

# RURAL MENTAL HEALTH SOLUTIONS




## PEER LEARNING TOOLKIT & GUIDE

This resource guide supports rural communities in their efforts to address mental health issues. It was developed in conjunction with the February 2024 WeCAN Rural Mental Health Solutions Roundtable.

WeCAN's Solutions Roundtables grew out of our Idaho-Montana-Wyoming rural peer learning network. In that spirit, the roundtable highlighted projects that rural communities can replicate, and fostered peer exchanges of ideas, questions, promising approaches and practical advice.

Rural Mental Health Solutions Roundtable recordings are available at [westerncan.org/mental-health-solutions](https://westerncan.org/mental-health-solutions)

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## WECAN KEY PARTNERS

University of Idaho | Idaho Rural Partnership | Montana State University | Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) | University of Wyoming | Wyoming Business Council

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# Solution Stories

These are the real-life rural community mental health solution stories shared by presenters during the Mental Health Solutions Roundtable. Recordings are online at [westerncan.org/mental-health-solutions](http://westerncan.org/mental-health-solutions)



## **Joel Ricks, Josh Tieken and Lex Godfrey, Rigby, Idaho**

Joel (Future Farmers of America), Josh (The Falls Insurance Center) and Lex (Rigby High School) talked about a community-driven effort to build a custom-designed mobile pizza oven out of a World War II buoy. Their aim is to foster community gatherings and deepen connections among area residents, including far-flung farmers.



## **Brenda Richey, Polson, Montana – [Slide presentation here](#)**

Brenda (Montana State University - Flathead Reservation Tribal Extension Program) talked about a 4-H youth mentoring program that pairs high school students with K-4th grade students. The program helps build a stronger sense of belonging and support within local school systems and the broader community.



## **Lance Hansen and David Callister, Moscow, ID – [Slide presentation here](#)**

Lance and David (University of Idaho Extension) talked about what farm stress researchers are learning in their work with 17 rural Idaho communities, and how some of these places are tackling their mental health challenges.



## **Paige Olsen, Wallace, Idaho – [Slide presentation here](#)**

Paige (Silver Valley Economic Development Corporation) talked about a community-created website and mental health resource center, and some unexpected sources of support, including how the group is using Americorps funding to support locals working to build the new organization.



## **Melissa Cook, Big Horn County, Wyoming – [Slide presentation here](#)**

Melissa (University of Wyoming Extension) talked about a mental health and fitness fair organized by a community group focused on economic development – and how that effort spawned more mental fitness events in the county and a "yellow feather" awareness-building campaign.



## **Danielle Scott, Lapwai, Idaho – [Slide presentation here](#)**

Danielle (University of Idaho Extension, Nez Perce Reservation) talked about multigenerational programs that draw on and strengthen cultural connections to build resilience. Woven from generations of Nez Perce traditions, culture is also prevention.

# Idaho Resources

## **Youth Programs**

### **Youth Advocacy Coalition**

YAC's purpose is to cultivate and strengthen supportive community partnerships that encourage and foster the physical and mental wellbeing of youth and families and to prevent substance misuse among youth.  
[westcentralmountainyouth.org/](http://westcentralmountainyouth.org/)

### **University of Idaho Extension**

4-H Building Fences and Youth Mental Health First Aid teaching coping and stress management strategies.  
[uidaho.edu/extension/county/canyon/family-consumer-sciences](http://uidaho.edu/extension/county/canyon/family-consumer-sciences)

**Communities for Youth** knows it can be hard to know what you or your community can do to help ensure well-being for young people. Their approach is called "Upstream Prevention" and it's about working directly with young people to identify the risks and protective factors in their lives to prevent crises before they start  
[communitiesforyouth.org](http://communitiesforyouth.org)

## **Data and Information Resources**

### **Western Idaho Community Health Collaborative**

This site publishes data about hundreds of indicators in every Complete Atlas Region community, and makes that data available in maps, charts, tables, and more.  
[idahoregoncommunityhealthatlas.org/chna-reports](http://idahoregoncommunityhealthatlas.org/chna-reports)

## **Mental Healthcare Services**

### **Liberty Healthcare Corporation**

Provides free mental health assessments for Idaho children with emotional disturbances.  
[libertyhealthcare.com/newsroom/liberty-provides-free-mental-health-assessments-for-idaho-children-with-emotional-disturbances/](http://libertyhealthcare.com/newsroom/liberty-provides-free-mental-health-assessments-for-idaho-children-with-emotional-disturbances/)

