



988

Community Education
and Awareness Toolkit

How to Use This Toolkit

The Helpline Center (HLC) in partnership with the Department of Social Services created this toolkit to share marketing and educational resources about 988 in South Dakota. Use the materials in this toolkit to share information about 988 with your communities.



The resources in this toolkit have been created to provide information to the public. With these materials, you can help members of your community learn:



What is 988



How 988 can help



When to contact 988



How to contact 988



...and more!



For more information on 988, visit the Helpline Center at HelpLineCenter.org/9-8-8/988-promotion/

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Ideas for Community Engagement



Schools

School administrators: Make sure that teachers, parents, and counselors know that the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is now the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. School materials should be updated to reflect this change. Also make sure that parents, teachers, and counselors know 988 is available by calling, texting, or chatting.

Teachers: Share information about 988 with students by using South Dakota's 988 resources when talking about mental health. Hang a 988 poster in your classroom for students to see.

Students: Support your peers by making sure they know 988 is available by text and chat, as well as by phone. Promote 988 within your student clubs and organizations.



Caregivers & Families

Normalize talking about mental health in your household. Talk to young people in your family about 988 so they know when and how to reach out.



Providers

Make **educational materials** about 988 available in your office. Educate staff about 988 during meetings and trainings. Talk to individuals receiving services about 988 during screenings.



Organizations

Share information about 988 in your email blasts, social media, and newsletters. Hang posters in popular locations around your workplace. Consider adding 988 to your organization's **email signature**.



First Responders & Uninformed Personnel

Include education about 988 in all staff trainings and ensure staff understand how the service fits into their work. Create a culture where staff feel comfortable reaching out to 988. Work with the HLC to learn how to best respond to behavioral health crises. Support your peers by sharing information about 988 after critical incidents.



Individuals

Follow the **5 Easy Steps to Share 988**.



Email Signature

Use the following text in your or your organization's email signature:

"Are you in crisis, experiencing emotional distress, or worried about someone you know? Call or text 988 or chat at 988lifeline.org/chat 24 hours a day, 7 days a week."



Publications

Include one of the following options when you want to share 988 as a resource on any documents, images, or publications:

Option 1:

If you or someone you know needs support now, call or text 988 or chat at 988lifeline.org/chat

Option 2:

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: Call or Text 988 or chat at 988lifeline.org/chat



Social Media

Use these examples to share information about 988 on your social media channels:

Option 1:

988 is more than just a number. It is a direct connection to compassionate and accessible care. Find materials to spread the word about 988 here: helplinecenter.org/988promo

Option 2:

988 is the new 3-digit number that connects you to behavioral health crisis counselors. Learn more at helplinecenter.org/988promo

Option 3:

When you call, text, or chat 988, you are connected to trained counselors. Get the answers to the most frequently asked questions about 988 here: helplinecenter.org/988promo

Option 4:

988 is for everyone. It's always available if you are in emotional distress, need support, or have thoughts of suicide. Learn more at helplinecenter.org/988promo



Conversation Starters

Here are some of the ways you can begin the conversation about 988 with people you know:

Educating Others:

"You can talk to a trained crisis counselor when you call, chat, or text 988."

"Did you know there's a three-digit number for people who are struggling or feeling overwhelmed?"

"Have you heard about 988?"

Supporting Others:

"I've heard that people who call 988 feel really supported."

"I feel like you might be struggling and want you to know that 988 has someone there to listen."

Worried about someone and want to check in? The ['Just Checking In'](#) tip sheet can help you have a supportive conversation.

5 Easy Steps to Share 988

1 Start the conversation. Ask people you know if they've heard of 988. Check out our [988 Conversation Starters](#) for some examples.

2 Ask to hang a 988 poster at your:

- Workplace
- Community stores
- Library
- Apartment building
- Place of worship
- Doctor's office

3 Share on your personal social media. Anyone can share this lifesaving service with their friends. [Download a 988 social media graphic](#) and help get the word out.

4 Normalize talking about mental health. Check in with people you know and share your experiences or coping skills.

5 Share 988 resources with your social and professional networks. Whether it's your bowling league or volunteer group, you can share information about 988 at one of your meetings.

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE

helpline
center



South Dakota's 988 Marketing and Educational Materials



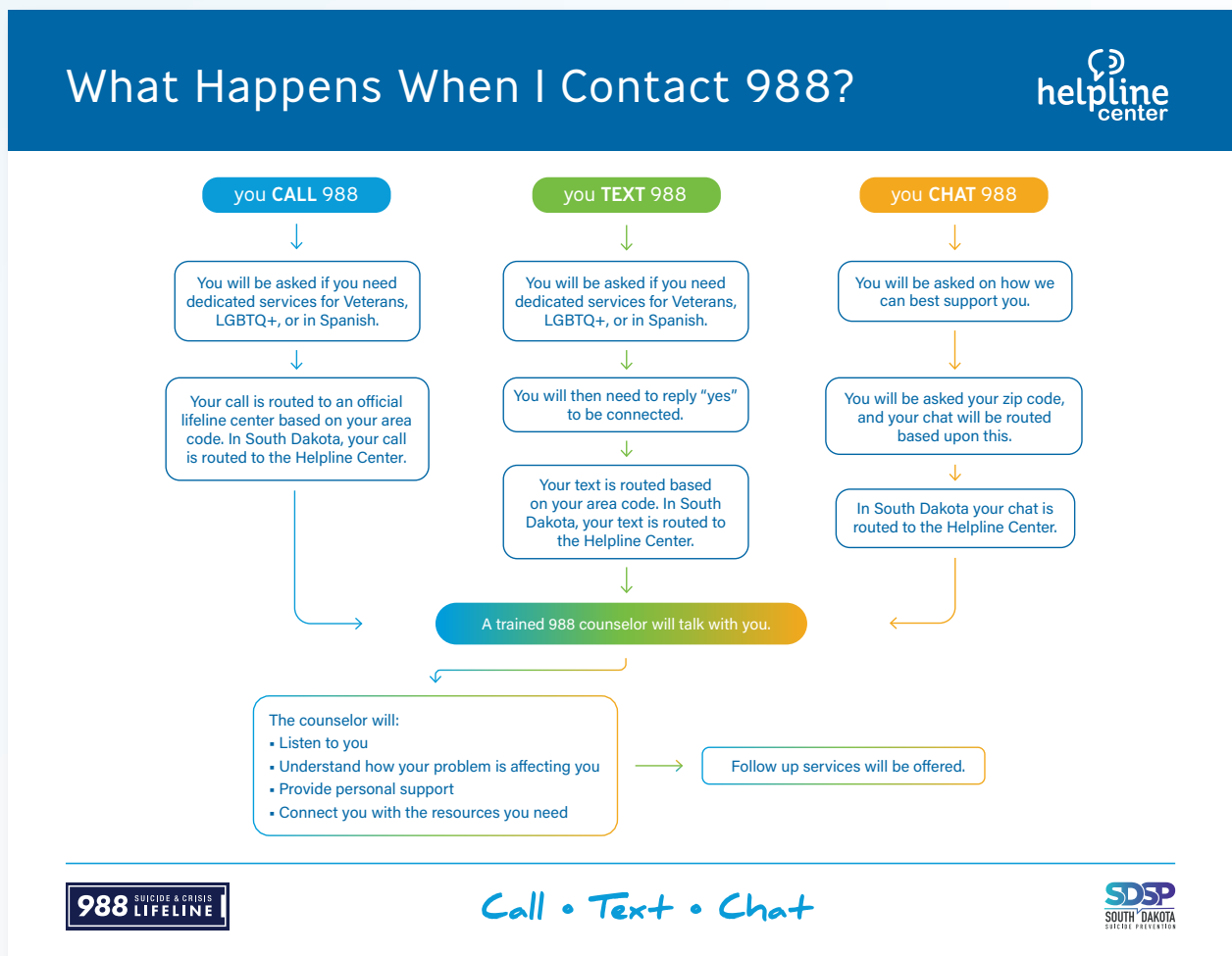
Use these materials to spread the word about 988 in your communities. You can share these resources electronically or by printing them out.

