

Toolbox Safety Talk

Micro Moments Toolkit

Topic: Mental Health in Construction

Facts

- The construction industry loses more workers to suicide than to any other cause of death on the job.
- Construction workers are nearly 4x more likely to die by suicide than the national average.
- Over 90% of construction workers surveyed reported mental health impacted their work.
- Stress, burnout, depression, and anxiety are common in construction and treatable.
- Asking someone how they're doing or connecting them to help does not increase the risk of suicide. Having a conversation can be the first step toward saving a life.



Mental Health Risks in Mechanical Construction

- Long hours, tight deadlines, and unpredictable jobsite conditions create pressure.
- Travel away from home and inconsistent schedules strain personal relationships.
- Current cultural stigma around mental health prevents conversations and intervention.
- Physical pain and injury can increase the risk of substance misuse and depression.

What To Do

- Recognize warning signs like isolation, mood swings, or talking about being a burden.
- If something feels off with a coworker, check in. A simple "Are you okay?" or "What can I do to support you?" can make a big difference.
- Practice small daily habits (Micro Moments) to reduce stress, like deep breathing or stepping away for a few minutes.
- Share the Micro Moments Toolkit with your crew. It's designed to start conversations and provide quick tools you can use in the moment.
- Use resources like the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline to connect to immediate support.
- Don't wait for a crisis to act. Support starts with listening, noticing, and showing up.

Toolbox Safety Talk Micro Moments Toolkit

Topic: MCAKC's Micro Moments Toolkit

What You Should Know About This Toolkit

- The Micro Moments Toolkit was created to support mental health on the jobsite through quick, actionable practices.
- It was developed with direct input from our local union partners, including Local 8 Plumbers & Gasfitters and Pipe Fitters Local Union 533.
- Every item inside is designed for ease of use and can be practiced anytime, anywhere.
- You can request more toolkits or explore every resource online using the QR code below.



What's Inside This Toolkit

- **Peer Ally Card:** Write down trusted contacts to reach out to when you need support.
- **Reasons to Stay Card:** A space to write three personal reasons you want to keep going.
- **Micro Moment Techniques:** Step-by-step quick breathing and tension-release exercises.
- **Stickers:** One textured for breathwork, one with a QR code to our mental health website.
- **Postcards:** Conversation starters to help you check in with coworkers and open up hard conversations and breathwork tips.
- **Poker Chip:** A tangible tool to keep in your pocket and stay mindful throughout the day.
- **Brochure:** A quick-reference guide with warning signs and support options.
- **Optional:** 8"x8" QR code magnet or sticker to discreetly place in portable restrooms, job boxes, or other shared spaces to make accessing support private.

Safe Work Practices

- Take a moment to reset using a Micro Moment technique like breathwork or grounding. Use the breathwork postcard in your toolkit to find a method that works for you.
- If a coworker seems off, ask "Are you okay?" or "What can I do to support you?" to let them know they're not alone.
- Review the brochure for warning signs such as sudden changes in mood, withdrawal from others, lack of energy, increased use of substances, or talking about feeling hopeless.
- Share the poker chip or explore the digital resources together to connect someone in crisis to 988 or other mental health support.
- Keep reminders visible. Stick a breathing sticker on your water bottle or a QR code sticker on your hard hat to stay connected to tools every day.

Toolbox Safety Talk

Micro Moments Toolkit

Topic: Toolkit Brochure - What to Look For

Mental health challenges are often unspoken. But that doesn't mean they're invisible. In construction, stress and pressure can show up in different ways. Learn to spot the signs that someone might be struggling.

Warning Signs

- Withdrawing from conversations or isolating from the team
- Increased conflict, irritability, or substance use
- Missing deadlines, making repeated mistakes, or seeming indecisive
- Tardiness, absenteeism, or showing up but mentally checked out
- Loss of focus, energy, or motivation on the job
- Saying they feel overwhelmed, hopeless, or numb

You'll find this list inside the Micro Moments Toolkit brochure, to reference when you need it.



What To Do

- If something feels off with a coworker, trust your gut. Your job is not to diagnose, just check in.
- Use the "Simple Ways to Reach Out" postcard in your toolkit to start the conversation.
- The "Intentional Conversations" card helps you go deeper on how to listen and respond.
- If you notice these signs in yourself or others, scan the QR codes in your toolkit to access digital resources and immediate support.

Break the Stigma

We all have hard days. If a coworker brings up warning signs they've noticed about you, try not to get defensive. Acknowledge the courage it took for someone to check in with you and stay open to the conversation. Their concern means they care.

Your response can help build trust and encourage them to reach out again, maybe to someone who truly needs it. When we respond with openness and respect, we strengthen a culture of care.