[WesternCAN.org](http://WesternCAN.org)

### **Idaho State University Clinics**

ISU's Meridian Counseling Clinic provides individual, couple, and family counseling at minimal costs to community members and Idaho State University faculty, staff, and students.  
[isu.edu/clinics/counseling-meridian/](http://isu.edu/clinics/counseling-meridian/)

### **Pathways Community Crisis Center of Southwest Idaho – Boise**

7192 Potomac Drive, Boise, ID 83704 –  
1-833-5-CRISIS (27-4747) [pcccsi.com/](http://pcccsi.com/)

### **Western Idaho Crisis Center – Caldwell**

524 Cleveland Blvd., Suite 160 Caldwell, ID  
208-402-1044. [widccc.org/](http://widccc.org/)

### **Northern Idaho Crisis Center – Coeur d'Alene** [nicrisiscenter.org/](http://nicrisiscenter.org/)

Northern Idaho Crisis Center  
2195 Ironwood Court, Suite D, Coeur d'Alene,  
208-625-4884

### **Behavioral Health Crisis Center of East Idaho – Idaho Falls**

1650 N. Holmes Ave., Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401  
208-522-0727  
[eastidahocrisis.com/](http://eastidahocrisis.com/)

### **Latah Recovery Center – Moscow**

531 S. Main, Moscow, ID 83843 –  
208-883-1045  
[latahrecoverycenter.org/](http://latahrecoverycenter.org/)

### **Idaho Suicide Prevention Hotline (call or text) – 208-398-4357**

### **Rural Crisis Center Network – Lewiston** **877-897-9027**

### **outheast Idaho Behavioral Crisis Center – Pocatello**

1001 N 7th Ave N Ste 160, Pocatello, ID  
208-909-5177  
[seibcc.com/](http://seibcc.com/)

# Idaho Resources

## **Support Organizations**

**Disability Action Center NW** - ID and WA  
DAC NW empowers people with disabilities to have self-determination and be included in all aspects of community life. [dacnw.org/](http://dacnw.org/)

## **Idaho Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence**

The Idaho Coalition is working to reclaim connections to your own and each other's humanity, and to create the foundation for collective liberation and thriving.  
[idahocoalition.org](http://idahocoalition.org)

## **Live Better Idaho, through ID Dept of Health and Welfare**

A free informational resource with links for finances, healthcare, food/nutrition, veterans, child care, family services and work/education. No name, phone or email required for access.  
[healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/](http://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/)

## **NAMI, National Alliance on Mental Health**

NAMI Idaho works to improve the quality of life for all those affected by mental illness through support, education, advocacy and research.  
[namiidaho.org](http://namiidaho.org)

## **Workshops and Trainings**

**University of Idaho Extension's Farm Stress Management** team includes trained professionals to provide free trainings in Mental Health First Aid (eight-hour course) and Question Persuade Refer (one-hour suicide prevention course). A number of MHFA and QPR trainings will be offered throughout the state. To become a source of support for your community email Talje Hoene at [thoene@uidaho.edu](mailto:thoene@uidaho.edu) who will help you find a local MHFA or QPR training to participate in. For resources and information: [uidaho.edu/extension/farm-stress](http://uidaho.edu/extension/farm-stress)

## **Community and County Programs and Projects**

### **Silver Valley Cares *Solution Story!***

To support and promote mental health within your community, fostering resilience, compassion, and emotional well-being.  
[svcares.org/](http://svcares.org/)

## **Help is Here! A Resource Guide for Elmore County**

Model county-level resource guide, which also describes some community-led mental health support programs.  
[stlukesonline.org/~media/stlukes/documents/mental%20health%20resources/resource-guide-elmore-2023-02-en.pdf](http://stlukesonline.org/~media/stlukes/documents/mental%20health%20resources/resource-guide-elmore-2023-02-en.pdf)

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## **Try the HeartMath Quick Coherence® technique**

Using the power of your heart to balance thoughts and emotions, you can achieve energy, mental clarity and feel better fast anywhere.

**Step 1:** Focus your attention in the area of the heart. Imagine your breath is flowing in and out of your heart or chest area, breathing a little slower and deeper than usual.

**Step 2:** Make a sincere attempt to experience a regenerative feeling such as appreciation or care for someone or something in your life. Focus on a feeling of calm or ease, or the feeling you have for someone you love or a special place.

