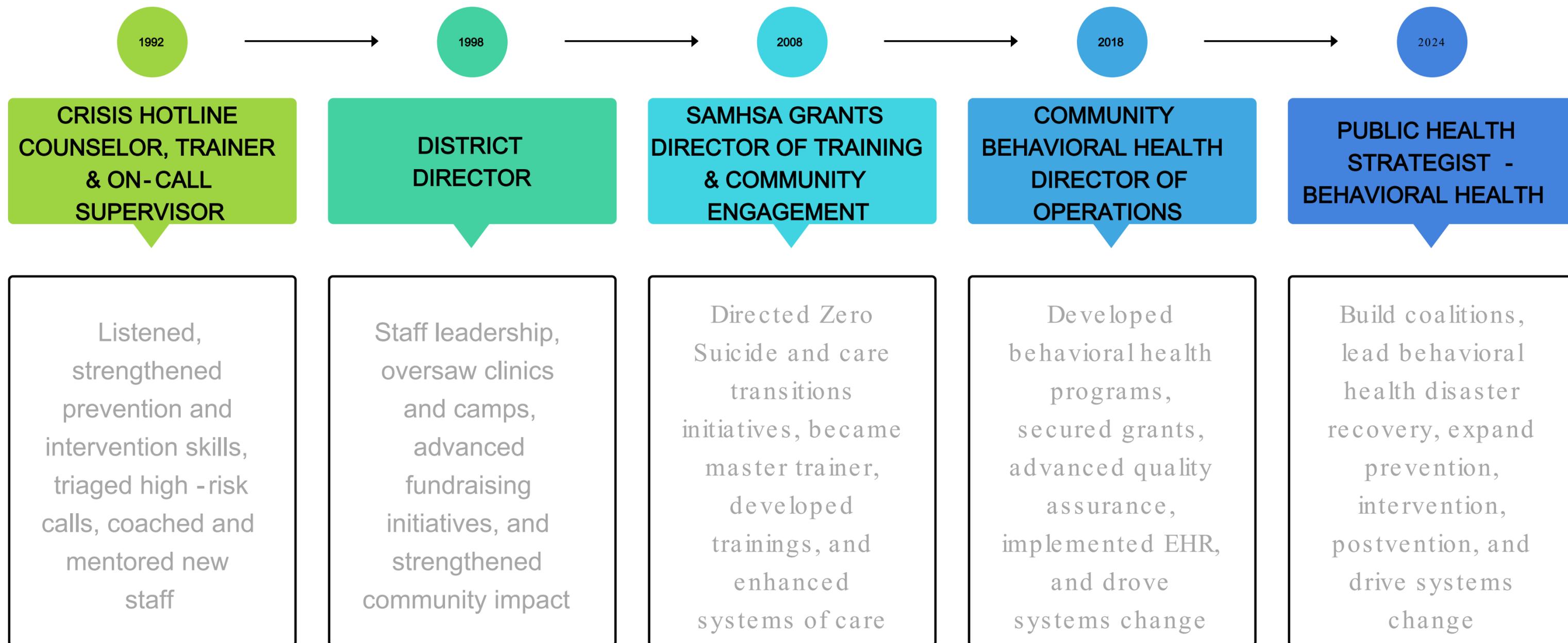


HELENE

HENDERSON COUNTY, NC
SEPTEMBER 27, 2024

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & SUICIDE PREVENTION STRATEGIST



