



# **Mental Health Awareness**

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**FirstLink**



## **Mission**

To assist people in identifying, accessing, and making effective use of community and volunteer resources.

## **Vision**

To be the first link in linking people and resources 24-hours a day.

# Our Services

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## 2-1-1 Helpline

Provides information to local community resources, offers non-judgmental listening and support.

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## 9-8-8 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

Offers support and crisis intervention for anyone experiencing a mental health challenge.

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## Contract Lines

Support clients of human service agencies by answering phones after hours.

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## Care & Support Program

Ongoing support provided to anyone in need. We reach out regularly to offer resources and a listening ear.

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## Mental Health Education

Spread awareness and education of mental health and suicide to the communities we serve.



# 2-1-1 or 9-8-8?

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## 2-1-1 Helpline

- North Dakota (statewide) & Clay County, MN
- Offers information to local resources
- Possible hold time

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## 9-8-8 Crisis & Suicide Lifeline

- North Dakota (statewide) & western half of MN
- Offers crisis intervention and safety planning for those struggling or their loved ones
- No call goes unanswered

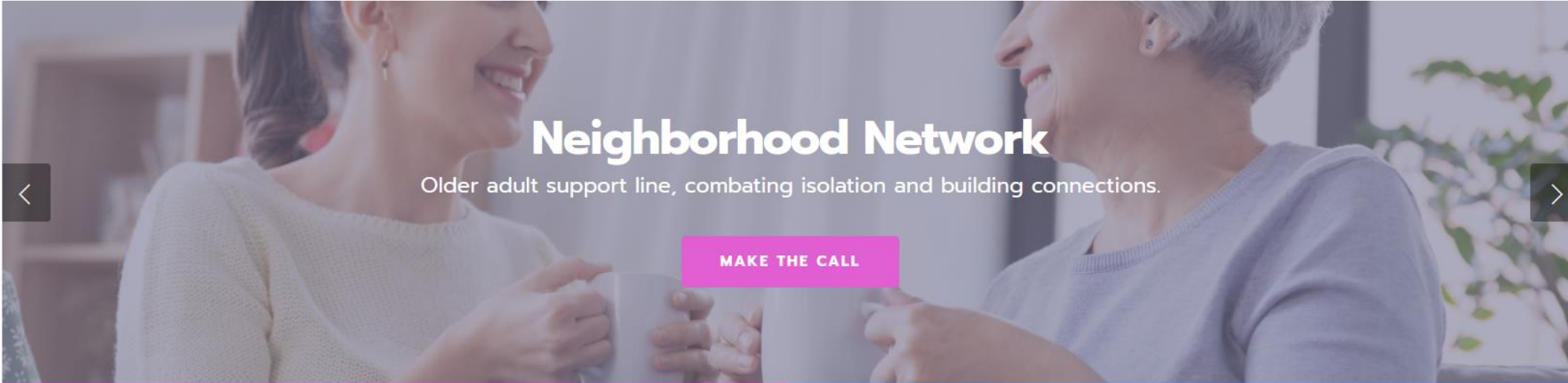
### All FirstLink phone lines...

- Available 24/7/365
- Are confidential
- Provide non-judgmental listening & support



- HOME
- ABOUT
- RESOURCES + SERVICES
- UPCOMING TRAININGS
- GET INVOLVED
- FIRSTLINK MERCH

- GET HELP
- DONATE



# Neighborhood Network

Older adult support line, combating isolation and building connections.

MAKE THE CALL



## Community Directory

Not sure where to turn for food assistance programs, a listening ear, or other resources? FirstLink is here for you.

[View](#)



## Firstlink Data Dashboard















FirstLink helps hundreds of people every day. This dashboard summarizes the needs shared with FirstLink during these contacts.

[View](#)



Get Help Now

## FirstLink 2-1-1 Directory of Resources

 Youth Services	 Food
 Mental Health/Substance Use Disorder Services	 Housing
 Support Groups	 Utilities
 Health Care	 Transportation
 Prenatal, Pregnancy, and Postpartum Services	 Education
 Personal & Household Items	 Employment
 Seasonal Programs	 Consumer Services
Resource Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria	

### Welcome

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**To get started**, begin by typing your zip code or city (*and select the suggested city with county that appears*) into the location box. You may then use the keyword search *or* select from the categories above. If you're having trouble, try typing a word or phrase and wait for the auto-suggest to help you out!