# Montana Resources

## **Ag Stress**

### **Montana Department of Agriculture - Free Counseling for Agricultural Producers**

Montana Department of Agriculture has partnered with Frontier Psychiatry to provide all Montanans involved in ag with access to free, confidential counseling access.

[agr.mt.gov/Topics/E-G/FRSAN-pages/Counseling-Access](http://agr.mt.gov/Topics/E-G/FRSAN-pages/Counseling-Access)

### **Montana Farm Bureau Federation**

MSU Extension and an associated statewide advisory council have developed an online clearinghouse of resources for a wide range of topics related to stress and mental health. Includes local, state and federal mental healthcare resources, programs, training opportunities and materials.

[mfbf.org/Rural-Resources/Rural-Mental-Health](http://mfbf.org/Rural-Resources/Rural-Mental-Health)

## **Supporting Organizations & Programs**

### **Montana State Extension MSU; Family and human development/mental health.**

Resource for addressing mental health in non-clinical settings. Includes MSU Extension contacts around the state and how to find mental healthcare providers in Montana.

[montana.edu/extension/health/mental\\_health.html](http://montana.edu/extension/health/mental_health.html)

### **YAM Youth Aware of Mental Health**

Also at MSU, the YAM program stands out among youth suicide prevention programs based on its strong research foundation of research evidence.

[montana.edu/crre/youthawareofmentalhealth.html](http://montana.edu/crre/youthawareofmentalhealth.html)

### **Children's Mental Health Bureau**

The Children's Mental Health Bureau administers state-funded mental health services for children. CMHB's mission is to support and strengthen Montana youth and families through Medicaid mental health services; their vision is for strong youth functioning in healthy families, living in supportive Montana communities.

[dphhs.mt.gov/bhdd/cmb/](http://dphhs.mt.gov/bhdd/cmb/)

### **NAMI Montana Chapter**

NAMI Montana supports, educates, and advocates for Montanans with mental conditions and their families. Website includes connections to training and peer support groups and county mental health resource guides.

[namimt.org](http://namimt.org)

### **Catalyst for Change**

Brings mental health services to and serves all Montanans, especially rural communities. Catalyst for Change uses a locally developed virtual-meets-local model to connect individuals, families, and communities to high-quality services.

[catalystforchange.org/](http://catalystforchange.org/)

### **Rural Institute for Inclusive Communities**

At University of Montana, RIIC partners with advocates and communities to serve, train, research, develop and evaluate services that improve the quality of life of people with disabilities.

[umt.edu/rural-institute/](http://umt.edu/rural-institute/)

# Montana Resources

## Montana Aging & Disability Resource Center

Directory of nine Aging & Disability Resource Centers in Montana to empower individuals to effectively navigate their long-term services and supports options to make informed choices, to streamline access to long-term services and support and organize the long-term support system. Includes mental health resources.

[dphhs.mt.gov/sltc/aging/adrc/](https://dphhs.mt.gov/sltc/aging/adrc/)

## Montana Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence

A statewide coalition of individuals and organizations working together to uproot violence and oppression in order to end domestic and sexual violence in Montana. Includes a service provider map.

[mcadsv.com/](https://mcadsv.com/)

## Crisis Assistance

**Montana 988** Suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline. Call 988 if you or someone you know is in crisis, 24 hours a day, for free and confidential emotional support.

[dphhs.mt.gov/suicideprevention/988](https://dphhs.mt.gov/suicideprevention/988)

## Resource Listings and Connections

### Montana State University Wellness

This link connects you to health and wellness resources, including stress management resources and the Montana Ag Producer Stress Resources Clearinghouse

[montana.edu/extension/wellness/](https://montana.edu/extension/wellness/)

### Montana Suicide Prevention Information and Resources

Robust resource listings including for schools, college students, LGBT youth, veterans, Native Americans, survivors, communities, and more.

[dphhs.mt.gov/suicideprevention/suicideresources](https://dphhs.mt.gov/suicideprevention/suicideresources)

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## TIP: Turn your goals into present tense affirmations

Affirmations aren't exactly goals, though. You use them to rewrite existing thought patterns linked to anxious and self-defeating thoughts. By setting them in the future, you're telling yourself, "Sure, that can happen eventually."

But this may not have much impact on your present behavior. Instead, structure your affirmation as if it's already true. This increases the chance you'll behave in ways that actually make it true.

