State of Wisconsin
Department of Health Services
Tony Evers, Governor
Kirsten L. Johnson, Secretary

October 27, 2023

The Honorable Howard L Marklein
Joint Committee on Finance, Senate Co-Chair
Room 316 East State Capitol
PO Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707

The Honorable Mark Born
Joint Committee on Finance, Assembly Co-Chair
Room 308 East State Capitol
PO Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Senator Marklein and Representative Born:

I am pleased to submit the Suicide in Wisconsin: Impact and Response Report and HOPELINE Annual Report to the Legislature, as directed by the Committee at its October 2, 2019, meeting under s. 13.10. The attached reports address suicide prevention activities in Wisconsin, including information on suicide prevention services provided by HOPELINE between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023.

Sincerely,

Kirsten L. Johnson
Secretary-designee

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH SERVICES
P-03089 (10/2023)

Division of Care and Treatment Services

HOPELINE Annual Report to the Legislature – July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023

By direction of the State Legislature, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services provides grant funds in the amount of $110,000 General Purpose Revenue (GPR) per state fiscal year to the Center for Suicide Awareness (CSA), a non-profit organization based in Kaukauna, Wisconsin. The funds are used to obtain and share data related to the use of HOPELINE, a text message-based emotional support service, as well as to maintain "HOPELINE" as Wisconsin's text message keyword for the national Crisis Text Line (CTL).

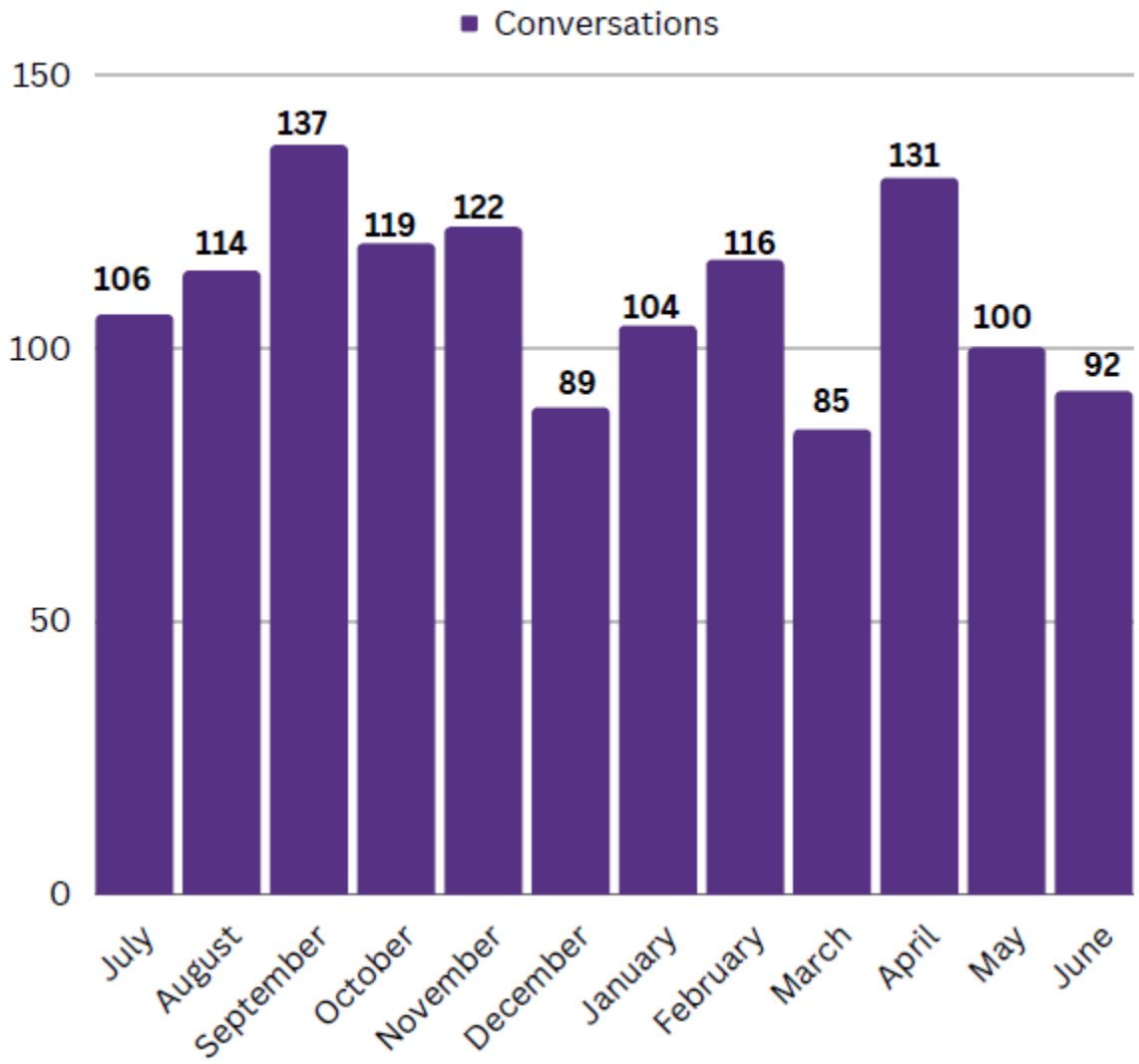
CTL is a free 24/7 text message-based support service for people in emotional crisis that is reached by texting CTL's number, 741741. CTL collects data about HOPELINE texts and texters, which is available through a data portal on CSA's website. The data can be used by interested parties in the state to help inform efforts related to mental health services and supports, crisis intervention, and suicide prevention.

