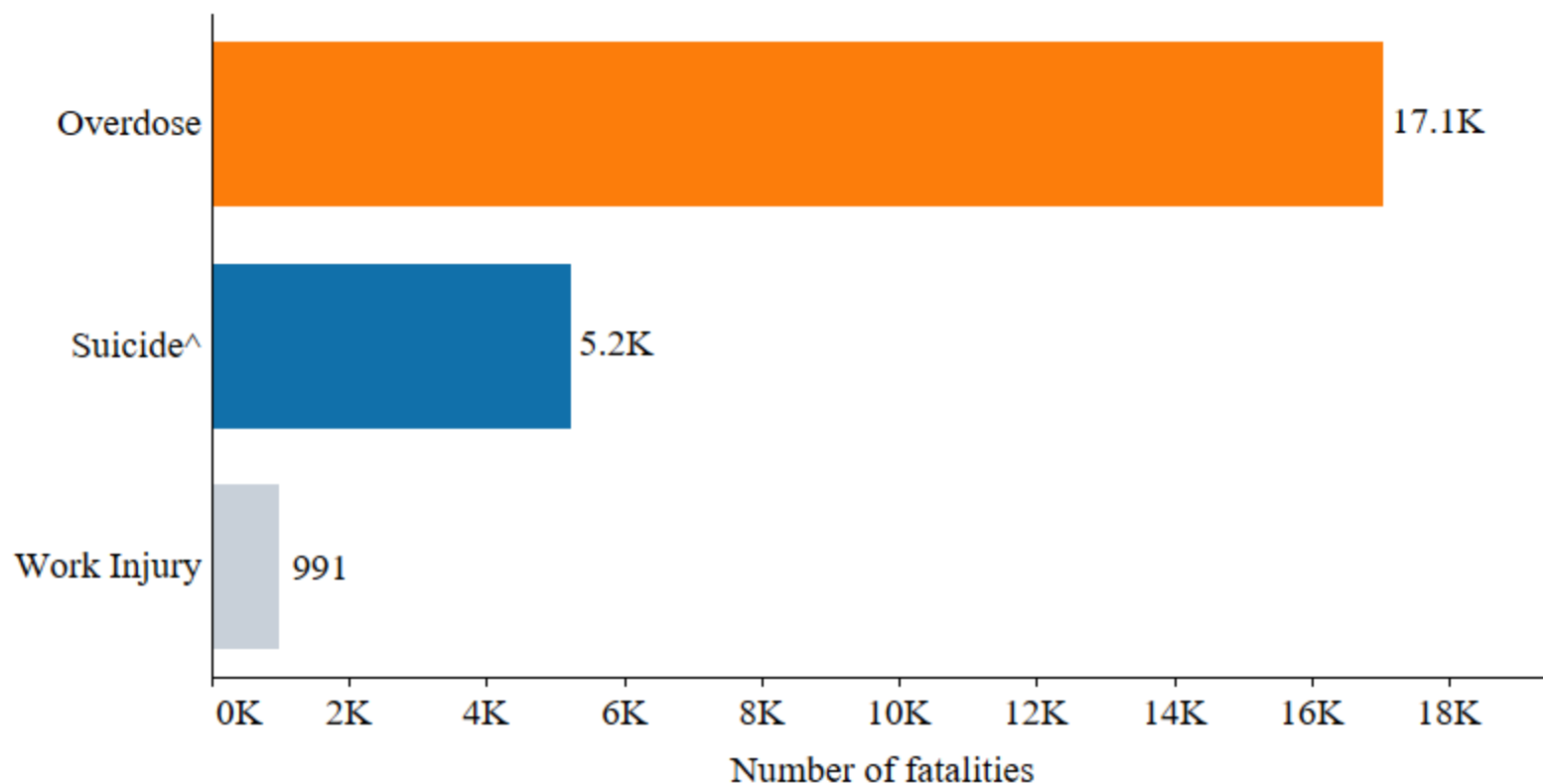
Construction has one of the highest overdose death rates
23.1% of overdose deaths where industry was reported were in construction.

When examining 2022 data there were 17.2 times as many overdose deaths than fatal worker injuries.

1 in 6 people aged 16- 64 years old who died from an overdose was a construction worker