For example: "I have the confidence to speak to strangers and make new friends."

[HEALTHLINE.COM](https://www.healthline.com)

# Wyoming Resources

## **Ag Stress**

**Wyoming Ag Stress** A webpage by the Wyoming Department of Agriculture with resources for farmers and ranchers to get help, family support, helping someone in need, and dealing with ag-related issues that can cause stress.

[agriculture.wy.gov/index.php?section=wyoming-ag-stress](http://agriculture.wy.gov/index.php?section=wyoming-ag-stress)

## **Wyoming 211 Farm & Ranch Stress Assistance**

To help farmers and ranchers in coping with the stress and demands that are unique to their industry, Wyoming 211 has partnered with the Wyoming Department of Agriculture and the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network to provide information and referral to resources and services that may assist farmers and ranchers in need of support or assistance.

[wyoming211.org/partners/farm-ranch-stress-assistance/](http://wyoming211.org/partners/farm-ranch-stress-assistance/)

**When Do You Need a Counselor?** This PDF article from the University of Wyoming Extension has advice and resources for farmers who are considering seeking outside help.

[https://www.uwyo.edu/uwe/\\_files/docs/whenfarmercounselor.pdf](https://www.uwyo.edu/uwe/_files/docs/whenfarmercounselor.pdf)

## **Mental Healthcare Services**

### **Mental Health Service Providers in Wyoming**

List of mental health care services by county in Wyoming. A similar list for substance abuse is accessible from this page, too.

[health.wyo.gov/behavioralhealth/mhsa/treatment/cmhc/](http://health.wyo.gov/behavioralhealth/mhsa/treatment/cmhc/)

**Wyoming State Hospital** The only state-operated psychiatric hospital in Wyoming. Provides treatment for a range of mental health disorders.

[health.wyo.gov/behavioralhealth/statehospital/](http://health.wyo.gov/behavioralhealth/statehospital/)

## **Wyoming Association of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Centers**

The association provides advocacy and training for Wyoming's premier treatment centers, treating everyone regardless of their ability to pay and providing the backbone of Wyoming's mental health system. This link provides contact information for member centers.

[wamhsac.com/locations](http://wamhsac.com/locations)

## **Wyoming Youth Services Association**

A collaboration of nonprofit organizations serving youth and families in Wyoming. WYSA encompasses crisis shelters, group homes, residential treatment centers, and psychiatric residential treatment centers.

Site includes directories of member centers.

[wyomingyouthservices.org/](http://wyomingyouthservices.org/)

## **Crisis Assistance**

**Wyoming Lifeline** Dial 988 to reach Wyoming LifeLine, a member of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline network. The Wyoming LifeLine is an initiative to help protect the people of Wyoming in times of crisis and save lives. You don't have to be suicidal to call. Anyone can call at any time. Someone is always there for you on the other end of the line. [wyominglifeline.org](http://wyominglifeline.org)

## **Wyoming Center on Aging Depression & Suicide Prevention Resources**

Resources on mental health and older adults, including suicide, depression, social isolation and more.

[uwyo.edu/wycoa/resources\\_on\\_aging/mental\\_health.html](http://uwyo.edu/wycoa/resources_on_aging/mental_health.html)

# Wyoming Resources

## **Supporting Organizations & Programs**

### **NAMI, National Alliance on Mental Health**

NAMI of Wyoming is the state's primary organization for information about relevant issues, advancements and progress in the field of mental illness. NAMI WY strives to ensure the availability and accessibility of quality support and research, leading to a better quality of life for people affected by mental illness. Its website offers information, education and resources, support groups. Local chapters provide additional support. [namiwyoming.com/](http://namiwyoming.com/)

### **Wyoming Project AWARE**

Wyoming Project AWARE's mission is to reduce the impact of behavioral health conditions and substance abuse within Wyoming communities. The project works in selected school districts across the state. Includes a [suicide "postvention" guide](http://edu.wyoming.gov/for-parents-students/project-aware/) for schools in the aftermath of death by suicide. [edu.wyoming.gov/for-parents-students/project-aware/](http://edu.wyoming.gov/for-parents-students/project-aware/)

### **Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic**

**Violence and Sexual Assault** Through a collective voice, the Wyoming Coalition Against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault is committed to provide leadership, education, and systems advocacy to advance social change and end violence. Includes a directory of advocacy and assistance programs across the state. [wyomingdvsa.org/](http://wyomingdvsa.org/)

