



Prevention Newslink

October 2025

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

National Prescription Take Back Day



Join South Dakotans in participating in National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day on Saturday, October 25. This nationwide event, hosted by the Drug Enforcement Agency, provides a safe, convenient and responsible way to dispose of prescription and over-the-counter medication. It's a great opportunity to clean out your medicine cabinet and get rid of those expired or unwanted medications.

Using Take Back Programs to get rid of unused medications can have a host of benefits.

- It helps to prevent prescription drug misuse. Research shows that teens see misusing medicine as "safer" and "socially acceptable" amongst their peers. Family and friend's medicine cabinets are the number one place where teens obtain things like prescription pain medication and other commonly misused prescriptions.
- Disposing of unused prescriptions reduces the risk of accidental poisoning. Having medicine that is no longer needed in the home can put our children, seniors, and pets in danger of accidental poisoning.
- It can also reduce the amount of medicines in the environment. It is no longer suggested to flush unused prescriptions down the toilet or throw them in the garbage as these methods are unsafe to the environment.



Many communities have take-back locations where you can drop off medications safely and anonymously year-round. Visit the Let's Be Clear website [here](#) to find a drop-off location near you!

SOUTH DAKOTA,
Let's Be Clear
PREVENTION. TREATMENT. RECOVERY.

UPCOMING TRAININGS & EVENTS

NAMI South Dakota 2025 Conference

October 16-17 | 1 pm CT
Huron Event Center, Huron
Click [HERE](#) for more information

Enough Abuse: Strategies for Your Family and Community WEBINAR

October 21 | 5:30 p.m. MT
Click [HERE](#) for more information

National Drug Take Back Day

October 25 | Statewide
The list of disposal sites located in South
Dakota can be found [HERE](#)

State Tribal Opioid and Methamphetamine Prevention Summit (STOMP)

November 6-7 | Pierre
Click [HERE](#) for more information

Cliff Effect Escape Room

Nov 19 | 8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. MT
Journey Museum & Learning Center, Rapid City
Click [HERE](#) for more information

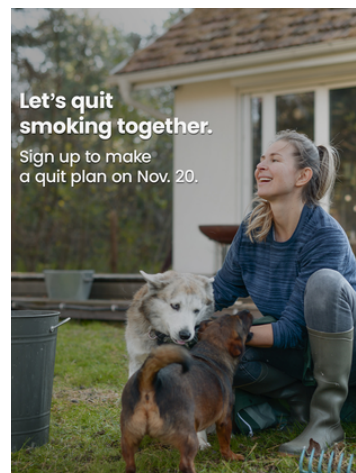
QPR Training

The QPR mission is to reduce suicidal
behaviors and save lives by providing
innovative, practical and proven suicide
prevention training.
Training and materials are paid for by grants
from the South Dakota Department of Social
Services. [To request the free training, click HERE](#)

The Great American Smokeout

Are you ready to quit smoking? Quitting
smoking improves your health, but it can
be hard to do. You don't have to do it
alone! On November 20, please join
people across the country for the
American Cancer Society's Great American
Smokeout.

Remember, the key to success is to keep
trying and not give up. More than half of
U.S. adults who have ever smoked have
quit. Make the Great American Smokeout
your quit day!



SD Tobacco Control Behavioral Health Toolkit

The SD Tobacco Control Program is proud to share the new SD
Tobacco Control Behavioral Health Toolkit.

People with behavioral health conditions, such as individuals with a
mental illness or substance use disorder, are disproportionately
impacted by commercial tobacco use, experiencing higher smoking
rates, greater health risks, and poorer outcomes than the general
population. In South Dakota, the smoking rate among adults with
behavioral health conditions is nearly double that of adults without
these conditions, reflecting a critical public health disparity.

This toolkit is designed to support behavioral health facilities in
creating tobacco-free buildings and grounds policies and effectively
integrating tobacco treatment into patient care. It provides
evidence-based strategies for securing leadership commitment,
staff training, and client education to help facilities overcome the
unique challenges they face while implementing these policies.

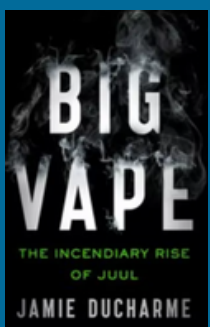
Prevention Specialist Book Review: Big Vape

Big Vape: The Incendiary Rise of Juul by Jamie Ducharme is a compelling listen, read, or
watch. With the audiobook available for check out on the SDPRC Libby App, the hardcover
available at the SEPRC and the recent Netflix documentary, there are many ways to
consume this story.

Big Vape follows the rise (and subsequent fall) of Juul, a product that started with
seemingly good intentions as founders were looking to invent a device to help adults quit
smoking and save lives. However this device ended up giving birth to a new addiction:
vaping.

This thrilling tale shows how the founders of Juul may have started with the mission to
create a safer alternative to smoking, but ended up using the same predatory tactics as Big
Tobacco, even partnering with them. A surprising highlight from the novel was hearing
how representatives from Juul labs targeted the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe attempting to
sell tribal leaders heavily discounted Juul devices.

If you would like to check out this book for yourself, sign up for our Libby account today
using this [QR code](#)!



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

Seasonal Affective Disorder

As the warmth of summer fades and October ushers in shorter days and colder temperatures, many people experience noticeable changes in their mood and energy. This seasonal transition can significantly affect mental health, particularly for those prone to depression. A well-documented condition known as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) most commonly begins in the fall and early winter months, and October is often when its early symptoms begin to appear. One of the primary reasons depression can worsen during this time is the reduction in sunlight. As days grow shorter, people are exposed to less natural light, which plays a crucial role in regulating mood-related chemicals in the brain like serotonin. Lower levels of serotonin have been linked to feelings of sadness, fatigue, and hopelessness, all classic signs of depression. At the same time, the increase in darkness can throw off our rhythms, leading to disrupted sleep patterns that further contribute to poor mental health.

October also marks a significant shift in routine and atmosphere. The end of summer often means returning to school, work, or other obligations after a period of relaxation, which can cause stress and anxiety. For some, this month brings a sense of isolation, as colder weather and darker evenings discourage outdoor activities and social interactions. These changes can lead to feelings of loneliness, especially for individuals who already struggle with mental health challenges. In addition, October's cultural and emotional tone can be bittersweet. While it brings the excitement of autumn traditions like Halloween and the beauty of fall foliage, it also signals the approach of the holiday season, a time that can be emotionally difficult for many. For people dealing with grief, strained relationships, or financial stress, the anticipation of the holidays can increase depressive feelings that may begin to surface as early as October.

Understanding how the change in seasons affects mental health is important for prevention and treatment. Strategies like light therapy, increased physical activity, counseling, and maintaining social connections can be effective in managing seasonal depression. Recognizing the signs early, often in October, can help individuals take proactive steps before symptoms become more severe. If you or someone you know is beginning to experience emotional difficulty around this time, know that 988 is available 24/7 to talk you through how to take care of yourself through these difficult times of season changes.

Upcoming Events

Surviving After Suicide Monthly Support Groups In-person

Dates: Third Thursday of each month from 7:00p.m. – 8:30p.m. CST

Location: 3817 S Elmwood Ave | Sioux Falls, SD 57105

There is no fee or registration required. Must be 18 years old to attend.

Virtual Group

Dates: Second Wednesday of each month from 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. CST

Location: Online - a Zoom link will be sent to your email once registered.

There is no fee but [registration](#) is required. Must be 18 years old to attend.

Looking for a mental health training for your team or business?

The Helpline Center offers multiples on-site trainings that can enhance your team's ability to respond to mental health needs and increase resilience.

Check out the options [here](#) or contact us at training@helplinecenter.org.

Request Helpline Center 988 or 211 marketing materials at NO COST!

See what is available [HERE](#).

SOUTH DAKOTA TOBACCO CONTROL PROGRAM

Hilary Larsen

Tobacco Program
Coordinator

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DOH Team:

DOHTobaccoControl@state.sd.su



Quittobaccosd.com

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

Great American Smokeout – November 20, 2025!

Although it isn't November yet, it is time to start your planning your Great American Smokeout activities!

The **Great American Smokeout**, held every year on the third Thursday of November, encourages people who use tobacco to make a plan to quit—or to begin their quit journey that day. This national event, organized by the American Cancer Society, highlights the health benefits of living tobacco-free and offers support and resources for quitting. It's a powerful reminder that every attempt to quit is a step toward a healthier, smoke-free future.

This day is a great day to help promote the resources available to those looking to quit nicotine. Whether you are planning on doing a big local campaign or event, pledge wall, or just wanting to spread the word, check out the FREE resources the Tobacco Control Program offers at [QuitSD](#)

If you or someone you know is looking to quit, visit the [South Dakota QuitLine](#)! Any South Dakota resident, 13 years and older is eligible for free services.

15 Years of Smoke-Free South Dakota!

South Dakota is CELEBRATING 15 years of our smoke-free law! The law, effective November 10, 2010, prohibits smoking in public buildings and workplaces, including restaurants, bars, and casinos. In 2019, legislation expanded the ban to include e-cigarettes and vaping products.

To honor this milestone, we're sharing **Darcy's story**. Darcy, a survivor of two heart attacks and lung cancer, told us, "I bet you think I got lung cancer from smoking? My parents were heavy smokers, and I got it from secondhand smoke."

His story reminds us that no one is immune to the dangers of secondhand and thirdhand smoke. In South Dakota, 18% of middle school students report recent exposure—proof our prevention efforts still matter.

Public health protections save lives. Every conversation, event, and awareness effort helps protect South Dakotans of all ages.

Join the celebration and be on the lookout to see how South Dakota Tobacco Control Program is celebrating the 15 year anniversary. **Share your stories and photos by emailing us or tagging #SDQuits on social media.**





LOST & FOUND[®]

PEER2PEER MENTORING: STUDENTS HELPING STUDENTS BUILD RESILIENCE

UPCOMING TRAININGS

Let's Talk about Mental Health

Virtual Presentation
November 12
3:30pm CT
[Registration Link](#)

Mental Health First Aid

Online Course
October 21 & 23
5:30-8:30pm CT
[Registration Link](#)

[Request a Training or Presentation](#)

Support services for college student mental and emotional wellness are in high demand. Peer2Peer Mentoring aims to provide an extra layer of support by connecting students with trained peer mentors. The program helps both mentors and mentees develop skills related to social and emotional learning and promotes help-seeking behaviors.

Peer2 Peer mentors undergo a 3-hour training that covers essential skills such as active listening, goal setting, community referrals, and boundary setting. They also complete a one-hour QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) training, a suicide prevention course. Mentors are then paired with mentees based on shared interests, school programs, and other factors. Mentors and mentees coordinate weekly or biweekly meetings to check in, set goals, address concerns, and make referrals to outside professionals when needed. Lost&Found program coordinators conduct biweekly check-ins with mentors to answer questions, resolve any issues, offer additional training opportunities, and provide ongoing program support.

The Peer2Peer Mentorship program is available to students enrolled at the following South Dakota colleges and universities:

Augustana University
Black Hills State University
Black Hills State University - Rapid City
South Dakota Mines
South Dakota State University
South Dakota State University - Rapid City
University of South Dakota
University of South Dakota - Sioux Falls



WANT TO LEARN MORE OR SIGN UP? SCAN THE CODE TO VISIT OUR CAMPUS HUB!

SD SUICIDE PREVENTION NEWSLETTER



Suicide Prevention in the Workplace

The workplace is where a majority of adults spend their waking hours. South Dakota's workforce accounted for 79% of suicide deaths in 2024. Work-related stress, isolation, and burnout can contribute to an employee's mental health challenges. Employers have a responsibility to recognize early signs of emotional distress and to create a stigma-free, supportive environment to open conversations about mental health are encouraged.

What can employers do to prevent suicide in the workplace?

- Help spread awareness of suicide prevention resources that are located in South Dakota. The [SD Suicide Prevention Workforce page](#) is a one stop resource for employers looking for more information on suicide prevention. Resources include profession specific resources, wellbeing assessment and more.
- Start the conversation with a [ready for use toolkit](#), that has been created for business to utilize.
- Learn the warning signs and how to intervene, by hosting a [suicide prevention training](#) in your workplace.



Click the image to learn more.

EVENTS

For more information or to add an event, Visit the SDSP Calendar

October

16th - 17th - [NAMI South Dakota 2025 Conference](#)

For information on Survivor Support Groups in various communities across South Dakota, click [here](#).

REMEMBER!

With hunting season quickly approaching, as a suicide prevention effort, it is a good time to think about how firearms are stored in your home. Gun locks are available, free of charge through the [SDSP website](#).

Safeguard your home this hunting season



To learn more about suicide prevention trainings or to request a training in your community or organization, [click here](#).

To order print or swag materials at no cost, [click here](#).

2025 Epidemiological Outcomes Executive Summary

The [Epidemiological Outcomes Executive Summary](#) has been published. This report presents a comparative analysis of suicidal ideation and behaviors across South Dakota, the Midwest, and the United States. The Executive Summary offers a clear overview of how suicide rates in South Dakota align with or differ from nation wide trends. The Executive Summary serves as a great resource for understanding community needs and can help inform targeted prevention and intervention efforts. Importantly, the data underscores the rising rates of suicide among males, a trend that warrants attention and tailored strategies. Leveraging this data for informed, evidence-based decision making is essential to effectively allocate resources, design impactful programs, and ultimately save lives.

Veteran Buddy Checks – October 20th – 24th

Veteran Buddy Check Week encourages Veterans to connect or reconnect with their Veteran friends - just to check in. This week aims to enhance peer-to-peer connections, improve mental health, and increase access to resources. You can find information, Veteran resources and sample scripts at the [SD Suicide Prevention website](#). Veterans can also call 988 and press 1 for the Veterans Crisis Line, chat [online](#) or send a text message to 838255 to receive free, confidential support.

