

IN THIS ISSUE:

GOOD NEWS

CIASP and Turner Foundation
Create Recovery Video with
Personal Stories from Workers

ANNOUNCEMENT

CPWR Facilitating 2nd Mental
Health and Suicide Prevention
Workshop

PREVENTION CORNER

CPWR and NABTU Creating a
Training Standard

RESOURCE

Washington University in St.
Louis Research Team Creates
Peer Support Playbook for the
Construction Industry

GOOD NEWS

CIASP and Turner Foundation Create Recovery Video with Personal Stories from Workers

For years, the construction industry has come together to break the silence surrounding mental health, suicide, and substance use disorders. Unions, contractors, researchers, and industry leaders across the country are moving beyond awareness campaigns and building practical solutions that support workers before they reach a crisis point.

One powerful example is the Construction Industry Alliance for Suicide Prevention ([CIASP](#)) and the [Turner Construction Company Foundation](#) teaming up to launch *Stronger than the Silence*, a brand new video series featuring four construction workers who bravely share their personal journeys through addiction, crisis, and recovery. Their honesty is powerful -- and it's already making a difference.

This video is more than a story. It's a tool. It's a lifeline. It's a step toward a safer, more supportive industry.

Here's how you can put it to work:

- [Watch & share](#) the full series or each individual story.
- [Use the Toolbox Talks](#) to spark a quick, meaningful conversation on your next jobsite.
- [Take the STAND Up Pledge](#) and help make suicide prevention a standard part of safety culture.



During the launch webinar, the workers who are featured shared how speaking up can save lives -- and how the industry helped them find their own path to recovery.

This is good news worth spreading far and wide.

ANNOUNCEMENT

CPWR Facilitating 2nd Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Workshop, August 4-5

As part of our ongoing work to bring together people committed to improving the health of construction workers, CPWR is hosting a mental health and suicide prevention workshop August 4-5, 2026, in Silver Spring, Maryland.

This workshop will build on our previous one in 2022. That summer, CPWR partnered with NABTU, researchers, contractors, government representatives, insurers, health and safety professionals, and others from the industry to identify opportunities for collaboration. Outputs included mapping successful organizations and programs, creating topic areas for collaboration, and highlighting areas for data collection, evaluation research, and training dissemination.

This summer's workshop will focus on building understanding of primary (upstream) factors that affect workers' mental wellbeing and can help prevent suicide. Furthermore, through workshop activities and collaboration we plan to share practical solutions for producing change by identifying which workplace factors can be modified and to share a better understanding of the industry's openness to implementing these factors. Put another way, the workshop aims to determine which modifiable factors are easily changed and which might take more time. Ultimately, the goal is to come up with collaborative solutions for progress to improve workers' lives.

If you're interested in participating in the workshop, please email crodman@cpwr.com.

PREVENTION CORNER

CPWR and NABTU Creating a Training Standard

CPWR is partnering with NABTU to create a minimum standard for suicide training curricula. The standard will guide partners in choosing among the many suicide awareness and mental health trainings available, ensuring each option includes a credible, practical, jobsite-relevant baseline. This effort comes after several partners reached out to us indicating they wanted to offer training but felt inundated with too many choices but too little information on how to choose a training that would be evidence-informed, tailored to construction realities, and aligned with current safety culture. By establishing standards for core learning objectives and participant supports, and by offering guidance for responding to imminent risk, CPWR and NABTU aim to improve the quality of these programs and make it easier for contractors and unions to choose with confidence. You can expect to see this resource shared in REASON soon.

Washington University in St. Louis Research Team Creates Peer Support Playbook for the Construction Industry

CPWR is excited to announce that the [COMPASS \(Construction Organizations Mobilizing for Peer Support and Suicide Safety\) playbook](#) is now available for download on our website. Developed to meet the unique needs of the US construction industry, it helps contractors assess, develop, and strengthen their suicide awareness and prevention programs. This CPWR-funded program provides contractors with an adaptable framework for implementing and maintaining an effective program that supports mental health and prevents suicide in their workforce. The playbook features a ten-step guide on how to implement and sustain a consistent suicide prevention program within their own companies. Although the program was developed for contractors, COMPASS could be adapted to other construction organizations, such as unions.

The COMPASS framework was inspired by MATES in Construction, an evidence-based suicide prevention program developed by the Australian construction industry. Research has shown that MATES is effective in encouraging help-seeking and help-offering, empowering peers and leaders to offer help more effectively and improving how workers utilize programs and navigate resources in the event of a mental health crisis. COMPASS adopts key elements of the MATES program, including three levels of suicide prevention training: the first is an awareness training that encourages workers to seek help for mental health issues; the second establishes a peer-based "gatekeeper" network on construction worksites where workers are encouraged to offer help to co-workers in need; and the third is an applied suicide intervention skills training that includes implementing individual plans for workers at critical risk.

The COMPASS framework was developed with the support of contractors, labor unions, and the Missouri Associated General Contractors (AGC), and it has been used successfully to implement suicide prevention programs at several Midwest construction sites in conjunction with support from the Washington University-based team in St. Louis.

If you are interested in hearing more about COMPASS, giving feedback on the program, or implementing it in your company or workplace, fill out this [Information Sheet](#) to introduce yourself or your company to the team.

RESEARCH

Highway Safety Program Studies Practices for Preventing Suicide and Addiction Among Construction and Maintenance Workers

Late last year the National Academies' National Cooperative Highway Research Program published [Mental Health, Suicide Prevention and Addiction Mitigation in Construction and Maintenance](#), which found that workers in road construction face elevated risks due to demanding conditions, stigma, and limited support. The report detailed how state agencies, DOTs, unions, and other bodies provide mental health resources by conducting a literature review, sharing a questionnaire with workers, and interviewing staff at state DOTs. The report found that, although implementation varies widely, common strategies were

training, peer support, and awareness campaigns. Key challenges included stigma, communication gaps, and lack of evaluation frameworks. The report highlights promising practices such as peer networks and digital tools, while emphasizing the need for better program evaluation, field-accessible solutions, and integration of mental health into safety culture.

The report [cites research on upstream drivers of health](#) that can make worksites physically and psychologically safe, including active measures designed to determine and reduce workplace stressors before they lead to mental health issues:

- Improving physical safety through infrastructure changes
- Restructuring leave and scheduling policies to support mental health and work-life balance, such as addressing concerns about punitive absenteeism policies and forced overtime
- Training for de-escalation, crisis response, and empathy to prepare employees and managers to handle traumatic situations and foster understanding between frontline staff and leadership
- Enhancing communication and outreach to increase awareness of mental health services, especially for workers without consistent email access
- Embedding mental health awareness in workplace culture through trust-building efforts that involve unions and frontline staff in wellness program design and implementation
- Building peer support networks and mentoring programs to combat isolation and boost morale

Lastly, it names downstream interventions that should be considered: evaluating and customizing EAPs and mental health programs to consider worker preferences for privacy; off-site one-on-one counseling; and professional-led support rather than peer groups.

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Contribute your organization's good news, human-interest story, free resources, or research findings to a future issue of REASON. Learn how by contacting Christopher Rodman at CPWR: crodman@cpwr.com.

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