Henderson County, North Carolina



HELENE IMPACTS

FLOODING RAINFALL

EXTREME MOISTURE
TAP EXTENDS WELL
TO THE NORTH

LANDSLIDES AND
MUDSLIDES LIKELY IN
APPALACHIANS



THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2024

STATE OF EMERGENCY

Declared in Henderson County

09.27.24

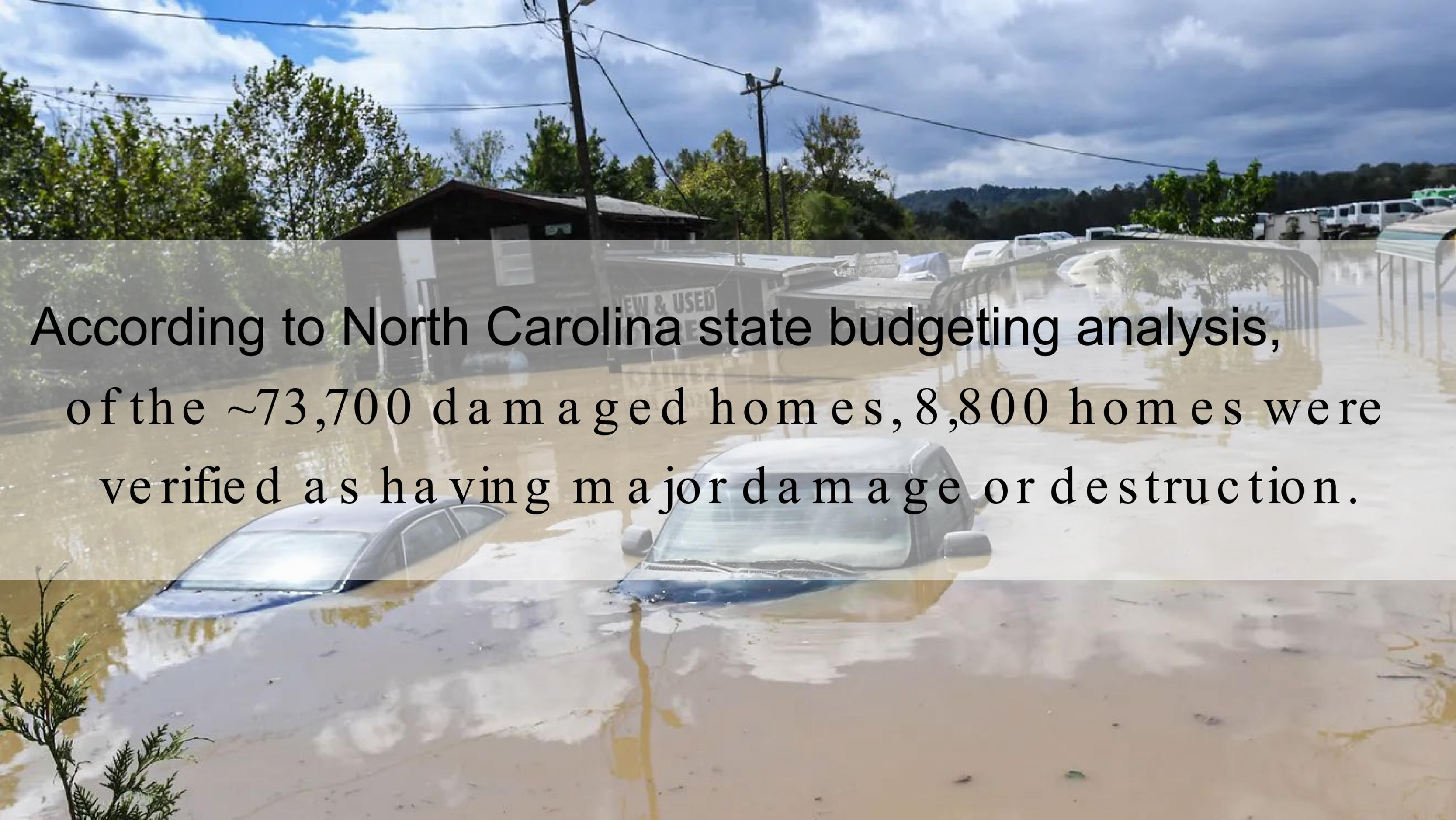
Flooded Hendersonville

9/27/25



Bat Cave & Chimney Rock Destruction



A photograph showing a residential area severely affected by flooding. The water is murky and brown, reaching up to the windows of a dark-colored house on the left. In the foreground, two cars are partially submerged in the floodwater. In the background, there are utility poles with power lines, more houses, and a sign that reads "NEW & USED". The sky is overcast with grey clouds.

According to North Carolina state budgeting analysis,
of the ~73,700 damaged homes, 8,800 homes were
verified as having major damage or destruction.

