Headset & Health

Mental Health Awareness Month

May 2026



Telecommunicators & Mental Health

Communications Officers handle intense, high-stakes calls every shift, and even though we're not on scene, the weight of those moments still sticks with us. We often hear the worst part of someone's day, deal with verbal abuse from callers, then disconnect and go right into the next call without ever knowing how things turned out or getting a moment to decompress. That kind of repeated exposure can build up over time and affect our mental health more than we realize. At the same time, a lot of us truly love what we do, which says a lot about the heart behind this job. Taking a minute to recognize both the impact and the purpose of what we do can go a long way in looking out for ourselves and one another.

Resources

HCSO Peer Support:
346 - 286 - 3175

HCSO Behavioral Health Division:
346-286-3150
Mon - Fri 8a-4p

Text Lines:
Suicide & Crisis Life Line - Text 988

Veterans/Military Crisis Line - Text 838255 or Dial 988 then Press 1

All text lines are available 24/7

Real Talk

"Destressing is different for everyone. I enjoy the quiet on the route home, no phones ringing, no music, just the silence. I understand I did my very best [... and] like any family- it takes a village."

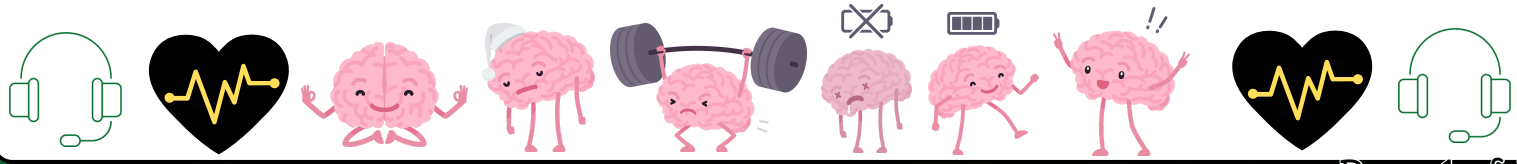
- I. Rosado, CO
3 Years of Service

Light Corner



Mini Word Scramble!

FUITLP: _____ HLAETHY:_____
ILAFYM: _____ UEFOPHL:_____
INPSEAHSP:_____ HISENDPRSIF:_____





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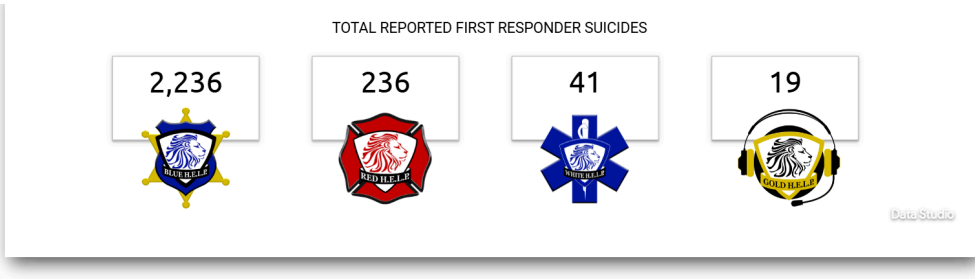
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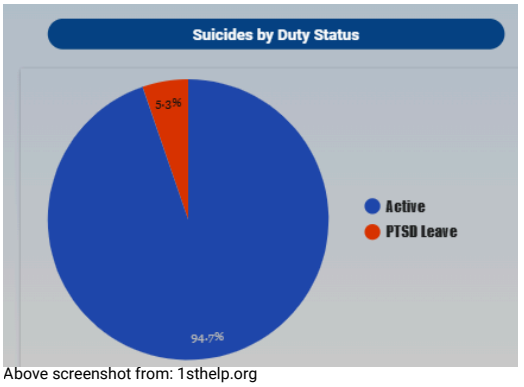


The stress of this job doesn't just stay at work, it follows us home, and how we cope with it matters. After a long shift, it's easy to reach for whatever helps take the edge off, whether that's a drink, something to help you sleep, or just anything that helps you shut your brain off for a bit. Most of us have been there in some way, especially when the calls and stress keep stacking up. Research shows that many 911 telecommunicators deal with sleep issues, high stress, and emotional strain at levels similar to other first responders, and some turn to substances as a way to cope. Being aware of these patterns is the first step to choosing *healthier ways to handle the pressure.*

If anything we've mentioned sounds familiar, you're not alone– these numbers help put it into perspective.

