



# Prevention Newslink

February 2025

## SOUTH DAKOTA PREVENTION RESOURCE CENTERS (SDPRC)

### WPRC

Youth and Family Services  
Rapid City, SD

Bill Elger  
[welger@youthandfamilyservices.org](mailto:welger@youthandfamilyservices.org)

Chloe White  
[cwhite@youthandfamilyservices.org](mailto:cwhite@youthandfamilyservices.org)

(605) 342-1593

### SEPRC

Volunteers of America-Dakotas  
Sioux Falls, SD

Kerri Cox  
[k.cox@voa-dakotas.org](mailto:k.cox@voa-dakotas.org)

Audrey Simmons  
[a.simmons@voa-dakotas.org](mailto:a.simmons@voa-dakotas.org)

(605) 444-6333

### NEPRC

Human Service Agency  
Watertown, SD

Dodi Haug  
[dodih@humanserviceagency.org](mailto:dodih@humanserviceagency.org)

Stephanie Kinnander  
[stephaniek@humanserviceagency.org](mailto:stephaniek@humanserviceagency.org)

(605) 884-3516

Click [HERE](#) to determine your region's Prevention Resource Center

## WHAT IS KRATOM? UNDERSTANDING A GROWING TREND IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Kratom is a plant derived from the leaves of a specific type of tree that is in the coffee family. The leaves from the Southeast Asian *Mitragyna speciosa* can have a stimulant and opioid-like effect on those who consume it. Kratom can be purchased in smoke shops and through online vendors by anyone over the age of 21 in South Dakota. Kratom can be ingested in a variety of ways: tablets/capsules, steeped as a tea, smoked, or even chewed.

### Kratom Side Effects



Muscle Pain



Drowsiness



Dry Mouth



Addiction



Insomnia



Potential Liver Damage



Tachycardia



Respiratory Depression

It is believed that kratom acts on opioid receptors in the brain. This substance has such varied effects on users because it contains the chemical mitragynine and 7-Hydroxymitragynine which if consumed in a low dose can have a stimulant effect, but in larger doses acts as a depressant.

AddictionResource

The Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) has noted Kratom as a "Drug and Chemical of Concern" due to the opioid-like effect that can lead to addiction and cause withdrawal symptoms in users of the product. The DEA also highlights the possible connection Kratom has had to several cases of psychosis. Information from the [Mayo Clinic reports](#) that side effects of kratom use include weight loss, chills, nausea, liver damage, depression, seizures, and hallucinations. [SAMHSA reported](#) that an estimated 1.7 million Americans over the age of 12 used Kratom in 2021.



Ongoing research is still being conducted on the effects of Kratom. You can stay up to date and find out more by visiting the [National Institute on Drug Abuse](#) website. For a quick and easy educational tool on Kratom, check out the [DOJ/DEA Drug Fact Sheet](#). John Hopkins also has an interesting fast-facts [graphic](#).

# UPCOMING TRAININGS & EVENTS

## School Crisis Prevention & Response Hub of South Dakota

### 2024-25 Virtual Speaker Series

For more information and to register, click [HERE](#). For questions, contact [Amber Kilburn](#).

## Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)

February 24-25 | Rapid City

To register email [Chloe White](#)

March 6-7 | Brookings

Find more information and register [HERE](#)

## Spring 2025 Tobacco Control Institute

March 18th, 2025 | 8:30a

Ramkota, 920 W Sioux Ave, Pierre

Find more information and register [HERE](#)

## Multi-Disciplinary Response To Victim Services Conference

March 27th, 2025 | The Box Events Center, Box Elder

See more information and register [HERE](#)

## 2025 SD Peer Leadership Conference

March 27 | Rapid City

Email [Chloe White](#) for more information

March 28 | Brookings

Email [Stephanie Kinnander](#) for more information

## Teaching Cannabis Awareness and Prevention Conference

April 9-10, 2025 | Virtual

See more information and register [HERE](#)

## SPF Application for Prevention Success Training (SAPST)

May 5-8 | In-Person

Register [HERE](#)

## Save-the-Date

Join us next year for the SD Behavioral Health Conference to include suicide & substance use prevention, mental health, treatment and more!

August 4-5, 2025

Sioux Falls Convention Center  
1201 North West Ave, Sioux Falls, SD 57104



# STAND UP TO BULLYING DAY

February 28th, 2025

“When adults respond quickly and consistently to bullying behavior they send the message that it is not acceptable. Research shows this can stop bullying behavior over time.

Parents, school staff, and other adults in the community can help kids prevent bullying by talking about it, building a safe school environment, and creating a community-wide bullying prevention strategy.”

- From [StopBullying.gov](#).



# NATIONAL LIBRARY LOVER'S MONTH

To celebrate National Library Lover's Month, sign up for the SDPRC's digital library through the Libby app! Scan the QR code to get registered.



The SDPRC digital library allows users to borrow e-books and audiobooks on topics varying from substance misuse, mental health, and suicide. Each of the SDPRCs also maintain a physical library in Rapid City, Sioux Falls, and Watertown. The SDPRC Prevention Libraries are free to access allowing anyone to listen or read from their phone, tablet, web browser or book with ease.

# SD TOBACCO CONTROL PROGRAM (SD TPC) RFA

The Tobacco Disparities RFA is to promote health equity by incorporating a long-term change aimed at reducing disparate commercial tobacco use among the following SD TCP priority populations: American Indians, pregnant and postpartum women, people of low socioeconomic status (SES), and the behavioral health populations. Funding maximum is \$25,000.