This report covers the period of July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023. During that time, the number of individuals in Wisconsin who texted HOPELINE was 741. The number of text "conversations" with people in Wisconsin was 1,315, which includes individual texters who reached out multiple times. Also during that period, HOPELINE requested emergency services be dispatched to the texter's physical location on 14 occasions. Those figures compare to 994 individuals, 1,881 conversations, and 18 emergency dispatches over the same period the previous year. Emergency services are contacted when the texter indicates suicidal thoughts, a plan, and a method to attempt suicide within 48 hours, and the crisis counselor is unable to de-escalate the situation.

The following pages contain data provided by CSA related to the use of HOPELINE, as well as information from DHS on CSA's expenditures using the grant funds.

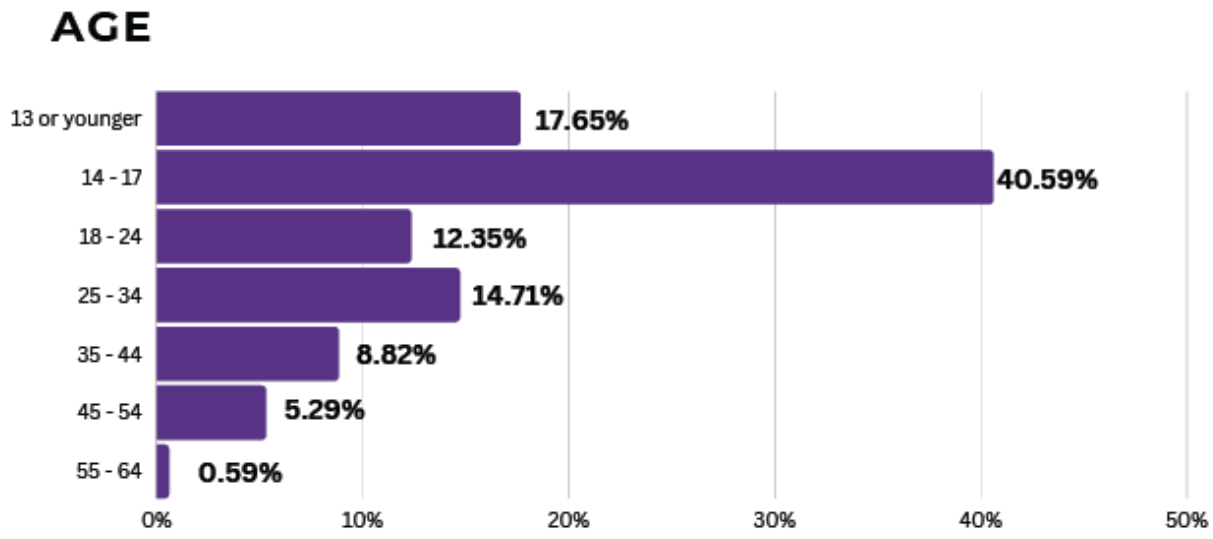
Volume

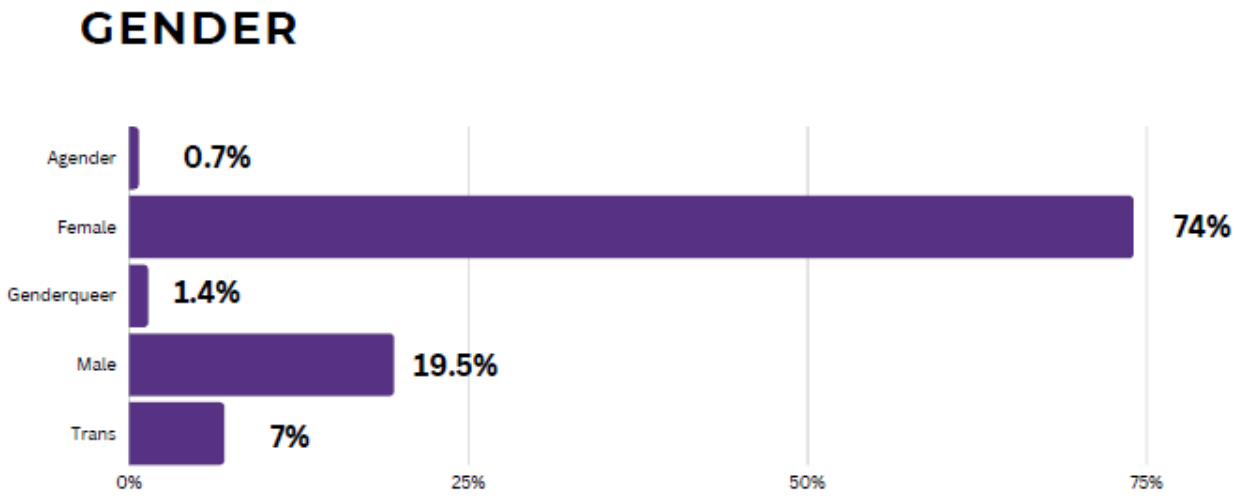
The chart below shows a breakdown of the text conversation volume by month for the period of July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023.