What Happens When Infographic

Know how your call, text, and chat works when you contact 988.



[Download 988 What Happens When Infographic PDF](#) or [Request from HLC](#)



Brochures

Our Safeguard and Hope & Help brochures are here for anyone to request or download. In times of crisis, having immediate access to mental health support is invaluable. These brochures provide information on the 988 Lifeline, dealing with grief, and at-home crisis prevention.

Hope & Help Brochure



[Download 988 Hope & Help Brochure PDF](#) or [Request from HLC](#)

Are you struggling after the suicide death of a loved one?
You are not alone. There is help and support.

If you are grieving, it can be helpful to:

- Share your story. Finding others who will listen to your questions and hear your story is healing. Sometimes when family and friends are also grieving, it may be difficult to find emotional support. A support group or bereavement class can be a safe and supportive environment in which to heal.
- Express your emotions. Grief from a suicide loss is unique. Feelings of guilt, stigma, anger, or isolation may be very different from other deaths you have experienced. All these feelings, if present, are normal and deserve a safe way to be expressed.
- Allow yourself time to heal. Grieving is hard work. It comes and goes, surfacing in unexpected times and places.
- Feel supported by others. Be open to the loving acts and listening ear of friends and family. Share your burden of grief with other survivors of suicide loss in a support group. Call the Helpline Center at 988 anytime of the day to feel supported and listened to.

You are not alone. There is help and support.

helpline center
Making lives better by giving support, offering hope and creating connections all day, every day.

There is hope.

Support Services Provided

- 24/7 crisis line
- Support groups for survivors of a suicide loss
- Suicide prevention trainings
- Outreach visits for survivors of suicide loss
- Peer prevention and loss support for K-12 schools

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

There is hope.

Call • Text • Chat 988
facebook.com/helplinecenter
@HelplineCenter
@HelplineCenter

helplinecenter.org

Safeguard Brochure



[Download 988 Safeguard Brochure PDF](#) or [Request from HLC](#)

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

In July 2022, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255) officially transitioned to the phone number 988. Moving to a 3-digit code transforms the way individuals reach out for mental health help and support. 988 is more than just an easy number to remember, it's a direct connection to compassionate and professional support for anyone who might be struggling with emotional distress, experiencing suicidal thoughts, or who is concerned about a family member or friend with a mental health or substance use issue.

In South Dakota, 988 is answered by the Helpline Center and is staffed by individuals with advanced degrees and experience in behavioral health. When someone contacts 988 they will be connected to a trained counselor who can address immediate needs and help connect them to ongoing care. Simply call, text or chat 988 and our caring and professionally trained staff will be there to support you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

HELPLINE CENTER MISSION
Making lives better by giving support, offering hope and creating connections all day, every day.

Further Information

helpline center

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

988
Call • Text • Chat

WEB RESOURCES
To find out more about crisis prevention efforts in South Dakota, please visit:
helplinecenter.org
sdsuicideprevention.org

*A special thanks to the Rhode Island Department of Health for sharing their materials.

