



# Mental Health & The American Farmer

Presented by : Haley Mills, RN, BSN, PMHNP-BC, APRN



# Who are psychiatric mental health nurse practitioners (PMHNP) and why are they needed?

## THE WHO

- Obtain a bachelor's in nursing and RN license
- Master's degree in nursing, specializing in psychiatry, obtain an APRN license
- Work with a collaborating psychiatrist
- Specialize in mental health disorders and psychotropic medications
- Diagnose and treat mental health issues
- Provide a therapeutic approach to treatment
- Incorporate physical health care

## THE WHY

- Mental Health Crisis
- PCP's
- CDC reported in 2022 that 23 percent of Americans suffered from mental health = 59.3 million people
- Bring more resources to the table
- More access to treatment
- Stay compliant and able to see provider more often and more quickly

Family

Madden Bros. Farms:

Est. 1902

Cow Lake, Arkansas

Faith

Farming

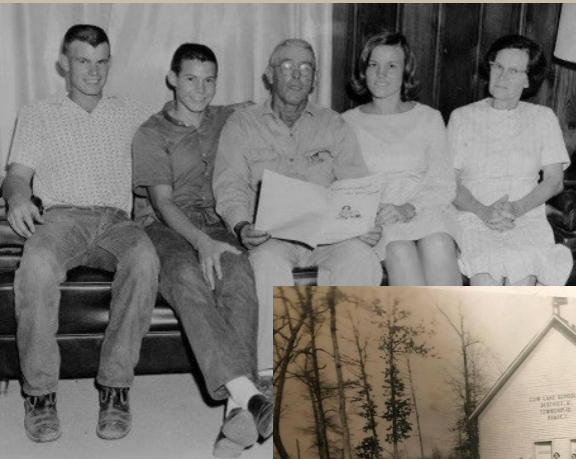
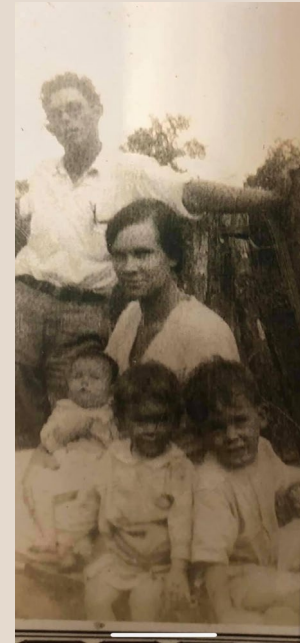
Education

Work Ethic





# Farm Family Roots



# Why all the attention now?

- Suicide rates have doubled in rural areas between 2000-2020
- Suicide is among the top 10 causes of premature and preventable death in the United States.
- Every 11 minutes someone commits suicide in the U.S.
- Rural residents are at a higher risk for suicide than urban residents.
- Men represent 64% of the farming population.
- Men make up 50% of the population, but make up 80% of suicides.

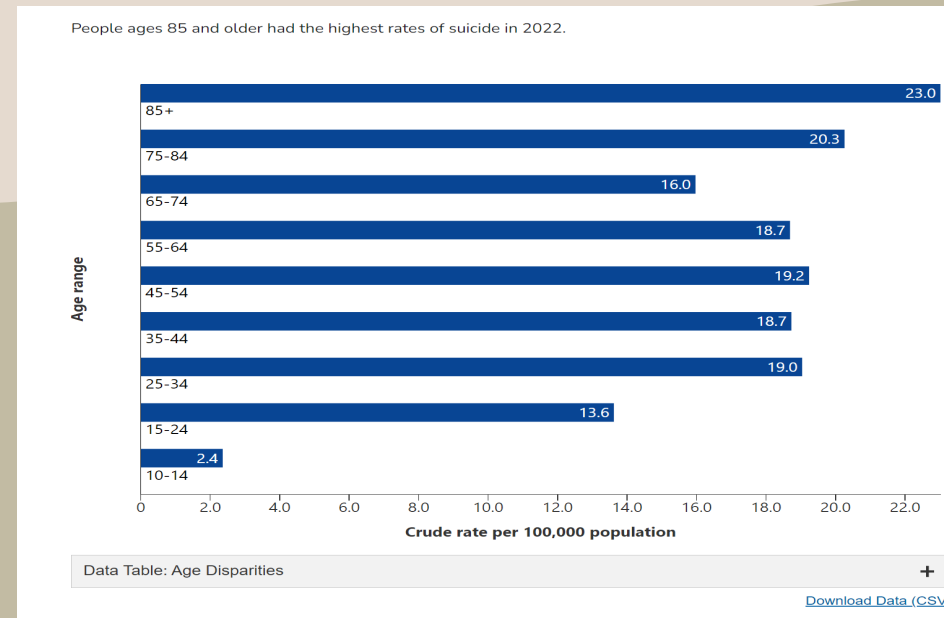
**Patients suffering from severe mental disorders have a 10 to 25-years shorter life expectancy, which requires urgent action from health care professionals and governments worldwide.**



