



# Building Up Mental Health in the Construction Industry

Lea Rummel, Electrical Estimator



# **Agenda**

- 1. The State of Mental Health in Construction**
- 2. The Power of Story Telling**
- 3. Organizational Recommendations for Building  
a Culture that is Supportive of Mental  
Health**

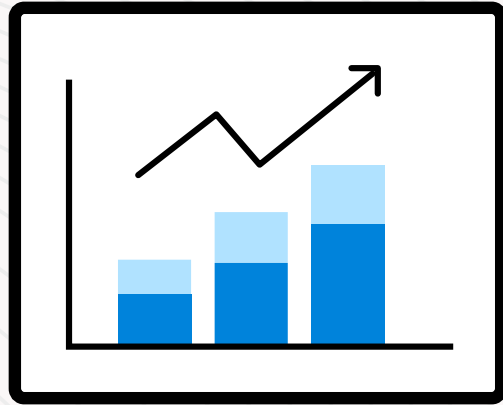
## **Things to Keep in Mind Today**

- 1. I am not a mental health care professional! I am here to be a resource & advocate for you, and to help improve our industry.**
- 2. Some topics may be difficult. Pause, or step away if you need to.**
- 3. It is not our job to diagnose anyone. Never attempt to do so.**



# The State of Mental Health in Construction





**Overall suicide rates increased  
by 36% from 2000 to 2022.**

