

Talking Points

988 Day 2026

988 Day on 9/8 (September 8):

A National Day of Action for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention

About the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

- The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a national lifeline that gives everyone a simple three-digit number to reach a skilled, compassionate counselor 24/7 via call, text, or online chat.
- People can contact 988 for themselves or others for any mental health reason, including: thoughts or feelings of suicide, drug or alcohol misuse, emotional distress, anxiety, depression, mental illness, loneliness, trauma, bullying, stress, relationship troubles, and just needing to talk to someone.

What is 988 Day?

- 9/8 is a national day led by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to raise awareness of the [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#) and its impact.
- Part of September's broader focus on Suicide Prevention Month and Recovery Month
- 2026 theme: "988 Reasons: Your reason is enough" -- highlighting the many reasons people may need support, such as a difficult moment, a mental health challenge, or a concern for someone else.

Purpose of 988 Day

- Reduce stigma and promote the importance of seeking emotional and mental health support
- Encourage centers, partners, and communities to lead local awareness and engagement
- Elevate 988 as a vital resource for hope, connection, and care

Key Call to Action

- Plan in-person or online activities with the theme "988 Reasons" to raise community awareness of 988 on 9/8
- Post photos and videos on social media using the hashtag #988day
- 988 offers 24/7 judgment-free support for mental health, substance misuse, and more. Text or call 988, or chat at 988lifeline.org.

When Speaking to Media

- Highlight your role as a 988 center in providing life-saving support through 988 and/or your organization's efforts to spread awareness.

- Share local 988 Day events, success stories, or partnerships.
- Reinforce that 988 is more than a number; it's a national network of hope.

988 Impact Highlights

- Over 26 million calls, texts, and chats routed since the launch of 988 in July 2022
- Nearly 20% increase in volume year-over-year, showing growing public trust.
- The vast majority of suicidal callers found the service helpful and said it prevented suicide. ([Gould et al., 2025](#))
- A [recent study](#) found that in 988's first 2.5 years, suicide deaths among young people were approximately 11% lower than expected, especially in states that actively invested in the service.

988 Awareness

- 988 has increased mental health awareness and access to behavioral health support, while reducing stigma around asking for help.
- The most recent [NAMI/IPSOS poll](#) shows that 74% of Americans are aware of 988, nearly quadrupled since the service launched.
- 69% of adults 50 and over are still unaware of 988, and many are unsure about using mental health and crisis lifelines (University of Michigan 2026 [National Poll on Healthy Aging](#))

988 in Communities

- States, territories, tribes, and health providers have expanded crisis systems since the 988 launch.
- Communities now better connect people in emotional distress or suicidal crisis with local treatment and recovery options.
- 988 Lifeline crisis contact centers are essential to the national continuum of mental health care.

988 & Emergency Services

- Only a small percentage of 988 calls involve 911, typically with the help seeker's consent, and 988 counselors share information only when necessary to save a life.

Other Stats on Suicide

- Suicide is one of the leading causes of death in the United States.
- Over 49,000 people died by suicide in 2023 – 1 death every 11 minutes
- The 988 Lifeline has been a significant factor in suicide prevention.