



September 2025 Member Meeting Summary

Date:	Thurs., Sept. 11, 2025
Time/Location	7:30 – 8:30 a.m in person at Catalpa Meeting Room, Appleton 11:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. via Zoom
Facilitator(s):	Sarah Bassing-Sutton (Executive Director), with spotlight presentation by Lindsey DeVries (Community Suicide Prevention Coordinator)
Agenda:	<p>Follow-ups from last meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Connecting with members- Waves of Need followup <p>Spotlight: Project Zero Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Sneak Peak Mind Your Wellness 2.0 data- Suicide Prevention Month - Opportunities to Participate- Suicide Prevention Action (SPA) Team Update- Safe Suicide Messaging: Best Practices for Talking About Suicide

Summary written by Wendy Harris

Project Coordinator, The Connection

1. Follow-Ups from Last Meeting

- **One-on-One Member Meetings**
 - Sarah continues to meet with member agencies individually. Purpose: learn organizational challenges, benefits of membership, and gather ideas to strengthen Connection's value.
 - Goal: meet with all members by year's end. Sarah continues to reach out to set up meetings.
- **"Wave of Needs" Update**

- Sarah convened a small group of community stakeholders (211, food pantries, housing providers, Partnership Health) to review emerging needs and policy impacts.
 - Findings:
 - Needs are rising, but full impact will likely appear further down the road (in a couple years, most likely)
 - Historical context: food pantry demand spiked two years post-2008 recession.
 - Some needs may be better coordinated by other entities, but The Connection can facilitate information exchange and discussions.
 - Next steps: maintain regular communication, consider topic-focused convenings, and remain proactive.
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2. Mental Health Action Partnership (MHAP) Update

- **Overview:** Sarah attended the Sept. 10 summit of the Mental Health Action Partnership (MHAP) in Madison. MHAP is a statewide mental health coalition focused on equitable access and continuous improvement in integrated health care throughout the state. Those wishing to get involved can find out more information at the MHAP website: <https://www.mhapwi.org/>
- **Key Legislative Updates (2025 priorities):**
 - [Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities \(PRTF\)](#) - **Signed into law! Act 9**
 - [Qualified Treatment Trainee \(QTT\)](#) - **Level funded in 2025-2027 at \$1.5M**
 - [Psychosocial Clubhouse](#) grants - **MOVING forward AB301/SB305**
 - [Treatment Alternatives & Diversion \(TAD\) Expansion](#) - **MOVING forward AB-178/SB-153**
 - [Dialectical Behavioral Therapy \(DBT\)](#) - **Bill proposal written; seeking sponsors**
 - [Department of Corrections \(DOC\) Independent Ombudsman](#) - **Proposal submitted to DOC Secretary**
 - [Community Support Programs \(CSP\)](#) - **Removed from budget**
 - [State Health Care Provider Loan Assistance](#) Programs - **Removed from budget**
 - [Medicaid Peer Support Services](#) - **Removed from budget**

- [Medicaid Community Health Workers \(CHW\)](#) - Removed from budget
 - **Midterm Priorities:**
 - Medicaid rate study for mental health and substance use treatment (modeled on Minnesota). Next meeting: 3 – 4 p.m., Sept. 17
 - Growing the mental health workforce | peer support specialists and peer support services. Next meeting: 3 – 4 p.m., Sept.
 - Integrated data system
Next meeting: 3 – 4 p.m., Oct. 14
 - Chapter 51 Emergency Detention improvements
Next meeting: 12 – 1 p.m., Sept. 24
 - Members encouraged to connect directly with their lawmakers; bipartisan interest/support noted.
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3. Suicide Prevention Awareness Month Spotlight: Project Zero

(Background: Project Zero is an initiative of The Connection focused on adult suicide prevention and systems-level change to improve adult mental health by enhancing protective factors and reducing risk factors.)

