



Prevention Newslink

October 2026

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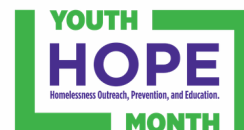
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Click [HERE](#) to determine your region's Prevention Resource Center

Youth HOPE Month November 2026



November is Youth Homelessness Outreach, Prevention, and Education (HOPE) Month. Each year, an estimated 4.2 Million young people between the ages of 13 and 25 experience homelessness in the United States. Young adults aged between 18 and 24 made up 8.6% of total respondents in the 2026 Point-In-Time count. 163 children under the age of 18 self-reported experiencing homelessness across the state out of a total of 1,154 homeless persons.

While rates of homelessness among young adults in South Dakota continue to decline, with 11% of respondents reporting homelessness in 2024, 8.8% in 2025, and 8.6% in 2026, continued



awareness and education remain important. Increasing understanding of the characteristics, experiences, and challenges of young people who are experiencing homelessness, at imminent risk of homelessness, or facing a crisis can help communities better recognize their needs and provide appropriate support.

Per the National Runaway Safeline's (NRS) Youth Homeless Prevention Report, experiences of unaccompanied homelessness have been linked with greater risk of exposure to violence, trauma, substance use, mental health problems, and premature mortality. The most commonly reported needs among young people seeking the NRS's crisis services were related to family dynamics, emotional abuse, mental health, and peers. Young people at imminent risk and in crisis were more likely to be minors under the age of 18.

This November we encourage you to spread awareness about Youth HOPE Month.

- Encourage others to join you in "Wear Green Day" on November 12.
- Share the Lifelines: Ensure your areas have direct access to resources by distributing the details for the National Runaway Safeline (1-800-RUNAWAY) and the 988 Lifeline.
- Meet Youth Where They Are: Distribute resources and crisis info at local youth hangouts where at-risk teens naturally gather.

UPCOMING TRAININGS & EVENTS

SD Peer Leadership

November 3 | 9:00 a.m.
Larkspur Landing | Pierre
Contact [Amy](#) to learn more.

Youth Mental Health First Aid

November 4 | 8:00 a.m.
Boys and Girls Club | Pierre
Contact [Stephanie](#) to learn more.

Healthy Minds, Stronger Communities

November 7 | Spearfish
Learn more and register [HERE](#)

Road to Wellness Workshop

November 9 | 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Empire Mental Health | Sioux Falls
Find more information [HERE](#) or email
info@empirementalhealthsupport.org

Emily's Pledge

A Fentanyl Awareness Assembly

November 12 | 10:00 a.m.
The Monument | Rapid City
Register [Here](#)

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)

November 16 | 8:00 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Helpline Center | Sioux Falls
Register [HERE](#)

ASIST

December 2-3
Human Service Agency | Watertown
Learn More & Register [HERE](#).

PREPaRE Training

Mental Health Crisis Interventions:
Responding to an Acute Traumatic
Stressor in Schools
February 11 & 12 | 8:30 - 3:30 (CST)
Virtual
Learn more and register [HERE](#)

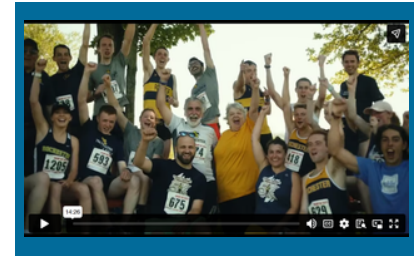
SPF Application for Prevention Success Training (SAPST)

Learn more and register [HERE](#)

International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day or Survivor Day November 21

In 1999, Senator Harry Reid, who lost his father to suicide, introduced a resolution to the United States Senate, leading to the creation of International Survivors of Suicide Loss Day. Also known as Survivor Day, it was designated by the United States

Congress as a day on which those impacted by suicide loss could come together for healing and support. Each year, Survivor Day falls on the Saturday before American Thanksgiving, to offer warmth and connection during a time of year that is often difficult for suicide loss survivors.



In South Dakota, the suicide rate is approximately 22 per 100,000 residents, ranking it the 5th highest in the nation. Farmers and ranchers experience up to 3.5 times higher suicide rates than the general public. Nationwide and regionally, roughly 3 times as many police officers die by suicide than those who die in the line of duty. Because South Dakota consistently ranks among the highest in the country for suicide rates, South Dakota faces a very high density of "loss survivors". These survivors are families, friends, coworkers, and other loved ones that are grieving the loss of someone to suicide.

Survivors Day is not just a day of remembrance for those lost, but a reminder that prevention is still a high priority. The reality is that those who are loss survivors face a substantially higher risk of exhibiting their own suicidal behavior and ideation due to the grief and trauma associated with their experiences.