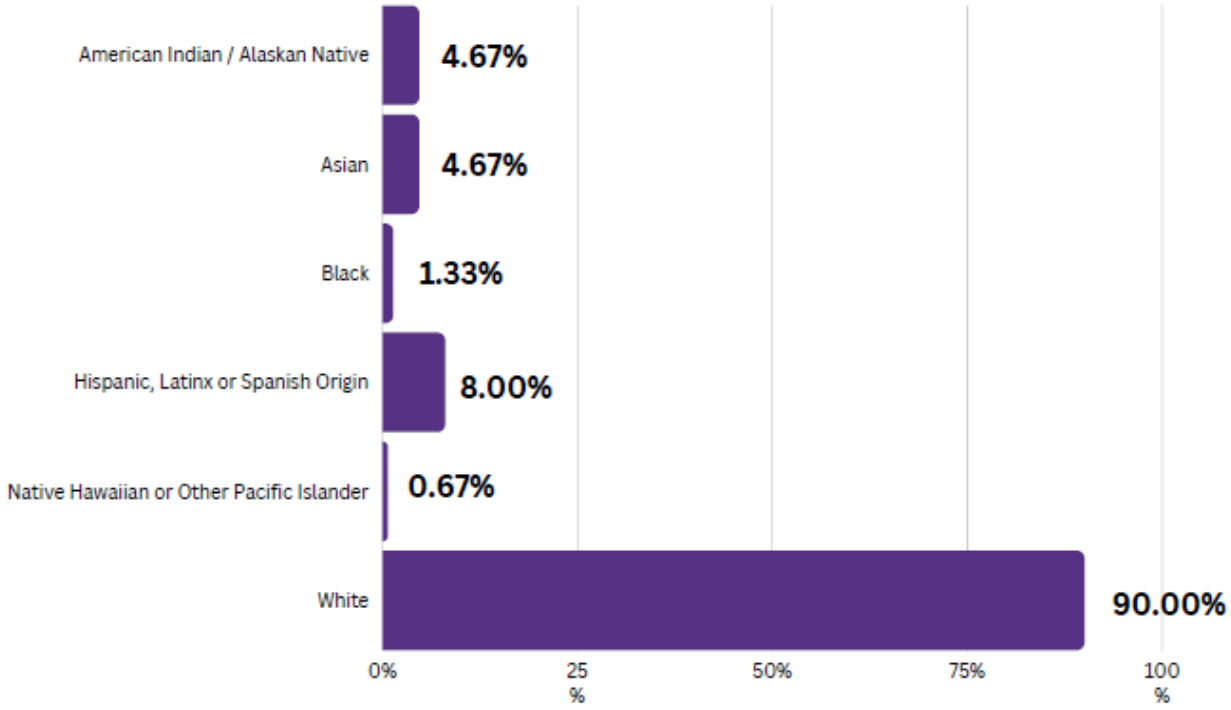
Demographics

In addition to conversation volume, HOPELINE also has access to demographic data reported by texters themselves for the following categories: age; gender; race/ethnicity; sexual identity; and disability. The charts below show data for these categories for the period of July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023. Percentage totals may exceed 100% due to rounding or texters identifying with more than one item in a category.

