

PAUL LAWSON HELPS

Mental Health & Suicide Prevention in Construction

Wellbeing: The Next Frontier of Safety





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Disclaimer 1

We will be talking about suicide.

It's ok to walk out.



Disclaimer 2

I am not an expert.

You don't have to be either.





“People were expecting Paddy to give the usual post-fight speech, but he delivered an incredibly powerful and vulnerable message about mental health...

This, along with (being) a professional fighter, someone we often view as ‘tough’ and not concerned with mental health concerns, made people sit up and listen. We need more people doing this from all parts of society...

vulnerability empowers.”

~Pete White, UK Mental Health Consultant



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Big Idea:

**Suicide prevention, wellbeing, and mental health support
are the next frontier of safety**



Do:

Start building a program



Why do we need to focus on mental health in the first place?

How do you build a mental health program?

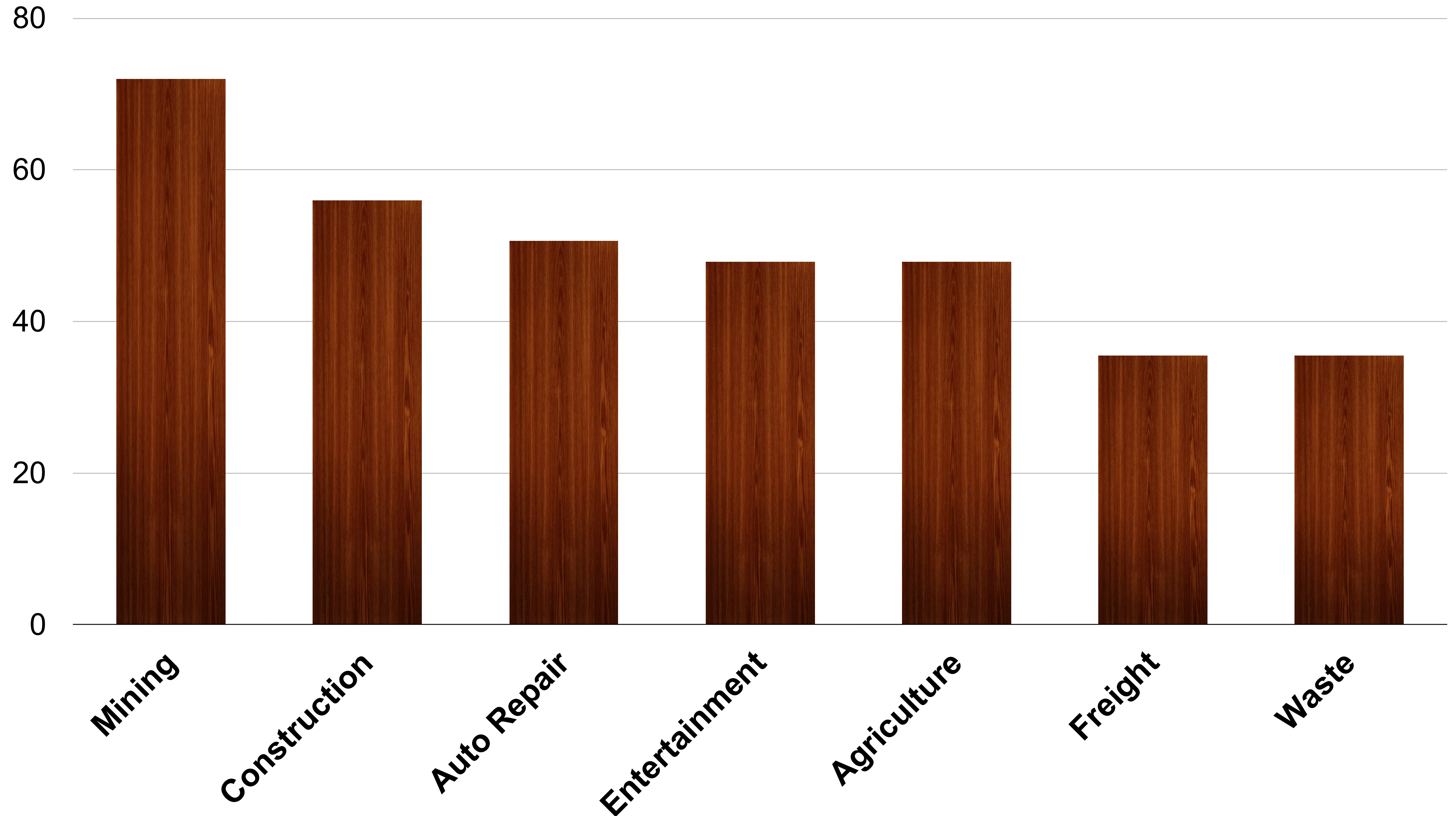
What will our industry look like if we all do something?



