

RURAL MENTAL HEALTH RESILIENCE

A PROGRAM OF HOPE

There's a mental health emergency in rural America:

PEOPLE LIVING IN RURAL AREAS HAVE HIGHER DEPRESSION AND SUICIDE RATES, BUT ARE LESS LIKELY TO ACCESS MENTAL HEALTH CARE SERVICES, COMPARED TO PEOPLE LIVING IN URBAN AREAS.

SUICIDE RATES AMONG PEOPLE LIVING IN RURAL AREAS ARE 64 TO 68 PERCENT HIGHER THAN THOSE IN LARGE CITIES, ACCORDING TO RECENT DATA FROM THE U.S. CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC).

FARMERS ARE TWICE AS LIKELY AS PEOPLE IN OTHER OCCUPATIONS TO DIE BY SUICIDE.



Rural Mental Health Resilience *A Program of Hope*[®]

PRESENTED BY:



NATIONAL GRANGE
OF THE ORDER OF PATRONS OF HUSBANDRY

If you or someone you know is suicidal or in emotional distress, call or text [988](tel:988) for 24/7 support.

If this is a life-threatening emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest hospital emergency room.

You can also chat at [988lifeline.org](https://www.988lifeline.org) if you are in crisis or if you are worried about a loved one who may need crisis support, including having thoughts of suicide or experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

THE DICTIONARY DEFINES RESILIENCE AS:

The capacity to withstand or to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness.

In response to the mental health crisis in rural America, Rural Minds and the National Grange have developed the **Rural Mental Health Resilience Program** to provide mental health information, resources and training for people who live in rural communities across the county.

THE RURAL MENTAL HEALTH RESILIENCE PROGRAM PROVIDES AN APPROACH FOR IMPROVING RURAL MENTAL HEALTH BY:

1. Recognizing the self-reliance of many people in rural America as a strength for confronting the problem.
2. Giving people who live in rural America the mental health information and resources they need to become part of the solution.
3. Encouraging the courageous conversations about mental illness and suicide that must be heard.
4. Enlisting people to serve as trusted sources of reliable information to help their family, friends and rural community.

HELP THOSE STRUGGLING WITH MENTAL HEALTH IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Knowing that many rural Americans are resilient and self-reliant, the Rural Mental Health Resilience Program was developed for folks who want to take it upon themselves to confront mental health challenges in rural America.

THE FREE PROGRAM MATERIALS INCLUDE:

- Rural mental health fact sheets and flyers to share in your community
- Tips and information about how to start a conversation about mental illness with people you know who might be struggling and for sharing with people in your community
- Guide for planning, promoting and leading community meetings that raise awareness about mental health challenges in rural America and provide access to potentially life-saving information
- Lists of organizations that provide mental health support and services.

THE RURAL MENTAL HEALTH RESILIENCE PROGRAM – BE PART OF THE SOLUTION

<https://www.ruralminds.org/resilience>

The free information, materials and resources can be viewed online or downloaded and printed. **We encourage you to use any or all of the following program materials** that you find helpful in order to improve mental health in your rural community.

PROGRAM TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROGRAM SECTION 1: FACTS ABOUT RURAL MENTAL HEALTH

Documents in this section:

Rural Mental Health Resilience Program Flyer

Rural Mental Health Emergency Fact Sheet

Rural Mental Health Lifestyle Challenges

Overcoming Stigma That Surrounds Rural Mental Illness

5 Common Myths About Rural Mental Health and Suicide

Suicide Awareness and Prevention Warning Signs

PROGRAM SECTION 2: TALKING ABOUT RURAL MENTAL HEALTH

Documents in this section:

Conversation Starters

Sample Email Content and Social Media Posts

PROGRAM SECTION 3: HOSTING A RURAL MENTAL HEALTH EVENT

Documents in this section:

Event Planning Roadmap

Key Messages for a Community Talk

PowerPoint Slide Presentation

Editable Event Brochure | Sample Event Brochure

Media Alert for Grange Event

Detailed Media Release

Interview Q&A Template

Social Media Post Graphics

Printed Banner PDF

Website Banner Graphic

Yard Sign

PROGRAM SECTION 4: FREE RURAL MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Crisis Resources

Mental Health Resources by Topic

Mental Health Resources A-to-Z

10 Tips for Tackling the Holiday Blues



Feeling stressed or sad about the holidays?
You're not alone.

A 2021 survey found that 60% of Americans feel the holidays have a negative impact on their mental health, including higher levels of stress, depression and anxiety, as well as increased substance abuse.*

For people affected by mental illness, the holiday season can be especially challenging. One study by National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) found that 64% of people with mental illness said the holidays make their conditions worse.*

What can you do to take control and help manage the increased stress of the holidays?

Here are some tips to do just that:

1 Set a budget and stick to it.

With inflation and rising costs, many people can't afford holiday gifts. Financial stress is hitting people in rural communities even harder this year compared to urban dwellers. Homemade gifts and gift exchanges among family and friends may help you stay within your budget.

2 Take time for yourself.

Whether it's taking a walk, watching a favorite movie, or listening to music, do something you enjoy to relax, feel refreshed and help you face the extra obligations of the holiday season.

3 Avoid excess alcohol consumption.

People sometimes turn to alcohol or drugs to help cope with negative feelings associated with holidays. However, overindulgence and substance abuse just add to feelings of guilt, anxiety and stress.

4 Get plenty of sleep.

Staying rested is important for maintaining both physical and mental health.

5 Set boundaries.

Don't hesitate to say "no" to people and think carefully when deciding whether or not to participate in events that may cause additional stress.

6 Make a gratitude list.

Year's end is a great time to think about what you are grateful for. Studies show that gratitude has a positive impact on mental health.

7 Get as much sunlight as possible.

A seasonal decrease of sunlight coincides with the holiday season and can lead to seasonal affective disorder – a form of depression during the winter months. To help boost your mood, go outside at midday when the sun is brightest, work near a window and brightly light your home.

8 Volunteer.

Helping others – whether it's through a local organization or by simply dropping off a meal to a housebound neighbor – is a good way to both lift your spirits and make new friends.

9 Acknowledge your feelings and reach out for support.

If you're grieving the loss of someone close this year, it's okay to feel sad and not want to celebrate. Connect with family, friends, a faith community or a support group. Let them know how you are feeling and if there is something that they can do to help.

10 Seek professional help if you're feeling overwhelmed.

Talk to your primary care doctor or a mental health professional if your anxiety, stress or sadness lasts for a while or becomes too overwhelming. Visit the Rural Minds website for mental health resources: www.ruralminds.org/mental-health-resources-by-topic.



To find help with managing a mental health crisis during the holidays or any time throughout the year, connect with 988. If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org to talk to a trained listener. The 988 Lifeline is free, confidential and available 24/7.



* Sources available at www.ruralminds.org