

Workplace Mental Health



Mental health is an important component of overall well-being and is equally as vital as physical health for all employees. Mental health concerns due to work have the potential to adversely impact an employee's social interactions, productivity, performance, and absenteeism.

Stress affects people in a variety of ways such as muscle tension, headaches, stomach discomfort, high blood pressure, and heart disease. Ignoring workplace stress can have lasting harmful effects on individuals, families, co-workers, and communities.

Traumatic Events

Sometimes a shocking, scary, or dangerous experience can be so intense that it can have an emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and physical impact on a person. Some examples of traumatic events that can happen in workplaces are:

- Explosions or chemical releases
- Building, crane, or other equipment collapses
- Co-workers being injured or dying on the job
- Abuse or assault of a co-worker or client

It is normal to feel terrified during and after a traumatic event. This is part of the body's "fight or flight" response to possible danger.

Traumatic events can happen to workers in all industries.

After experiencing a traumatic event people may:

- Feel anxious, sad, or angry
- Have terrifying thoughts or flashbacks
- Have recurring nightmares

- Be confused or unable to think clearly
- Have a hard time falling and staying asleep
- Frighten easily



If these symptoms continue long after the event or affect day-to-day life, they can be signs of acute stress disorder, or post-traumatic stress disorder. Both require professional help to address.

Substance Use Disorder

Substance use disorder is a persistent desire for substances even in the face of negative consequences. Some people come to rely on opioids, stimulants, alcohol, or other substances even when the substances cause harm. People may develop a dependence on drugs, including prescription medications, and alcohol for many reasons, including the presence of other mental health conditions, chronic pain, or injuries. Regardless of the underlying reason, substance use disorder can be treated and controlled.



MAY

Mental Health Awareness Month

JUNE

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Awareness Month

SEPTEMBER

National Suicide Prevention Month
National Recovery Month

Suicide

Suicide can touch anyone, anywhere, at any time. But it is not inevitable. Help is available.

According to the CDC^{1,2}

- More than 12 million adults seriously think about suicide each year.
- More than 3 million adults make a plan to commit suicide each year.
- More than 1 million adults attempt suicide each year.
- More than 48,000 people die by suicide in the United States each year.

People of any age, gender, and background can have thoughts of suicide. Untreated mental health conditions can lead to these thoughts and even suicidal actions. That is why it is important to provide resources and encourage people to get help when they are having mental health concerns, experiencing traumatic events, or battling substance use disorders.



Certain factors may increase an individual's risk of developing suicidal thoughts and attempting suicide such as:

- Mental health conditions like depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, anxiety disorders, and substance use disorders
- Traumatic events
- Health issues like chronic pain or illness
- Prolonged stress
- Recent tragedy or loss
- Criminal or legal problems
- Job loss or financial problems
- Substance use disorder
- Childhood trauma
- Domestic violence

References

1. [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(2021\)](#)
2. [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Statistics \(2021\)](#)

Resources

Employers can help change the stigma of mental health by prioritizing it as part of their workplace culture, having conversations about it, and knowing how to support those workers who say they need assistance. Workplace Stress - Overview | Occupational Safety and Health Administration ([osha.gov](https://www.osha.gov))

- [OSHA Suicide Prevention in Construction](#)
- [OSHA Workplace Stress](#)
- [Call or text 988](#) for free, confidential crisis counseling anytime, 24/7
- [Text a counselor at 838255](#) for Veterans Crisis Line
- [Text Talk to 741741](#) for English
- [Text Ayuda to 741741](#) for Spanish

Get Help

