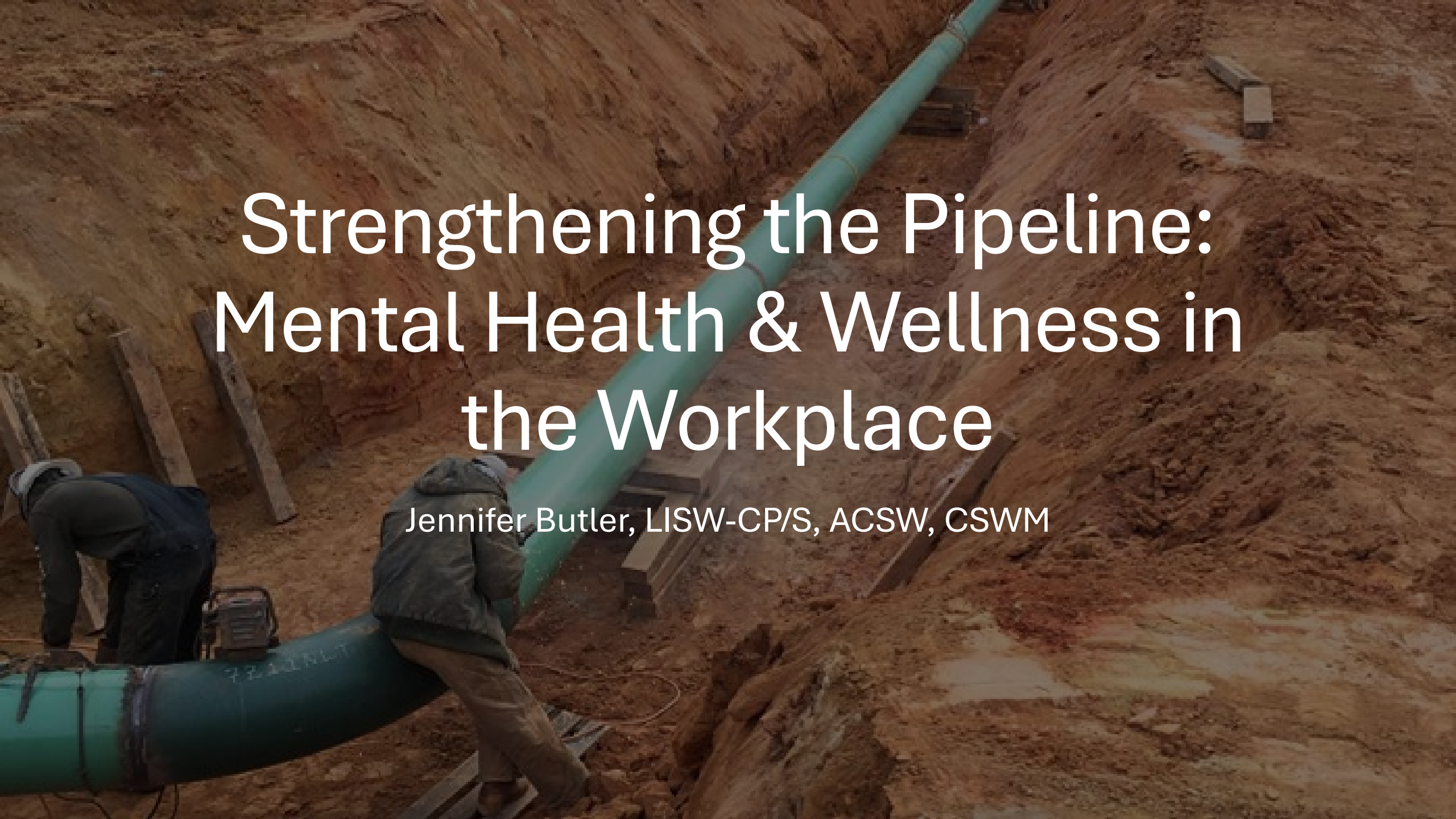


Strengthening the Pipeline: Mental Health & Wellness in the Workplace

Jennifer Butler, LISW-CP/S, ACSW, CSWM

Why Mental Health Matters at Work

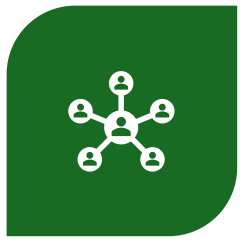
- 76% of U.S. workers report symptoms of mental health conditions.
- Mental health affects safety, productivity, and retention.
- Untreated mental health issues cost billions annually in lost productivity

Defining Mental Health, Wellness & Well-Being

- Mental Health: Emotional, psychological, and social well-being.
- Wellness: Active pursuit of health across multiple dimensions.
- Well-Being: Overall life satisfaction and functioning.