**U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
(CDC)**



**The construction industry  
has the second highest  
suicide rate compared to  
other industries.**

**CDC & National Institutes of Health  
(NIH), 2023**

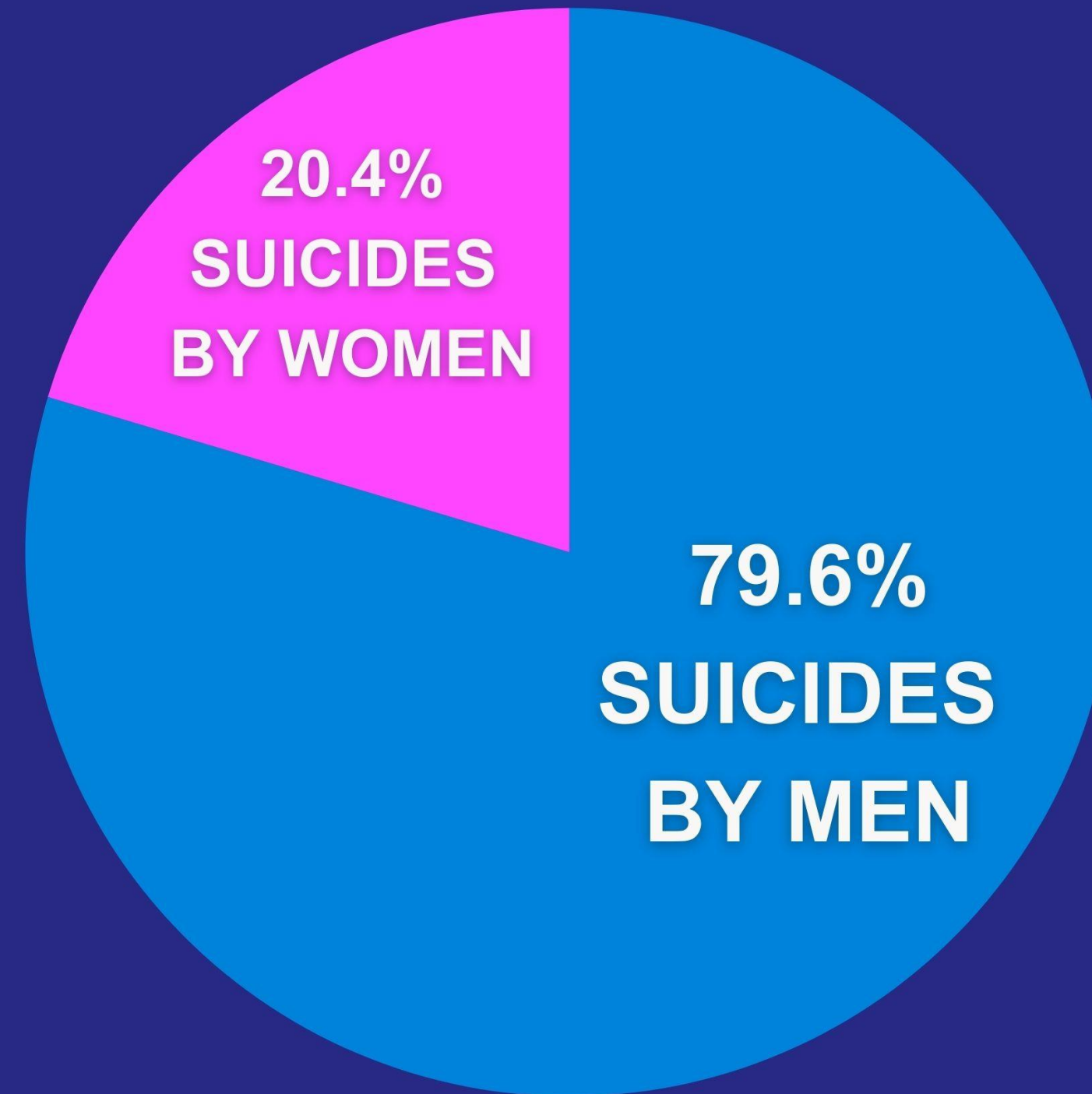


# MASCULINITY & MENTAL HEALTH

**Women are more likely to experience mental illness than men.**

**But men are almost 4 times as likely to die by suicide than women.**

**Men are less likely to seek help for mental health challenges or mental illnesses.**



# OSHA'S Fatal/Focus Four Hazards

**5 times as many  
construction  
workers die by  
suicide each  
year, than all of  
OSHA's Fatal 4  
combined.**





# The Power of Storytelling









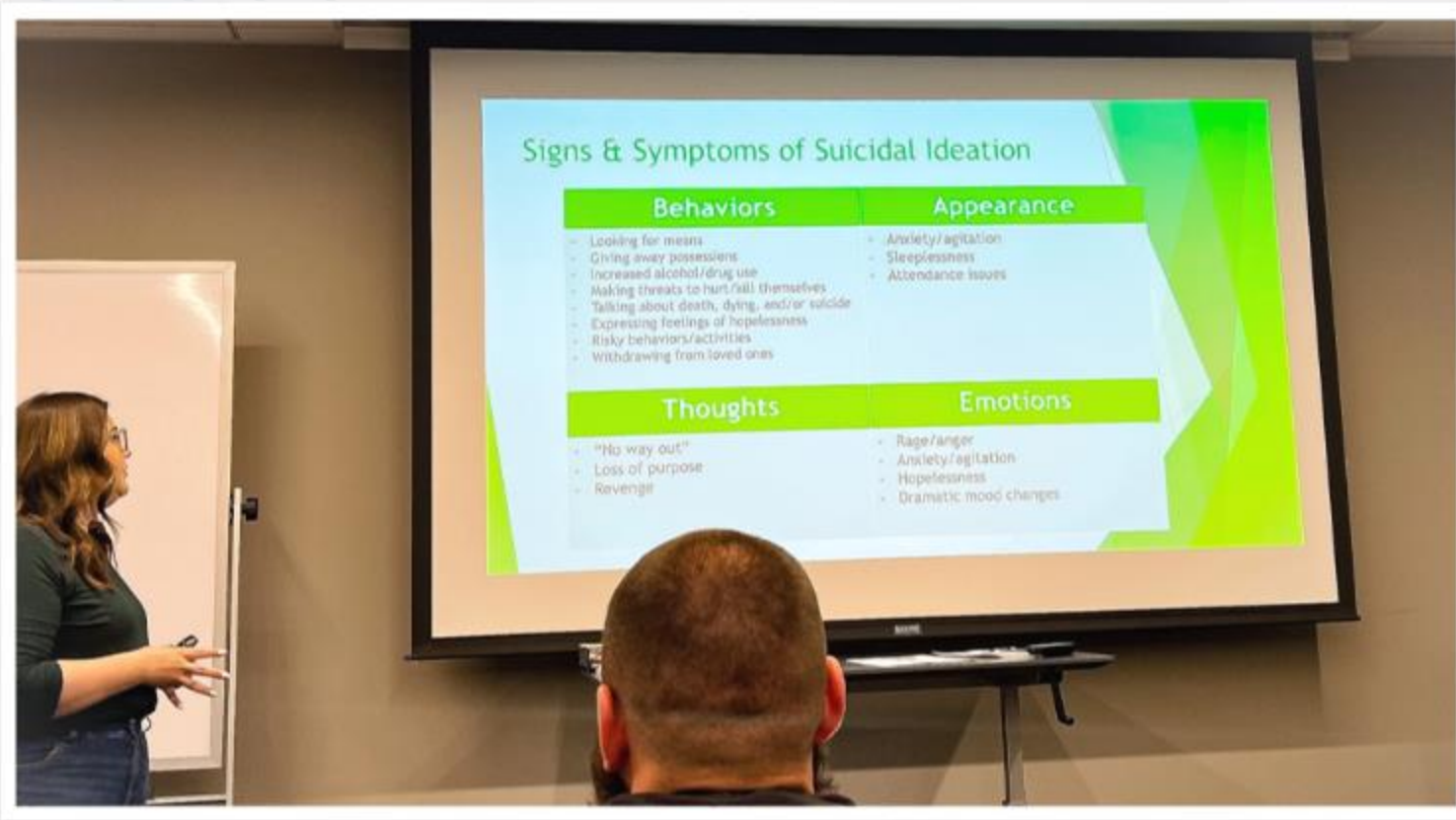
“ The only cure for  
grief is action.

