

# Decrease Suicide

A Construction Suicide Prevention Partnership Toolbox Talk\*

[www.suicide-stops-here.org](http://www.suicide-stops-here.org)

Statistics drive a lot of what we do in safety. Activities and environments that have a high rate of illnesses or injuries spur the creation of new policies and procedures and maybe even added oversight by OSHA and other agencies. Despite all of the training, PPE, programs, and other measures put in place, **approximately 1,000 construction workers die on job sites each year.** That is a sad and sobering statistic, especially when we consider that one of those could be us or someone on our crew.



As shocking as those numbers are- there's one that's even more shocking. **Over 5,000 people working in construction will die by suicide each year.** That's right- 5 times as many of your fellow construction workers will take their own lives as will be killed due to a job site accident. When we think about all the time and effort we spend on the physical safety of the workforce- we also need to increase our attention to the emotional safety of the workforce.

## Why Does This Happen?

Well, think about you and your coworkers. You probably pride yourself on being tough, getting things done at all costs, and working through whatever life throws at you. While these are great traits, if someone is experiencing mental illness like depression or anxiety- which are real, treatable health conditions- or going through a major life crisis, or have an addiction or substance misuse disorder, they might not be able to just "power through" - and they probably aren't likely to ask for help, either.

## What You Can Do

If someone on the job site seems to be under stress or upset, you might hear others say, "suck it up," "it's not that bad," or "don't be a wimp." Instead of blowing it off when someone seems down or out of sorts, or mocking them about it, imagine if you took the time to talk to them about what is happening in their lives. Sometimes, just knowing that someone cares is enough.



There are resources that can help anyone struggling with a mental health challenge:

- Call or text the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline by dialing 988
- Text the Crisis Text Line "HELLO" to 741741
- Check out the Construction Suicide Prevention Partnership at [www.Suicide-Stops-Here.org](http://www.Suicide-Stops-Here.org) for more resources