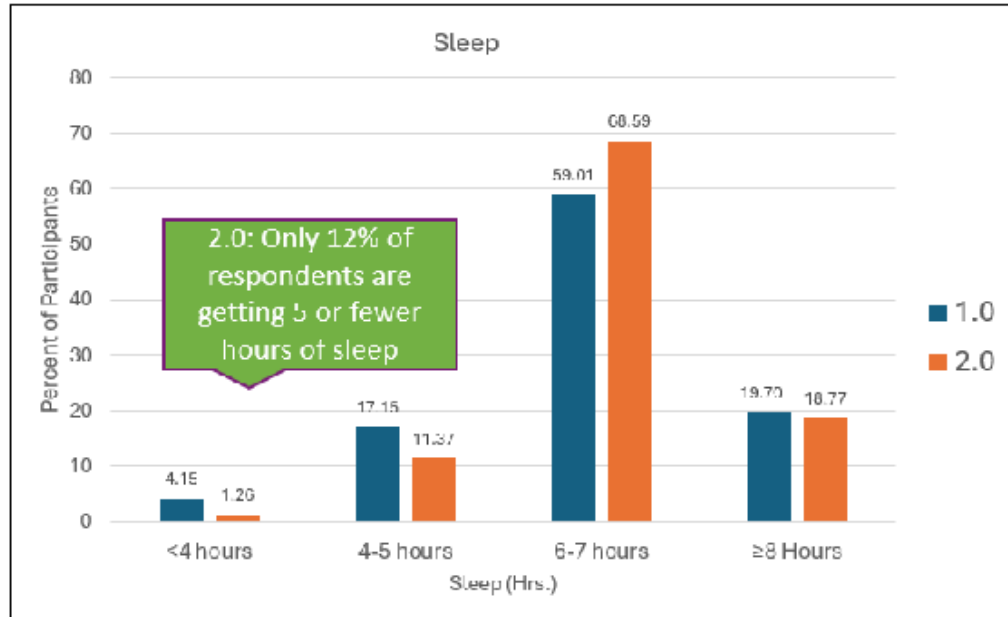
A. Mind Your Wellness Survey 2.0 – Sneak Peek

(Background: The Mind Your Wellness Survey, an initiative of Project Zero, is a local survey conducted in Calumet, Outagamie and Winnebago counties to gain a better understanding of adult mental health and suicide-related behaviors. The survey, designed by the Medical College of Wisconsin, was first administered in 2021 and provided a detailed look at risk and protective factors related to suicide and the mental health of adults living in the Fox Cities. The Connection closed out the second iteration of the survey in August 2025 and is in the process of analyzing results.)

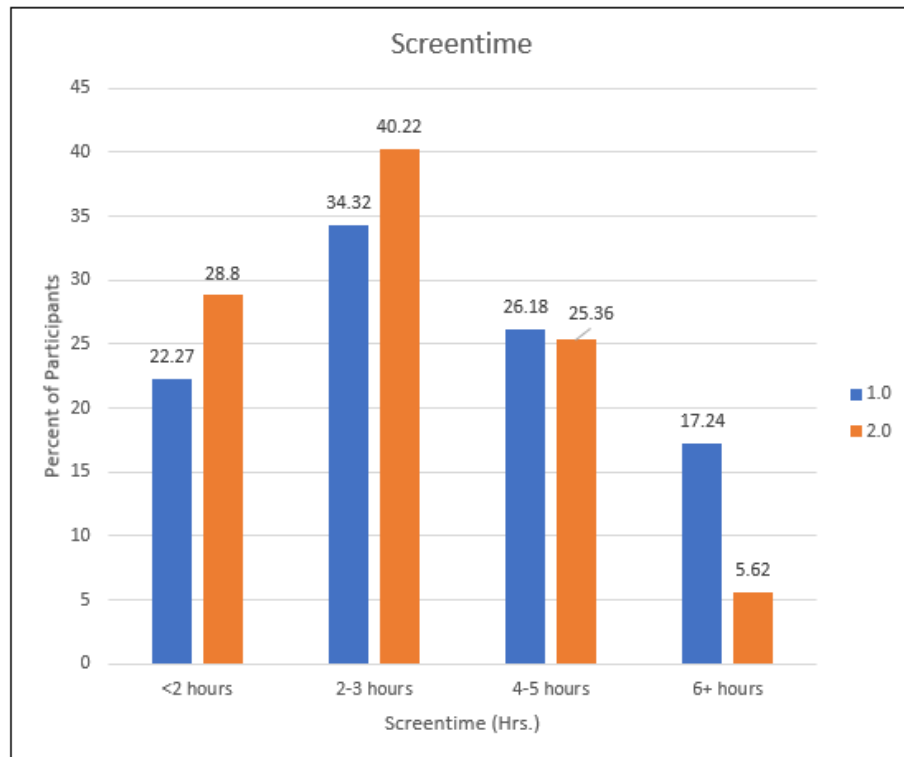
- **Survey details:**
 - Conducted Aug. 1–31, 2025.
 - Designed to be culturally responsive
 - 655 responses.
 - Anonymous, IRB-approved, culturally updated.
 - Full report to be shared at Nov. 2025 meeting.

- **Early Findings:**

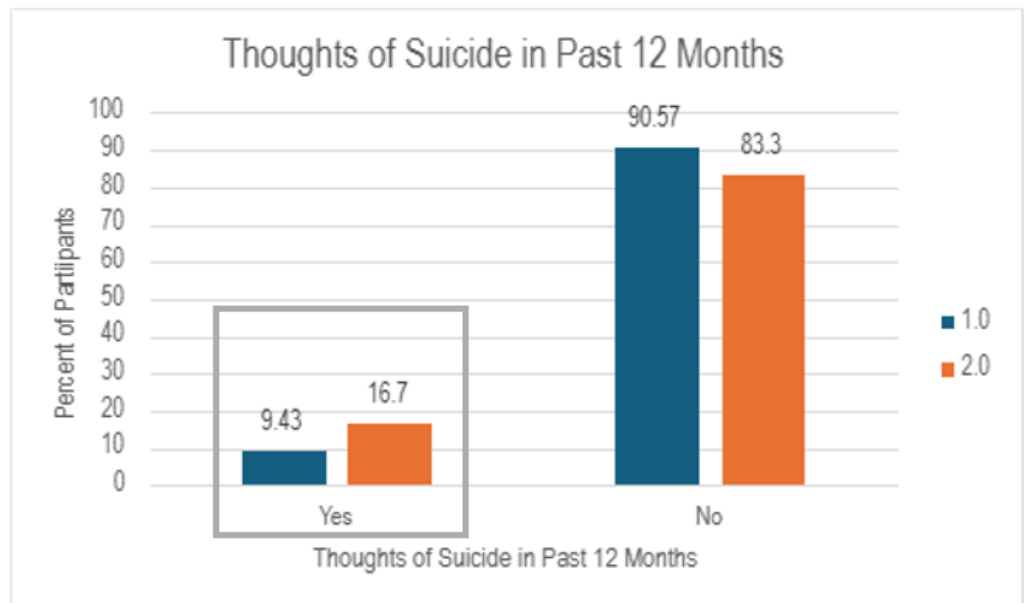
- **Sleep:** Fewer adults report <5 hours/night (12% vs. 22% in MYW 1.0). Yet many still wake unrefreshed.



- **Screen time, depression and anxiety:** Shift toward lower daily recreational use; prior survey showed strong link between > 4 hours/day and anxiety/depression. Spending fewer than 4 hours on screens outside of work/school showed less likelihood of experiencing anxiety and depression (MYWS 1.0)



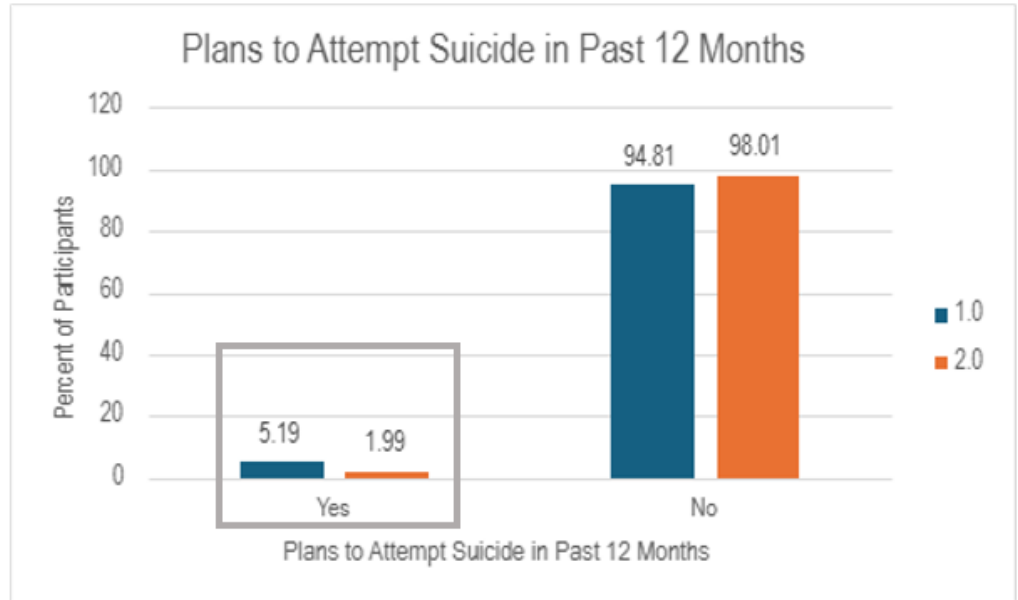
- **Suicide Loss Survivors:** More than 5% reported experiencing a suicide loss. Clear correlation with searching for suicide information.
- **Suicidal Thoughts/Plans:**
 - Higher reports of suicidal ideation vs. MYW 1.0.



MYWS 1.0 May 2021-July 2022

MYWS 2.0 Aug. 2024-Aug. 2025

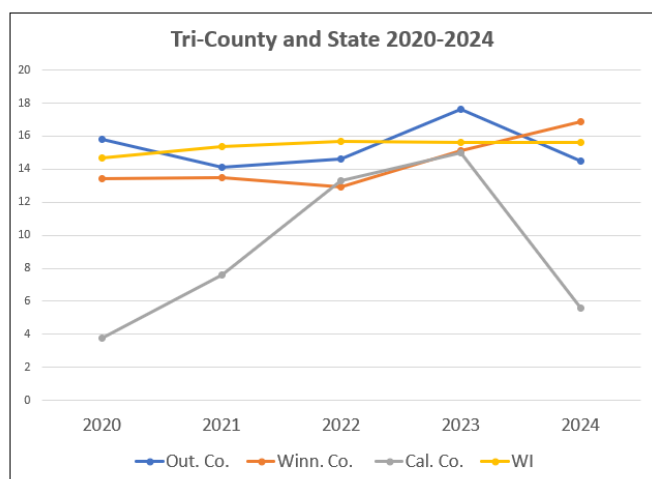
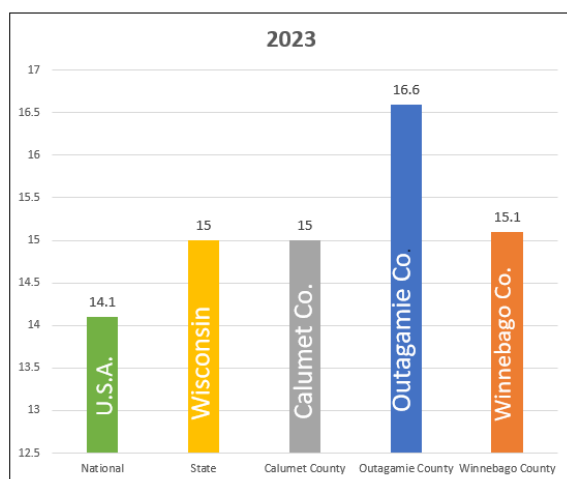
- Fewer reported making a plan/attempt → suggests some protective/preventive effect.



