

News

Reflecting on one year of support with the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

During the first year of the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, two local crisis centers responded to 142 percent more contacts statewide than the previous year, connecting more Iowans experiencing a suicidal crisis or emotional distress with life-changing services. Between July 2022 and May 2023, over 31,000 Iowans contacted 988 for support.

July 16 marks the official one-year anniversary of the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, previously known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. The introduction of a three-digit dial code was made to ease the connection with crisis

services when individuals are experiencing a suicidal or mental health-related crisis.

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a national network of local crisis centers that provide free and confidential support 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Individuals with an Iowa area code who reach out to 988 are routed to one of two non-profit agencies — CommUnity Crisis Services in Iowa City or Foundation 2 Crisis Services in Cedar Rapids.

“The increase in contacts shows this seemingly small change was a strong step in the right direction” Ryan Dickson, CommUnity’s Crisis

Helpline Director said. “Our team has created an incredible service that meets the support needs of Iowans and those across the country. It is amazing work they do, helping someone choose life.”

Between July 2021 and May 2022, 62 percent Iowans who reached out to 988 for help reported experiencing a mental health crisis, 33 percent reported experiencing emotional distress, and 5 percent reported having a suicide-related concern.

Reducing the number of steps and time it takes to connect people to the appropriate service increases the chances an individual will receive

the help they need, ultimately creating healthier communities.

“We know that every time we answer the phone, we have the opportunity to be a life-changing and life-saving support,” Emily Blomme, Chief Executive Officer of Foundation 2 Crisis Services said. “Our goal is always to make it as easy as possible for people to reach our crisis counselors, and 988 is a valuable step in that direction.”

In more than 97 percent of contacts answered by Foundation 2 Crisis Services and CommUnity in the last year, the issue was able to be adequately handled by the crisis counselor over



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phone, chat, or text. In cases where further support is requested, the counselor can connect the individual in crisis to local resources, such as mobile crisis, which dispatches crisis counselors to respond in-person. Both CommUnity and Foundation 2 Crisis Services offer mobile crisis services, creating a

continuation of care that strives to provide support in a timely manner.

If you or a loved one need emotional support, please do not hesitate to reach out. You are not alone. Text or call 988 or chat online at 988lifeline.org/chat. Contacting the Lifeline is free, confidential, and available 24/7 every day of the year.

Camera

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the projects to be done that would not be possible without a tax rate increase or loss of other services,” Gott said.

According to data from Blue Line Solutions, the Tennessee-based company who administers the speed cameras, at 75 mph 5,871 citations were issued from the camera on Hwy 163. From 76 to 85 mph 6,134 citations were issued and 86 mph and above had 200 citations issued.

“The program was never designed in such a manner to be construed as a ‘money grab,’ as many media outlets portray it,” Blue Line Solutions CEO Mark Hutchinson said. “Though it seems counterproductive to the safety component of the program, I and Blue Line Solutions believe the best course of action would be to increase the threshold for issuing cita-

tions to 11 plus mph over versus 10 mph.”

A specific location for the eastbound speed camera has not been determined but the council recommended east of the overpass bridge.

According to the automated traffic enforcement language added to the Prairie City code of ordinance, the vehicle owner will be liable for the fine which ranges from \$100 for 1 to 14 mph over, \$200 for 15 to 19 mph and \$400 for 20 mph over or more. An automated traffic citation will not be sent or reported to the Iowa Department of Transportation or similar department or any other state for the purpose of being added to the vehicle owner’s driving record.

A notice of the violation will be mailed to the vehicle owner within 30 days after the police department determines a violation has occurred. A violation can be contested by submitting a form within 30 days of the first notice.

Friendship

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disabilities. It is fun and I wanted to try out and do it,” Lowry said. “I had a lot of fun. I’ll definitely do it again.”

With new sponsors and volun-

teers pledging their time and money even during the fair, it looks like the Friendship Livestock Show will be around for many years to come. A heartwarming event, it is a great way to be inclusive and share the love of the fair.

Cow

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got it tied up until we could get the trailer.”

The animal was then loaded up, and headed back home.

“Some animals don’t like to be moved to different places and they react differently,” Hiemstra said. “When I was little and in

4H I had an animal that drug me around everyday at home, but when I got to the fair she was fine. Some animals are fine at home. But you move them to a new environment and they don’t like it.”

Safety is always a priority during the fair. A new PA system was installed this year to reach all corners of the grounds. The local EMS is also always

ready to respond as it did Saturday in case of any injury or health occurrence.

The fair is full of animals. While 99 percent of the time they behave as expected, they still have minds of their own and can push their weight around if they want to.

“This morning we had a cat get away,” Hiemstra said. “It’s the fair. Animals can get away.”

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MYTH

You would know if you had syphilis.

FACT

Like many STIs, syphilis can have no symptoms.



Find testing near you: gettested.cdc.gov

Public Health IOWA HHS

Syphilis is a sexually transmissible infection (STI). It’s more common and easier to get than you might think. Not everyone who has syphilis has symptoms, so people often don’t realize they have it. If you do have symptoms, they can include a painless sore or rash. Thankfully, syphilis is easy to test, treat and cure! If you’re sexually active, make sure that getting tested syphilis is part of your health routine.

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