

Cuyahoga County Board of Health Data Days Event

Suicide Data and Lifeline

FrontLine Service 988 Lifeline

Rick Oliver, Director of Crisis Service

rick.oliver@frontlineservice.org

FrontLine Service

Established in 1988, Frontline Service is the primary agency in Cuyahoga County reaching out to individuals experiencing homelessness, those struggling with mental health issues or thoughts of suicide, and those whose lives have been devastated by violence in their homes or community.

OUR MISSION: FrontLine Service is a private, non-profit organization that reaches out to adults and children in Northeast Ohio to end homelessness, prevent suicide, resolve behavioral health crises and overcome trauma.

FrontLine's Crisis Services

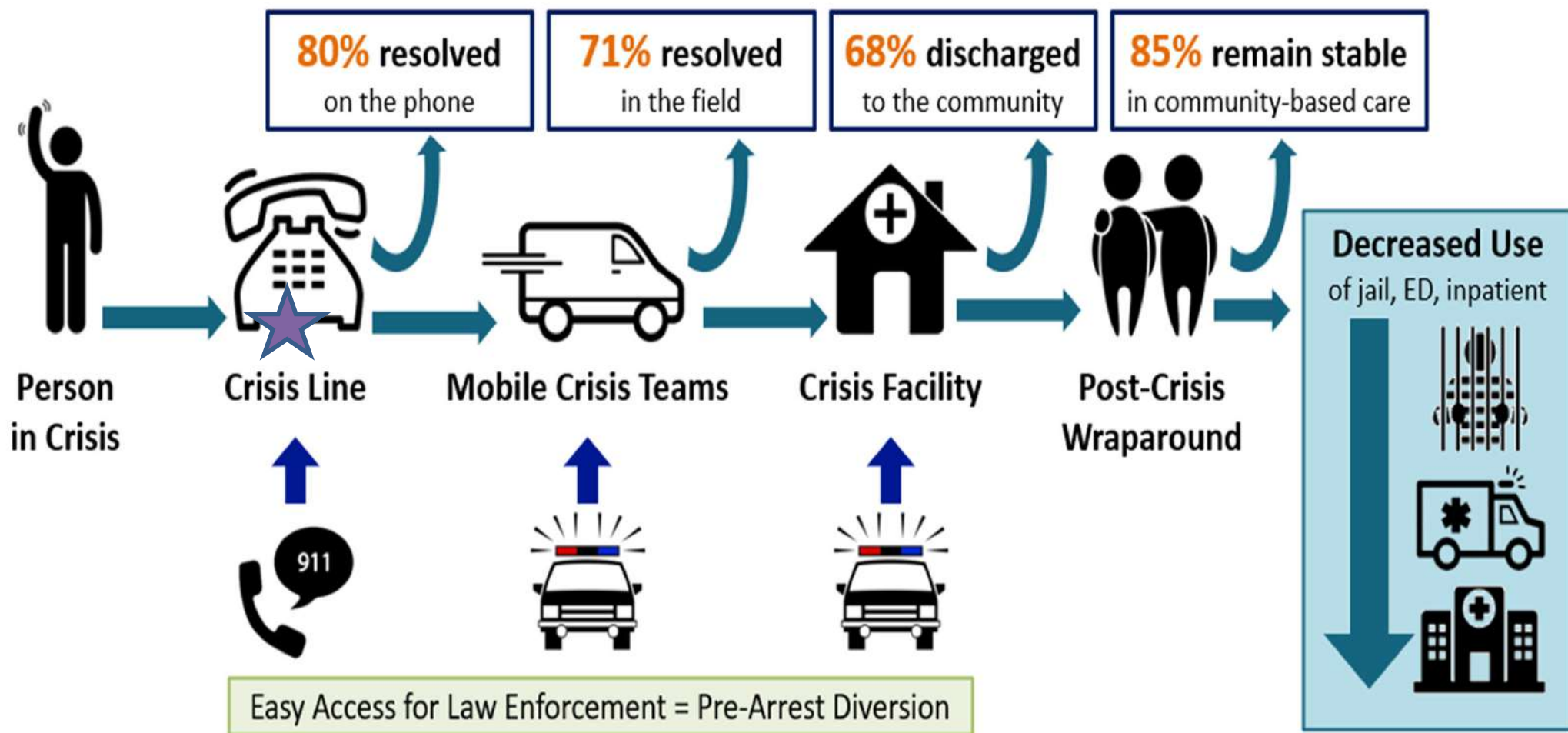
Someone to contact:

- 988 Crisis Hotline (Suicide Prevention/Mental Health Referral and Info)
- 988 Crisis Chat/Text

Someone to respond:

- Care Response Team (dispatched by 988)
- Child Response Team (dispatched by 988)
- Co-Responder Team (in partnership with CDP)
- Traumatic Loss Response Team

The Crisis Continuum



LEAST Restrictive = LEAST Costly



Schematic designed by Margie Balfour, Connections Health Solutions. Data courtesy Johnnie Gaspar, Arizona Complete Health
Data applies to southern Arizona geographical service area, last updated Sep 2019

About 988

- 988 offers 24/7 access to trained crisis counselors who can help people experiencing mental health-related distress. That could be:
 - Thoughts of suicide
 - Mental health or substance use crisis, or
 - Any other kind of emotion distress
- People can call or text [988](tel:988) or chat 988lifeline.org for themselves or if they are worried about a loved one who may need crisis support.
- 988 serves as a universal entry point so that no matter where you live in the United States, you can reach a trained crisis counselor who can help.

988: Building on a Strong Foundation in Ohio

- **Since 2005**, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255) has **helped thousands of Ohioans** in emotional distress and crisis through:
- In July 2022, federal law required all states to **transition** from the 1-800 number **to the easy-to-remember 3-digit number 988**.
- 988 has helped **connect Ohioans** in a mental health or addiction crisis with **Ohio's crisis response and support system**.

► Someone to TALK TO.

► Someone to RESPOND.

► A PLACE TO GO.



Current and Expanded Lifeline Center Network in Ohio

Primary and Backup Coverage



**Coverage Prior
to 5/1/22**



Primary Coverage by Agency



**Expanded
Coverage
effective 5/2/22**

America's Mental Health Crisis

988

**TOO MANY PEOPLE
ACROSS THE U.S.
EXPERIENCE
SUICIDAL, MENTAL
HEALTH AND/OR
SUBSTANCE USE
CRISIS WITHOUT
THE SUPPORT AND
CARE THEY NEED**

In 2021

- 1 in 5 Americans experienced mental illness each year. Many go untreated.
- There was approximately one death by suicide every 11 minutes.
- For people aged 10–14 and 25–34 years, suicide was the second leading cause of death.
- More than 950,000 youth aged 12–17 and 1.6 million adults attempted suicide.
- About 107,000 people died from drug overdoses.



How the 988 Lifeline works?

- A national network of over 200 independent crisis centers equipped to help people in mental health-related distress or experiencing a suicidal crisis via call, chat, or text.
- Free and confidential support 24/7.
- Most callers are significantly more likely to feel less depressed, less suicidal, less overwhelmed, and more hopeful after speaking to a Lifeline crisis counselor.
- Over the last 12 months, the 988 crisis hotline has fielded 230,000 contacts from Ohioans.



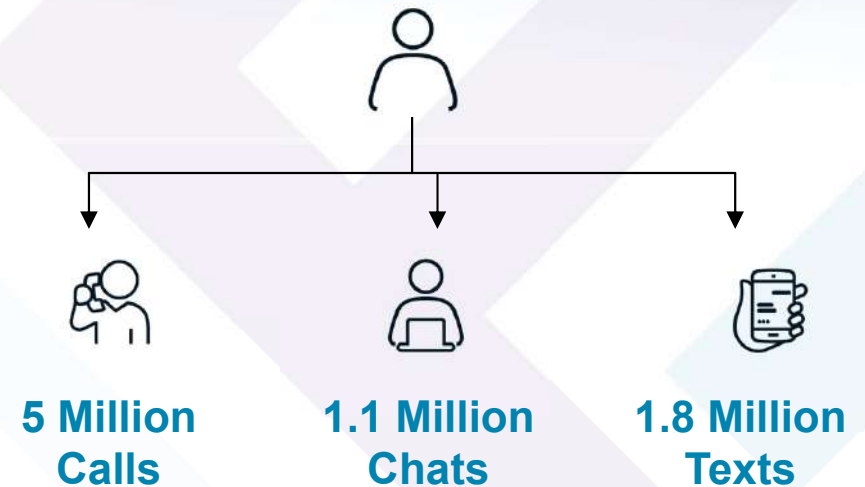
How The Lifeline Works

In 2025, the Lifeline received nearly **8 million contacts**

People who **call the Lifeline** are given three options:

- **Press 1** to connect with the **Veterans Crisis Line**
- **Press 2** to connect with the **Spanish Subnetwork**
- **Remain on the line** and be connected to a **local crisis center**; if local crisis center is unable to answer, the caller is routed to a national backup center

People who **text/chat the Lifeline** are currently connected to crisis centers equipped to respond to texts and chats



There is Hope

988



Providing 24/7, free and confidential support to people in suicidal crisis or mental health-related distress helps

- No judgement, just help
- 988 Lifeline helps thousands of people overcome crisis situations every day

Proven to work – Lifeline studies have shown that after speaking with a trained crisis counselor, most callers are significantly more likely to feel

- less depressed
- less suicidal
- less overwhelmed
- more hopeful



2.5 –
3m
Lifeline

13 -
15m

Local, County,
and State
Crisis Lines



24m+

Conservatively estimated
at 10% of the 240 - 250
million annual calls to 911
(NENA)

40m+ Annual Crisis Calls
Behavioral Health & Suicide

Key Differences Between 911 and 988

Mental Health and Addiction Emergency or Crisis?

Mental Health and Addiction EMERGENCY

A mental health and/or addiction emergency is a life-threatening situation. An immediate response from law enforcement or medics is needed. A person may be actively trying to harm themselves or someone else. In other situations, a person may be out of touch with reality, be unable to function properly, or may be out of control.

Examples of mental health and addiction emergencies are:

- Active suicide threat.
- Threatening harm to self or others.
- Self-injury that needs medical attention.
- Severe intoxication.
- Inability to care for oneself.
- Apparent drug overdose.

If someone is having a mental health
and/or addiction emergency,
CALL 911.

What to expect when you call 911:

- A dispatcher will answer your call and ask about your emergency.
- Local law enforcement or paramedics will be sent to your location.
- In some cases, a crisis intervention team will accompany law enforcement.
- You will get help dispatched immediately.
- You may be transferred to 988, if appropriate.

911



988 SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE

Mental Health and Addiction CRISIS

A mental health and/or addiction crisis is not a life-threatening situation. Intervention may be possible without an immediate response by law enforcement or medics. A person may be thinking about hurting themselves or someone else or may be extremely emotionally upset or distressed.

Examples of a mental health and addiction crises are:

- Talking about suicide or planning to harm oneself.
- Talking about harm to self or others.
- Self-injury that doesn't need immediate medical attention.
- Overuse of alcohol or other drugs.
- Extreme depression, anxiety, or other mental illness symptoms.

If someone is having a mental health
and/or addiction crisis,
CALL 988.

What to expect when you call 988:

- A trained professional will answer your call.
- The professional will ask you to describe your crisis.
- In many cases, the professional will assist you over the phone and link you to additional care as necessary.
- In some cases, a mobile team will be sent to your location.
- If necessary, the person experiencing a crisis will be taken to a stabilization facility.
- You may be transferred to 911, if needed.

988



mha.ohio.gov/988



RECOVERY
Ohio

988 – Cuyahoga County Call Volume

- **Typical call volume to FrontLine's crisis hotline prior to 988**
 - **Average daily total call volume – 127 calls**
 - **Average daily NSPL call volume – 25 calls**
- **Typical call volume to FrontLine's crisis hotline prior to 988**
 - **Average daily total call volume - 166 calls per day (31% increase)**
 - **Average daily 988 call volume - 73 calls per day**
- **Prior to July 2022, about 20% of our call volume was from the National Suicide Prevention Hotline (800-273-8255).**
- **Since the start of 988 in July 2022, about 44% of our call volume has been from the 988 Crisis Hotline.**

In April 2026, an article appeared in the New York Times titled "Youth Suicides Declined After Creation of National Hotline," highlighting a landmark study published in JAMA.

Key Findings from the Story:

- **Lives Saved:** Between the 988 rollout in July 2022 and December 2024, there were 4,372 fewer suicide deaths among adolescents and young adults (ages 15 to 34) than sophisticated mathematical models had projected.
- **Call Volume Impact:** The decline was most pronounced in states with the highest 988 call volumes. The 10 states with the largest relative increases in 988 use saw an 18.2% reduction in youth suicides, compared to a 10.6% reduction in states with lower uptake.
- **Control Group Validation:** To ensure the decline was linked to the hotline, researchers cross-referenced data with older adults (who use the line less frequently) and youth in England (where no similar lifeline existed). Neither group showed a comparable drop

Hope Has A New Number!



Questions/Comments