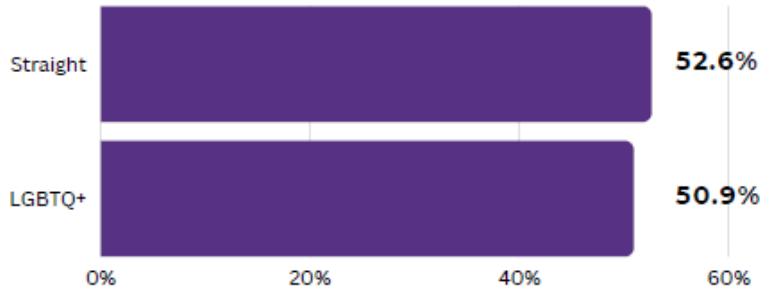


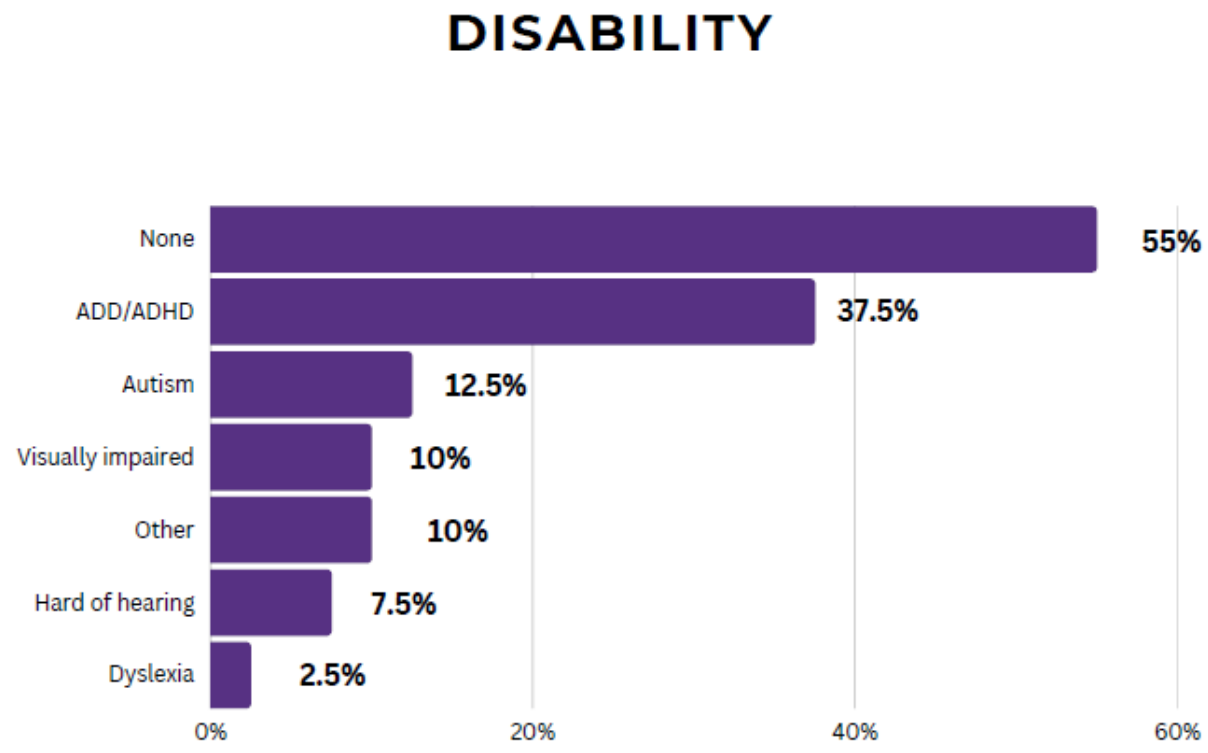


RACE/ ETHNICITY



SEXUAL IDENTITY





Another demographic category is texter location, for which HOPELINE has data at the county level. The table below shows the distribution of conversations per county over the period of July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023. If a county is not listed, it means HOPELINE had no texters from that county.

County	Number of Conversations
Adams	1
Ashland	3
Barron	4
Bayfield	6
Brown	160
Calumet	3
Chippewa	3
Clark	3
Columbia	5
Crawford	1
Dane	77

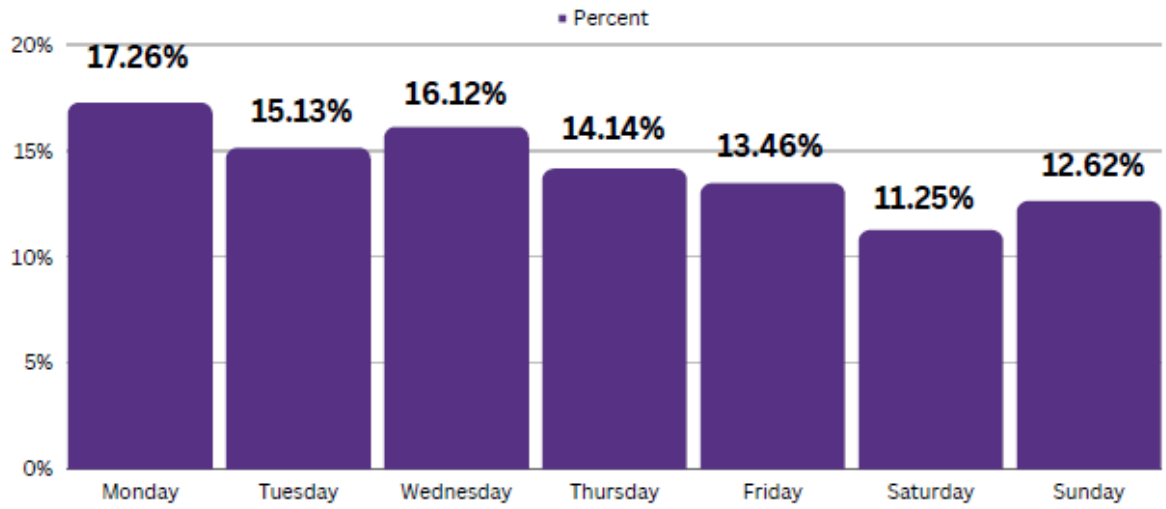
County	Number of Conversations
Dodge	24
Door	5
Douglas	8
Dunn	6
Eau Claire	29
Florence	1
Fond du Lac	30
Forest	6
Grant	6
Green	5
Green Lake	7
Iowa	3
Jackson	9
Jefferson	10
Juneau	3
Kenosha	18
Kewaunee	6
La Crosse	19
Lafayette	1
Langlade	3
Lincoln	3
Manitowoc	42
Marathon	29
Marinette	1
Milwaukee	191
Monroe	11
Oconto	3
Oneida	6
Outagamie	167
Ozaukee	1
Pepin	1
Polk	7

County	Number of Conversations
Portage	28
Price	3
Racine	54
Richland	1
Rock	40
St. Croix	17
Sauk	3
Sawyer	2
Shawano	3
Sheboygan	9
Taylor	3
Vernon	9
Vilas	6
Walworth	21
Washburn	2
Washington	25
Waukesha	45
Waupaca	11
Waushara	2
Winnebago	64
Wood	45