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Topic: Postcard - Simple Ways to Reach Out

Reducing isolation builds connection, and connection supports mental health. Even a small check-in can make a big difference in someone's day or their life. That's why your Micro Moments Toolkit includes a Simple Ways to Reach Out postcard. It features sentence starters by Mindful Momentum to help you begin a conversation, even when it feels awkward.

What To Do

- ◆ Not sure how to start? Send a short text or leave a voicemail. A quick check-in can still make a big difference.
- ◆ Create a safe space to connect. Choose somewhere quiet or take a walk.
- ◆ These phrases can help:
 - This may feel awkward, but I'd like to know if you're alright.
 - What can I do to support you?
 - You seemed _____ today. I'm concerned.



Next Steps

- ◆ If you are unsure who to check in with, review the What to Look For list inside the toolkit brochure.
- ◆ Use the Intentional Conversations card to help guide a deeper dialogue if needed.
- ◆ Scan a QR code to explore tools online or connect to local mental health resources.

Break the Stigma

If a coworker starts a conversation with you using one of these sentence starters:

- ◆ Take a breath and remember their concern comes from a place of care.
- ◆ Even if you are not struggling, respond with openness and model sharing your own highs and lows.
- ◆ Your willingness to engage can help them feel more confident reaching out again.

Try using this card regularly. With practice, these conversations become easier. The more we talk about mental health, the more we reduce the stigma across our industry.

Toolbox Safety Talk Micro Moments Toolkit

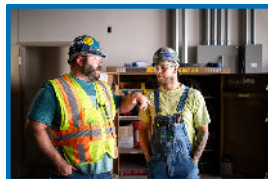
Topic: Postcard - Start the Conversation

A quick check-in isn't always enough to feel seen and supported. That's why your Micro Moments Toolkit includes the Start the Conversation postcard: a guide for going deeper when someone may be struggling.

These intentional conversations are how we make space for honesty, connection, and healing, without needing to be an expert.

What To Do

- Choose a quiet and private space when possible, or offer to walk side by side.
- Take a deep breath and slow your voice to help the other person feel calm. Your presence, body language, and tone matter.
- Approach the conversation with openness, not problem-solving. The goal is connection, not advice.
- Then follow the Intentional Conversation steps provided on the postcard.



Next Steps

- If you are unsure who to check in with, review the What to Look For list in the brochure.
- Scan a QR code to explore tools online or connect to local mental health resources.
- Refer the person to their Peer Ally Contact card to connect with someone they already trust and continue the conversation.

Break the Stigma

If a coworker starts an intentional conversation with you:

- Take a breath and remember their concern comes from a place of care.
- Even if you are not struggling, model sharing your own highs and lows.
- Your willingness to engage can help them feel more confident reaching out again.

Try using this card regularly. With practice, these conversations become easier and more natural. The more we talk about mental health, the more we reduce the stigma across our industry.

Toolbox Safety Talk Micro Moments Toolkit

Topic: Postcard - Breathe Better. Feel Better. & Sticker

Remember: A Micro Moment is a small action you take in real time to reset your focus, calm your body, and support your mental health.

Even just a few minutes of focused breathing throughout your day can reduce stress, improve mood, and support your mental well-being. You don't need total silence, stillness, or privacy.

What To Do

Simple Reset with Textured Infinity Sticker

- Place your textured infinity sticker where you'll see and use it often: your phone case, water bottle, hard hat, or lunch cooler.
- Trace your finger along the textured infinity sticker as you breathe in and out.
- Let the motion guide your rhythm. No need to count.

Cyclic Sighing

- Inhale deeply through your nose.
- Inhale again briefly, continuing the same breath.
- Exhale slowly through your mouth.
- Repeat for 1–5 minutes.

Box Breathing

- Inhale for 4 counts. Hold for 4 counts.
- Exhale for 4 counts. Hold again for 4 counts.
- Repeat as needed.

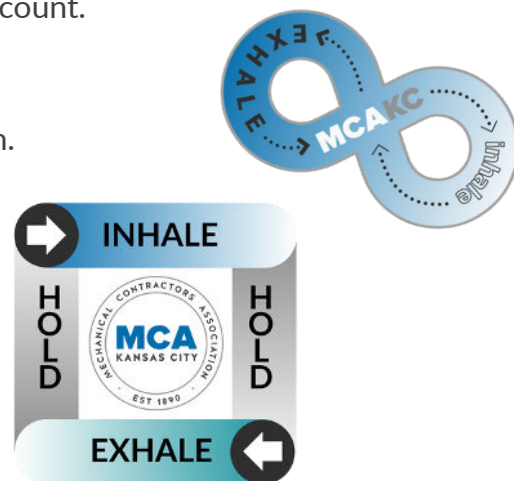
Next Steps

- Try each breathing technique to find the one that works best for you.
- Request more breathing stickers from MCAKC. We have multiple designs.
- Practice other Micro Moment exercises using the emotion wallet cards in your toolkit.