### **Wyoming Aging & Disability Resource Center**

Empowering older adults, people with disabilities and caregivers to successfully navigate their quality of life and independence with the tools and knowledge needed to choose the best path for themselves. Streamlines access to supports and services. [adrcwyoming.org/](http://adrcwyoming.org/)

## **Resource Listings & Connections**

### **Wyoming Injury & Violence Prevention**

**Program** Coordinates state and local efforts to prevent unintentional and intentional injury and violence through public awareness, training, and system change. Suicide prevention resources include listings of community mental health providers, a suicide prevention resource guide, suicide survivor and lived experience support groups, links to suicide prevention training, fact sheets and suicide reporting media guidelines. There's also information about how to sign up for monthly Wyoming Alliance for Suicide Prevention calls.

[health.wyo.gov/publichealth/prevention/wivpp/suicide-prevention/](http://health.wyo.gov/publichealth/prevention/wivpp/suicide-prevention/)

**Wyoming 211** Serving 100% of Wyoming's population, Wyoming 211 connects people with community, health and disaster services through a free phone service and searchable online database.

[health.wyo.gov/behavioralhealth/mhsa/treatment/cmhc/](http://health.wyo.gov/behavioralhealth/mhsa/treatment/cmhc/)

## **Mental Health & Suicide Prevention Trainings**

**Wyoming Suicide Prevention Trainings** A list of suicide and mental health trainings available in the state, and a list of available trainers.

[health.wyo.gov/publichealth/prevention/wivpp/suicide-prevention/wyoming-suicide-prevention-trainings/](http://health.wyo.gov/publichealth/prevention/wivpp/suicide-prevention/wyoming-suicide-prevention-trainings/)



# Western Region Resources

## **Farm-Focused Efforts**

### **Western Regional Agricultural Stress Assistance Program (WRASAP)**

WRASAP is composed of lead agencies representing 13 states and 4 territories. WRASAP wants to make sure that ag producers, their families and people they work with have access to the resources needed, when they're needed.

[farmstress.us/](http://farmstress.us/)

### **Colorado State University Extension and Goodwill Industries** provides a unique collaboration that promotes independence in production agriculture by helping workers find the help they need to begin, remain, or regain employment on their farm or ranch.

[agrability.colostate.edu](http://agrability.colostate.edu)

## **Resources and Programs**

**THE PARADISE PARADOX** is a film that explores the mental health crisis affecting America's mountain towns and the innovative solutions being developed in response. For more information and to request a screening in your community:

<https://www.paradiseparadoxfilm.com>

Accompanying discussion guide so community members can engage in conversations and take action:  
[paradiseparadoxfilm.com/pdf/the-paradise-paradox-discussion-guide.pdf](http://paradiseparadoxfilm.com/pdf/the-paradise-paradox-discussion-guide.pdf)

## **Data and Information Resources**

### **Western Idaho Community Health Collaborative**

publishes data about hundreds of indicators in every Complete Atlas Region community, and makes that data available in maps, charts, tables, and more.

[idahooregoncommunityhealthatlas.org/chna-reports](http://idahooregoncommunityhealthatlas.org/chna-reports)

[WesternCAN.org](http://WesternCAN.org)

### **California Center for Rural Policy**

Dedicated to improving the lives of rural people in California through community-based, innovative research  
[ccrp.humboldt.edu](http://ccrp.humboldt.edu)

### **Northwest Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Collaborative**

A diverse team aims to equip rural communities across Washington, Oregon, Alaska, and Idaho with training to prevent and address opioid use disorder.

[www.nwrotac.org](http://www.nwrotac.org)

### **My Future Pathways: A Solution in Eagle County Colorado**

MFP serves and supports Eagle County's underserved youth and families in a holistic way to help them meet their full potential. They use a three-pillar approach: providing social-emotional support through mentoring and expertise via partner organizations, supplying academic support through tutoring and scholarships, and promoting physical health and wellness through sports and recreational activities.

[myfuturepathways.org](http://myfuturepathways.org)

# Resources for Tribal Communities

## **Indigenous Story Studio**

Indigenous Story Studio, formerly known as the Healthy Aboriginal Network, has been a registered non-profit society in the province of British Columbia since 2005. Their mandate is the non-profit promotion of health, literacy & wellness.  
[istorystudio.com](http://istorystudio.com)

**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Association (SAMHSA), Tribal Training and Technical Assistance Center** guides tribal communities and organizations in applying cultural knowledge and strengths to support wellness around substance use disorders, suicide prevention, and mental health. They define TTA as the process of providing targeted support using culturally relevant, evidence-based, holistic approach to support Native communities in their self-determination efforts through infrastructure development and capacity building, as well as program planning and implementation. The Tribal TTA Center helps Native communities build local capacity and skills, and TTA is customized and tailored to meet the need and readiness level of each community they work with.  
[samhsa.gov/tribal-ttac/resources/mental-health-promotion](http://samhsa.gov/tribal-ttac/resources/mental-health-promotion)

## **Native Hope**

Native Hope exists to address the injustice done to Native Americans. They dismantle barriers through storytelling and impactful programs to bring healing and inspire hope.  
[nativehope.org](http://nativehope.org)

## **WERNATIVE: For Native Youth, By Native Youth**

You've got questions, WERNative (We R Native!) has answers. If you are a Native youth and have a 'mind, body or spirit' question on your heart that a Relative can assist with good medicine, ask [WERNative.org](http://WERNative.org)!

**Tribal Extension (Federally Recognized Tribes Extension Program (FRTEP))** is a successful tribal community outreach model focusing on agricultural productivity and youth development. This website provides information on FRTEP projects on reservations across Indian Country, highlighting the measurable impacts, success stories and sharing ideas. FRTEP offices are located on reservations and staff often partner with local communities, governments and institutions.  
[tribalexextension.org/](http://tribalexextension.org/)  
[Measuring FRTEP's success - Tribal Extension](#)

## **Indian Country Extension**

**Cooperative Extension in Indian Country:** This term identifies Cooperative Extension work that occurs in Indian Country – on American Indian reservations, in tribal communities and tribal colleges. This nonformal, knowledge-based educational programming is grounded in the philosophy established in the Smith-Lever Act of 1914.  
[indiancountryextension.org/](http://indiancountryextension.org/)

# National Resources

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## Organizations & Agencies

### AARP

Information and resources for mental health treatment and improvement across the lifespan. [aarp.org/health/conditions-treatments/mental-health-resource-center/](http://aarp.org/health/conditions-treatments/mental-health-resource-center/)

### Lifeline

The 988 Lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals in the United States. [988lifeline.org/](http://988lifeline.org/)

### National Alliance on Mental Illness

The nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness. Website is a wealth of resources and information. Check your state or area for a local NAMI affiliate. [nami.org/Home](http://nami.org/Home)

### Prevention Institute

Works with a breadth of partners and communities to develop strategies and practices to keep people healthy and safe in the first place. The Mental Health and Wellbeing page on PI's site includes descriptions of collaborative projects with community partners to shift policies, practices, and norms to create conditions that support mental health and resilience. [preventioninstitute.org/focus-areas/promoting-mental-health-wellbeing#:~:text=Building%20thriving%20communities%20helps%20foster,experience%20less%20stress%20and%20anxiety](http://preventioninstitute.org/focus-areas/promoting-mental-health-wellbeing#:~:text=Building%20thriving%20communities%20helps%20foster,experience%20less%20stress%20and%20anxiety)

### Rural Minds

Serves as the informed voice for mental health in rural America, and provides mental health information and resources. Website includes fact sheets on different mental health conditions, a comprehensive, searchable resource guide and Rural Minds' new Rural Mental Health Resilience program in collaboration with the National Grange, [ruralminds.org/](http://ruralminds.org/)

### Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration - Rural Behavioral Health

Includes grant programs such as the Strategic Prevention Framework-Partnerships for Success program for rural communities, and a link to SAMHSA's [Center for Mental Health Services](http://samhsa.gov/rural-behavioral-health). [samhsa.gov/rural-behavioral-health](http://samhsa.gov/rural-behavioral-health)

# National Resources

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**USDA Office of Urban Agriculture** Grant program includes technical and financial assistance including for community farms and gardens (and other small-scale and innovative producers) to provide healthy, local food, encourage economic development, provide employment and on-the-job training, expand community greenspaces, foster community collaboration, build climate and disaster resilient communities. Despite the “urban” label, rural communities are eligible for these grants. [usda.gov/topics/urban#grants](https://www.usda.gov/topics/urban#grants)

**USDA Rural Development state offices** Access USDA rural development programs – including for potential collaborations with housing programs like Habitat for Humanity. [rd.usda.gov/about-rd/offices/state-offices](https://rd.usda.gov/about-rd/offices/state-offices)

See **USDA Rural Health Liaison, Kellie Kubena’s keynote presentation and slide deck** for more insight into USDA and other federal resources to support rural community mental health solutions. [westerncan.org/mental-health-solutions](https://westerncan.org/mental-health-solutions)

**Wyoming Center on Aging Depression & Suicide Prevention Resources** Resources on mental health and older adults, including suicide, depression, social isolation and more. [uwyo.edu/wycoa/resources\\_on\\_aging/mental\\_health.html](https://uwyo.edu/wycoa/resources_on_aging/mental_health.html)

## Training

**COMET (Changing Our Mental and Emotional Trajectory)** COMET was developed in rural Colorado to align with rural cultural values of neighbor helping neighbor and communities being their own best resource. COMET empowers friends and neighbors to be more prepared to support others’ mental health needs – especially before a crisis. The program trains community members how to initiate a supportive interaction for a potentially emotional conversation using a simple, conversational seven-question guide. [medschool.cuanschutz.edu/family-medicine/research-and-innovation/pbrns/hprn/projects-and-programs/comet](https://medschool.cuanschutz.edu/family-medicine/research-and-innovation/pbrns/hprn/projects-and-programs/comet)

**National Council for Mental Wellbeing Mental Health First Aid** Identify. Understand. Respond. Mental Health First Aid is a skills-based training course that teaches participants about mental health and substance-use issues. [mentalhealthfirstaid.org](https://mentalhealthfirstaid.org)

**QPR Gatekeeper Training** The Question Persuade Refer (QPR) Gatekeeper course is taught in a clear, concise format using the latest in educational technology and practices. The course takes approximately one hour to complete. Learn how to question, persuade, and refer when you know someone who might be suicidal. QPR training for professionals is also available. [qprinstitute.com/individual-training](https://qprinstitute.com/individual-training)

# National Resources

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## Second Step Programs

The nonprofit Committee for Children offers these programs that promote social-emotional learning (self-awareness, self-control and interpersonal skills) in classrooms, out-of-school settings, and for adults. [cfchildren.org/](http://cfchildren.org/)

**Youth Aware of Mental Health (YAM)** Youth Aware of Mental health, also known as YAM, is a school-based program for young people ages 13 to 17, in which they learn about and explore the topic of mental health. YAM is an evidence-based program taking place in classrooms around the world. Students actively engage with the topic of mental health through role-play and student-led discussions. [y-a-m.org](http://y-a-m.org)

## Other Support & Resources

**Equestrian Therapy** Informative website about equine-assisted therapy including a directory, certification program links and information about different applications of this type of therapy. [equestriantherapy.com/](http://equestriantherapy.com/)

**Mental and Physical Health Resources for Students, Parents, and Teachers** from Cornerstone Whole Health Care Organization developed with grant support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Resources for K-3, 4-6 and 7-12, plus resources for parents, teachers and communities. [hub.c-who.org/student-resources-home](http://hub.c-who.org/student-resources-home)

## Mental Health in Rural Communities Toolkit

This toolkit, assembled by the Rural Health Information Hub, is designed for organizations that would like to implement mental health programs in rural areas. It contains seven modules that focus on developing, implementing, evaluating, and sustaining rural mental health programs. [samhsa.gov/resource/dbhis/mental-health-rural-communities-toolkit](http://samhsa.gov/resource/dbhis/mental-health-rural-communities-toolkit)

**Mindfulness and Movement** Tips and suggestions from University of Wyoming Extension for keeping moving to boost metabolism, good posture, energy and mental fitness. [uwoextension.org/uwnutrition/newsletters/mindfulness-movement/](http://uwoextension.org/uwnutrition/newsletters/mindfulness-movement/)

**North American Drama Therapy Association** Resources related to this active, experiential approach to therapy that has broad applications. Includes an extensive resource section. [nadata.org/](http://nadata.org/)

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**People's Garden program** The simple act of planting a garden can have big impacts -- from building a more diverse and resilient local food system to empowering communities to address issues like nutrition access and climate change—and better mental fitness! Learn about People's Gardens, nominate your community garden, and access resources and gardening advice here. [usda.gov/peoples-garden](https://usda.gov/peoples-garden)

