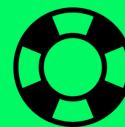


# BALANCING WORK AND FAMILY PRESSURES



American  
Foundation  
for Suicide  
Prevention

John is a drywall finisher on a big commercial job. He leaves the house at 5:30 AM and doesn't get home until after 6:00 PM. His wife works evenings, so they barely see each other, and he's missing his daughter's softball games. Lately, John has been more on edge—he forgot the lunch he had packed twice last week, got into a shouting match over a missing tape measure that he left in his truck, and has been sleeping poorly. It's not the work—he likes the crew. But juggling job and home responsibilities is wearing him thin. He hasn't told anyone, but it's starting to affect his performance—and his mental health.

In construction, the pressure doesn't stop when you leave the job site. Long hours, commutes, inconsistent schedules, and financial stress can take a toll on workers and their families. When personal life is strained, it shows up at work—through fatigue, distraction, or burnout. Balancing work and family isn't easy, but supporting each other through these pressures can make the job safer and life "off the clock" a little more manageable.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

**Supervisors can Acknowledge the Strain and Lead With Empathy:** A simple comment like, "I know everyone's juggling a lot at home and here" can go a long way. Recognizing that the struggle is real—without judgement-- makes it feel safer for workers to speak up if they're overwhelmed.

**Watch for Signs that Someone Might Be Feeling Stretched Too Thin:** If a coworker is distracted, irritable, or forgetful, consider that personal stress may be a factor. Checking in with them by saying "You need a hand today?" can open the door to support without getting too personal.

**Encourage Conversations:** Normalize talking about family commitments just like we do about job deadlines. This helps create a team culture that values life outside of work. People do better when they know that everyone juggles personal, family and work stress.

## JOB SITE DISCUSSION STARTERS

1. What are some ways that we can support coworkers who might be feeling overwhelmed by the demands of both work and home life?
2. What small changes can supervisors or crew members make to show empathy and support for each other during busy or stressful times?

## THE BOTTOM LINE

Construction is demanding, and we bring our whole selves to the jobsite. Personal matters like health and family are important, just like our work is. When workers feel they're forced to choose between their family and their paycheck, mental health can suffer. Supporting balance isn't just kind—it improves performance and retention. When we treat our teams as people first, we build trust and morale. Family and work don't have to compete—we can help them support each other.

Lastly, if you or someone you know is in crisis, please call, text or chat with the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline by calling or texting the number 988.

*Don't forget to mention your company's mental health resources or local service options.*