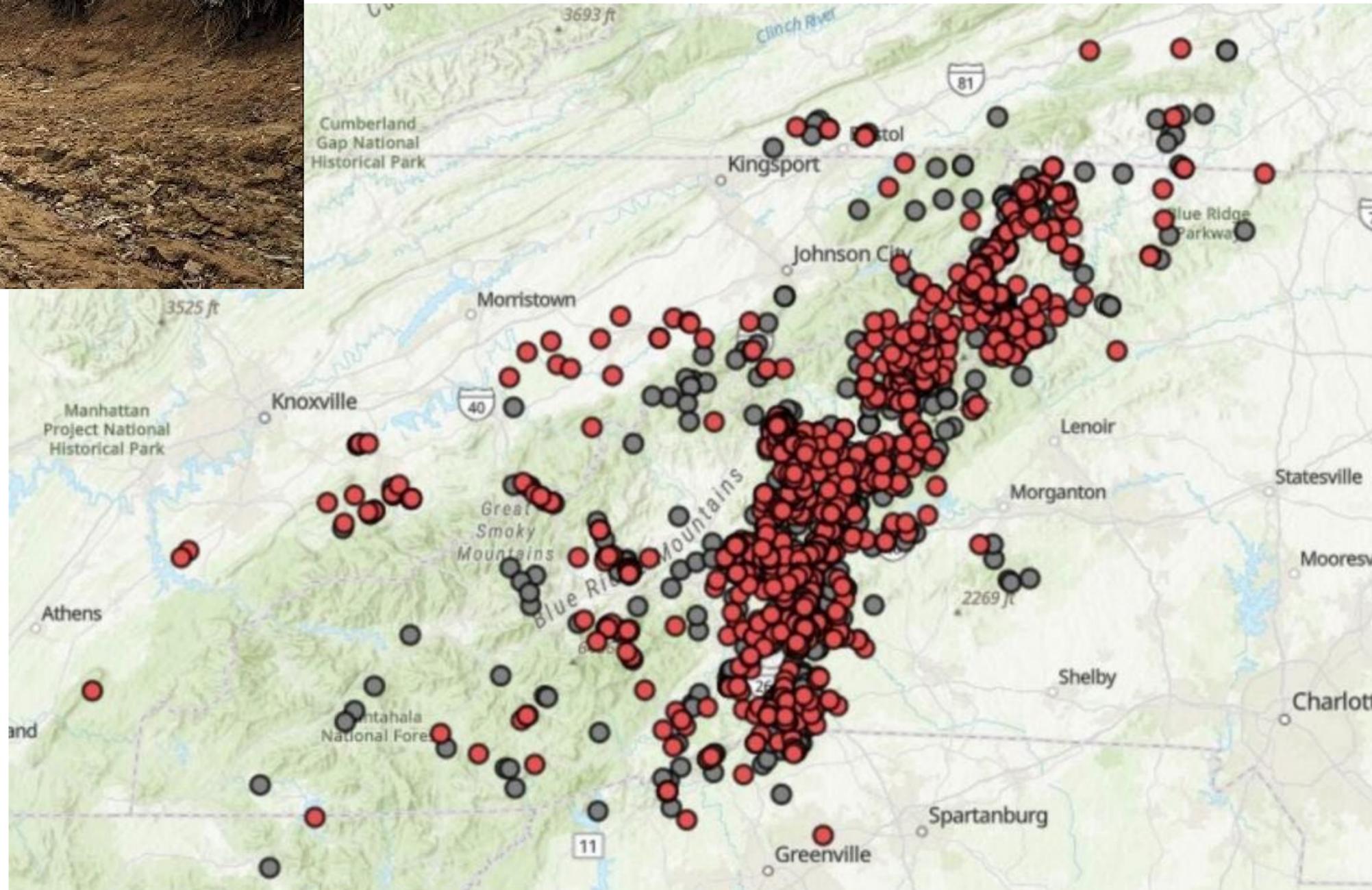


Lake Lure After Helene

Reports say winds, flooding and landslides caused by Helene damaged roughly 821,906 acres (about the area of Rhode Island) of forestlands in Western North Carolina.



OVER 2000 LANDSLIDES US GEOLOGICAL SURVEY





Integrating behavioral health into shelter response – within days of Helene.

DAYS AFTER HELENE...

Suicide Postvention Needs,
Grief Support, and

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)

WEEKS AFTER HELENE...