The Tobacco Youth & Community Engagement RFA is designed to focus on engaging youth and young adults, as well as their community, in tobacco efforts including tobacco prevention (including e-cigarettes) and cessation. Applicants should focus their efforts on supporting and implementing evidence-based interventions and activities that are specifically for youth (under 18 years old), young adults (18-24 years old), or community-based efforts to learn about tobacco prevention and cessation. Funding maximum is \$25,000.

These two highly competitive RFA opportunities will open for application submissions on January 10, 2025 and will close at 5pm (CT) on March 26, 2025. To view more details click [HERE](#). If you have any interest in applying, please feel to reach out to Hilary Larsen ([Hilary.Larsen@state.sd.us](mailto:Hilary.Larsen@state.sd.us)).

# SOUTH DAKOTA SUICIDE PREVENTION



## RESOURCES

**STATEWIDE WEBSITE**  
[SDSUICIDEPREVENTION.ORG](http://SDSUICIDEPREVENTION.ORG)

**THE HELPLINE CENTER**  
[HELPLINECENTER.ORG](http://HELPLINECENTER.ORG)

If you or someone you know needs help with:

- Depression
- Grief
- Relationship Conflicts
- Drugs
- Alcohol
- Suicidal Thoughts

Call/text 988 or [chat online](#)



# 988

---

## SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

# Suicide & Support Dogs

People who live with chronic thoughts of suicide may need to find unique ways to cope long term. Therapy dogs can play a significant role in providing emotional support and reducing the risk of suicide for individuals struggling with mental health challenges. Their calming presence and unconditional love can help alleviate feelings of isolation, hopelessness, and distress. Here's how therapy dogs can be impactful in suicide prevention:

1. Providing Emotional Comfort
  - Therapy dogs offer non-judgmental companionship, which can reduce feelings of loneliness and help people feel understood and valued.
  - Physical contact, such as petting a dog, triggers the release of oxytocin, a hormone associated with bonding and stress reduction, which can help improve mood.
2. Reducing Anxiety and Depression
  - Interaction with therapy dogs has been shown to lower cortisol (stress hormone) levels and reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression.
  - The routine of caring for a dog such as feeding them or going on walks can provide a sense of purpose and distraction from intrusive thoughts.
3. Facilitating Social Connections
  - Therapy dogs often serve as social bridges, encouraging interaction between individuals who may otherwise isolate themselves.
  - Participating in therapy dog programs or visiting group settings with dogs can foster a sense of community and belonging.
4. Encouraging Mindfulness
  - Spending time with a therapy dog can help individuals stay present in the moment, reducing the impact of overwhelming thoughts or emotions.
5. Supporting Therapy and Recovery
  - Many mental health professionals incorporate therapy dogs into treatment plans for patients at risk of suicide.
  - Canine-assisted therapy can create a safe and comforting environment for individuals to open up about their feelings.

If you or someone you know is struggling with suicidal thoughts, it's important to reach out for help. Therapy dogs can be a part of a broader support system that includes counseling, medication, and strong social connections. Please reach out to 988 at any time for additional support or for information about therapy dogs.

## SOUTH DAKOTA TOBACCO CONTROL PROGRAM

### Southeast Tobacco Prevention Coordinator

**Carter Linke**

605-770-6994

[clinke@bhssc.org](mailto:clinke@bhssc.org)

### Northeast Tobacco Prevention Coordinator

**Ashley Heyne**

605-221-8783

[aheyne@bhssc.org](mailto:aheyne@bhssc.org)

### Western Tobacco Prevention Coordinator

**Kayla Bolstad**

605-721-4584

[kbolstad@bhssc.org](mailto:kbolstad@bhssc.org)



[Quittobaccosd.com](http://Quittobaccosd.com)

Click [here](#) to determine your region's Tobacco Prevention Coordinator

## Tobacco Spring Institute: REGISTRATION LIVE

Looking to strengthen your community's efforts in tobacco prevention and cessation? Join the Spring Tobacco Control Institute on **March 18th**, hosted by the South Dakota Tobacco Control Program! This event offers tools, resources, and strategies to help individuals and organizations reduce tobacco use and its harmful effects. Whether you're a seasoned advocate or new to tobacco control, the institute provides valuable insights and networking opportunities to drive meaningful change. Don't miss this chance to make an impact—learn more and register today at [Quit Tobacco SD's website](#). For more information, please contact Hilary Larsen ([Hilary.Larsen@state.sd.us](mailto:Hilary.Larsen@state.sd.us))

## Media Resources and Library

The Tobacco Control Program would like to remind you there are many free prevention and cessation materials available to order [here](#).



## 2025 Great American Spit Out

Mark your calendars for the Great American Spit Out on **Thursday, February 20, 2025!** This event raises awareness about the dangers of smokeless tobacco and oral nicotine pouches which are often falsely marketed as safer alternatives. These products contain addictive nicotine and can lead to gum disease, tooth loss, and oral cancer. Schools are encouraged to take part by hosting pledge walls, incorporating anti-tobacco lessons into the curriculum, or organizing student-led presentations to spread awareness. Empower your students to make informed decisions and stand up against tobacco use. Find the [Youth Resource Guide](#) here.

## UPCOMING EVENTS AND TRAININGS

- March 4, 2025 3-5pm CT/2-4pm MT: CATCH My Breath Training (Virtual) [Register Here](#)
- March 13, 2025 3:30 – 4:40 CT / 2:30 – 3:30 MT: NOT on Tobacco Training (Virtual): [Register Here](#)

For more trainings or additional events, please visit [here](#) or contact Ashley Heyne ([aheyne@bhssc.org](mailto:aheyne@bhssc.org)).