B. Tri-County Suicide Data (2020–2024)

This data is intended to assist local agencies in data driven decision making to positively impact mental health for adults living in the Tri-County

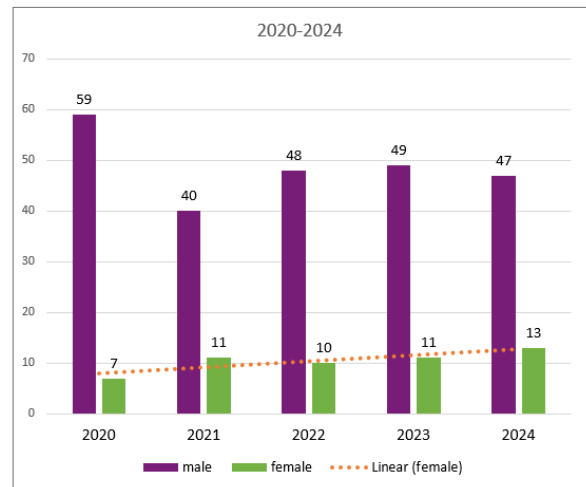
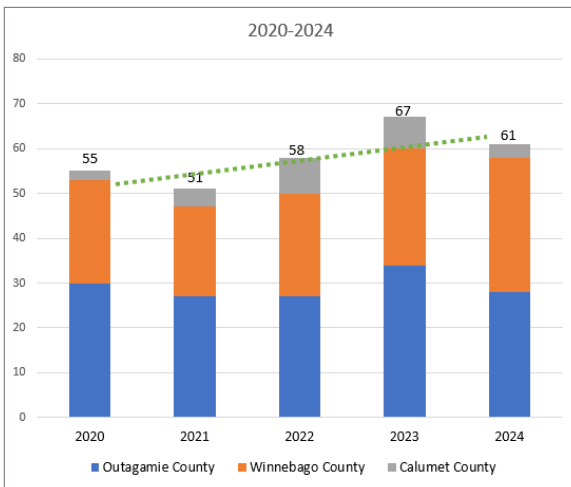
- **Rates:** Wisconsin stable at 14–15 per 100,000. Small counties (e.g., Calumet) show sharp rate swings due to low population.



- **Deaths:** 295 deaths over 5 years across tri-county; 82% male. Female trend line rising

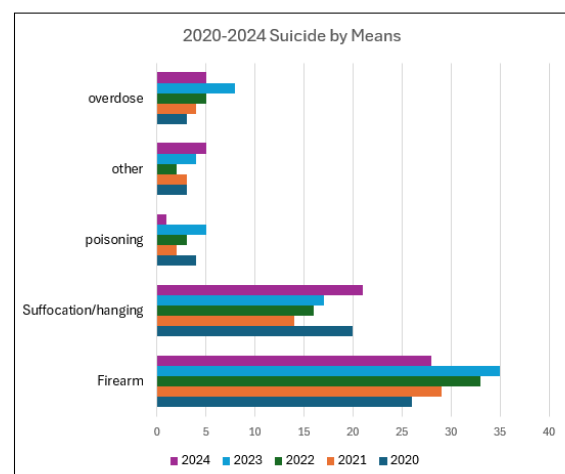
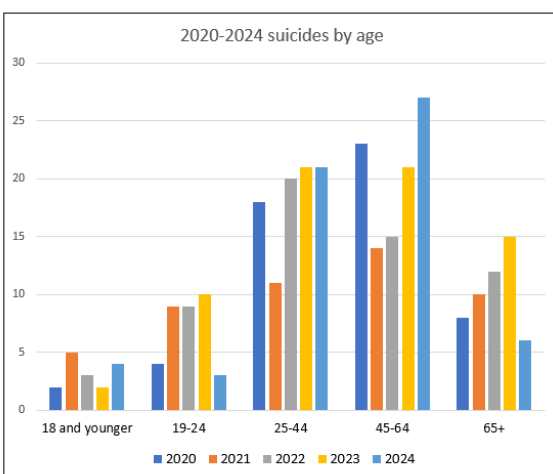
Tri-County Suicides by Gender