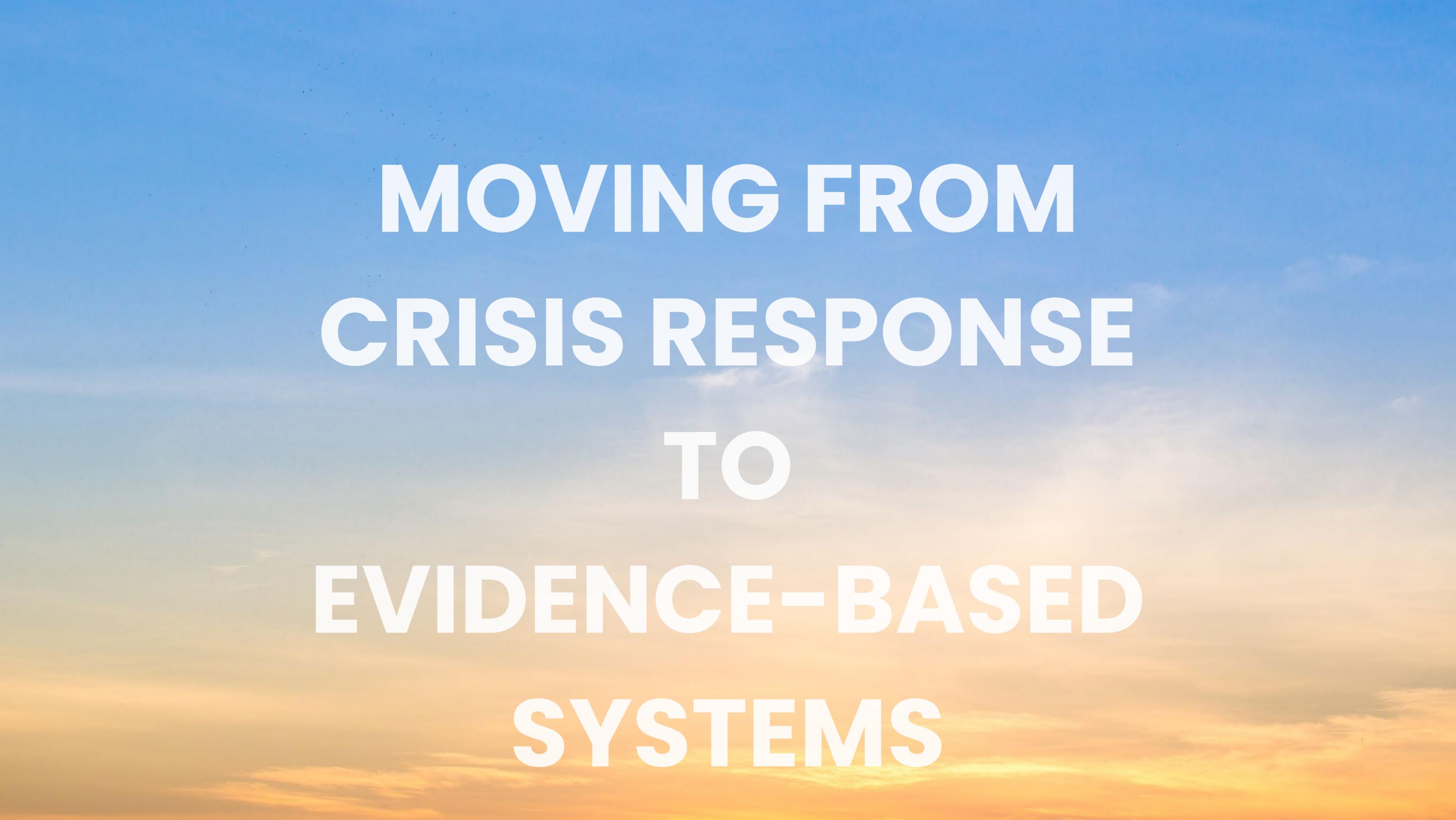
Community Unprepared – 10.14.24

Housing Meetings:

NC Back@Home Case Study 2017 (Rapid Rehousing)

FEMA Planning Considerations: Disaster Housing 2020





**MOVING FROM
CRISIS RESPONSE
TO
EVIDENCE-BASED
SYSTEMS**

Henderson County Behavioral Health Conference

03.24.25

FIRST YEAR EVENT- SOLD OUT
 232 PARTICIPANTS
 50 PERSON WAITLIST
 24 EXPERT SPEAKERS
 25 EXHIBITORS

IMPACT REPORT HENDERSON COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

HELD ON MONDAY, MARCH 24, 2025



This full-day event brought together experts, professionals, and community leaders to explore evidence-based strategies, emerging trends, and innovative approaches to behavioral health in our region.

"I learned a lot from this conference. I was really impressed with the variety and content of all the sessions. I felt I took something away from each one, even the opening and lunch speakers."

- CONFERENCE PARTICIPANT

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

100%

felt the content was evidence-based

- "Behavioral health is a field with a lot of ongoing research. I appreciated this opportunity to learn more so I can provide better care for the people I support."
- "I developed a better understanding of the effectiveness of recovery courts."
- "I plan to change my suicide risk assessment and safety planning forms after seeing Zero Suicide's evidence-based forms."

98%

said expectations were exceeded for the event

- "I gained a number of resources that I was not aware of prior to the conference."
- "Exceptionally great planning and execution."
- "I felt very curious and informed this whole day."
- "I connected with some great resources in our community to share with the families I work with."

97%

found the content enhanced their professional capabilities

- "I gained skills to teach clients to help aid in resilience."
- "I took away strategies to help my students feel more regulated during the day at school."
- "I learned how to incorporate components of DBT into my practice."
- "I gained some self-care strategies, ideas for improving advocacy for clients, and tools for building resiliency within myself."

PLANNING COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

11

partner agencies supported conference execution

- "I enjoyed building community with the committee and the community in attendance."
- "I realized how much research is out there & the value of strategies for our mental health."
- "The interactive area was such a beautiful way to connect all of the attendees."
- "I'm proud of all the local representation."
- "I really enjoyed seeing everyone collaborating and networking to grow this work."