# What age groups are at the highest risk for committing suicide?

- People ages 85 and older had the highest rates of suicide in 2022.
- Americans are living longer with increased resources for health care and advancement in physical health care- medications, surgeries, ect.
- The longer we live the more loss we experience.

-Death of loved ones, financial losses, disabilities and physical health disorders that limit independence and increase isolation.



# BOOMERS:

Living up to their title

-BY 2034 AMERICANS OVER 65 WILL OUT NUMBER CHILDREN FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HISTORY!

-YOUNGER GENERATIONS ARE HAVING LESS CHILDREN.

The largest population at risk for suicide will increase.

# FARMERS & RISK FACTORS

NATIONAL DEATH DATA SHOWS THAT FARMING RANKED FOURTH AMONG OCCUPATIONS WITH THE HIGHEST SUICIDE DEATHS AND SUICIDE RATE AMONG FARMERS.

- ISOLATION
- TIME
- SITUATIONAL STRESSORS
- STIGMA



# FARMING STRESSORS:

“Farming is more than just a job — it is a lifestyle and a calling, sometimes passed down through generations.”

- UNPREDICTABLE WEATHER
- FLUCTUATING MARKET PRICES
- LONG HOURS
- **FAMILY:** The integrated blend of family, farming, and nature can cause unique situations of stress in farm families. Family roles can change and get distorted when they are also your coworker.

# ISOLATION

- Geographical : working long hours alone, living/working rural areas separated from society and social interaction
- Emotional : unable to share fears and feelings, misunderstood, and rejection



# BE ON THE LOOK OUT:


## Signs and Symptoms of Mental Health Conditions

- Sleeping: too much or not enough
- Appetite changes: too large or too small
  - Lack of motivation and energy
- Increased use of alcohol or other substances
- Hostility, irritability, and impatience in personal relationships
  - Interferes with your ability to do your job

## TRUST YOUR GUT

Develop self-awareness, this is your ability to perceive and understand the things that make you who you are as an individual, including your personality, actions, values, beliefs, emotions, and thoughts.

# TIME & THE FARMER



The way we  
spend our  
time defines  
who we are.

Jonathan Kirtle

- Rarely able to take time off  
Due to responsibilities and/or guilt-  
feeling like you “ought to” or need to always be  
working

- Poor work life balance  
The work is never done and  
there is always a task to complete


- Coping mechanism  
Used as an outlet or  
distraction from problems

“

Time is the one thing we  
all have in common, but it  
is also the one thing that  
we all use differently.

CATHERINE PULSIFER

GRACIOUSQUOTES.COM



“The bad news  
is time flies.  
The good news  
is you’re the pilot.”

—MICHAEL ALTSHULER



# What came first, the chicken or the egg?

## Physical Health + Mental Health

- The Vicious Cycle :

Chronic stress, depression, or other untreated mental health disorders can induce deterioration of physical health, likewise chronic, untreated physical health issues can worsen mental health.