HOW TO SAFEGUARD YOUR HOME

helpline center

A Guide to Crisis Prevention in the Home

Posters

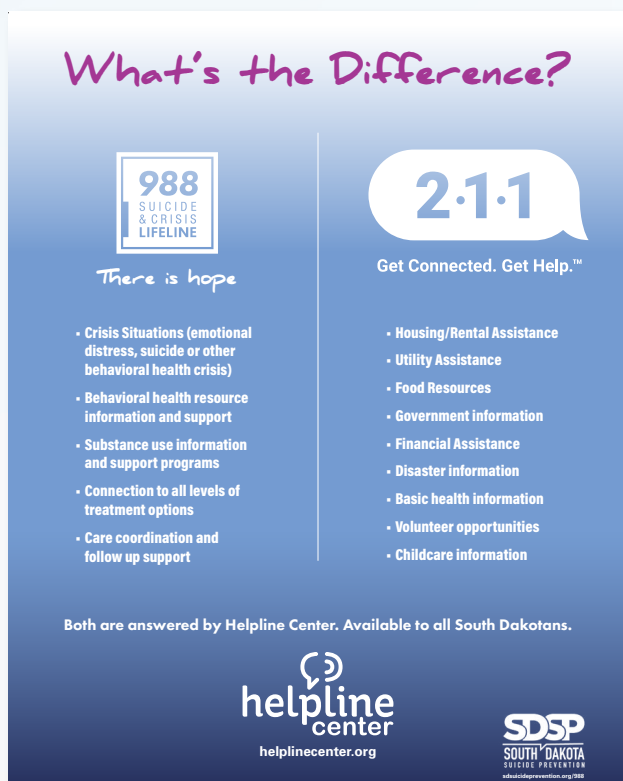
Choose from the five poster designs below and download the one(s) that will best reach your audience.



988 Poster



[Download Poster PDF](#) or [Request from HLC](#)



988, 211: What's the Difference? Poster



[Download Poster PDF](#) or [Request from HLC](#)

Posters (cont.)

Choose from the five poster designs below and download the one(s) that will best reach your audience.

Help is 3 Numbers Away helpline center

211 maintains a comprehensive database of community resources and provides information and referrals for essential needs like:

- Food
- Housing and Shelter
- Utility Assistance
- Health Services
- Government Services

211 also can connect people with information and referrals for:

- Transportation
- Legal Services
- Support Group
- Disaster Aftercare

988 Provides crisis support for:

- Thoughts of Suicide
- Mental Health Crisis
- Substance Use Crisis
- Emotional Distress

911 Provides first responders dispatched for:

- Medical Emergency
- Fire
- Reporting a Crime
- Disaster Response
- Life Threatening Situations

Call for information and Community Resources
 Call for Crisis Support and Emotional Distress
 Call for Emergencies

Whole Person Care
 Warm Handoff

988 LIFELINE 211

Help is 3 Numbers Away Poster



[Download Poster PDF](#) or [Request from HLC](#)

SD BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Find mental health and addiction support for you or a loved one.

988
 LOCAL SUPPORT
 Call. Text. Chat.

SDSP SOUTH DAKOTA SUICIDE PREVENTION helpline center

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

988 Tear-Off Poster



[Request from HLC](#)

Social Media Graphics

Share HLC’s social media graphics on your private or professional social media page. Use the [suggested social media language](#) in the caption of your posts. The images below are an example of the many graphics available.



Talk with Us Social Graphic 1



[Download Social Graphic JPEG](#) or [Request from HLC](#)



Talk with Us Social Graphic 2



[Download Social Graphic JPEG](#) or [Request from HLC](#)



Hope and Help Social Graphic



[Download Social Graphic JPEG](#) or [Request from HLC](#)

Social Media Graphics (cont.)

Share HLC's social media graphics on your private or professional social media page. Use the [suggested social media language](#) in the caption of your posts. The images below are an example of the many graphics available.



There is Hope Social Graphic



[Download Social Graphic JPEG](#) or [Request from HLC](#)



988 Social Graphic Video



[Download Social Graphic Video](#) or [Request from HLC](#)

Help is 3 Numbers Away Handout

This hand-out is designed to help individuals distinguish when to call 988, 911, and 211 for support and resources.



[Download 988 Social Media Graphics](#) or [Request from HLC](#)



Just the Facts Infographic

This resource highlights the key facts about 988.



[Download Just the Facts Infographic PDF](#) or [Request from HLC](#)

988: Just the Facts

Since the launch in July 2022, there has been lots of information shared about 988. These are the important facts about 988 in South Dakota.

988 and 911 are separate services with separate contact centers.

988 is not the 911 for mental health. Rather than immediately sending services to you, **988 provides emotional support from trained crisis counselors.**

988 **does not have the ability to track callers' geographic location.**

Currently, **less than 5% of calls to 988 require law enforcement to be involved.** This typically happens when there is imminent risk to someone's life.

