



NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH

September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, a dedicated time to come together with collective passion to raise awareness of suicide prevention. We can all benefit from honest conversations about mental health conditions and suicide because just one conversation can change a life.

More than 47,000 people die by suicide each year in the United States; it is the 11th leading cause of death overall and the 2nd leading cause for people ages 10-34. Suicide is a major public health concern. But there is hope too: suicide is preventable, and we as a community have the power to reduce these numbers.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has declared 9/8 as national 988 Day. 988 Day is a national initiative dedicated to raising awareness about the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline and for emphasizing the importance of mental health and suicide prevention. For more information, including how to promote 988 Day, please visit 988lifeline.org.



Kentucky Youth Data



The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [Youth Risk Behavior Survey](#), which is completed every two years, shows that in 2023, 18.6% of Kentucky high school students seriously considered attempting suicide, and 8.6% of Kentucky's high school students attempted suicide in the previous 12 months.

988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

Since its inception in July of 2022, 988 has received over 16 million contacts. When people call, text or chat 988, they will be connected to trained counselors who are part of the existing Lifeline network. These trained counselors will listen, provide support and connect them to resources if necessary. 988 has expanded to provide specialized services for Veterans and Spanish speakers.



Ways to Support Your Community



The National Council for Suicide Prevention's [Take 5 to Save Lives Campaign](#) gives us five areas that we can all participate; LEARN, KNOW, DO, TALK, and SHARE. This campaign provides ways in which we can support suicide prevention activities and includes even more public awareness events including World Suicide Prevention Day, National Suicide Prevention Month, and National Suicide Prevention Week.

Warning Signs of Suicide

Talking About

- Wanting to die
- Intense guilt or shame
- Being a burden to others

Feelings

- Empty, hopeless, trapped or having no reason to live
- Extremely sad, more anxious, agitated or full of rage
- Unbearable emotional or physical pain

Behaviors

- Making a plan or researching ways to die
- Withdrawing from friends, saying goodbye, giving away important items or making a will
- Taking dangerous risks
- Displaying extreme mood swings
- Eating or sleeping more or less
- Using drugs or alcohol more often

Kentucky Specific Resources

- [Kentucky Department of Education's Suicide Prevention Page](#)
- [Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services Provider Directory](#)

Available Training



The Kentucky Department of Education along with the Department for Behavioral Health and Intellectual Disabilities offer [Sources of Strength](#) training for schools throughout the state. Sources of Strength is a best practice youth suicide prevention project designed to harness the power of peer social networks to change unhealthy norms and culture, ultimately preventing suicide, bullying, and substance abuse. Earlier this year, *The American Journal of Preventative Medicine* showed a 29% reduction in new suicide attempts in schools with Sources of Strength programs. This is a significant finding which further demonstrates that upstream, strength-based, peer-led initiatives have significant prevention impact.

[Youth Mental Health First Aid](#) teaches adults how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among children and adolescents ages 12-18.



**Mental Health
FIRST AID**

from NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR
MENTAL WELLBEING