Philosopher George Henry Lewes

England, 1846







Northern California Chapter  
National Electrical Contractors Association

# LEVEL UP FOREMAN'S DEVELOPMENT SERIES



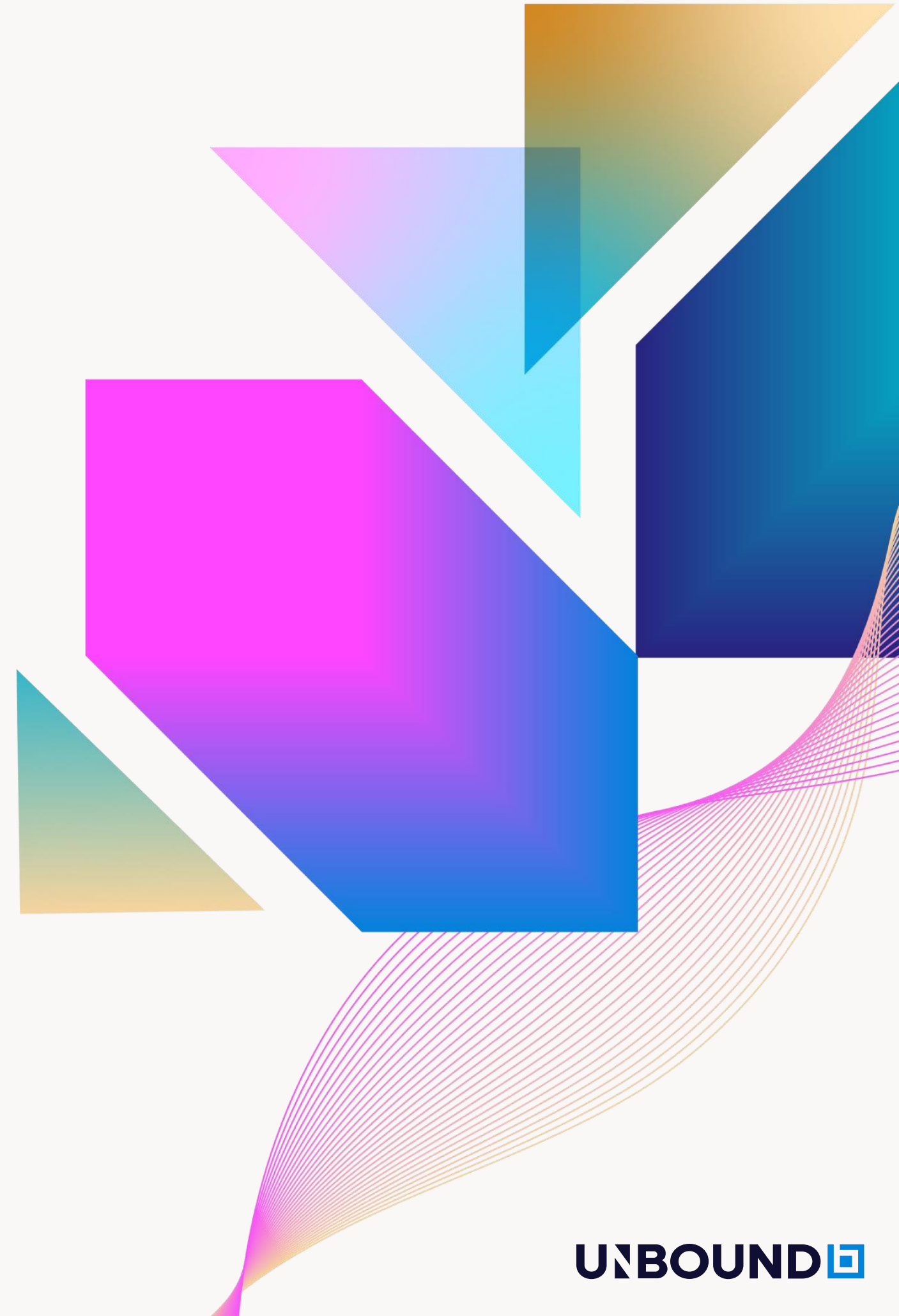






# Building a Culture that is Supportive of Mental Health:

Organizational  
Ideas/Recommendations





# What prevents people from getting mental health support?

## Main Barriers

### Lack of Knowledge/Access

- Don't know where to start
- Difficult to find/navigate
- Don't know what benefits & resources are already available to them
- Don't know they even need or could benefit from mental health support

### Lack of Resources

- Cost
- Not enough time

### Stigma

- Feel embarrassed or uncomfortable about seeking help
- Toxic masculinity
- Culture