Break The Stigma

- Use Micro Moment exercises openly and regularly.
- Encourage others to take a Micro Moment when stress runs high.
- Say the words: "I need a Micro Moment" to help normalize these tools.
- Hand out extra stickers or show someone how to use the one you carry.

These Micro Moments make a big impact, especially when we practice them together.



Toolbox Safety Talk Micro Moments Toolkit

Topic: Wallet Card - Peer Ally Contact & Reasons to Live

Your Micro Moments Toolkit includes a wallet-sized card designed to help you stay connected and grounded during tough times. One side includes space to write the name and number of your Peer Ally—someone you trust to support you. The other side helps you identify three personal Reasons to Live. These are the people, values, and goals that keep you going, even on the hardest days.

This card is a powerful reminder that you are not alone. When filled out, it becomes a lifeline and a source of strength.

What To Do

- Write the name and number of someone you trust to call when things feel hard.
- If no one comes to mind, scan the QR code on your card to find a Peer Ally through your union resources.
- Call 988 as a group to see how simple and non-threatening it is.
- List three personal reasons that give your life meaning.
- Keep the card accessible in your wallet, truck, or locker.



Next Steps

- Use the QR codes in your toolkit to find additional support.
- If someone calls you for help, use the conversation postcards to guide your response.
- After talking with your Peer Ally, use a Micro Moment exercise to refocus and reconnect.

Break the Stigma

- Carry this card with you, especially during tough times.
- Encourage others to complete and keep their own cards.
- Save 988 for yourself or someone else who may need it.

Filling out this card is a safety practice, not a weakness. These small actions can save lives.

You are not alone.

Toolbox Safety Talk

Micro Moments Toolkit

Topic: Wallet Cards - Anxious? Angry? Depressed? Stressed?

When emotions run high, it's hard to know what to do next. That's why your Micro Moments Toolkit includes four wallet-sized cards, each color-coded by feeling, with simple exercises to help you reset in real time.

These exercises are Micro Moments: short, practical actions that help you shift gears, calm your body, and refocus your mind. Each card offers a different way to take that moment, based on how you're feeling.

● **Yellow = Anxious**

● **Teal = Depressed**

● **Red = Angry**

● **Gray = Stressed**

What To Do

- Try each Micro Moment exercise on the cards and notice how you respond.
- If you often feel one of these emotions, keep that card accessible.
- Practice regularly so the tools feel familiar before you're overwhelmed.
- Brainstorm other Micro Moments you've used that help you reset and share.
- Pay attention to how much time each takes. Most exercises are under 2 minutes.
- Place your breathing sticker somewhere accessible to combine breathwork with any of these exercises.

Next Steps

- Use your breathwork postcard and/or breathing sticker to extend or deepen a Micro Moment.
- Request more breathing stickers from MCAKC. We have multiple designs.
- After connecting with a Peer Ally or having an intentional conversation, take a Micro Moment to reset and stay grounded.

Break the Stigma

- Big feelings don't have to lead to big reactions. These cards help you stay in control and avoid harmful responses like yelling or shutting down.
- Use Micro Moment exercises openly and often.
- Encourage coworkers to take a Micro Moment when emotions run high.
- Say the words: "I need a Micro Moment" to help normalize these tools.
- Share extra Emotion Wallet Cards or show someone how you use your own.

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Topic: Poker Chip & Hard Hat Sticker

Your Micro Moments Toolkit includes two powerful items to remind you that help is always available: a weighted poker chip and a square hard hat sticker. These tools aren't just symbols. They're real, usable resources to connect you or someone else to immediate mental health support.

What To Do

- Place the sticker visibly on your hard hat to show you're a mental health ally.
- Keep the poker chip accessible.
- Scan the QR code on either item to visit our mental health website. You'll find:
 - Direct links to call, text, or chat with 988.
 - Union-specific resources from Local 8 and Local 533.
 - A list of Kansas City mental health and family support options.
 - Digital versions of the emotion wallet cards for mobile use.
- Call 988 as a group to see how simple and non-threatening it is.



Next Steps

- Use your Intentional Conversation and Sentence Starter postcards to guide the conversation to connect someone to support.
- Call your peer ally to discuss support resources.
- Call, text, or chat with 988 for yourself or alongside someone who may need help.
- Review What to Look For in the brochure to decide who needs a poker chip or sticker.
- Request replacement poker chips and/or stickers from MCAKC.

Break The Stigma

- Wearing this hard hat sticker sends a clear message: mental health matters and you're someone who cares.
- If someone offers you a poker chip or sticker, don't brush it off. Accept it or show you already have one. These gestures make it easier for everyone to keep offering support.
- Encourage your team to share resources freely. A sticker or poker chip handed off at the right moment could save a life.