

# Mental Health Awareness Month

The month of May is a time to pause and raise awareness of the fact that many people live everyday with mental and behavioral health issues and there is a need to reduce the stigma attached with the experience. Post-COVID the reality is that millions of Americans are dealing with an increase in mental, behavioral, and substance misuse illnesses in their families (NAMI). Additional mental health challenges by the COVID-19 pandemic have also increased youth related substance use, mental health struggles, and suicide (HHS). According to HHS, suicide is still the second highest cause of death in youth ages 10 to 14 and adults from ages 24 to 35. This prompted the July 2022 launch of **998** the new three digit code for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

The **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** provides 24/7 call, text, and chat access to crisis counselors. It is for anyone experiencing suicidal, substance use, and/or mental health crises or emotional distress. Concerns about loved ones may also be addressed using the 988 dialing code. SAMHSA has described the new 988 dialing code as an important step in transforming how crisis and trauma situations are handled in the United States. Please note that the 800-273-8255 number still works, 988 is just built off of the 10-digit number.

## Resources:

- [Substance Use Prevention and Encouraging Healthy Brain Development](#)
- [Together for Mental Health](#)
- [Fact Sheet: Celebrating Mental Health Awareness Month 2022](#)
- [988 Frequently Asked Questions](#)

For general questions about the FCPS Substance Abuse Prevention Program, please contact the Office of Student Safety & Wellness at: (571) 423-4270. Be sure to follow us on Twitter @FCPSSAPS.

**For further Information & support:**  
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