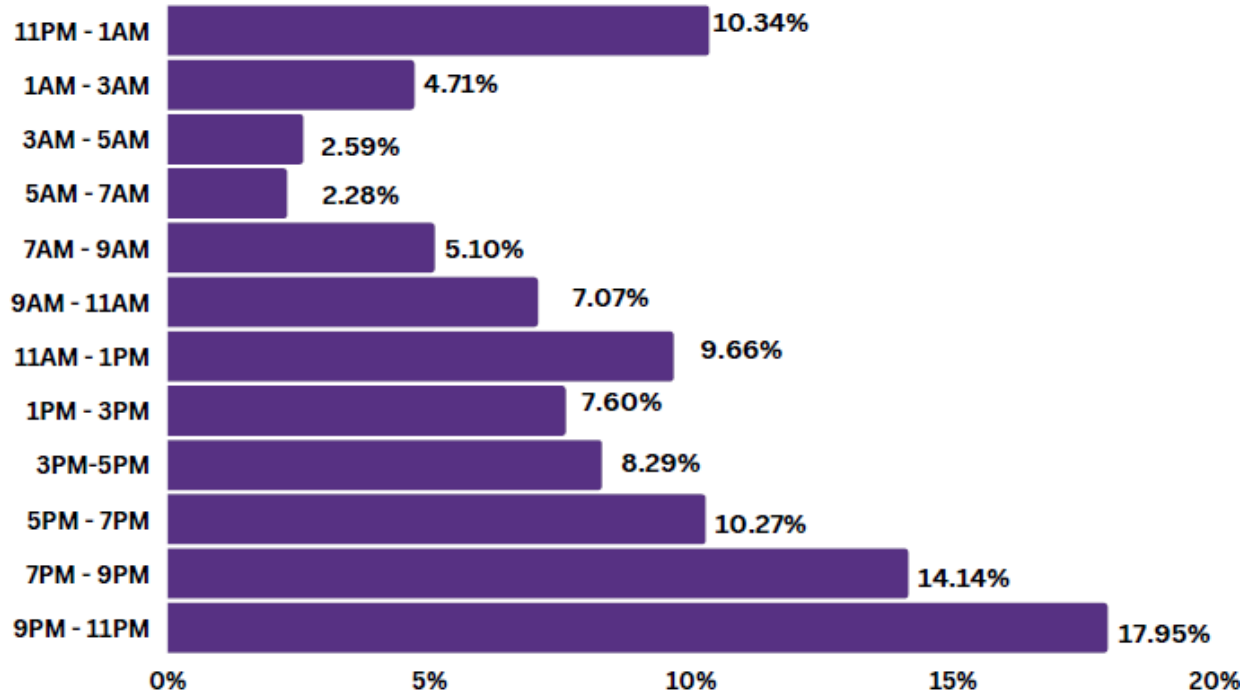
Volume Distibution

HOPELINE also has details about the text volume it receives. The following two charts show the distribution of HOPELINE conversation volume by day of the week and time of day for the period of July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023. The charts show that Monday is the day of the week with the highest volume of texts and that the overall volume peaks between the hours of 7:00-11:00 p.m.

