



NEWS RELEASE

# The Hartford And Active Minds Bring Traveling Mental Health Exhibit To University Of Connecticut

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Send Silence Packing® stops at UConn Storrs today from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on national tour to reduce stigma, support mental health, inspire action

HARTFORD, Conn.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- **The Hartford**, a leading provider of employee benefits and workers' compensation, is partnering with **Active Minds**, the nation's leading nonprofit organization mobilizing youth and young adults, to bring its **Send Silence Packing®** exhibit to the University of Connecticut today from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

UConn is among the 60-80 colleges and communities hosting the interactive exhibit featuring 100 backpacks, each with a **mental health story**. Send Silence Packing is estimated to reach more than half a million youth and young adults this year, thanks to an ongoing partnership between the insurer and the nonprofit.

"The future of work depends on action now, and by sharing these powerful stories of survival and resilience, we hope to inspire action and meaningful conversations to support those in need," said The Hartford's Chairman and CEO **Christopher Swift**. "We are investing in education and community partnerships to help the next generation thrive and lead – building a healthier, more resilient future for everyone."

Generation Z is reporting more mental health conditions than previous generations. The Hartford's 2025 **Future of Benefits Study** found 40% of Gen Z workers feel depressed or anxious at least a few times per week and 46% say

stigma prevents them from seeking mental health care.

“Every backpack in this exhibit represents a story that deserves to be heard,” said Brandi Pretlow, vice president of community initiatives at Active Minds. “By bringing Send Silence Packing to campuses like the University of Connecticut, we’re not only breaking the silence around mental health struggles but also equipping students to care for themselves and one another. With partners like The Hartford, we are championing a new era of mental health with the message that hope and help are always possible.”

Mental health professionals from UConn’s Student Health and Wellness (SHaW) team are staffing today’s event. “Send Silence Packing is the latest way UConn is helping students feel seen and supported,” said Kristina Stevens, LCSW, director of mental health for the University of Connecticut. “We’re proud to host this powerful experience and hope it sparks important conversations and continued mental health support on our campuses and our home state.”

Send Silence Packing is the latest initiative by The Hartford supporting the University of Connecticut. This summer The Hartford announced a \$500,000 gift to the UConn Foundation to help offset the cost of room and board for qualifying students in a residence hall on Pratt Street. In 2021, \$1 million in funding from the insurer created The Hartford Scholars Program, which provided financial support and mentoring for 50 UConn Hartford students. This past spring, 20 of The Hartford UConn Scholarship recipients from the first cohort graduated.

Additionally, employees of The Hartford are volunteering at today’s exhibit, including recent graduates and alumni.

## About Active Minds

Active Minds is the largest nonprofit in the United States mobilizing youth and young adults to transform mental health norms across society. For more than 20 years, we have equipped the next generation of peer mental health advocates through a variety of programs, including the Active Minds Chapter Network, A.S.K., and Send Silence Packing. Our advocacy, initiatives, and campaigns foster lasting change in how youth view and discuss mental health, encouraging them to use their voices to influence broader conversations and inform mental health supports within their communities. Together, we are building a diverse movement of champions committed to improving mental health for all. To learn more about Active Minds, visit [activeminds.org](https://www.activeminds.org).

## About The Hartford

The Hartford is a leader in property and casualty insurance, employee benefits and mutual funds. With more than 200 years of expertise, The Hartford is widely recognized for its service excellence, sustainability practices, trust and integrity. More information on the company and its financial performance is available at

<https://www.thehartford.com>.

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