**Remember, 2-1-1 is there for you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week!** Our call specialists are more than happy to assist you in finding resources and providing a non-judgmental listening ear. The 2-1-1 Helpline is a free service and can also be reached directly by calling 701-235-7335 (SEEK).

**Would you like your program or organization listed?** [Please complete our brief intake form by clicking here.](#) A member of FirstLink's Community Resource team will be in touch!

**THANK YOU** to Dakota Medical Foundation who is proud to provide funding for this valuable resource to improve the health and well-being of our region.

### Keyword Search

 Search What I am looking for?

 Serving Location

Search

## Keyword Search

Search payment

- Automobile Insurance Payment Assistance
- Automobile Payment Assistance
- Automobile Payment Assistance \* Families/Friends of People With Chronic Illness
- Birth Certificate Fee Payment Assistance
- Condominium/Homeowner Association Fee Payment Assistance
- Education Related Fee Payment Assistance
- Electric Service Payment Assistance
- Electric Service Payment Assistance \* COVID-19
- Gas Service Payment Assistance
- Heating Fuel Payment Assistance

# Wait for the auto-suggest!

## Keyword Search

Search What I am looking for?

▼ Serving fargo

- Fargo, Cass County, North Dakota US 
- West Fargo, Cass County, North Dakota US
- Fargo, Ellis County, Oklahoma US
- Fargo, Saint Clair County, Michigan US
- Fargo, Clinch County, Georgia US
- Fargo, Cass County, North Dakota US 58103

### 1. RKDA - PPlies (Fargo)

#### Rural Kids Development Alliance (Fargo)

Provides supplies and food to underserved caregivers, families, children, and single mothers. Services include: Hygienic supplies Food Wate...

Fargo North Dakota , United States , 58104-8962  
(701) 639-6674 | <https://ruralkidsda.com/>

### 2. Bethel Evangelical Free Church - Ruby's Pantry (Fargo)

#### Bethel Evangelical Free Church (Fargo)

This is a drive-up, pop-up food pantry. Each guest provides a \$25 donation and receives an abundance of grocery items (one bundle of miscellaneous gro...

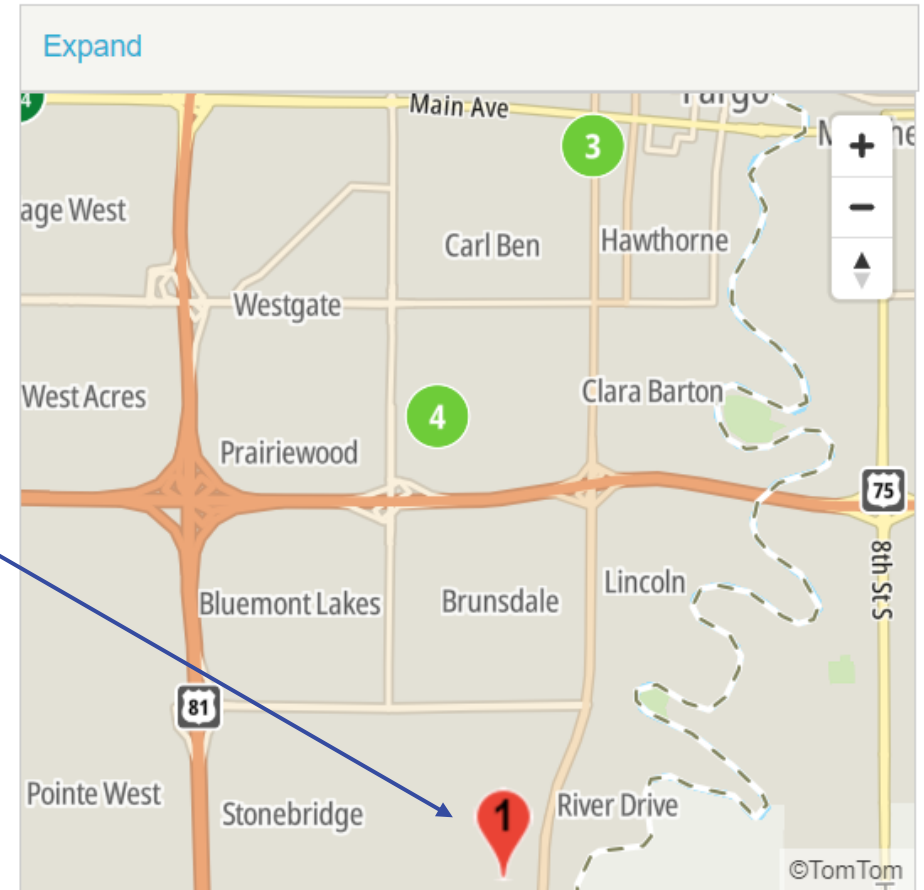
Fargo North Dakota , United States , 58103-5041  
(701) 232-4476 | [rubyspantry.org/location/150](http://rubyspantry.org/location/150)