## **Rural Health Information Hub - Rural Mental Health Page**

The RHlhub is your guide to improving health for rural residents—providing access to current and reliable resources and tools to help you learn about rural health needs and work to address them. Resources include toolkits, program models, data, educational resources, relevant grant funding sources, and networking opportunities. Search related topics from this page. [ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/mental-health](https://ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/mental-health)

## **Rural Mental Wellness Toolkit**

From the Stigma Free Society of Canada, You will find engaging resources for audiences including youth, families and seniors. The Inspiring Stories for You section showcases videos of rural residents who open up the conversation around mental health and stigma. [ruralmentalwellness.com](https://ruralmentalwellness.com)

## **Articles, Videos and More**

**Nurtured By Nature** Learn how psychological research is advancing our understanding of how time in nature can improve our mental health and sharpen our cognition. (Kirsten Weir, Monitor On Psychology, April May 2020) [apa.org/monitor/2020/04/nurtured-nature](https://apa.org/monitor/2020/04/nurtured-nature)

**Americans on Medicare now get better access to mental health care. Here's how** 7-minute audio or print article on new Medicare coverage for mental health care starting Jan. 1, 2024. (NPR) [npr.org/2024/01/02/1222389808/mental-health-medicare-therapy-counselor?ft=nprml&f=1200383155](https://npr.org/2024/01/02/1222389808/mental-health-medicare-therapy-counselor?ft=nprml&f=1200383155)

**Love, Your Mind Mental Health PSAs** from the Huntsman Mental Health Institute in Salt Lake City, Utah. With rodeo legend, Kaycee Field [youtube.com/watch?v=DlJJr-Nl48A](https://youtube.com/watch?v=DlJJr-Nl48A), pro footballer Marcus M. Smith II [youtube.com/watch?v=G5SMmgDV8NE](https://youtube.com/watch?v=G5SMmgDV8NE) and 5th generation strawberry farmer Marshal Sewell [youtube.com/watch?v=HjVtzA8jruk&list=TLPQMjYwMTIwMjRD2yMvg76YFA&index=3](https://youtube.com/watch?v=HjVtzA8jruk&list=TLPQMjYwMTIwMjRD2yMvg76YFA&index=3).

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**HeartMath Free Emotional Support Resources** Science-based, simple and effective heart-based tools for transforming stress and anxiety, staying resilient and bringing more ease, patience and love into your life. Includes resources for children. With over 400 independent peer-reviewed studies, HeartMath Inc. and the not-for-profit HeartMath Institute are recognized worldwide for their research and scientifically validated methods for reducing stress, anxiety and overwhelm while helping to restore inner balance, self-security, resilience and a sense of well-being.

[heartmath.com/freeresources/](http://heartmath.com/freeresources/)

## **TED Talks on mental health**

**Why Students Should Have Mental Health Days, Hailey Hardcastle** In this 7-minute video, Hailey Hardcastle addresses youth mental health, and the important understanding that “it’s always okay to not be okay. It’s okay to take a break.” She shares how having the option to take mental health days in high school helped her practice self-care and health management. She went on to help pass a bill in Oregon that allows students to take mental health days from school. “Pace yourself...Mental health challenges are not going away...but we can learn to manage and look out for each other.”

[ted.com/talks/hailey\\_hardcastle\\_why\\_students\\_should\\_have\\_mental\\_health\\_days](http://ted.com/talks/hailey_hardcastle_why_students_should_have_mental_health_days)

**Confessions of a Depressed Comic, Kevin Breel** In this 11-minute video, writer, comic and mental health activist Kevin Breel speaks up about depression. He shares how the external world sees him as a funny friend but they don't see his internal world of depression. "We need to shatter the silence...and take away the taboos." [ted.com/speakers/kevin\\_breel](http://ted.com/speakers/kevin_breel)

**How Climate Change Affects Your Mental Health, Britt Wray** In this 7-minute video, science broadcaster Britt Wray talks about how climate change affects your mental health. "For all that's ever been said about climate change, we haven't heard nearly enough about the psychological impacts of living in a warming world." She talks about the impact of the reality of climate change, especially on our youth; how it is “threatening our well-being -- mental, social and spiritual...” Ms. Wray encourages us “to be honest with each other about what’s happening...” to our world. [ted.com/talks/britt\\_wray\\_how\\_climate\\_change\\_affects\\_your\\_mental\\_health](http://ted.com/talks/britt_wray_how_climate_change_affects_your_mental_health)

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This resource guide is intended as a source of support for rural communities that are taking on mental health challenges through locally driven efforts. It is not a comprehensive listing.