295 Lives lost in the Tri-County over the past 5years. 82% were male. Trendline indicates increase for females



- **Age:** Highest risk 45–64 yrs. Youth suicides fewer but deeply concerning.
- **Means:** Firearms >50% of deaths; slight recent decline offset by rise in other means (suffocation, poisoning, overdose).

Tri-County Suicides by Age and Means



C. Suicide Prevention Action (SPA) Team

- Former “Tri-County Zero Suicide Coalition,” now rebooted and community-driven.
- Mission: Engage Tri-County community suicide prevention stakeholders to create a culture of connection and collaboration to reduce suicides and increase our collective knowledge of evidence-based approaches to suicide prevention.

Vision: Zero Suicides in the Tri-County

- **Strategic Plan:** Two-year plan focusing on **adolescents** and **LGBTQ+ populations**.
- **Objectives & Activities:**
 - Address social media’s mental health impact (youth/caregivers, schools, peer supports).
 - Expand peer support & gatekeeper trainings.
 - LGBTQ+ “Passport-to-Health” resource distribution.
 - “Handle With Care” school protocol (law enforcement to schools).
 - Lethal means safety
 - Review county suicide death review team recommendations (adult & child).

D. September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month | Resources & Best Practices

- **Social Media Toolkits available** from [NAMI](#), [SAMHSA](#), and [988](#).
- **Safe Messaging:** Tips for Positive Narrative
 - Personal stories that convey hope, help and strength (NOT sad, shock and or trauma), and that convey RECOVERY is the norm.
 - Concrete and realistic actions-hotlines, warning signs
 - Examples of effective prevention or intervention
 - Effective Treatments
 - Programs and Services-stories of people helped
 - Program accomplishments and successes

4. Announcements & Upcoming Opportunities

- Just released: [Wisconsin's Suicide Prevention Plan: Strategies for Action and Hope.](#)
- [American Foundation for Suicide Prevention FSP Out of the Darkness Walk](#)
Sept. 13, 2025 in Neenah.
- **Trainings:**
 - Emotional CPR Training, offered by Ebb & Flow Connections Cooperative
Upcoming trainings: Sept. 13 & 14, Oct. 7, Nov. 5, 6, & 7.
[Click here for training calendar.](#)
 - Question. Persuade. Refer. (QPR) Trainings:
 - 4:30 – 5:45 p.m., Sept. 25, in-person, offered by NAMI Fox Valley.
Location: 211 E. Franklin St., Appleton. [Click here to register.](#)
 - 11:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m., Sept. 30, virtual training, offered by NAMI Fox Valley. [Click here to register.](#)
 - Contact [Prevent Suicides Fox Cities](#) or [Community For Hope](#) to request a QPR Training.
 - CEU Training Series: Us 2 Behavioral Health has developed a series of trainings for mental health providers to enhance their skills and understanding to better support diverse populations. Free for Connection members. [Click here for more info and to register.](#)
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 - **Suicide Prevention Resource Center online course, [Being A Good Relative: A Training for Crisis Counselors Responding to Native Callers, Texters, and Chatters.](#)** (Free, self-paced course for crisis counselors and other practitioners working with Indigenous people.
 - **[NACCHO Course](#): Community Based Suicide Prevention for Local Health Departments** free, 4-module online course

5. Closing

- Next meeting scheduled for Thurs., Nov. 13, 2025
- Slide deck and recording meeting can be found at:
<https://www.newmentalhealthconnection.org/member-meetings/>

