

Addressing Suicide and Mental Health in Construction

## Topic of the Day: Reduce the Stigma

**Fundamentally, the problem with suicide is the *stigma* associated with mental health.**

*I had a student who was recently laid off, his family life was stressful, and had only one more chance of passing a competency test before he was kicked out of the program. He called me one day very upset and repeatedly told me he was "just done." Picking up on several warning signs, I was worried about his safety. Keeping him calm, I talked to the student until I knew he was in a safe place with a family member and created a plan with the student to get help. We were able to help him get through the apprentice program and refer him to additional resources.*

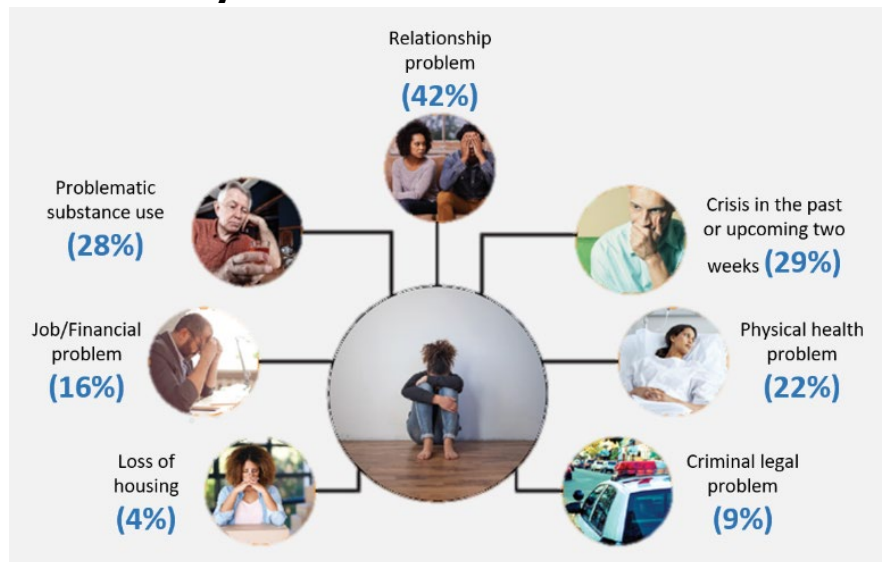
-Instructor

### Risk Factors in the Construction Industry

- Stoic, "tough guy" culture
- Seasonal & unsteady employment
- Travel away from home
- High pressure to produce on time
- Physically-demanding work & chronic pain
- Industry with highest rate of prescription opioids & second highest rate of heavy alcohol use
- Sleep disruption
- Culture of Substance abuse
- Fearlessness & risk-taking
- Access to lethal means (firearms & jobsite hazards)

**Suicide doesn't only occur in people who have known mental health issues.**

**Many factors contribute to suicide:**



Source: CDC's National Violent Death Reporting System, data from 27 states participating in 2015.

*Mental health is a personal issue, a family issue, a work issue, and a society issue. This is why mental health should be part of the SAFETY CONVERSATION.*



#youarenotalone