The Surgeon General's 5 Essentials

PROTECTION FROM HARM



CONNECTION & COMMUNITY

WORK-LIFE HARMONY

MATTERING AT WORK

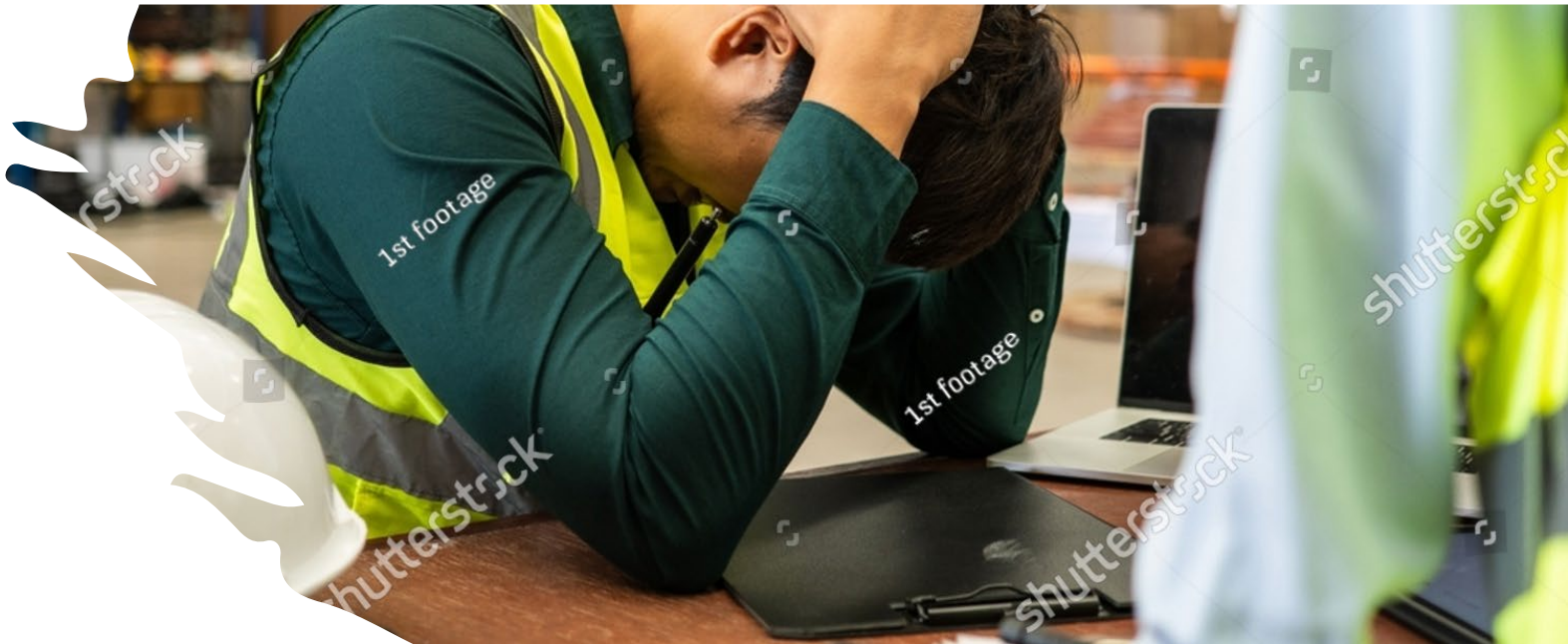
OPPORTUNITY FOR GROWTH

Evidence-Based Interventions

Level	Intervention	Example
Organizational	Policy Changes	Flexible scheduling
Group	Peer support	Wellness Champions
Individual	Self-care tools	Mental health apps

Mental Health Risks in High-Stress Industries

- Isolation and remote work
- Physical danger and fatigue
- Long hours and irregular schedules
- High-pressure environments



Four Quadrants of Psychological Safety

Learner Safety

It's safe to:

- **Discover**
- **Ask questions**
- **Experiment**
- **Learn from mistakes**
- **Look for new opportunities**

Challenger Safety

It's safe to:

- **Challenge the status quo**
- **Speak up**
- **Express ideas**
- **Identify changes**
- **Expose problems**

Collaborator Safety

It's safe to:

- **Engage in an unconstrained way**
- **Interact with colleagues**
- **Have mutual access**
- **Maintain open dialogue**
- **Foster constructive debate**

Inclusion Safety

It's safe to:

- **Know that you are valued**
- **Treat all people fairly**
- **Feel your experience, and ideas matter**
- **Include others regardless of title/position**
- **Openly contribute**