988 is **for more than just suicidal crises.** It is for any problem a person is having that causes them distress.

95% of calls to 988 are resolved over the phone. The other 5% usually require agreed-upon mobile crisis or other follow-up services.

988 offers **free and confidential emotional support.** You will be connected to a trained counselor who will talk with you and offer you support if you choose to accept it.

The people answering the 988 texts, chats, and calls are **trained crisis counselors that receive extensive training and supervision, including how to respond to a crisis.**

You **do not need to provide personal information** when you call 988. The counselor may ask for information, but you can decline to share if you don't feel comfortable doing so.

Call • Text • Chat

Just Checking In Infographic

This resource highlights the key facts about 988.



[Download Just Checking In Infographic PDF](#) or [Request from HLC](#)

Just Checking In

We want to make it easy to check in on each other. These tips can help you have a supportive conversation.

HOW TO ASK: Different Ways to Start a Conversation about Mental Wellness

Ask genuinely. There are no special words. Being authentic is more important than what you say.

"I just wanted to check in with you. How are you doing?"

Share how you are first. Being open about your struggles can help normalize what others are going through.

"I've been really anxious lately with everything that is going on. How have you been?"

Ask regularly. If you think someone is struggling, make it an expected part of the conversation that you'll ask how they are, even if they don't want to talk that day.

"I just wanted to check in on how you are doing today. I'm thinking of you."

Ask directly. Letting someone know you want to hear about mental health can help them feel okay about opening up to you.

"Just checking in. You seem a little down today. How are you doing?"

Ask about today. It can be overwhelming to think about your overall emotional health if you are struggling. Focusing on the moment can be helpful.

"How are you feeling today? How are you feeling right now?"

Talk to them about things other than mental health too. Connect over other aspects of your relationship.

"This meme made me think of you!"

HOW TO ANSWER: Different Ways to Respond to Someone Who is Struggling

Stay calm. If someone lets you know they are having a hard time, it is because they trust you to listen. You don't need any special skills other than being yourself.

"Thanks for sharing that. Tell me more about what's going on."

Validate their feelings. Comparing their situation to other people or letting them know why things aren't so bad is not helpful. Acknowledge that they aren't okay.

"That sounds really hard."

Check back in regularly. Let them know they're on your mind.

"I've been thinking about you since we talked. How are you doing today?"

Ask follow-up questions. Let them know you are interested by asking for more information.

"How long have you been feeling like this? What kinds of things have been helpful or not helpful?"

Be open about your own struggles without comparing. Normalizing mental health challenges is helpful.

"I've been having a lot of anxiety lately too."

Find ways to stay connected. Social connection is critical for mental health.

"I'm thinking of having a virtual watch party for our favorite series this week. What night works best for you?"

Call • Text • Chat

Safety Plan

Use HLC's safety plan:

- With individuals receiving services
- At tabling events
- For yourself



[Download HLC Safety Plan PDF](#) or [Request from HLC](#)

Safety Plans Work  

1 Write 3 warning signs that a crisis may be developing.

2 Write 3 internal coping strategies that can take your mind off your problems.

3 Who / What are 3 people or places that provide distraction? (Write name / place and phone numbers)

Phone: _____

Phone: _____

Phone: _____

4 Who can you ask for help? (Write names and phone numbers)

Phone: _____

Phone: _____

Phone: _____

5 Professionals or agencies you can contact during a crisis:
Clinician: _____ Phone: _____
Local Urgent Care or Emergency Department:
Address: _____ Phone: _____
Call • Text • Chat 988

6 Write out a plan to make your environment safer. (Write 2 things)

Talk with us.
 
988
Call • Text • Chat

 
helplinecenter.org sdsuicideprevention.org

Modified from Stanley & Brown (2021)

988 Magnets

Help make sure 988 is known in every business, workplace, and home.



[Request from SD Behavioral Health](#)



In South Dakota,
988 is answered by professional
crisis counselors at the
Helpline Center.