CONFERENCE SUMMARY

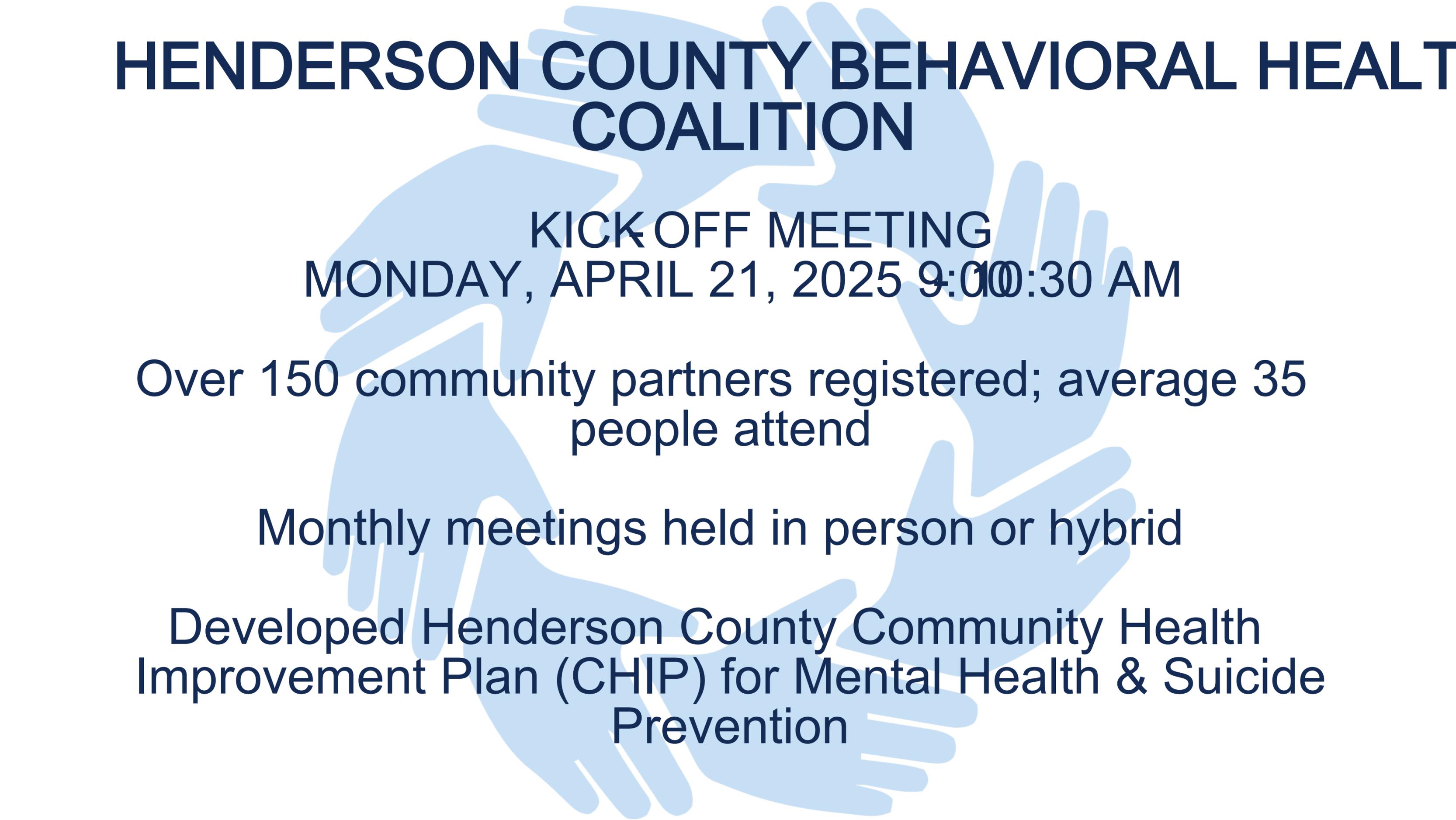
Participants	Speakers
231	24
Wait List	Exhibitors
Over 50 People	25

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina, AdventHealth, Blue Ridge Health, Children and Family Resource Center, Crossnore Communities for Children, Henderson County Department of Public Health and Department of Strategic Behavioral Health, Hope Coalition, Pyramid Healthcare, The Free Clinics, UNC Health Pardee, and Vaya Health for your support.

Looking to support the 2026 Henderson County Behavioral Health Conference?
 Contact Melissa Witmeier, Public Health Strategist for Behavioral Health, at mwitmeier@hendersoncountync.gov





HENDERSON COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COALITION

KICK OFF MEETING
MONDAY, APRIL 21, 2025 9:00:30 AM

Over 150 community partners registered; average 35
people attend

Monthly meetings held in person or hybrid

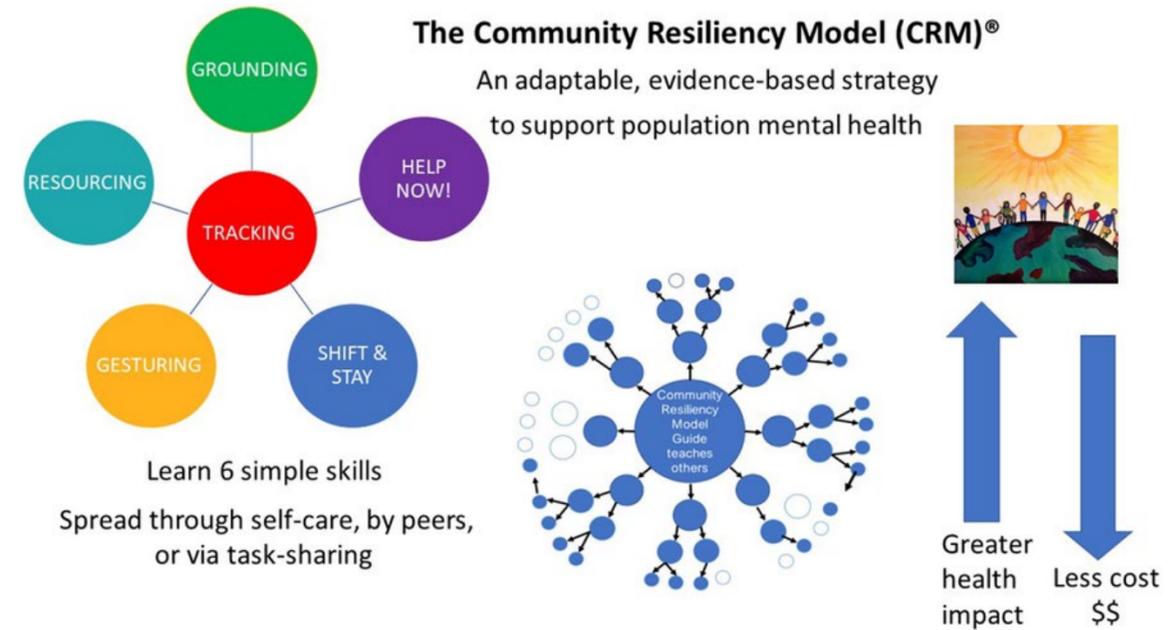
Developed Henderson County Community Health
Improvement Plan (CHIP) for Mental Health & Suicide
Prevention

Community Resilience - Debriefs, Rountables and Trainings



The Community Resiliency Model (CRM)[®]

An adaptable, evidence-based strategy to support population mental health



CROSSNORE
communities for children

Center for trauma resilient communities

Psychological first aid



Survivors of Suicide Loss Support

Group

Henderson County Survivors of Suicide Loss Support Group

Find Support and Understanding



Grieving a suicide loss is a unique and complex experience. If you have lost a loved one to suicide, you are not alone. This free group offers a safe space to be heard and understood.

Join Our Next Support Group Meeting!

Please register and a member of our team will reach out to you.



Public Health
Henderson County, NC

Henderson County Survivors of Suicide Loss 8-Week Support Group



Begins October 7, 2025



Public Health
Henderson County, NC

Grieving a suicide loss is a unique and complex experience. If you have lost a loved one to suicide, you are not alone.

No survivor of suicide loss should go without support. This group offers a safe space to be heard and understood.

Free Support Group for Adults (Ages 18+)

Meets Weekly from October through November in the evening at:

Full Circle Community Wellness
1915 George St, Hendersonville, NC 28792

This is a closed group with 10 participants that must pre-register; if the class is full or does not have enough participants, you may be moved to the next group. Participants should plan to attend each week.

To sign-up for the support group, please call or register through the portal and a member of our team will reach out to you, (828) 694-6038



<https://forms.office.com/g/ZTwYs4TeHw>

HENDERSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS PROJECT SERV & CFHC GRANTS- CRISIS & DISASTER

SOURCES OF STRENGTH IMPLEMENTATION

2 LOCAL CERTIFIED TRAINERS
5 HIGH SCHOOLS
2 MIDDLE SCHOOLS
CRISIS COUNSELOR
TEACHER STIPENDS
SCHOOL STIPENDS

MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING CAPACITY



**INFORMATION
SESSION**

**SOURCES
OF STRENGTH**

Sources of Strength is an evidence-based program that empowers youth to foster hope, strength, and resiliency by connecting themselves and their peers to protective factors and trusted support systems.

Interested in becoming an Adult Advisor or a trusted adult for a Sources of Strength program at a Henderson County high school or middle school? Join us to learn more.

2 HCPS Adult Advisors per school may receive stipends for Year 1 implementation thanks to funding from the Community Foundation of Henderson County.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25TH
VIRTUAL MEETING AT 9 AM OR 1 PM
INTERESTED: SIGN-UP AT [HTTPS://BIT.LY/45AC6U7](https://bit.ly/45AC6U7)



FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT
SOURCESOFSTRENGTH.ORG

Public Awareness & Messaging

Messaging

988 | SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

healing together
is easier than
struggling alone



COMPASSIONATE SUPPORT
ANYTIME. ANYWHERE.

SEPTEMBER 8TH IS

988

DAY

SAVE
988 IN
YOUR
PHONE
TODAY!

FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL
SUPPORT FOR ANYONE IN CRISIS.
CARING COUNSELORS ARE AVAILABLE 24/7/365.
CALL OR TEXT 988 OR VISIT 988LIFELINE.ORG.

988 | SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

What Recovery
Might Look Like:
(even if it's invisible)

- *SETTING BOUNDARIES
- *ACCEPTING SUPPORT
- *HAVING SETBACKS (BUT CONTINUING)
- *LETTING GO
- *REACHING OUT
- *TRYING AGAIN AFTER A TOUGH DAY

*sometimes recovery looks like
small, steady steps no one else sees.*

FIND HELP NEAR YOU: [FINDTREATMENT.GOV](https://www.findtreatment.gov) | PEER WARMLINE: 1-855-PEERS-NC

988 | SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

**HEALING
HAPPENS
*TOGETHER***

Community Foundation
of Henderson County



Partnership For Health
CREATING A HEALTHIER HENDERSON COUNTY, TOGETHER

988 | SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

healing together
is easier than
struggling alone

Community Foundation
of Henderson County
Partnership For Health
CREATING A HEALTHIER HENDERSON COUNTY, TOGETHER

bit.ly/hcbhr



988 | LÍNEA DE PREVENCIÓN DEL SUICIDIO Y CRISIS

sanarnos juntos
es más fácil que
luchar solos

bit.ly/hcbhr



Community Foundation
of Henderson County
Partnership For Health
CREATING A HEALTHIER HENDERSON COUNTY, TOGETHER

SEPTEMBER

is **Suicide Prevention** and
Recovery Month.