**MENTAL  
HEALTH**

**AND SAFETY**

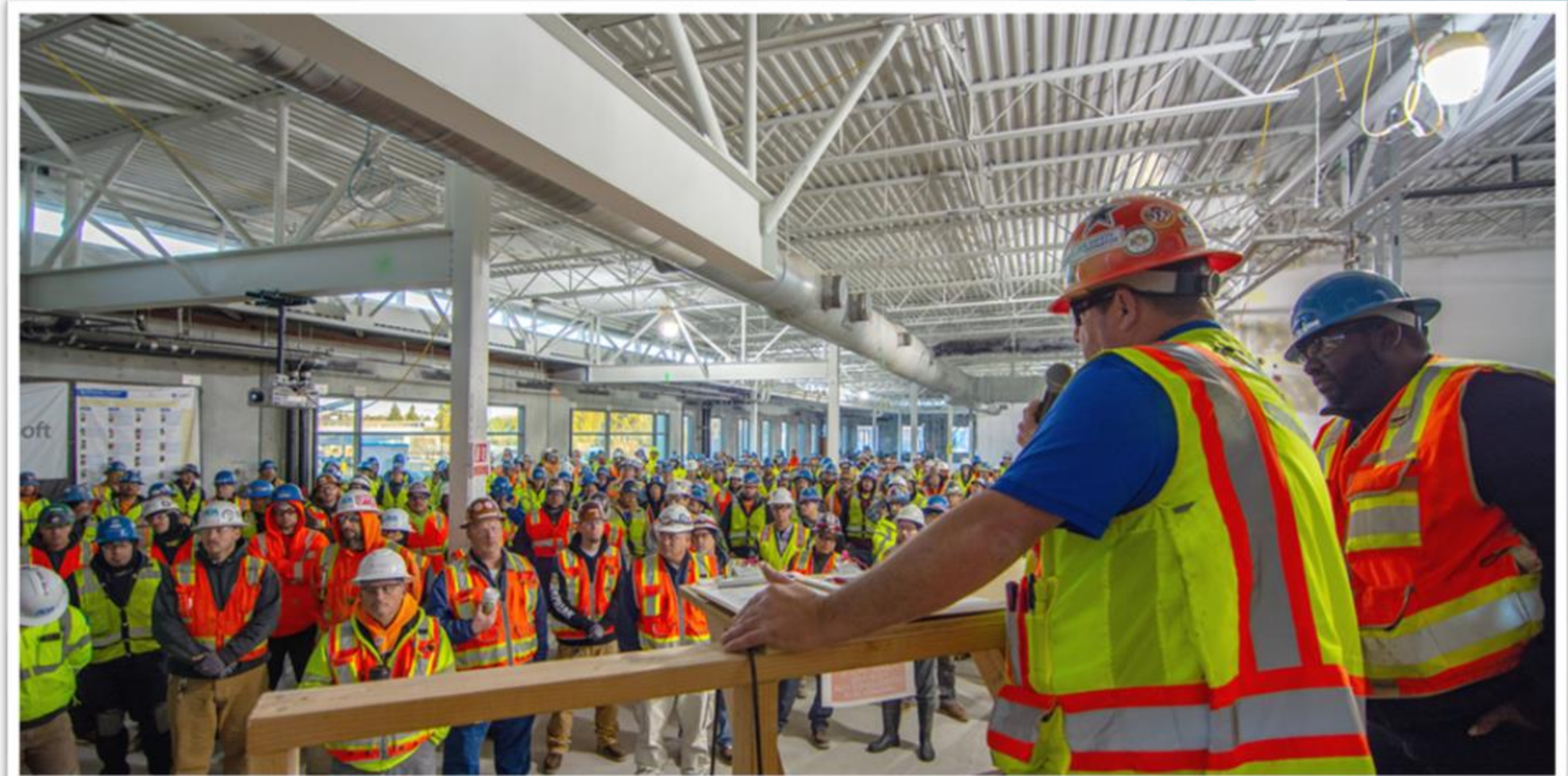
**PHYSICAL  
HEALTH**

**AND SAFETY**



# Leadership

- **Buy-in from leadership & executives**
- **Verbal/visible support, and often**
- **Normalize talking about it**
- **Train leaders to have conversations around mental health**
- **Prioritize the employees in the field; do not neglect them**
- **Initiatives can be started by ANYONE within the organization, regardless of title**

