SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

988

Call, Text, or Chat

HOPE IS THREE DIGITS AWAY

What Is 988?

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (988) is confidential, free, and available **24/7/365**. It connects people experiencing a mental health, substance use, or suicidal crisis with trained crisis counselors.

When Should I Call 988?

You may call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org for yourself or if you are worried about a loved one who may need crisis support.

There is no reason too big or too small to reach out to 988. There are many reasons you may connect with 988 beyond thoughts of suicide. Some examples include:

- Mental health crisis
- Substance use challenges
- Emotional distress, anxiety, or depression
- Relationship troubles
- Loneliness

Call services with interpreters are available in more than 240 languages.

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE | DHCS CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES

What to Expect

What happens when I call 988? You will first hear a greeting message, then a menu of options. These options offer connections with specially trained counselors. If you choose one of these options, the call is routed accordingly. If you do not choose any of these options, you are connected to a 988 Crisis Center trained counselor based on the call's approximate location.

What happens when I text 988? You will first see prompts with instructions on how to connect with veteran and service-member support or Spanish-speaking counselors. If you are not trying to connect with one of these services, reply NEXT to move through the prompts. You will then be asked questions to assess what you need. The text prompts will continue to guide you as you wait to be connected with a counselor.

What happens when I chat 988? After clicking on the link, a brief survey will open. It helps counselors understand how best to support you and takes less than five minutes to complete. Once you click "Start a chat" at the bottom of the survey screen, you will see a screen that indicates 988 is connecting you to a counselor.

Once you connect with a counselor by call, text, or chat, they will introduce themselves, ask about your safety, listen, and work to understand how your problem is affecting you. The counselor will provide support and share helpful resources.

Why 988?

Too many people are experiencing suicidal crisis or mental health–related distress without the support and care they need. Depression, addiction, and suicide rates are rising in young men and boys.

- Depression is the leading cause of death in young men.[1]
- Young men are three times more likely to die by suicide than young women.[2]
- Young men die of overdose at two to three times the rate of women.[3]

California is taking targeted action to address the mental health crisis among young men and boys with an executive order issued by Governor Gavin Newsom focused on suicide prevention, behavioral health, and helping find purpose through education, family, and work. This is a state-wide effort to reduce mental health stigma, strengthen mental health supports, and create pathways for work and education for men and boys.

Need Help?

Call, Text, or Chat 988

For judgement free 24/7 support, call or text 988 or chat online.

[1] U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2025, March 26). Suicide Data and Statistics.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Butelman, E.R. Huang, Y., Epstein, D. H., Shaham, Y., Goldstein, R. Z., Volkow, N. D., & Alia-Klein, N. (2023). Overdose mortality rates for opioids and stimulant drugs are substantially higher in men than in women: State-level analysis. Neuropsychopharmacology, 48, 1639–1647. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41386-023-01601-8

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

DHCS CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES