# DECREASE

## TOOLBOX TALK:

### Changing the Statistics of Suicide in Construction

**STANDUP**

Statistics drive a lot of what we do in safety. Activities and environments that have a high rate of illnesses or injuries spur the creation of new policies and procedures and maybe even added oversight by OSHA and other agencies. Despite all of the training, PPE, programs and other measures put in place, approximately 1,000 construction workers die on jobsites each year. This is a sad and sobering statistic, especially when we consider that one of those could be us or someone on our crew.

As shocking as those numbers are – there's one that's even more shocking. Over 5,000 people working in construction will die by suicide each year. That's right – 5 times as many of your fellow construction workers will take their own lives as will be killed due to a jobsite accident. When we think about all of the time and effort we spend on the physical safety of the workforce – we must let these statistics drive increased attention on the emotional safety of the workforce as well.

Why do so many people working in construction die by suicide? Well, think about you and your co-workers. You probably pride yourselves on being tough, getting things done at all costs and working through whatever life throws at you. While those are all great traits to have, if someone is experiencing mental illness like depression or anxiety – which are real, treatable health conditions – or going through a major life crisis, or they have an addiction or substance misuse disorder, they might not be able to just "power through" – and they probably aren't likely to ask for help, either.

If someone on the jobsite seems to be under stress or upset, you might hear others say, or even say yourself "suck it up", "it's not that bad" or "don't be a wimp". Instead of blowing it off when someone seems down or out of sorts, and rather than making fun of them about it – what if you took the time to talk to them about what is going on in their lives? Sometimes, just knowing that someone cares is enough. And if not, there are resources available that can help them like your EAP, the Suicide Prevention Lifeline or Crisis Text Line.

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY ALLIANCE FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

**INFORMATION & RESOURCES**
preventconstructionsuicide.com

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

**CALL 988**
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crisistextline.org

CRISIS TEXT LINE

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