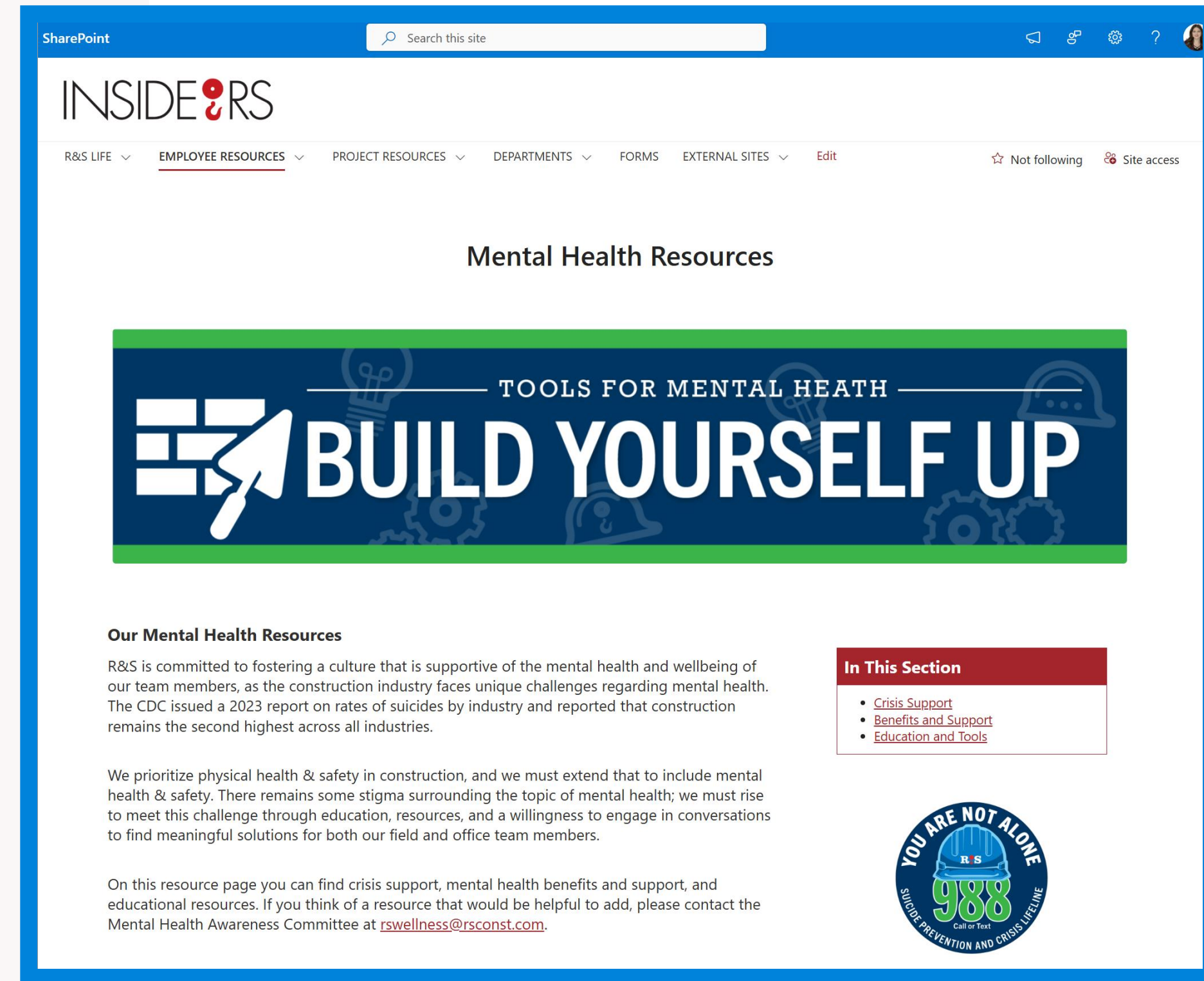




# Company Mental Health Resources

## Visible & Accessible

- **Centralized hub for mental health resources**
- **Includes employee benefits (i.e. EAP, Health Insurance Mental Health benefits, etc.)**
- **Includes crisis support information (e.g. 988)**
- **Easily accessible by all employees**
- **Ability to access in private**
- **Remind employees OFTEN where resources are available**







# National Stand-Down for Construction Suicide Prevention Week

**NATIONAL STAND-DOWN  
CONSTRUCTION SUICIDE  
PREVENTION WEEK**


**2024**

Monday, Sept. 9  
11-50AM PDT



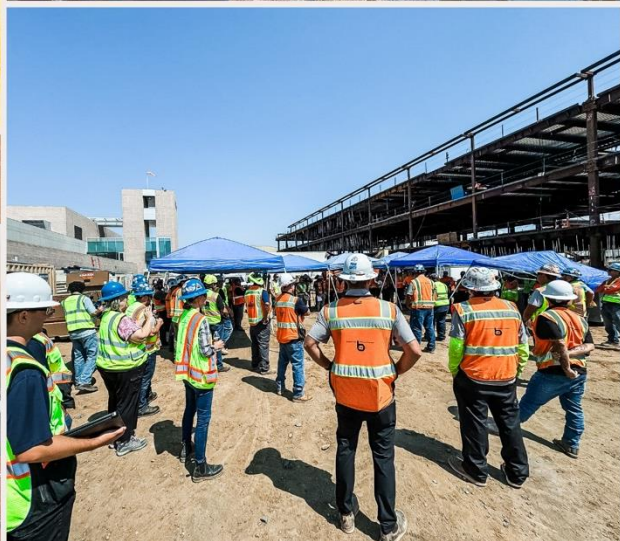


**RUDOLPH & SLETTEN**  
GENERAL CONTRACTORS



**CONSTRUCTION SUICIDE  
PREVENTION WEEK**  
ConstructionSuicidePrevention.com

is participating in the  
2024 CSPW Stand-down.