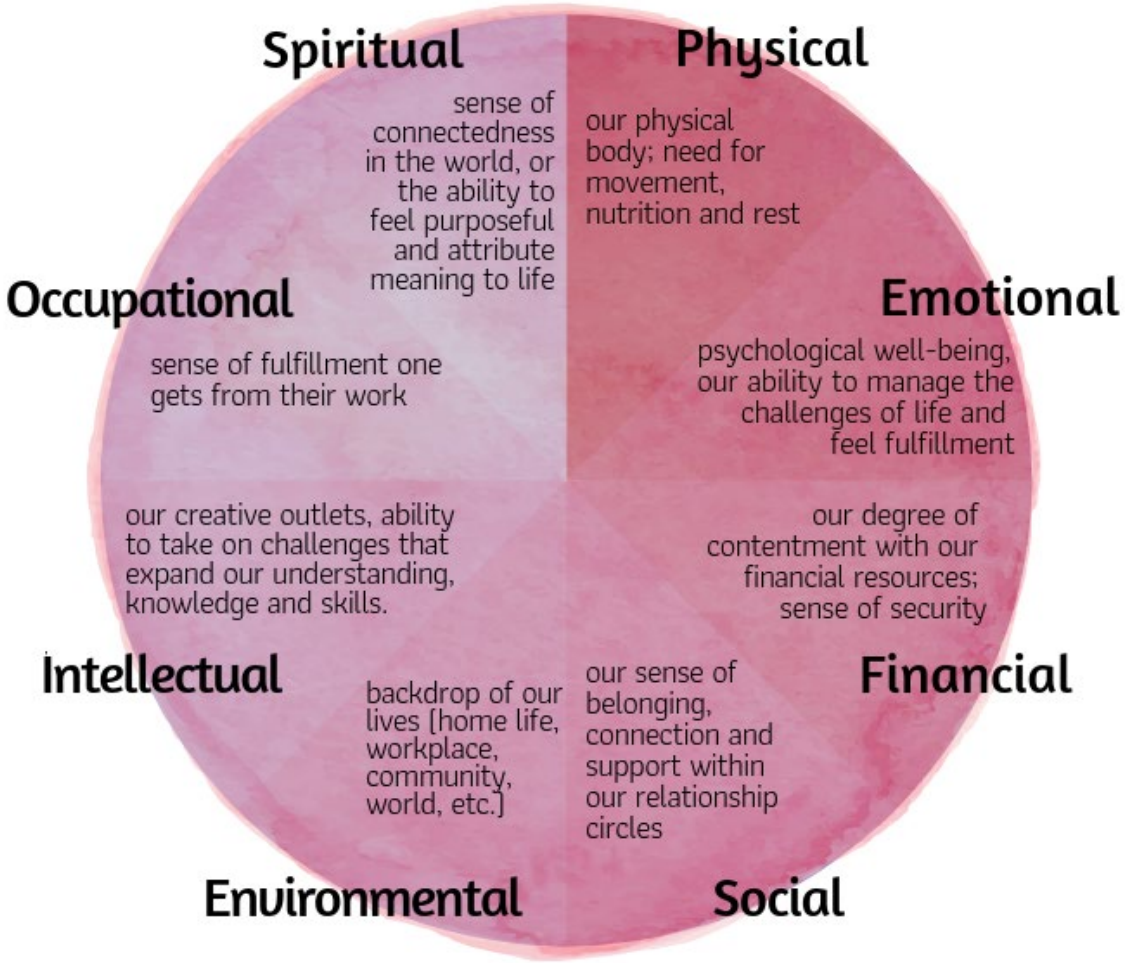
Wellness Programs That Work

- On-site counseling and mental health days
- Team-building retreats and mindfulness sessions
- Physical wellness initiatives (e.g., fitness challenges)

Tools & Resources for Employers

- Mental Health America toolkits
- Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)
- Mental health literacy training

HOPEFUL MINDS



Interactive Activity – Wellness Self-Check

- Use the Wellness Wheel
- Reflect on 8 dimensions: emotional, physical, social, intellectual, spiritual, environmental, financial, occupational

Leadership's Role

- Model healthy behaviors
- Normalize mental health conversations
- Provide support and training

Creating a Sustainable Strategy

- Assess needs and gather feedback
- Build a wellness plan with clear goals
- Measure impact and adjust regularly


Alone we are smart.
Together we are brilliant.
Steven Anderson
quotefancy

Call to Action

- Mental health is safety
- Wellness is performance
- Take one action this week to support your team

Jennifer Butler, LISW-CP/S, ACSW, CSWM

South Carolina Department *of* Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities

Office of Mental Health

Jennifer.Butler@scdmh.org