Please evaluate your pre- and postvention policies regarding these situations to determine if your organization is prepared for a crisis related to this before it occurs; also continue to promote resources like the 988 Lifeline, the Helpline Center, and the Short-Term Crisis Care Centers in your area for those who may experience a crisis.

The Great American Smokeout is an event hosted by the American Cancer Society on the third Thursday of November every year. It is an opportunity for people who smoke to commit to healthy, smoke-free lives. Annual Great American Smokeout events began in the 1970s, when smoking and secondhand smoke were common.



Each year, the event draws attention to preventing deaths and chronic illnesses caused by smoking. Fortunately due to the efforts of everyone, the past few decades have seen great strides in changing attitudes about smoking, the understanding of nicotine addiction, and helping people quit.

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

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder Awareness

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) is a mental health condition that affects millions of people and is often misunderstood. OCD involves recurring, unwanted thoughts, images, or urges (obsessions) that cause significant anxiety, along with repetitive behaviors or mental acts (compulsions) performed in an attempt to reduce that distress. While many people casually use the term "OCD" to describe being neat or organized, the reality is far more complex and can significantly impact daily life, relationships, school, and work.

Common obsessions may include fears of contamination, harm coming to oneself or loved ones, intrusive thoughts, or an overwhelming need for certainty. Compulsions can include excessive cleaning, checking, counting, repeating actions, or seeking reassurance. Individuals with OCD often recognize their thoughts and behaviors are excessive but feel unable to stop because of the anxiety they experience. The good news is that OCD is treatable. Evidence-based treatments, including Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), specifically Exposure and Response Prevention (ERP), and, in some cases, medication, can help individuals manage symptoms and improve their quality of life. Early intervention and support can make a meaningful difference.

During OCD Awareness efforts, we encourage our community to learn more about the condition, challenge misconceptions, and support those who may be struggling. No one should feel ashamed to seek help for their mental health. The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at the Helpline Center is available 24/7 for calls, texts, and chats. The 988 team is available for questions pertaining to OCD and coping strategies to assist one struggling with OCD or someone experiencing a loved one with OCD.

Upcoming Events:

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training
October 20 and 21 (must attend both days) , 8am-5pm
Arise Church (3803 S Western Ave. Sioux Falls)
Register [HERE](#)

Mental Health First Aid
November 16, 8am-5pm
Helpline Center (3817 S Elmwood Avenue, Sioux Falls)
Register [HERE](#)

SOUTH DAKOTA TOBACCO CONTROL PROGRAM

Hilary Larsen

Tobacco Program Coordinator

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DOH Team:

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Quittobaccosd.com

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FREE materials and
resources.

Stanford REACH Lab's Becoming a Trusted Adult Video Series

For many adults, talking with young people can feel like learning an entirely new language. The Stanford REACH Lab and the Stanford Center for Health Education have created a new 10-lesson course, [Becoming a Trusted Adult: Foundations for More Effective Drug Education](#), designed to help adults communicate more confidently and effectively with youth about substance use.

The course emphasizes building trust, using nonjudgmental dialogue, and supporting teens in making their own healthy choices. Whether you are a parent, counselor, coach, school staff member, or another adult who works with youth ages 11–19, this course is worth considering.

Participants will learn why young people may experiment with substances, how to recognize early warning signs, and how to use motivational interviewing and harm-reduction strategies. The course also covers tailoring and initiating conversations, as well as ways to support a young person throughout the process.

This course offers practical, evidence-based tools that can strengthen adult–teen relationships and promote healthier decision-making.

*Note videos are towards the bottom of the [webpage](#) and can also be found on [YouTube](#).

Oral Nicotine Pouches Emerging as a Nicotine Initiation Pathway

A [new Truth Initiative study](#) shows that oral nicotine pouches like Zyn, On!, and Velo are becoming a growing first step into nicotine use for young people. Among 15–30-year-olds who had never used nicotine, initiation with pouches more than doubled between 2021 and 2024.

Although data shows that youth use remains low, fewer than 2% of middle and high school students report using pouches, usage has increased among young adults. Most young people who start with pouches also use multiple nicotine products, especially e-cigarettes, which raises dependence risk and potential health harms.

Users report using pouches primarily for the “buzz,” perceived lower harm, and social influences. Very few cite quitting other products as their motivation, and flavors are rarely the main driver.

The findings highlight evidence that dual- or poly-use of nicotine products are on the rise, especially with youth and young adults who use e-cigarettes.

Read the study published in the [American Journal of Public Health](#) for more information.