



# Prevention Newslink

March 2026

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## Reducing Naloxone Stigma

The opioid crisis isn't something happening "somewhere else." It's affecting families, friends, and neighbors in communities all across South Dakota. That's why having simple, life-saving tools readily available matters so much. One of the most effective tools we have is naloxone, often known by the brand name Narcan. This can reverse an opioid overdose and give someone a second chance at life.

Naloxone is becoming easier to access, but stigma still stands in the way. Some people worry that promoting or carrying naloxone sends the wrong message or encourages drug use. In reality, naloxone is about safety. It's no different than learning CPR or keeping a fire extinguisher nearby. We don't expect an emergency, but we're grateful to be prepared when one happens.

What makes naloxone so powerful is that it puts the ability to save a life into the hands of everyday people. Anyone can be trained to recognize an overdose and respond quickly.

You don't have to be a medical professional to make an impact. Supporting naloxone distribution can be as simple as getting trained, sharing information, or encouraging your workplace, school, or community group to keep naloxone on hand.

If you or someone you care about uses opioids, the risk of overdose is real whether accidental or not. Opioid misuse can happen to anyone, and overdose can occur even when medications are prescribed. Knowing the warning signs and being ready to act quickly can save a life.

More information on recognizing and responding to an overdose is available at [www.letsbeclearsd.com/prevention/reverse-overdose](http://www.letsbeclearsd.com/prevention/reverse-overdose).

Naloxone should be as common as fire extinguishers, first aid kits, and CPR classes. By talking openly about it and encouraging access, we reduce stigma, save lives, and strengthen our communities. Promoting naloxone isn't about drugs, it's about people, and making sure help is there when it's needed most.



Information for this article was provided by [www.nacoa.org/removing-the-stigma-around-narcan-why-naloxone-training-saves-lives/](http://www.nacoa.org/removing-the-stigma-around-narcan-why-naloxone-training-saves-lives/).

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

# UPCOMING TRAININGS & EVENTS

## QPR Training

April 6 | 1 PM - 2:30 PM (CST)

Sioux Falls

Find more information [HERE](#).

## The Risks Are Real

April 7 | 11:00 AM (CST)

Virtual

Find more information and register [HERE](#)

## Pain Uncovered: The Hidden Connections Shaping Relief and Dependence 3-Part Series

April 13 | 12 PM - 1 PM (CST)

May 11 | 12 PM - 1 PM (CST)

Virtual

Find more information [HERE](#).

## Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)

April 21-22 | Sioux Falls

Find more information and register  
[HERE](#).

## Medications for Opioid Use Disorder Training Days

May 1 | 8am-5pm MT

Monument Convention Center Rapid City

May 14 | 9am-1pm CST

USD Sanford School of Medicine

Sioux Falls

Find more information and register  
[HERE](#).

## SPF Application for Prevention Success Training (SAPST)

May 18-22

Register for more information with the  
QR code below.



# April is Alcohol Awareness Month

April is Alcohol Awareness Month, a chance to spark real conversations, share real facts, and make a real difference in our communities around alcohol.

Alcohol is a common part of many social events such as ballgames, weddings, backyard barbecues, or weekends at the lake. When teens regularly see alcohol as part of these gatherings, it can send the message that drinking is simply part of having fun or fitting in. But alcohol affects teens differently than adults. Because the teen brain is still developing, especially the areas that control decision-making, emotions, and impulse control, alcohol can have a much greater impact than many people realize.

According to the South Dakota Department of Health, South Dakota has one of the highest alcohol-related death rates in the country, with about 31.4 deaths per 100,000 people. That's not just a statistic, it represents neighbors, coworkers, classmates, and family.

It's important to note that most South Dakota teens and adults actually don't binge drink. The majority are making healthy choices even if that's not always what it looks like on social media.

