

The SAFE PILLAR Series

The Safe Pillar Series is a four-part training program designed to equip local pillars/individuals in communities and industries (like the building and construction community) with practical skills and resources to better support the wellbeing, safety, and mental health of those within their organizations. Each course is taught by certified members and organizations in the community and builds toward helping participants feel confident recognizing when someone may be struggling, knowing how to respond, equipping them with resources to help provide or refer them to and strengthening safety culture throughout the industry.

Course 1: Suicide Prevention 101 - April 2nd, 2026

Instructor: Alyssa Mitchell, MPA, CHES

Bio: A suicide prevention professional with the Utah Department of Health and Human Services, where she serves as the Suicide Prevention Program Manager. She leads statewide training and prevention initiatives, supports implementation of evidence-based strategies, and works closely with community and workplace partners to promote effective, responsible approaches to suicide prevention.

Course Description: This course provides a foundational overview of suicide prevention in Utah, focusing on awareness, infrastructure, and available resources.

Participants gain:

- A general understanding of Utah's suicide prevention landscape
- Awareness of statewide strategies and support systems
- Clarity on how prevention efforts intersect with workplaces and communities

This course establishes a shared baseline of understanding without requiring clinical knowledge.

Course 2: Vital Cognition for Construction - June 2nd, 2026

Instructor: Alyssa Mitchell, MPA, CHES

Bio: A suicide prevention professional with the Utah Department of Health and Human Services, where she serves as the Suicide Prevention Program Manager. She leads statewide training and prevention initiatives, supports implementation of evidence-based strategies, and works closely with community and workplace partners to promote effective, responsible approaches to suicide prevention.

Course Description: This course is tailored specifically to the construction industry and addresses the unique pressures faced by construction professionals.

Participants gain:

- Insight into why suicide prevention is especially relevant in construction
- Tools to support healthier conversations within teams
- Awareness of resources and supports available to employees at all levels

The focus is on creating a culture of awareness, support, and responsibility within construction organizations.

Course 3: CALM (Counseling on Access to Lethal Means) - September 3rd, 2026

Instructor: Jordan Merrill, MHL

Bio: The Community Health Program Manager for Intermountain Health's Desert Region, where he leads public health and prevention efforts in southern Utah. He works with local and statewide coalitions, including suicide prevention initiatives, to raise awareness, reduce stigma, and connect individuals and organizations with resources that support wellbeing and community health.

Course Description: CALM is an evidence-based training focused on reducing risk through practical, responsible safe storage practices and responsible firearm ownership.

Participants gain:

- Understanding of how time and distance can reduce risk
- Best practices for safe storage and responsible access
- Guidance on having respectful, non-confrontational safety conversations

This course emphasizes prevention through practical decision-making rather than crisis response.

Course 4: Postvention & Building a Supportive Plan - December 3rd, 2026

Instructor: Teresa Willie, LCSW

Bio: A licensed clinical social worker with Sandstone Counseling, where she provides mental health counseling and support to individuals, families, and communities. Her work includes trauma-informed care, suicide prevention, and helping people build practical tools for resilience, healing, and long-term wellbeing.

Course Description: This course focuses on how organizations can respond thoughtfully after a difficult or impactful event as well as create an organizational plan to support individuals or the team during times of crisis.

Participants gain:

- Guidance on supporting individuals and teams following a loss or crisis
- Best practices for minimizing disruption and long-term impact
- A simple framework for creating a workplace "Support & Safety Plan"

The goal is to help organizations respond with care, clarity, and leadership. And have a plan to be ready when a crisis strikes.