



Jamie Evans
Sen Director, Environmental Health & Safety
Turner Construction

Building an Inclusive Safety Culture

An interview with Turner Construction's Senior Director of Environmental Health and Safety

Jamie Evans is the Senior Director of Environmental Health and Safety at Turner Construction for the Boston area. Prior to joining Turner, Evans enlisted in the United States Navy and spent his five years of service in the Naval Construction Force, commonly known as the "Seabees." Many of the projects he was involved in were located in third-world countries that lacked access to infrastructure and critical medical care. While deployed, he delved deep into the construction team culture and the Seabee motto, "Can Do."

"You lived, ate and celebrated together. I loved the team and the 'take care of each other' culture," explained Evans.

A SAFETY CULTURE SHIFT

After completing his service, Evans joined Turner Construction in Boston where he has been developing a more inclusive approach to safety that addresses the worker's well-being and behavioral health. The construction workforce is statistically older with the average age in the mid-40s. Behavioral Health, which Turner defines to be comprised of physical and mental health, is a real concern - especially for those in recovery. "Long hours, long commutes, lack of healthy food options, chronic pain and substance misuse are common themes I hear from our labor force, union health and welfare partners," said Evans.

There needs to be a shift in how companies develop their safety culture, Evans says. Evans considers this one of the most rewarding parts of his career as he and the Turner team implement positive behavioral health strategies throughout the construction industry. This started the company's "Active Caring" culture in which he is a Regional Active Caring Leader.

Active Caring was started many years ago, under the leadership of Turner Construction's Senior Vice President Pete Hamill, to better understand the health of the industry. Evans was tasked with initiating a discovery mission to learn about and identify common themes and make informed solutions. Although research is still ongoing, Evans developed a framework detailing the changes needed and how to make an impact. The first step is changing the culture from policing to helping, supporting and assisting.

EDUCATION IS CRUCIAL, LANGUAGE IS POWER

How do we communicate with those who are struggling or talk about the subject of recovery? It starts with education. Through awareness campaigns, assistance programs, behavioral health literacy modules, wellness trailers on jobsites, Peer-to-peer exercises and mental health first aid training, Turner's Wellness Team aims to destigmatize addiction and mental health issues, and provide the workforce with the skills and resources to effectively communicate and proactively engage. **"We provide the skills to recognize and the language to support,"** Evans summarized.

A WELLNESS TOOL TO CONSIDER

In partnership with [MindWise](#), Turner developed a resource tool to promote mental health and wellness in all of our staff, trade partners and even friends and family. Check Up from the Neck Up, a construction industry behavioral health support site, provides mental health screenings to ensure everyone has the ability to access help when they need it.

For more information on Behavioral Health Support, visit Check Up from the Neck Up at:

<https://screening.mentalhealthscreening.org/4builders>