Blake Roddy



2023 Suicide Rate by Industry per CDC





Detailed Industry Data

In 2023, there were 5095 suicides in construction

- That same year, there were 982 Construction Worker Fatalities (Fatal Four)

The suicide rate in the U.S. is rising

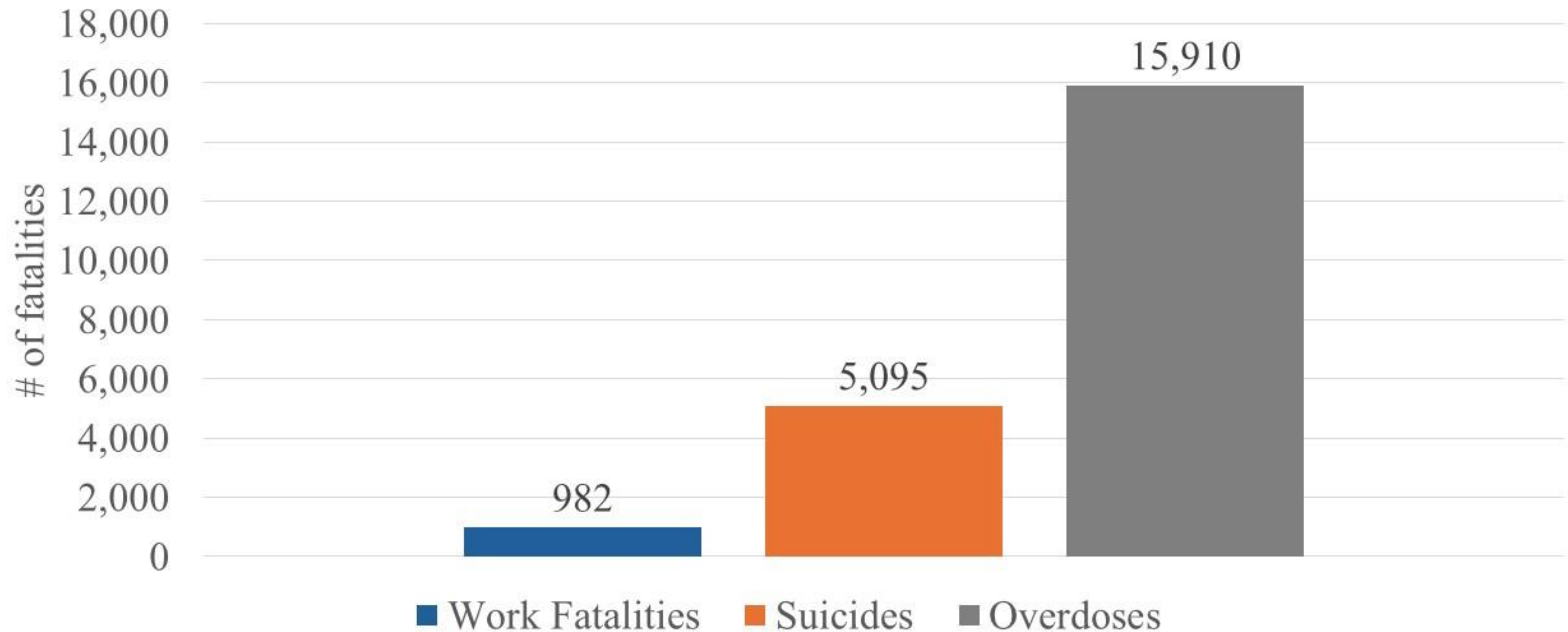
- Construction workers are at a greater risk of suicide than the average worker

This applies to 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



Fatalities by cause among construction workers 16 to 64 years old, 2023



What Are The Risk Factors?

- Macho Culture
- Work / Life Imbalance
- Stress
- Irregular Sleep
- Drug Misuse

Accident reveals:
"Lack of training".

What Are The Uphill Battles

- Macho Culture
- Work / Life
- Stress
- Irregular Sleep
- Drug Misuse



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Mental Health Awareness & Suicide Prevention



Building Blocks

Accept the challenge.