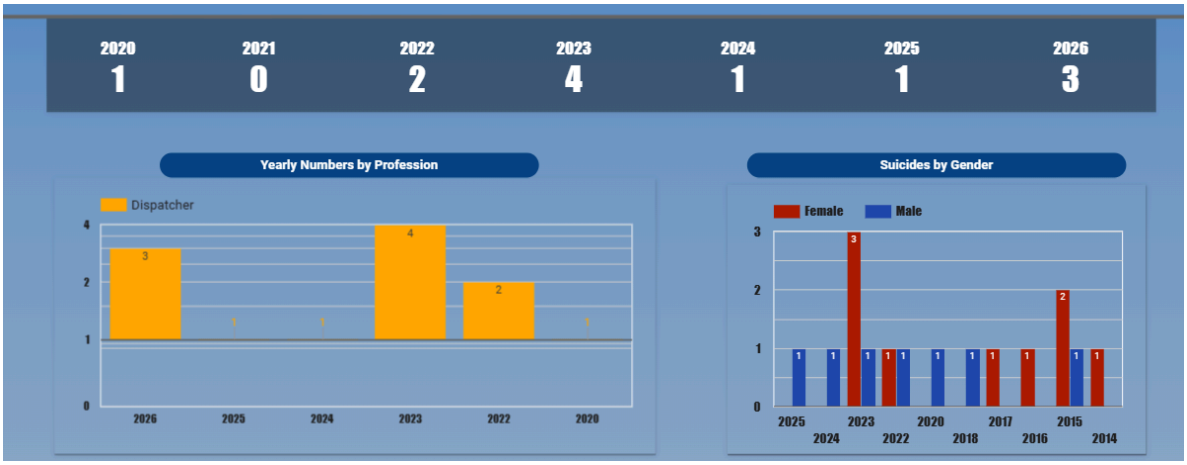


Police and Corrections number represents number of suicides we have confirmed since we started collecting the data in 2016, this number dates back to 1978 but is not all deaths, only what has been reported. Collection of fire, EMS and dispatch began in 2021 and we expect the overall numbers will rise as we verify the deaths.
Above screenshot from: 1sthelp.org



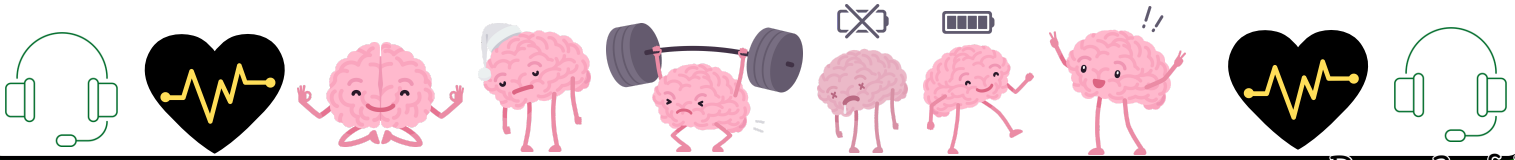
Above screenshot from: 1sthelp.org

Suicides in Dispatch - (as of 04/30/2026)



Above screenshot from: 1sthelp.org

These numbers are based on reported incidents. If its not reported then the information unfortunately is not 100% updated to reflect the ACTUAL numbers.



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Real Talk

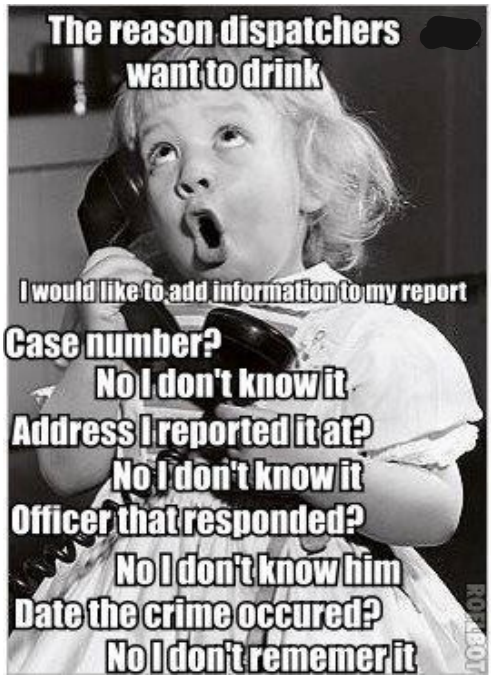
"I believe that healthy habits are essential. Just like gas fuels a car, healthy habits fuel our ability to keep going. In our line of work, we are expected to avoid mirroring the caller's emotions and to provide clear, calm direction while remembering to ask the necessary questions to obtain the right information. All of this can cause significant emotional and physical strain. I would like to share the habits I use to stay energized:

My healthy habits include:

- Forms of movement: exercising; dancing, including walking, standing, and stretching during my shift.
- Mindful eating: consuming foods and drinks that are naturally energizing.
- Prioritizing rest: essential for rejuvenating the mind and body.
- Relaxing: watching easy-to-watch shows and movies, meditating, and allowing time to do nothing.
- Mind exercises: engaging in reading and word games (e.g., word search, crossword puzzles).
- Organizing: maintaining a neat space and clearing my thoughts (for example, journaling).

Prioritizing health is vital in our line of work. The better we take care of ourselves, the better we can support others. One healthy habit can make a difference."

- I. Carrington, CO - 1 Year of Service



Mindset tip of the month

Do things you actually enjoy, it helps clear your head more than you'd think. Sprinkle in some self-care moments when you can, like drinking some water, eating before you hit that "HANGRY" point, step outside for a quick breather, or actually resting when your schedule allows it.

Some people find writing helpful but not everyone wants to keep a journal, and that's okay. There are also FREE apps that let you type out your thoughts and then "release" them digitally, like sending a message that disappears or gets destroyed after it's written.

It doesn't need to be perfect, small, consistent habits matter more than doing everything at once.

Worry Box - iPhone Worry Burner - Android

Coming Next Month: Men's mental health: more than "just be strong"

"Headset & Health" is created to support the mental health and wellness of our Communications Officers across all shifts. If you'd like to share a quote, tip or idea for a future issue, reply to this email or Click **here** to submit suggestions .