This month isn't about pointing fingers. It's about:

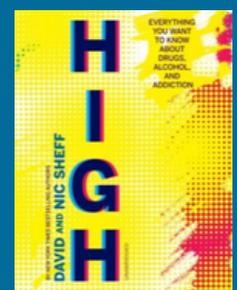
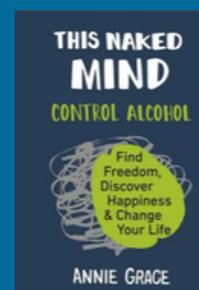
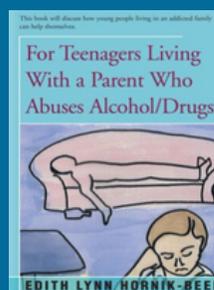
- Knowing what risky drinking looks like
- Recognizing when alcohol is being used to cope
- Checking in on ourselves and the people we care about
- Understanding that help and recovery are possible
- Understanding how alcohol can affect your goals, sports performance, grades, and mental health
- Recognizing peer pressure and knowing how to respond

You don't need a title or a program to make an impact. During Alcohol Awareness Month, you can:

- Share facts and resources on social media
- Host a conversation at your school, workplace, or community group
- Encourage alcohol-free activities and events
- Start a simple check-in: "How are you really doing?"
- Model healthy coping skills and stress management

Remember, small actions are what build stronger communities.

## SDPRC Libby Recommendations



## Start Smart - Win Big

Driving safe is always worth it. But how's \$10,000 sound to sweeten the deal? Drive Safe SD is giving away \$10,000 to one lucky high school student, plus another \$10,000 to donate to the school program of their choice.

Entries are open until 4/10. Just take a quick quiz on your driving habits, and you're in! Enter now at <https://drivesafesd.com/lesson-learned/>  
[#DriveSafeSD](#) [#LessonLearnedSD](#)  
[#NewDriverSafety](#)



## Distracted Driving Awareness Month

April is National Distracted Driving Awareness Month, a campaign dedicated to reducing, or eliminating, deaths and injuries caused by distracted driving.

Distracted driving includes anything that takes your eyes, hands, or mind off the road including texting, adjusting the GPS, eating, scrolling social media, or even having an intense conversation. While multitasking may feel normal in our daily lives, it doesn't belong behind the wheel. At highway speeds, reading or sending a text can mean traveling the length of a football field without looking at the road.

According to the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#), thousands of people are killed each year in crashes involving distracted drivers, and many more are injured.

The good news? Distracted driving is 100% preventable. Simple choices make a powerful difference:

- Put your phone on "Do Not Disturb" before driving.
- Keep your phone out of reach.
- Set your GPS and music before you start moving.
- Speak up if you're a passenger and notice unsafe behavior.

For teens and adults alike, safe driving starts with personal responsibility. A text can wait. A notification can wait. A life cannot. This April, let's commit to driving distraction-free because every trip, no matter how short, deserves our full attention.

## We're Hiring Prevention Specialists!

Join our SD Prevention Resource Centers (SDPRCs) in advancing substance use prevention and mental health promotion across our regions. We are hiring Prevention Specialists who are passionate about strengthening communities and creating lasting impact.

In this dynamic role, Prevention Specialists:

- Deliver engaging, evidence-based prevention trainings and presentations for schools, community organizations, coalitions, businesses, and other partners
- Provide technical assistance and hands-on support to strengthen local prevention infrastructure
- Build and support coalitions to expand sustainable, community-driven prevention efforts
- Coordinate youth and adult training opportunities across multi-county regions
- Promote prevention campaigns and share resources through digital platforms, media outreach, and community events
- Maintain and expand access to prevention tools, curricula, and educational materials
- Collect and analyze data to measure impact and support continuous quality improvement
- Help ensure compliance with state and federal prevention standards

These positions are ideal for collaborative, community-minded professionals who are energized by outreach, training, partnership-building, and data-informed work. Prevention Specialists play a key role in empowering local partners and strengthening prevention systems across the regions we serve.