DAYS OF THE WEEK

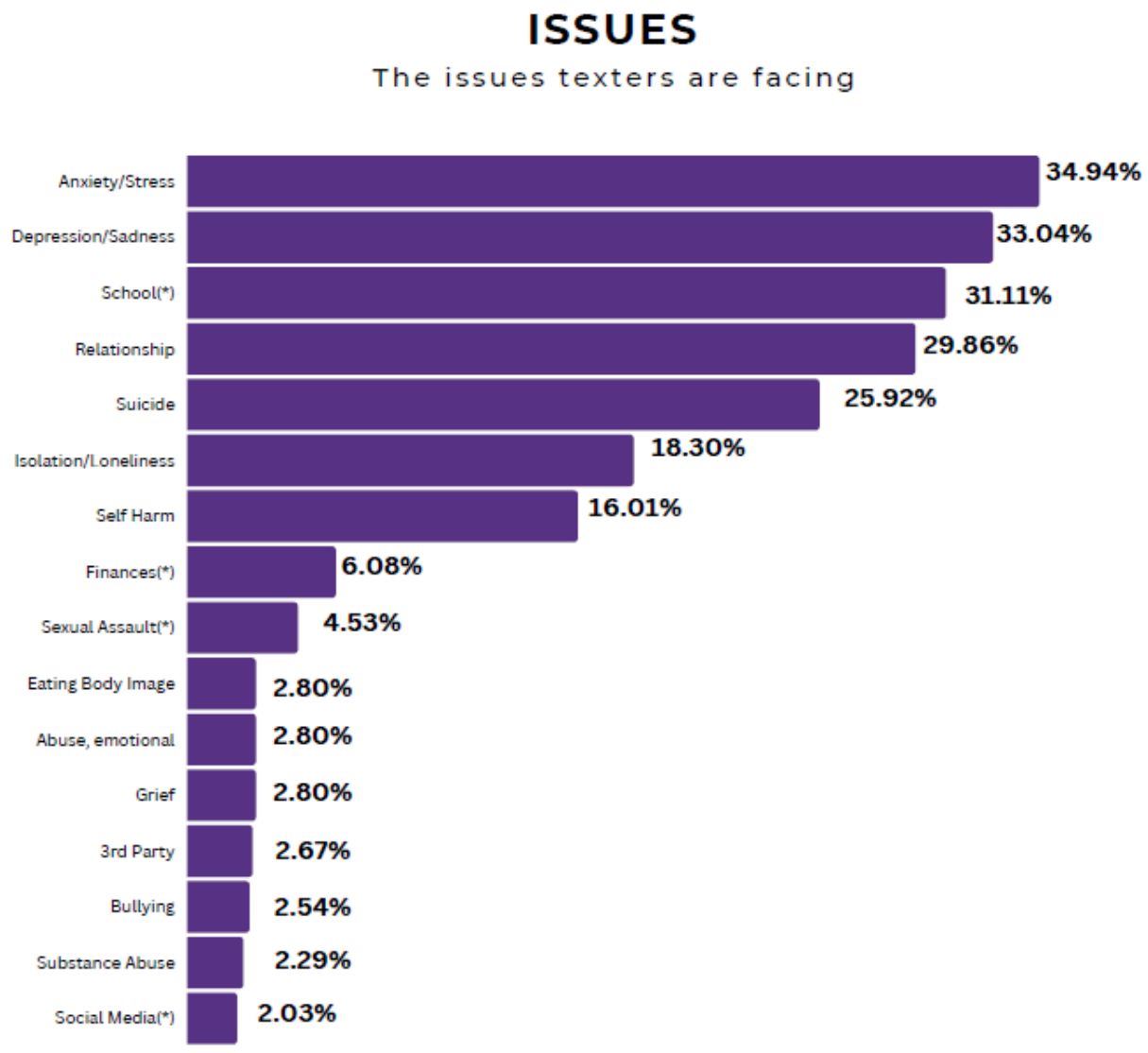


TIME OF DAY



Texters' Top Issues

The content of text conversations is another data point collected for HOPELINE. This chart shows the top issues that texters talked about during the period of July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023. An asterisk (*) means that the issue was inferred from the content of the text message. In addition to these specific issues, it should be noted that 56% of texters shared something with a crisis counselor that they had never shared with anyone else before.



Expenditures

This final section of the report contains information on CSA's expenditures using the grant funds for the period of July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023. During this period, CSA used grant funds in the amount of $110,000 for the following activities:

- Maintain the "HOPELINE" keyword contract with CTL ($4,000)
- Support general HOPELINE operations, including office space, supplies, bookkeeping services, and liability insurance required by CTL ($7,849)
- Maintain technology that enables access to the CTL premium dashboard data system, which contains the HOPELINE data ($4,936)
- Employ two part-time staff, equaling one full-time equivalent position ($93,215 salary and fringe), to perform the following duties for HOPELINE:
    - Fulfill requests for data reports
    - Field questions regarding the data
    - Examine the data to gauge activity and possible trends
    - Collect information on how data is being utilized and for what purposes
    - Work within Wisconsin to educate community partners on the importance of using the "HOPELINE" keyword to ensure that data for the state is as complete as possible
    - Work with CTL national, as well as with other state CTL keyword holders, to help ensure the accuracy and integrity of HOPELINE data
    - Continue to ensure that the data portal on the CSA website is accessible