**YOU ARE NOT ALONE**

**988**  
Call or Text

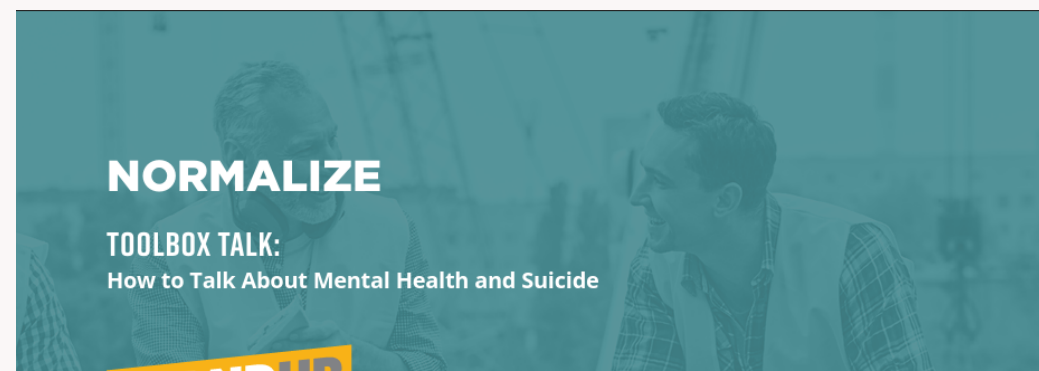
**SUICIDE PREVENTION  
AND CRISIS LIFELINE**

Crisis counselors available nationwide 24/7  
Mental health & emotional support  
Connect to resources  
Crisis de-escalation  
Free & confidential

**It Could Save a Life.**







Talking about mental health and suicide can feel awkward and uncomfortable. The stigma that surrounds these topics can make us embarrassed to bring them up and sometimes what happens is we use inappropriate phrases and language to address them. The problem with this is that it increases the stigma around mental health and suicide and can make it harder for someone in need of help to ask for it.

We have the power to eliminate the stigma and make these conversations easier by adopting proper language and increasing our mental health literacy. Don't feel bad if you don't know how to properly talk about these things – most people do! But you can make the choice to change your language so that you can help others.

If we think about mental illness like any other physical illness it helps to reframe our thinking and language. We don't say somebody “is cancer” so we shouldn't say that about mental illness either. Swap out “is” for “is experiencing anxiety” or “has depression”. When we say they “are depressed” it labels the whole person as the disorder and it becomes their identity – as opposed to addressing it as a health issue.

Similarly, our language around suicide can be changed to help not only those at risk, but those who may have attempted or lost someone have more dignity as well. “Committed suicide” is the common phrase we hear but “commit” implies a crime or a sin. Suicide is a death caused by the disease of mental illness, addiction, or despair. Saying “died by suicide” is a much more respectful term to use.

The most important thing is to think about what you are saying and whether it will make you seem approachable for someone who is experiencing mental illness or suicidal thoughts to talk to. Avoid using words like crazy, psycho, schizo or wacko as descriptions for anyone – even if they aren't experiencing mental illness, using those words increases the negative stigma around mental health and makes it harder for those in need to speak up.



## ARTICLES

- [Workplace Stress: Make Work Better - Mental Health Matters \(OSHA\)](#)
- ['Be Willing to Listen': Experts discuss suicide prevention in construction](#)
- [Why Does Mental Health Matter in Construction?](#)
- [Mental Health Programs Supporting the Construction Industry](#)
- [10 Action Steps Companies Can Take to Save Lives](#)

## BLOGS & NEWSLETTERS

- [The Invisible Construction Crisis Removing Our Emotional Masks - CSDZ](#)
- [Mental Wellbeing Becoming Increasingly Important for Construction Workers - National Association of Building Trades Unions](#)
- [The Invisible Construction Crisis: Pledge to STAND-Up for Suicide Prevention - CSDZ](#)
- [The Invisible Construction Crisis: Why Focus on Construction Workforce Risk? - CSDZ](#)
- [Breaking the Mental Health Stigma - CSDZ](#)

## PODCASTS

- [Dig This! Podcast featuring CIASP Executive Director, Sonya Bohmann - NUCA](#)
- [Chat with the Chairman, featuring CIASP Executive Director, Sonya Bohmann - CFMA](#)
- [The Construction Industry Confronts Its Biggest Challenge - Preventing Suicide - LiveSafe Prevention](#)
- [Shining a Light on Mental Health in Construction - Coatings Pro Magazine](#)
- [ABC's Greg Sizemore Talks About the Need to Address Suicide in Construction - Digging Deeper Podcast](#)

