

Workplace Thrive Academy: Session III Snapshot

This is a recap and analysis of Session 3: July 15, 2025

Depression & Suicidal Thoughts - Recognize, Engage, Connect Training



The United Way of Charlotte County's Workplace Thrive Academy continued its vital work with Session III on July 15, 2025. This session focused on advancing mental health awareness and exploring sustainable strategies to integrate wellness into the core of workplace culture. Our commitment is to foster supportive environments where all employees, including our ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) population, can thrive.

The session fostered rich discussions, reinforcing critical perspectives on workplace mental health:

Mental Health Misunderstood in Aging: A persistent and concerning theme was the confusion between dementia and mental health conditions in older adults. Leaders stressed the urgent need for increased "aging-proficiency" and clear education to prevent misdiagnoses and ensure appropriate support.

Proactive, Not Reactive: The consensus was clear: mental wellness initiatives must move beyond temporary "band-aid" fixes. Sustainable, long-term strategies are essential to create lasting change within the workforce.

Equity and Universality: Mental health affects everyone, regardless of background or circumstance. As one participant shared, "United Way serves everybody - and mental health doesn't discriminate." This highlights the universal need for accessible and inclusive support.



Program Reach & Impact

29 Participants

16 Businesses Represented

7 Funded Agencies

Pre-Session Survey Results

Areas Where Participants Still Need Help/Information



Actions Taken After Previous Thrive Academy Sessions

- Engaged more with staff / not let administrative work interfere
- Working on EAP & better employee engagement
- Implemented work from home vouchers for recognition
- Launched MH Pulse Survey & scheduled classes / reiterating resources
- Started internal conversations, identifying areas for improvement

Hopes/Goals for July Thrive Academy Session

- Become more informed to provide resources
- More equipped to manage employee struggles with substance abuse/depression/anxiety
- Learning actionable steps for workplace anxiety
- Get ideas & build relationships/partnerships
- Motivation / Learning something new
- Practical tools/conversation starters/action items (especially for anxiety, low budget activities)

WHO IS ALICE? Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed

ALICE households earn more than the Federal Poverty Level but less than the basic cost of living. These are working families, seniors, and individuals who often don't qualify for public assistance but still live paycheck to paycheck, unable to afford essentials like housing, child care, food, and health care.

Critical Perspectives

Mental Health Misunderstood in Aging: A persistent and concerning theme was the confusion between dementia and mental health conditions in older adults. Leaders stressed the urgent need for increased "aging-proficiency" and clear education to prevent misdiagnoses and ensure appropriate support.

Proactive, Not Reactive: The consensus was clear: mental wellness initiatives must move beyond temporary "band-aid" fixes. Sustainable, long-term strategies are essential to create lasting change within the workforce.

Equity and Universality: Mental health affects everyone, regardless of background or circumstance. As one participant shared, "United Way serves everybody – and mental health doesn't discriminate." This highlights the universal need for accessible and inclusive support. Systemic Change Takes Time (and Partnership): Participants recognized that truly addressing root causes—moving "upriver" instead of just "pulling people from the river"—requires sustained effort. United Way's unique position in uniting nonprofits and businesses was highly valued for this vision. The journey is long, with significant change projected over a decade, but the foundation is being laid.



The session emphasized that mental wellness is a continuous movement, requiring employer support, ongoing training, and community partnerships.

Next Steps

There's a collective effort to improve workplaces in Charlotte County. United Way Charlotte County is pursuing **Bell Seal Certification** for Workplace Mental Health, evaluating commitment across four pillars: workplace culture, benefits, compliance, and wellness. This certification aims to enhance mental health support, gain insights from Thrive Academy sessions, and lead by example in the community. Collaboration with businesses and agencies is essential for fostering resilience and empathy.

Our Commitment: Why We're Not Stopping

The overwhelming feedback from Session III affirmed our belief: mental wellness cannot be a one-and-done conversation. It must evolve into a continuous movement - championed by employers, strengthened by ongoing training, and bolstered by robust community partnerships. The enthusiasm and commitment from local businesses signal a collective readiness to make this transformation a reality.



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Workplace Thrive Academy