Synthetic opioids were involved in 3 out of 4 overdose deaths in 2022

9. Fatalities by cause among construction workers aged 16 to 64 years old, 2022*

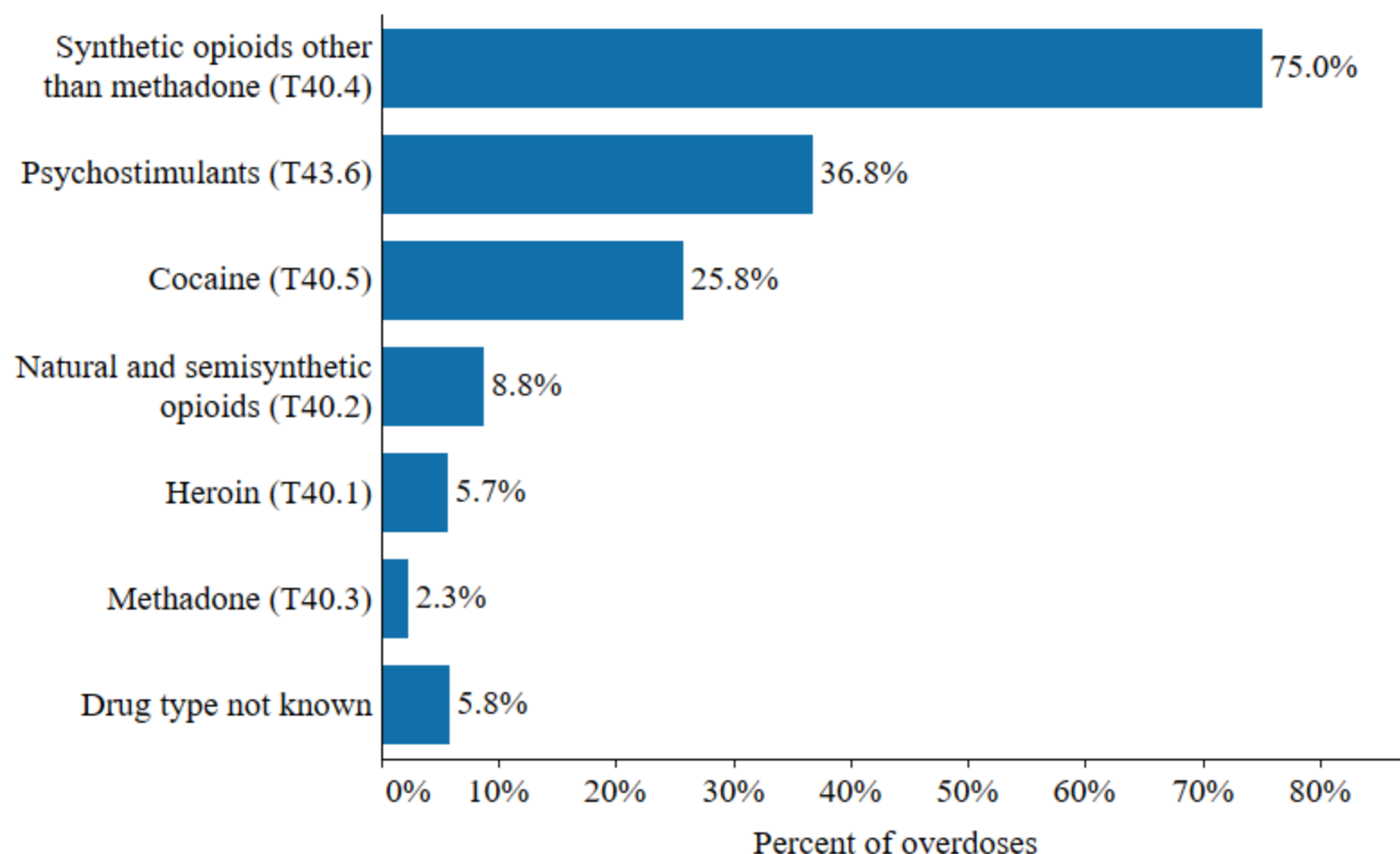


Source: National Center for Health Statistics, 2022 Mortality Multiple Cause-of-Death and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022 Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries.

* Work injury data population does not align 1:1 with mortality data. Interpret with caution.

^ Suicides may include overdoses due to overlapping definitions.

12. Drug type involvement for overdoses among construction workers aged 16 to 64 years old, 2022



Source: National Center for Health Statistics, 2022 Mortality Multiple Cause-of-Death.

* May sum to greater than 100% as more than one type of drug could have been involved in an overdose.

Acute Rx Leads to Long Term Use

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

Long term use leads to:

- Increased perception of pain
- Increases risk of depression
- Increases risk of suicide

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988
SUICIDE
& CRISIS
LIFELINE

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STANDUP
FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

GET HELP

Know who to contact
if you or someone you
know is at risk of suicide

GET INFORMED

Learn why construction is
the most at-risk industry for
suicide deaths

GET STARTED

Pledge to STAND UP for
suicide prevention and
address it as a health and
safety priority

**WE ALL
STAND
STRONGER
TOGETHER**



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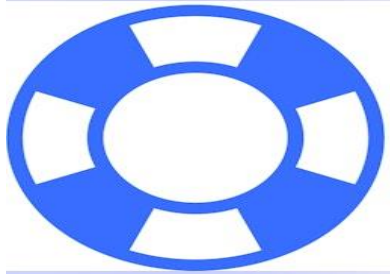
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Resources

Additional Resources



**American
Foundation
for Suicide
Prevention**



National Alliance on Mental Illness



NCCER
| National Center for Construction
Education and Research

SPEAK UP TO
STANDUP



Take the Pledge



preventconstructionsuicide.com

Take the pledge, download resources,
order supplies, access free training and
screening tool – all on our website



@THE_CIASP