## VIDEOS/WEBINARS

- [Start the Conversation: OSHA Safe and Sound Week, featuring CIASP Executive Director, Sonya Bohmann](#)
- [NY Building Trades Employer's Association Mental Health Video](#)
- [Suicide Prevention Program Building Awareness in Construction - ForConstructionPros.com](#)
- [Uniting the Construction Industry Behind Suicide Prevention](#)







**American  
Foundation  
*for* Suicide  
Prevention**

# HARD HAT COURAGE

CONFRONTING SUICIDE *in*  
the CONSTRUCTION COMMUNITY



## TALK SAVES LIVES: CONSTRUCTION



An Introduction to Suicide Prevention  
in the Construction Industry

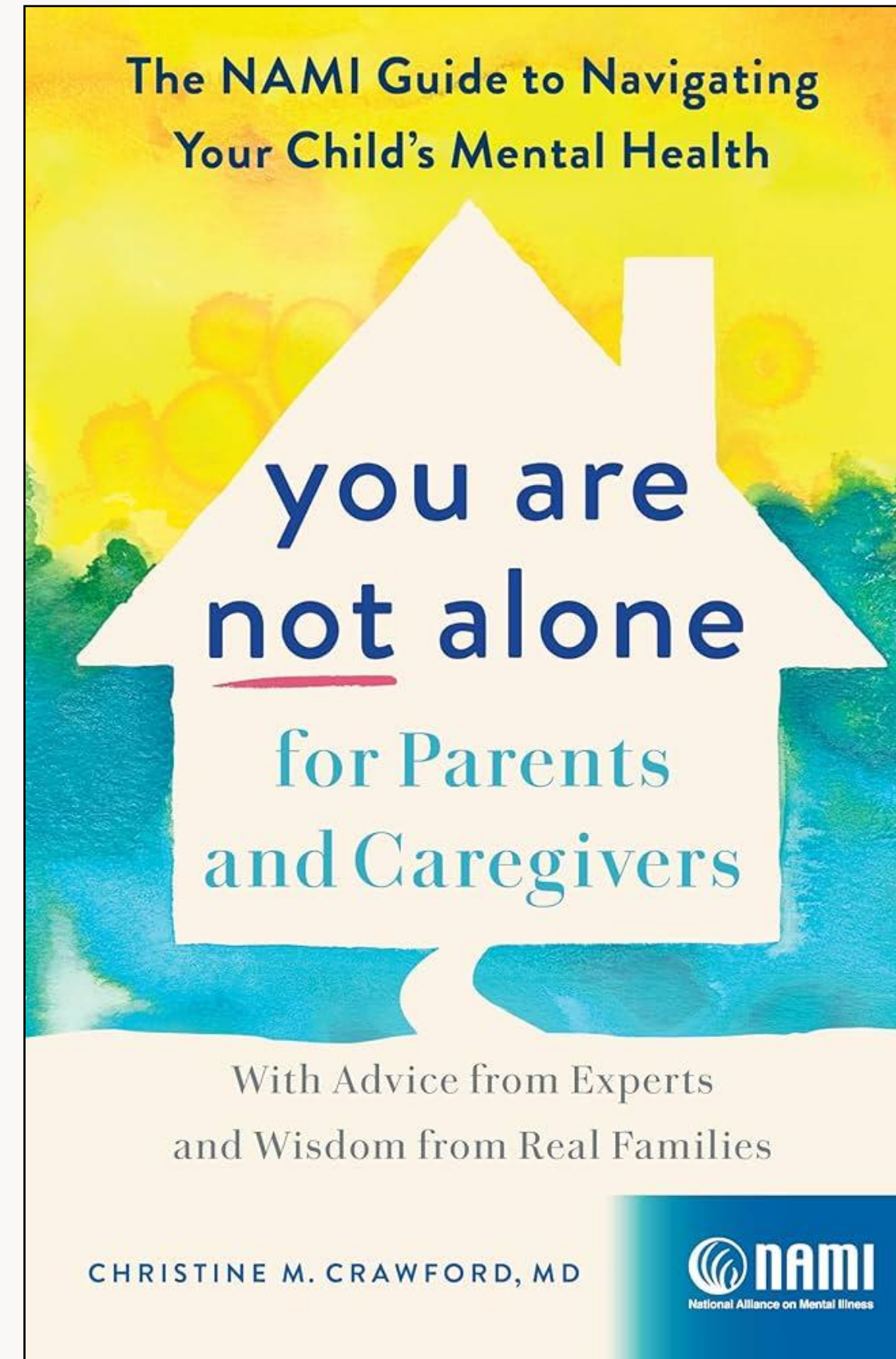
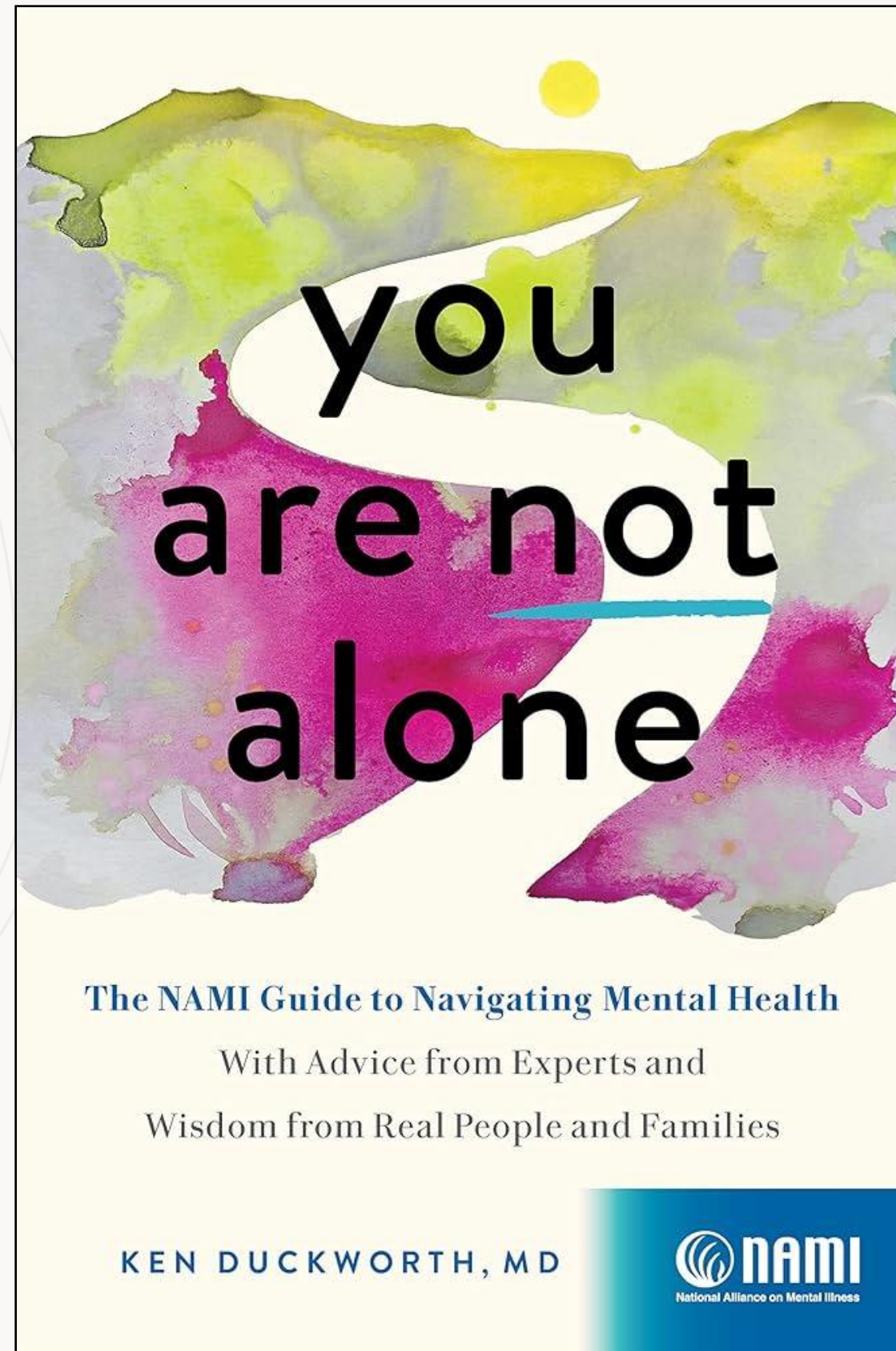


**HARD HAT  
COURAGE**





# Book Recommendations





# More Book Recommendations

\$40,834,405.62 Raised For Local Bookstores



Mental Health Awareness Books

By Lea - LifeMeetsLiterature

EDIT THIS LIST

Join us as we call attention to the importance of mental health and wellness.

				
<b>You Are Not Alone</b>	<b>How to Be Enough</b>	<b>You Are Your Best Thing</b>	<b>What My Bones Know</b>	<b>How to ADHD</b>
Ken Duckworth	Ellen Hendriksen	Brené Brown, Tarana Burke	Stephanie Foo	Jessica McCabe
 Hardback	 Hardback	 Paperback	 Paperback	 Hardback
<del>\$28.95</del> \$26.92	<del>\$30.00</del> \$27.90	<del>\$17.00</del> \$15.81	<del>\$21.00</del> \$19.53	<del>\$28.00</del> \$26.04

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UNBOUND

# Q&A



Thank you!



*Contact Me!*



**LinkedIn**



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