"Be the change you want to see" (Ghandi).

Begin the journey.

This is not about writing a policy or doing a "one and done" program. There is no single blueprint, so think of this guide as a roadmap with many roads leading to the same destination.

Commit to action.

Adopt the mindset of "gentle pressure relentlessly applied". This is a process of trial and error that will work through persistent implementation and continuous improvement.

Develop a team.

Create a workable strategic action plan.

Execute your plan.

Expand visible and vocal communications on project jobsites of addressing the emotional needs of workers and their families.

1. Galvanize Leadership
2. Understand Your EAP
3. Aggressively Market Resources
4. Provide Training
5. Plug Into Safety



1. Galvanize Leadership

- Makes good *business* sense...
- 4:1 ROI
- Use This Tool: Mental Health Calculator
- Leadership just needs to give permission



2. Understand Your EAP

- Employee Assistance Program
- Free & anonymous
- Provides counseling sessions, financial and legal advice, family services
- Small investment for big impact
- Often under-utilized





Digitally Enabled Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

- ▶ 3 sessions with a counselor in-person or virtually
- ▶ Take the assessment and check your wellbeing score
- ▶ Bite-sized training available from desktop or mobile app
- ▶ Skills training to develop resilience, stress management, and mental fitness
- ▶ Get your own personalized recommendations

Designed to help reduce stress and keep you healthy



Financial Advice



Child & Parenting Services



Legal Services



Adult & Eldercare Services



Online Legal Forms



Webinars & Trainings

Services for Employees & Families



Confidential Counseling



24-hour Crisis Help



Online Peer Support Groups



Tess, AI Chat-bot

Life presents us with challenges at work and at home on a daily basis. You do not have to face these challenges alone, even if you're far away.

Contact:



800-395-1616



uprisehealth.com/members

Access Code: midcityelectric





3. Aggressively Market Resources



Look for signs

- Hopelessness, depression, anxiety
- Feeling s/he is a burden to others
- Social withdrawal, isolation
- Sleep problems
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Loss, rejection or humiliation
- Giving away possessions
- Talking about death

Empathize and listen

- Remain calm and offer compassion
- Avoid judgement or advice
- When in doubt, just listen
- "This must be so hard for you."

Ask directly about suicide

- Asking shows that you care and offers them a chance to share their pain
- "Sometimes when people feel hopeless, they are thinking about suicide. Are you thinking about suicide?"

Remove the danger

- Lock up and limit access to medications, firearms, and other dangerous items.

Next level care:

- Call **988**, the Suicide Prevention Lifeline 24/7
- Immediate danger? Call 911
- Stay with the person

Suicide Warning Signs

These signs may mean someone is at risk for suicide. Risk is greater if a behavior is new or has increased and if it seems related to a painful event, loss, or change.

- Talking about wanting to die or kill oneself
- Looking for a way to kill oneself, such as searching online or buying a gun
- Talking about feeling trapped, hopeless, or having no reason to live
- Talking about being a burden to others
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs
- Acting anxious or agitated; behaving recklessly
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge
- Displaying extreme mood swings

Suicide is preventable.
Call the lifeline at **988**

<https://uprisehealth.com/resources/the-roi-on-workforce-mental-health/>

PLH



**Text HOME
to 741741**
for free, 24/7 crisis
support in the US.



988
SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE

ADAMH
ALCOHOL, DRUG AND MENTAL HEALTH
BOARD OF FRANKLIN COUNTY



Your workers will **trust a person**
before they will trust a resource...

...personally advocate for resources.

4. Provide Training



Mental Health
FIRST AID



5. Plug Into Safety



Toolbox Talks
Stand Downs





[ABOUT US](#) ▾

[GET HELP](#) ▾

[GET INFORMED](#) ▾

[GET INVOLVED](#) ▾

[DONATE NOW](#)

[PLEDGE TO STAND UP](#)

[CALENDAR](#)



TOOLBOX TALKS

TOOLBOX TALK TEMPLATES

Download and customize these Toolbox Talk templates with your organization's logo.

