



Prevention Newslink

May 2026

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

National Safety Month

June is National Safety Month, a time to highlight the importance of protecting ourselves, our workplaces, and our communities. Safety isn't limited to hard hats and hazard signs, it also includes mental health, emotional wellbeing, and prevention efforts that support the whole person. When we think about safety in a more holistic way, we create stronger, healthier communities across South Dakota.

Mental health is a critical part of overall safety. Stress, burnout, anxiety, and depression can affect focus, reaction time, and decision-making, increasing the risk of accidents at work, on the road, and at home. Creating supportive environments where people feel safe discussing mental health is essential. This can include normalizing conversations about stress, encouraging breaks and work-life balance, and ensuring people know where to turn when they need help.

Suicide prevention is a vital part of this conversation. South Dakota, like many rural states, continues to face higher-than-average suicide rates, making awareness and early intervention especially important. Recognizing warning signs, such as withdrawal, sudden mood changes, or expressions of hopelessness, can help us respond before a crisis escalates. Checking in with a coworker, calling a friend, or sitting down to listen without judgment are small actions that can build connection and reduce feelings of isolation.

There are strong, local resources available to support South Dakotans. The Helpline Center provides 24/7 support through 988 for immediate crisis resources, in addition to utilizing 211 for community resources across the state.

Ultimately, safety is about looking out for one another. By prioritizing mental health, strengthening connections, and promoting prevention, we can create environments where people feel supported and empowered to seek help. This National Safety Month, let's commit to expanding how we think about safety, not just as protection from harm, but as a shared responsibility to care for the wellbeing of every South Dakotan.



For more information, visit www.nsc.org/nsm/.

UPCOMING

TRAININGS & EVENTS

Virtual Ethics as a Compass for Substance Misuse Prevention Professionals

May 19 & 21 | 12:00pm-3:00pm CST

Find more information and register [HERE](#)

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)

May 27-28 | Watertown

Find more information and register [HERE](#)

June 10-11 | Rapid City

Find more information and register [HERE](#)

June 16-17 | Sioux Falls

Find more information and register [HERE](#)

Equine Healing (Adult)

June 6 | 10:00am-2:00pm MT

Thunder Horse Stables

3315 S. Valley Dr, Rapid City

Find more information and register [HERE](#)

2026 Step Forward to Prevent Suicide

June 6 | 9:00am-12:00pm CST

Fawick Park / Statue of David

200 S. 2nd Avenue, Sioux Falls

Find more information and register [HERE](#)

Youth Mental Health First Aid

June 8 | Pierre

Find more information and register [HERE](#)

June 18 | Brookings

Find more information and register [HERE](#)

PTTC Prevention Ethics

June 16 & 18 | 9:00am-12:00pm MT

Virtual

Find more information and register [HERE](#)

SPF Application for Prevention Success Training (SAPST)

Register for more information with the QR code.



Safe Storage & Suicide Prevention

Safe storage, also known as "means safety," is a key component of suicide prevention. In a suicide crisis, the length of time someone seriously contemplates suicide tends to be short-lived. Reducing access by secure storage, or "means safety," refers to making an effort to limit or eliminate the ability for a person at risk of suicide to access the means for their suicide plan.

What can reduce risk?

Learning how to safeguard your home by:

- Restricting access to pesticides, alcohol, and other substances
- Securely store over-the-counter and prescription medications, properly dispose of unused medications
- Use a gun lock and store firearms securely
- Pay attention to changes in mood, behavior, or warning signs in loved ones



Support and resources are available across South Dakota. **The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is available 24/7 via call, text, or chat** for any behavioral health need.



Free trainings on means safety and suicide prevention are available through the **South Dakota Suicide Prevention website**. In addition, gun locks and medication lock boxes can be shipped at no cost to South Dakota residents by scanning the QR code provided.



2026 SD Behavioral Health Conference

The SD DSS, Division of Behavioral Health has opened registration for the 2nd Annual "Your Journey Matters" conference.

Featuring key speakers:

- Lauren Sisler - Emmy Award-winning sports broadcaster, ESPN sideline reporter, author, and keynote speaker with lived experience.
- Dennis Gillan - speaker, educator, and author who discusses his family's loss of his brothers to suicide.
- Sam Quinones - journalist, storyteller, former LA Times reporter, is author of "Dreamland," "The Least of Us," about fentanyl and methamphetamine, and the sequel to those books, "The Perfect Tuba," in which he argues that tuba players and band directors have answers for a country mired in drug addiction.

There will also be speakers discussing topics across the clinical, general population, at-risk populations, youth, and medical perspectives when it comes to behavioral health.

Registration is open through July 27th or until capacity. Click [here](#) to register now! For additional information, please visit www.sdbehavioralhealth.gov/conference.

SOUTH DAKOTA SUICIDE PREVENTION



RESOURCES

STATEWIDE WEBSITE
SDSUICIDEPREVENTION.ORG

THE HELPLINE CENTER
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

Mental Health Awareness Month

Communities across the United States are observing May as Mental Health Awareness Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness, reducing stigma, and promoting resources for those facing mental health challenges. The annual observance encourages open conversations about conditions such as anxiety, depression, and stress-related disorders. Organizations, schools, and healthcare providers often host events, workshops, and campaigns aimed at improving mental well-being.

Mental health is just as important as physical health. Throughout this month, individuals are encouraged to check in with loved ones, practice self-care, and seek professional support when needed. Social media campaigns and community initiatives also play a key role in spreading awareness and connecting people with resources.

Mental Health Awareness Month serves as a reminder that support is available and that no one should face mental health challenges alone. In times of crisis or when immediate support is needed, individuals can call or text 988 to reach the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, which is answered by the Helpline Center in South Dakota. The Helpline Center also offers free trainings for individuals to learn more about mental health challenges and how to approach someone who may be struggling.

Upcoming Events

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training

June 10 & 11 | 8:30 am-4:30pm (CST)

Youth and Family Services | 202 E Adams St | Rapid City, SD 57701

Registrants must attend both days.

Register [HERE](#)

June 16 & 17 | 8:30 am-4:30pm (CST)

The HUB at Southeast Technical College | 2001 N. Career Ave. | Sioux Falls, SD 57107

Registrants must attend both days.

Register [HERE](#)

Mental Health First Aid

Register [HERE](#)

May 22 | 8:00 am – 5:00pm

Helpline Center | 3817 S Elmwood Ave | Sioux Falls, SD 57105

15th Annual Step Forward to Prevent Suicide Walk

Register [HERE](#)

June 6 | 9:00 AM

Fawick Park | 200 S. 2nd Ave | Sioux Falls, SD 57104

SOUTH DAKOTA TOBACCO CONTROL PROGRAM

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Quittobaccosd.com

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

World No Tobacco Day – A Perfect Time to Choose a Tobacco-Free Summer

[World No Tobacco Day](#), observed each year on **May 31**, is a global reminder of the serious health risks of tobacco use and the life-changing benefits of quitting. As we head into summer, it's an ideal moment to make a fresh start, breathe easier, and enjoy the season without tobacco holding you back.

Whether you're thinking about quitting, already on your quit journey, or supporting someone you care about, small steps this summer can make a big difference.

This summer, try taking on a **Tobacco-Free Summer Challenge**. These tools are designed to keep you motivated, engaged, and focused on healthier habits:

- **[Tobacco-Free Living Bucket List](#)**: Stay active and distracted with a fun summer bucket list filled with activities and challenges that help reduce cravings and support a tobacco-free lifestyle.
- **[30-Day Tobacco-Free Challenge](#)**: A structured, day-by-day guide with tips, motivation, and reflection prompts to help you build momentum and stay committed.

These challenges can help you stay busy, reduce stress, and build confidence in your ability to quit or remain tobacco-free.

Truth Initiative's NEW Outsmart Nicotine Campaign

[Outsmart Nicotine](#), Truth Initiative's latest campaign, exposes the cycle of stress and withdrawal that fuels nicotine addiction—whether from vapes, pouches, or cigarettes—and invites young people to break free with the *EX Program*, a free, evidence-based digital quitting tool co-developed with the Mayo Clinic. The new ads *Drive Thru*, *Study Sesh*, and *Crush* highlight how nicotine often worsens stress instead of easing it, especially when users combine multiple products. Backed by clinical research showing quitting success can increase by up to **40%**, EX Program offers personalized quit plans, daily motivation, and community support tailored for youth and young adults. Encourage your audience to visit exprogram.com to access this powerful quitting resource today.