

DEBUNKING MYTHS ABOUT

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE

Learn the facts about 988.

WHAT IS 988?

The **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) offers 24/7 call, text and chat access to trained crisis counselors who can help people experiencing suicidal, substance use, and/or mental health crisis, or any other kind of emotional distress. People can also contact 988 if they are worried about a loved one who may need crisis support.

You can call or text directly to 988 or chat at www.988Lifeline.org/chat.

IF I CALL 988, WILL POLICE BE DISPATCHED TO MY LOCATION?

The goal of 988 is to reduce the need for police involvement and instead connect individuals in mental distress with counselors equipped in crisis intervention. When you call 988, you will be connected to a trained crisis counselor who will ask you to describe your crisis, provide support, and share resources if needed. Data shows that about 80 percent of calls to the Lifeline are resolved over the phone, without further intervention.

Lifeline crisis counselors do not have the ability to identify who you are or where you are located. If it is determined that someone requires an emergency response, the call will

be transferred to 911 to ensure the safety of the individual and the public.

HOW IS 988 DIFFERENT FROM 911?

988 was established to improve access to crisis services for individuals experiencing suicidal, substance use, and/or mental health crisis. The purpose of 911 is to dispatch Emergency Medical Services, fire and police, and to help with public safety.

DOES 988 ONLY HELP PEOPLE WHO ARE SUICIDAL?

No. The Lifeline responds 24/7 to calls, chats or texts from anyone who needs support for suicidal, mental health, and/or substance use crisis, and connects those in need with trained crisis counselors.

CAN I STILL CALL THE 1-800-273-TALK NUMBER TO REACH THE LIFELINE?

Yes. The 1-800-273-TALK number still works. Using either number will get you to the same services. 988 is just an easier-to-remember way to access a strengthened and expanded network of crisis call centers.