- Examples :

- ❖ **Chronic stress can cause hypertension which can lead to stroke or heart attack.**
- ❖ **Chronic pain can negatively affect mental health such as worsening depression, anxiety problems, and substance abuse.**
- ❖ **Insomnia can be caused by untreated mental health issues, and lack of sleep worsens mental health. Lack of sleep can cause physical health problems such as cognitive impairment, putting the patient at increased risk for falls and other injuries.**
- ❖ **Farmers are at risk for work related injuries, chemical induced lung disease and treatment such as medications, surgeries, and hospitalizations negatively affect mental health.**

# Work Jeans and Family Genes

“Farming is more than just a job — it is a lifestyle and a calling, sometimes passed down through generations.”

- Physical health problems such as diabetes, heart disease, cancer and other diseases can be hereditary.
- Mental health disorders not only can be worsened from the working conditions in farming, but genetics play a huge role in mental health care. This can include depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, ADHD, and others.

# Why the Stigma?

Stigma is a mark of disgrace that sets a person apart and often comes from lack of understanding or fear. When a person is labeled by their illness, they are seen as part of a stereotyped group. Negative attitudes create prejudice, which leads to negative actions and discrimination.

“We didn’t talk about that stuff.”

## The Stereotypical Farmer

-Strong

-Resilient

-Raised not to complain or show emotion

“Because that’s the way I was raised.”

—

# When Silence isn't Golden:

Your brain is an organ, if you had heart disease you wouldn't just wish it away or think a broken leg would just heal itself.

## Let's talk about it!

- Silence isn't a sign of strength.
  - Communication is a sign of emotional maturity.
  - Break the generational dysfunction by normalizing thoughts, feelings, and choices.
  - Actions speak louder than words. Lead by example to your children, show them that asking for help is a sign of strength and not a weakness.
-



# First Things First: The Cold Hard Truth

**If you do not prioritize your mental and physical, it will of for itself**

**.  
In the form of : hospitalizations- for physical or mental issues,  
surgeries that comes with recovery time, accidental overdoses, or  
even death.**

Make time now to put your mental and physical health as a priority, or it will cost you more time later.

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# Taking the First Steps :

Crash Course in mental health care treatment.

## The Role of Medication Management

Can be provided by PMHNP or a Psychiatrist in an outpatient setting , in person or telehealth.

- Optimizing Brain Function by treating chemical imbalances
- Stabilizing Mood and Functioning
- Symptom Management

## The Power of Therapy

Provided by a therapist, counselor, and other licensed mental health professionals

- Therapy is the toolbox of mental healthcare,.
- Develop self- awareness
- Develop skills development: learning healthy coping mechanisms, improving communication skills, improve problems solving skills
- Behavior Modifications identify unhealthy behaviors and negative thought processes and add some tools to your toolbox to make positive changes.

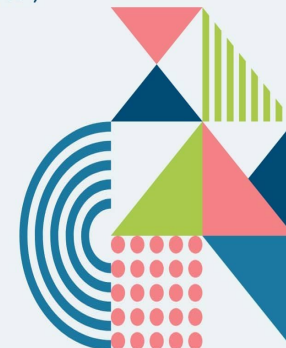
# I have decided to ask for help, now what?

- Find a provider who accepts your insurance
- What is going to be the easiest way for me to stay compliant? In person vs. telehealth, or both.
- Therapy, Medications, or both?
- Each patient is different and that is why it is important for therapist and medication management providers to work together and be able to provide the client with the best outcomes possible.



## How Therapy and Meds Can Work Together:

- ✓ Comprehensive approach to address biological, psychological, and social factors.
- ✓ Enhanced therapy outcomes.
- ✓ Personalized, cohesive treatment plans.



# Working Together

-WHILE THERAPY AND MEDICATION OFFER DISTINCT BENEFITS OF THEIR OWN, THE COMBINATION CAN LEAD TO ENHANCED TREATMENT OUTCOMES.

## THE COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

-COMBINING THERAPY AND MEDICATION, INDIVIDUALS BENEFIT FROM A COMPREHENSIVE TREATMENT PLAN THAT CONSIDERS ALL DIMENSIONS OF MENTAL HEALTH, ADDRESSING BOTH THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND BIOLOGICAL FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THEIR CONDITION.

These enhanced therapy outcomes can help create personalized treatment plans for the client.