### 3. Olivet Lutheran Church - Food Pantry (Fargo)

#### Olivet Lutheran Church (Fargo)

Drive up Food pantry available to anyone in need. Items are mostly non-perishable, but may contain some freezer items or produce.

Fargo North Dakota , United States , 58103-4145  
(701) 235-6603 | [olivet.org](http://olivet.org)







# Program: Olivet Lutheran Church - Food Pantry (Fargo)

Resource Number: 53003429

Agency: [Olivet Lutheran Church \(Fargo\)](#)

**Description:** Drive up Food pantry available to anyone in need.

- Items are mostly non-perishable, but may contain some freezer items or produce.

## Location information

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### Physical Location

1330 University Dr S  
Fargo, ND, United States, 58103-4145

### Bus Service

Located on a bus route

### Mailing Address

1330 S University Dr  
Fargo, ND, United States, 58103-4188

### Last Verified On

Friday, September 9, 2022

### Last Updated On

Wednesday, September 14, 2022

## Contact information

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(701) 235-6603

### Email

[pkankelfitz@olivet.org](mailto:pkankelfitz@olivet.org)

### Website

<http://olivet.org>

### Main Contact

Bill Boelter  
Pastor  
[bboelter@olivet.org](mailto:bboelter@olivet.org)

### Senior Worker

Kris Gorden  
Senior Pastor  
[kgorden@olivet.org](mailto:kgorden@olivet.org)

### Hours of Operation

Third Mondays/month, 4:30pm-6:30pm; Telephone to confirm distribution before attending

## Programs offered

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[Olivet Lutheran Church - Christmas Eve Meal/Party \(Fargo\)](#)

## Program information

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### Eligibility

Must be a resident of the service area.

### Program fee

No fees/not applicable

### Application Process

Walk-in and register at table by completing a brief intake form. Please do not arrive prior to 4pm.

### Languages Offered

English

### Documents Required

No Documents Required

### Holidays Observed

When the holiday falls on Saturday, the holiday is observed on Friday. When the holiday falls on Sunday, the holiday is observed on Monday.

New Year's Day

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day

Easter

Christmas Eve

Christmas Day



# **Mental Health Challenges and Disorders**

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Definitions and Symptoms



# Definitions

- **Mental Health**

- A state of well-being in which the individual realizes their own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, and can work productively.

- **Mental Health Challenge**

- A term that includes both mental disorders and symptoms of mental disorders that may not be severe enough to warrant the diagnosis of a mental disorder.

- **Mental Disorder/Mental Illness**

- A diagnosable illness that affects a person's thinking, emotions, and behavior, and disrupts the person's ability to work or carry out daily activities and engage in satisfying relationships.