- Interested in the Central Prevention Resource Center (located in Pierre) position?
  - View the full listing and [apply here](#).
- Interested in the Southeastern Prevention Resource Center (located in Sioux Falls) position?
  - View the full listing and [apply here](#).

# 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

## Sleep and Mental Health

Each year from March 10–16, communities recognize National Sleep Awareness Week, led by the National Sleep Foundation, to emphasize the importance of healthy sleep. Sleep is not a luxury; it is essential for both physical and mental well-being.

When we get consistent, quality rest, our brains are better able to regulate mood, manage stress, and process emotions. In contrast, ongoing sleep deprivation can increase irritability, anxiety, and symptoms of depression, while also making everyday challenges feel more overwhelming. Practicing good sleep hygiene, such as keeping a consistent sleep schedule, limiting screen time before bed, and creating a calm nighttime routine, can improve both sleep quality and emotional resilience. Even small changes can have a meaningful impact on mental health and overall functioning.

For those who struggle to sleep due to racing thoughts or emotional distress, support is available. The Helpline Center houses the South Dakota 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline that provides free, confidential support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. By calling or texting 988, individuals can connect with trained counselors who are ready to listen and help during difficult moments.

## Upcoming Events

### Surviving After Suicide Monthly Support Groups

#### In-person Support Groups:

Third Thursday of each month from 6:30p.m. – 8:00p.m. CST  
Helpline Center | 3817 S Elmwood Ave | Sioux Falls, SD 57105  
There is no fee or registration required. Must be 18 years old to attend.

#### Virtual Support Groups:

Second Wednesday of each month from 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. CST  
There is no fee but registration is required. Must be 18 years old to attend.  
To receive a Zoom link, register [HERE](#) or contact [griefsupport@helplinecenter.org](mailto:griefsupport@helplinecenter.org).

### Upcoming Community Mental Health Trainings

#### Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training: Register [HERE](#)

April 21 & 22 | 8:30 am-4:30pm (CST)  
Helpline Center | 3817 S Elmwood Ave | Sioux Falls, SD 57105  
Registrants must attend both days.

#### Question, Persuade, Refer: Register [HERE](#)

April 6 | 1pm – 2:30pm  
Helpline Center | 3817 S Elmwood Ave | Sioux Falls, SD 57105

## SOUTH DAKOTA TOBACCO CONTROL PROGRAM

Hilary Larsen

Tobacco Program Coordinator

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DOH Team:

[DOHTobaccoControl@state.sd.us](mailto:DOHTobaccoControl@state.sd.us)



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

Click [here](#) to order our  
FREE materials and  
resources.

### Take Down Tobacco – April 1, 2026

Mark your calendars for [Take Down Tobacco](#) (TDT) National Day of Action on April 1, 2026! This national day empowers youth and communities to stand up against the tobacco industry's harmful influence. Organized by the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, TDT mobilizes youth, advocates, and organizations across the country to educate the public, promote tobacco-related policies, and support individuals who want to quit. No action is too small to make an impact.

Looking for activity ideas?

- Visit SDQuit's Tobacco Prevention [Activities](#) for a TDT-related [resource guide](#) and [coloring page/pledge sheet](#)
- Explore the [Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids' Take Down Tobacco](#) page for:
  - Activity ideas, including pledge card templates
  - Sample social media posts for the day
  - Cessation materials
  - Fact sheets
  - And much more!



### "Clear-Flavored" E-Cigarettes

A recent [study](#) examining the rise of "clear-flavored" e-cigarettes found that these products—often marketed as unflavored—are rapidly gaining popularity. However, researchers discovered that online product descriptions frequently use language that implies flavor experiences, such as "smooth" or "menthol," potentially allowing companies to sidestep flavor restrictions while still appealing to consumers. Because flavored e-cigarettes are known to attract youth, this trend raises concerns that "clear" products may be another strategy to maintain youth interest and bypass regulation. The findings highlight the need for stronger oversight of product marketing and clearer definitions of what constitutes a flavored tobacco product.

Truth Initiative provides more information and study key takeaways [here](#).