# Professional Mental Health Care Resources:

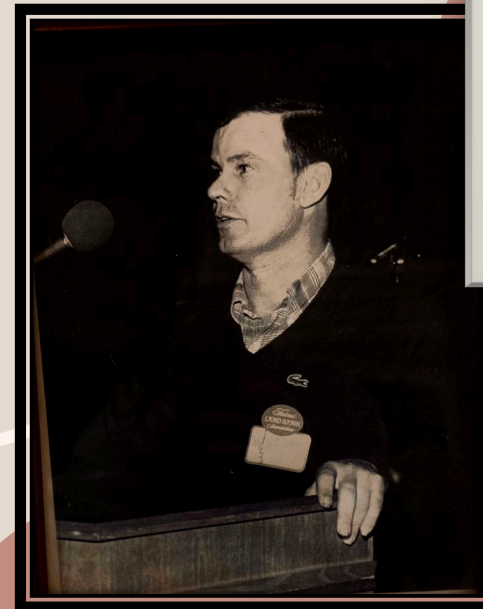
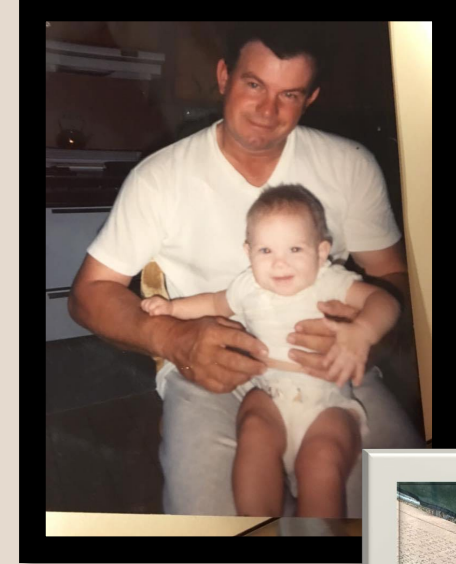
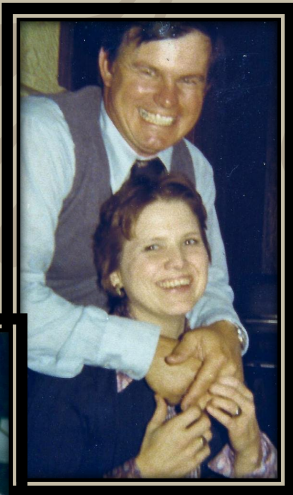
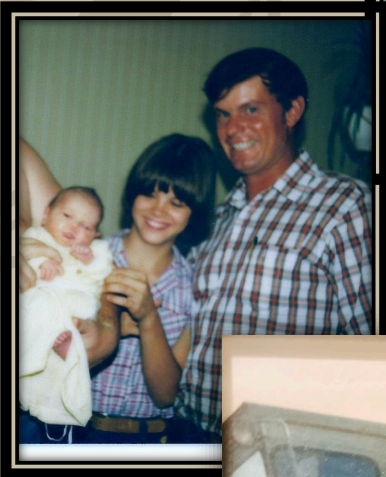
The National Council for Mental Wellbeing has a list of certified community behavior health clinic organized by state and is updated every year.

## HOW CAN YOU FIND A MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDER?

- ASK YOUR HEALTH INSURANCE COMPANY FOR A LIST OF COVERED PROVIDERS
  - WORD OF MOUTH
  - PCP REFFERAL
  - ASK TRUSTED FRIENDS, FAMILY OR SOMEONE FROM YOUR FAITH COMMUNITY.
  - CONTACT A LOCAL OR NAMI
  - ASSOCIATED WITH AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION, AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION, OR ASSOCIATION FOR BEHAVIORAL AND COGNITIVE THERAPIES.
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# My Farmer

Dale Claridge Madden, Sr.  
1945-2000



# Q&A

- FACEBOOK
  - The Practice: Therapeutic Counseling Services, PLLC
- INSTAGRAM
  - @thepracticecounseling
  - [www.thepracticecounseling.org](http://www.thepracticecounseling.org)

Providing therapy and medication management services in person and telehealth.



## **THE PRACTICE: THERAPEUTIC COUNSELING SERVICES, PLLC**

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