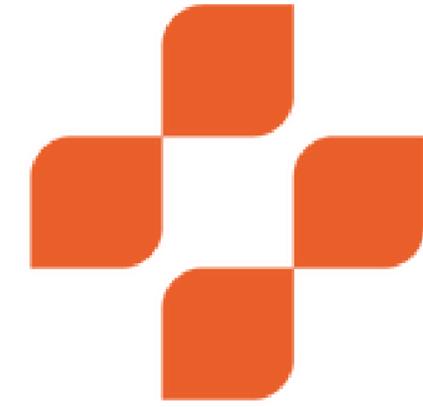
Join us in raising awareness, offering support,
and reminding each other that
help is available and healing is possible!

All month long, we're sharing resources,
reflections, and ways to show up for each other.

988 | SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE



Suicide Prevention Strategies



Mental Health
FIRST AID

from NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR
MENTAL WELLBEING

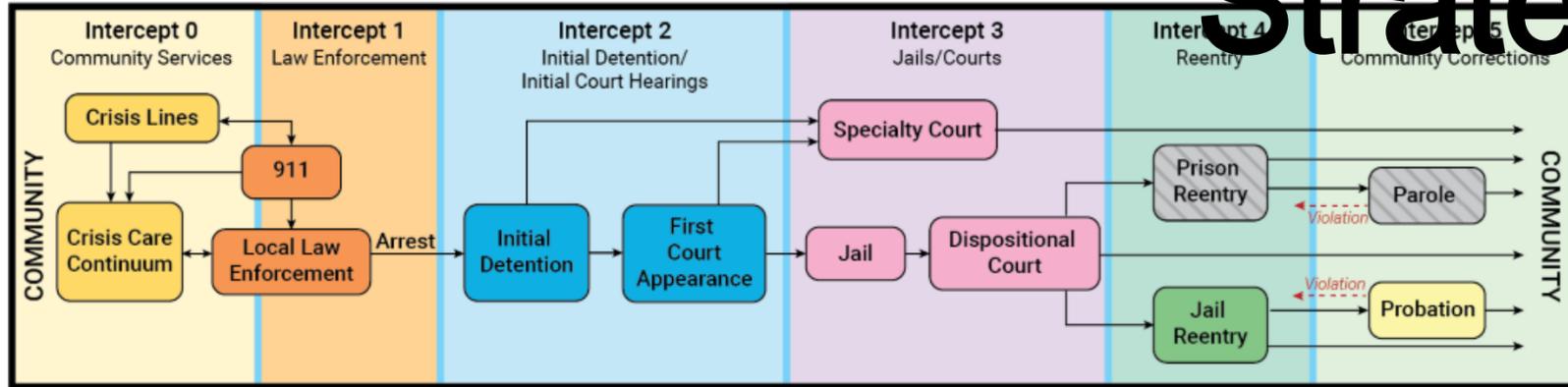
QPR
For Suicide
Prevention



HENDERSON COUNTY
SUICIDE POSTVENTION
RESPONSE TEAM

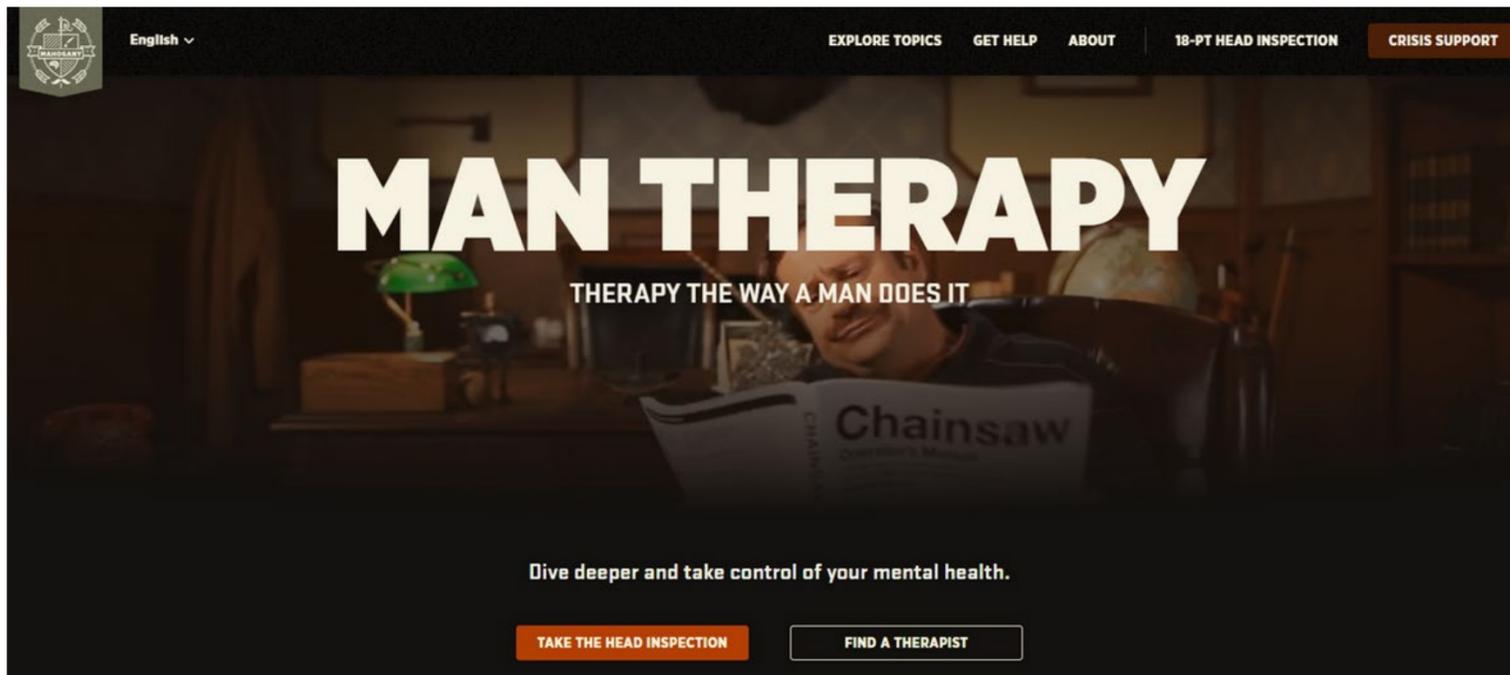
Future

Strategies

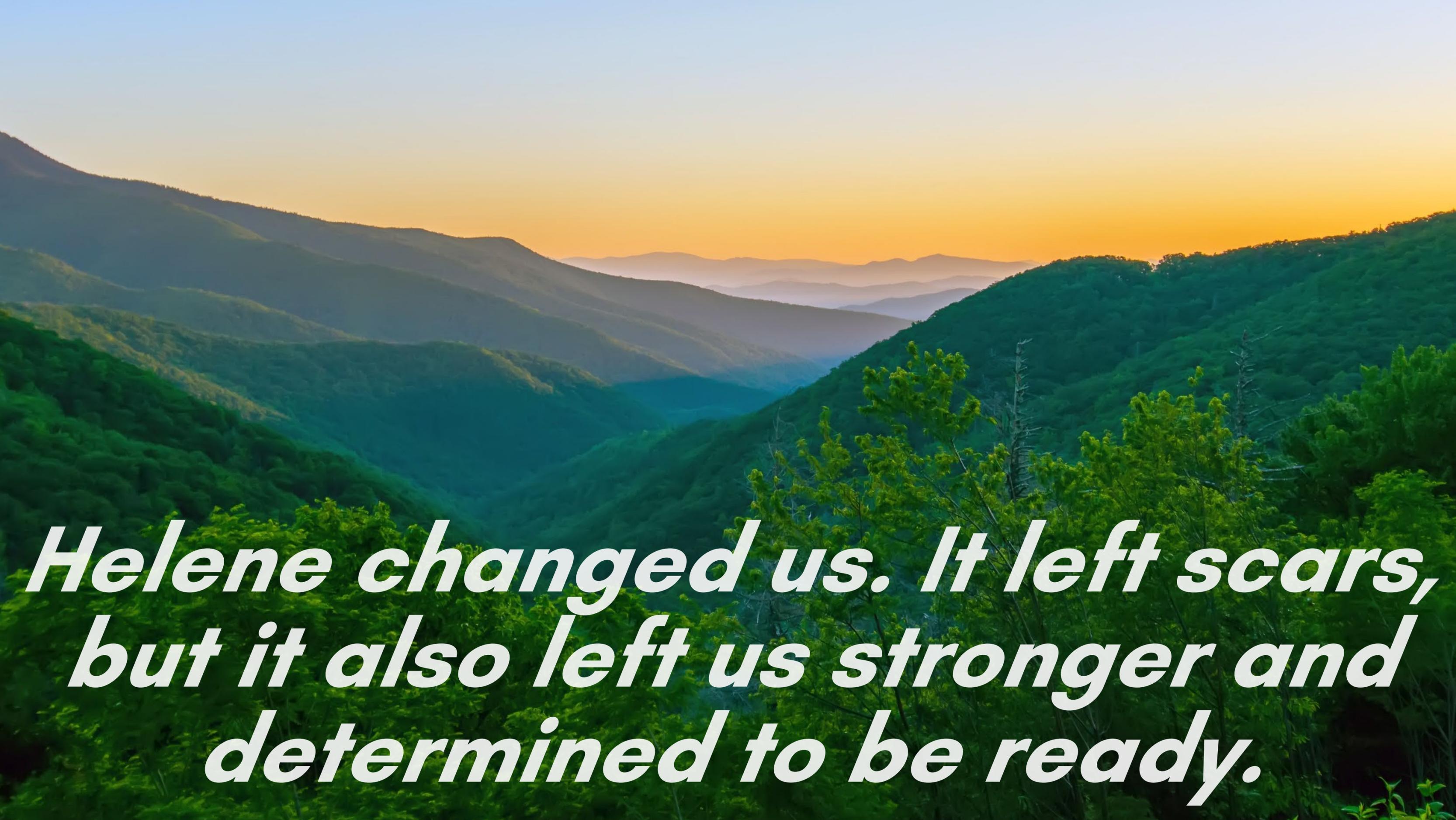


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LINC - HC



COUNSELING
ON ACCESS TO
LETHAL MEANS



*Helene changed us. It left scars,
but it also left us stronger and
determined to be ready.*



Thank you

Melissa Witmeier

mwitmeier@hendersoncountync.go