# Depression



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## Definition

- A sad or low mood that persists for at least two weeks.
- In 2021, 14.5 million U.S. adults (5.7% of population) had at least one major depressive episode with severe impairment in the past year<sup>1</sup>

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## Symptoms

- Hopeless and negative thinking
- Difficulty concentrating
- Sadness/lack of enjoyment
- Sudden mood swings
- Non-suicidal self injury
- Changes in sleeping habits
- Loss of interest in activities and hobbies
- Lack of energy

# Anxiety

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## Definition

- A feeling of worry caused by perceived threats in the environment
  - Panic disorder
  - OCD
  - Generalized anxiety
  - PTSD
  - Social anxiety/Phobias
- Over 40 million (19.1%) adults in the U.S. have an anxiety disorder<sup>2</sup>

## Symptoms

- Mind racing or going blank
- Decreased memory
- Feeling on edge
- Having a sense of impending doom, danger, or panic
- Avoidance of situations that may trigger anxiety
- Obsessive or compulsive behavior
- Gastrointestinal problems
- Sweating, dizziness, numbness
- Muscle aches and pains

# Substance Use Disorder



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## Definition

- A problematic pattern of using alcohol or another substance that results in impairment in daily life or noticeable distress
- In 2021, 61.2 million people aged 12 and older used illicit drugs in the past year<sup>3</sup>

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## Symptoms

- Constantly thinking about the substance
- Mood swings
- Neglecting important duties at work, school, or home
- If actively using the substance, showing physical signs of intoxication
- Glazed or bloodshot eyes
- Increased tolerance of a substance
- Disrupted sleep schedule

# Psychosis

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## Definition

- A general term used to describe a mental health condition in which a person has lost some contact with reality
  - Psychosis is a syndrome (collection of symptoms) not an illness
- The current thinking is that 1.5-3.5% of people will meet diagnostic criteria for a psychotic disorder<sup>4</sup>

## Symptoms

- Difficulty concentrating or paying attention in conversations
- Expressing unusual ideas, voicing strange feelings
- Feeling depressed, anxious, irritable
- Having limited, flat, or inappropriate emotions
- Talking to themselves or someone who is not present
- Changes in appetite
- Dressing inappropriately for the weather
- Experiencing delusions and/or hallucinations



# How to Help - ALO

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Approach with Concern, Listen, Offer Help





# De-Escalation

- Try to stay calm and levelheaded
  - Be the level you want the conversation to be
- Don't argue or raise your voice
- Don't threaten
  - Punitive action, hospitalization, harm, etc.
- Don't restrict the individual's movements
- Use positive words instead of negative words
  - Instead of "Don't do that," say "Let's do this."
- Pause the conversation, if needed

# How to Help – The Approach

- Find a private, comfortable environment
- Choose a time that is mutually convenient for both parties
  - Ensure you have the time for the conversation
- Express concern in a caring, non-judgmental way
  - Use “I” Statements
    - “I’ve noticed a change in \_\_\_\_ and I’m concerned.”
    - “I haven’t seen you around recently, are you okay?”

# How to Help – Listen

- Utilize active listening skills
  - Paraphrase/repeat what you hear
  - Ask clarifying questions if needed
    - “What I hear you saying is \_\_\_\_\_, is that correct?”
  - Reflect back feelings you hear
    - “It sounds like this situation has you feeling very stressed.”
  - Don’t listen for the sake of responding
    - Work on pausing the internal dialogue
- Ensure you are communicating in a non-judgmental way
  - You don’t have to understand or agree to help and be empathetic

# How to Help – Offer Help

- Encourage professional help
  - Doctor, therapist, social worker, crisis counselor
- Encourage self help
  - Reach out to trusted individuals, take a walk, engage in hobbies, listen to music, eat/drink water/take a nap
- If appropriate, offer to help reach out to assistance together
  - Call 988 and do a warm handoff
  - Schedule an appointment together, offer to attend

# What if help isn't wanted?

- Encourage individual in need to talk to a safe, trusted person
  - Hearing from a trusted person may help someone feel more comfortable reaching out for help
- Find out if there are barriers
  - Barriers could include cost, stigma, prior treatment not going well, not knowing of local resources, etc.
    - Call 2-1-1 for information on resources in the area (if unknown) and for resources with sliding fee scales/no one turned away due to inability to pay
- Ensure individual knows you are there for them if they do feel ready to get help



# **Suicide Awareness**

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Myths, Facts, How to Help



# Myths About Suicide

- “Asking about suicide will cause a person to die by suicide.”
- “Most suicides happen without warning.”
- “People who talk about dying by suicide are looking for attention.”
- “No one can stop a suicide.”