CIASP BRANDED TOOLBOX TALKS

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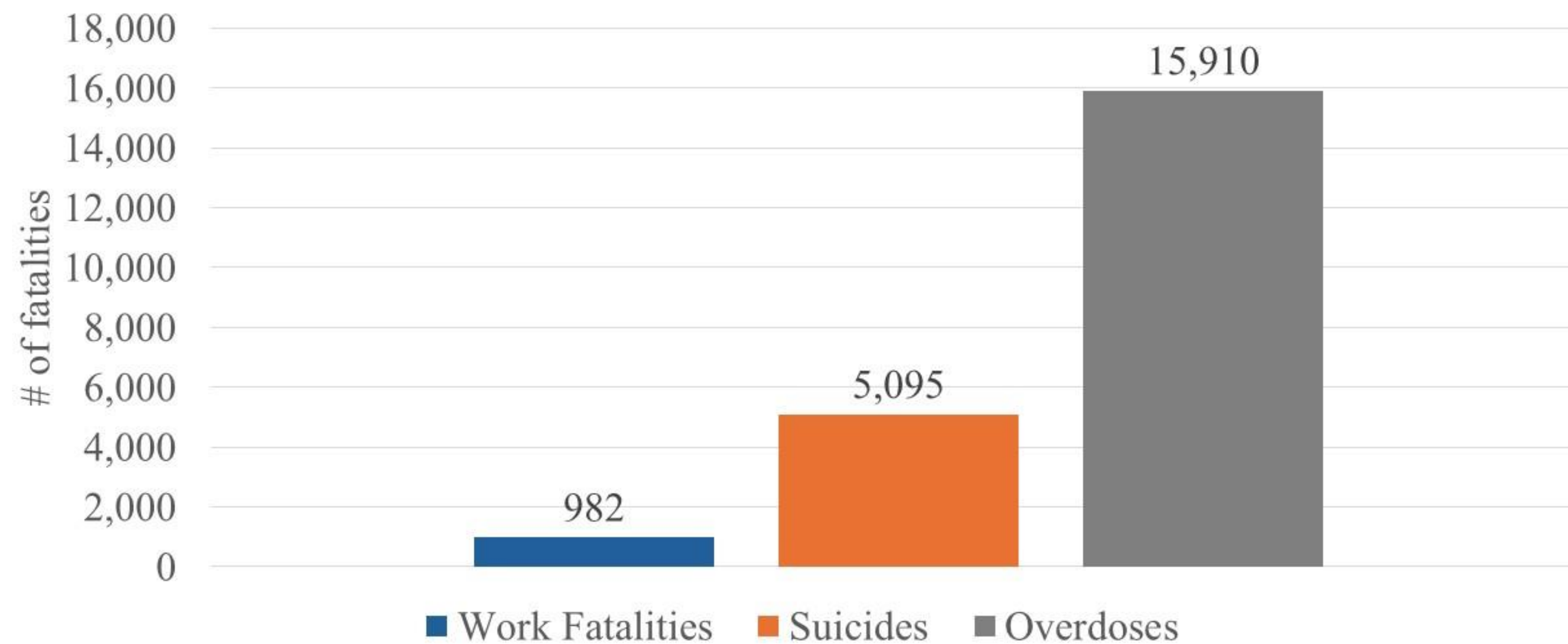
*"On the Golden Gate Bridge,
we had the idea we could cheat death
by providing every known safety device for workers."*

- Joseph Strauss, 1937; The Saturday Evening Post



...it's time for the next new frontier in safety.

Fatalities by cause among construction workers 16 to 64 years old, 2023



Big Idea:

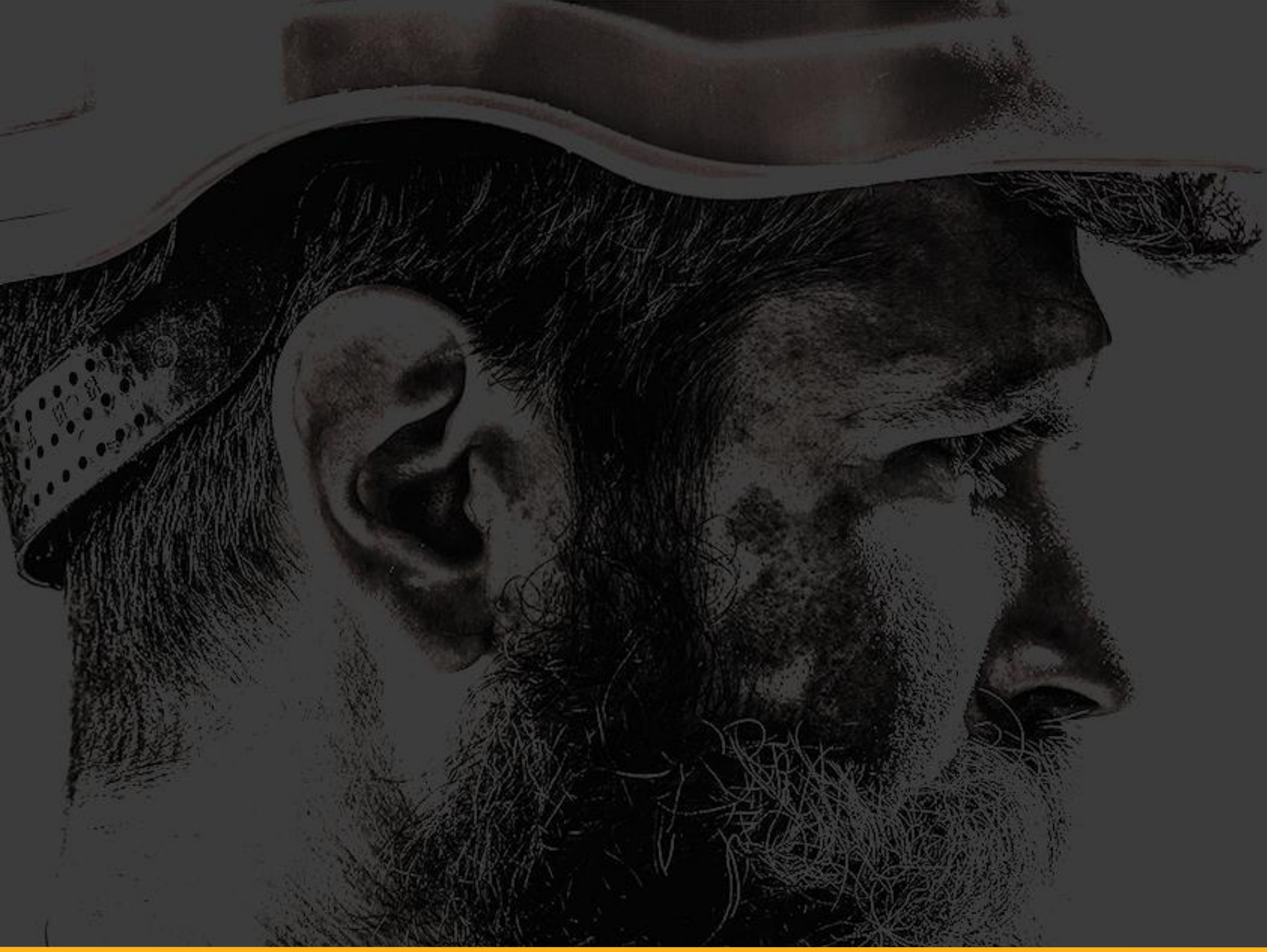
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contact@paullawsonhelps.com



Paul Lawson

Construction Industry Mental Health Advocate
| Helper



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BX BLUEPRINTS FOR WELLBEING COUNCIL

YES, YOU CAN TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH IN CONSTRUCTION!

Mental health can be an awkward topic to discuss in the workplace, especially in industries like construction, *but it doesn't have to be!*

Join author and Organizational Psychologist Melissa Doman, MA for a fireside interview with Blueprints for Wellbeing leaders Paul Lawson and Monica Poirier as they explore proven methods to make mental health concepts and topics easy to grasp and apply in construction industry environments. Bring your unique questions to add to the open Q&A after the interview and take away valuable tools that will impact the wellbeing of workers in your company. **REGISTER NOW** and receive a free copy of Melissa's book, "Yes, You Can Talk About Mental Health at Work." A book signing will follow the event.



WHO: Safety Directors/Managers, HR Professionals and anyone who wants to be prepared to provide support.

WHEN: Wednesday, May 14 | 8 -10 AM

WHERE: The Makoy
5462 Center Street, Hilliard, OH 43026

COST: NO COST for BX Members

PRESENTER:

Melissa Doman, M.A.
Mental Health at Work Specialist/Author/
Former Clinical Mental Health Therapist



All attendees will receive a copy of Melissa's book,
"Yes, You Can Talk About Mental Health at Work!"



**REGISTER
ONLINE
AT BX.ORG**

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT **ASHTON CHAPMAN:**

e achapman@bx.org **p** 614.486.9521 X236 **w** bx.org