# Suicide

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## Prevalence (2021 Data)

### North Dakota

- 20.8 suicide rate (deaths per 100,000 total population)<sup>5</sup>
- 9<sup>th</sup> highest in the country<sup>5</sup>
- 9<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in ND<sup>5</sup>

### Nationwide

- 14.5 suicide rate (deaths per 100,000 total population)<sup>6</sup>

## Warning Signs

- Talking about suicide/death
- Withdrawing from activities and friends
- Preparing for death
- Expressing feeling trapped or hopeless
- Feeling there is no purpose to life
- Threatening to hurt or kill oneself
- Sleep schedule disruption



# Risk Factors v. Protective Factors

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## Risk Factors

- Previous suicide attempts
- Lack of social support
- Recent loss
- Mental health condition
- Chronic physical health condition
- Membership of a minoritized group (race, cultural, LGBTQ+, etc.)

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## Protective Factors

- Social supports
- Job security
- Counseling
- Future plans/goals
- Coping skills
- Spirituality

# Suicide – How to Help

- Same as previous action plan
  - Approach
  - Listen
  - Offer Help
- Another step – collaborate on a safety plan
- Connect individual in need with 988 if unsure of how to best assist

# Suicide – Safety Planning

- Warning signs
  - “What are warning signs I’m feeling suicidal?”
- Internal coping strategies
  - “What can I do to distract/cope?”
- People and social settings that provide distraction
  - “Who can I turn to or where can I go for distraction?”
- People I can ask for help
  - “Who can I turn to for help?”
- Professionals/agencies I can contact
  - “Who are professionals that can help?”
- Making the environment safe
  - “What can I do to make my environment safe?”



# Self-Care

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Resiliency and prioritizing your wellbeing



# Self-Care and Resiliency

- Resiliency
  - A person's ability to “bounce back” or overcome challenging experiences
  - Protective factors bolster resiliency
- Self-Care
  - The active practice of seeing to your own physical and mental health needs, particularly during or after a stressful event
  - Taking care of yourself helps you to be better able to assist others in need
    - Can't pour from an empty cup

# Dimensions of Wellness

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## Social

Talk with friends and family

Engage in community events

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## Physical

Exercise

Eating healthy

Sleep

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## Spiritual

Attending church/spiritual service

Meditating

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## Intellectual

Reading

Writing in a journal

Puzzles/puzzle games

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## Environmental

Cleaning your environment (inside and outside)

Recycling

Caring for plants (gardening, houseplants, etc.)



# Summary



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## Mental Health Challenges & Suicide

- Mental health is a state of well-being, mental health challenges include both mental disorders and symptoms of mental disorders, and mental disorders are diagnosable illnesses that affect a person's daily life.
- Being a supportive individual can help to keep someone safe for now until they can connect with others

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## Action Plan

- Approach
- Listen
- Offer Help
- Safety Plan

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## Self-Care

- Care for yourself before you care for others.
- Self-care is diverse and different for everyone
- Self-care fosters resiliency



# Stay in touch!

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

- Newsletter sign-up
- Add new program/resource to directory
- Career/internship opportunities



facebook.com/myfirstlink



@myfirstlink



FirstLink



\*TRAINER\*  
\*POSITION\*



outreach@myfirstlink.org



(701) 293-6462 – ADMINISTRATIVE LINE  
2-1-1 or (701) 235-7335 - RESOURCES  
9-8-8 or (800) 273-8255 - CRISIS



# Resources

1. <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/major-depression>
2. <https://www.nami.org/About-Mental-Illness/Mental-Health-Conditions/Anxiety-Disorders>
3. <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2023/01/04/samhsa-announces-national-survey-drug-use-health-results-detailing-mental-illness-substance-use-levels-2021.html>
4. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK546579/>
5. <https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/suicide-rates-by-state.html>
6. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/suicide.htm>