

STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND SCHOOL STAFF FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

COMMON QUESTIONS FROM STUDENTS

I'm not 18 yet. If I tell the counselor I have thoughts of suicide, will they contact my parents?

Expressing thoughts of self-harm or suicide will not lead to a connection with a person's parents. If someone is expressing a desire to harm themselves or others, is unable to engage in the safety planning process, and is struggling to identify tangible social support, it may be necessary for a 988 counselor to encourage a more immediate connection to the person's parent or guardian during the conversation.

Will a counselor call the police if I share something like having self-harmed?

988 counselors are trained to contact law enforcement only in rare situations when there is concern someone is in great danger. Outside intervention from law enforcement or emergency medical services (like an ambulance) is necessary in less than 1% of all contacts in Wisconsin, and only when someone's life is in danger and all other means are deemed inappropriate or ineffective.

COMMON QUESTIONS FROM PARENTS

Why would my child ever contact a hotline like 988?

Youth often feel overlooked, not taken seriously, or are told they are exaggerating. It is important to allow them to share their stories, validate their feelings, and listen with the intent to understand the problem rather than minimizing it or focusing on fixing it. It can be helpful to encourage them to identify their thoughts, feelings, and actions as they are often not empowered to do so. 988 counselors aim to collaborate with youth to support them in looking for realistic ways to work through or cope with their situation, which can empower them to feel hopeful and more in control.

I'm worried about my child and/or their friend. Can I contact 988 on their behalf or with them?

Yes. 988 regularly receives calls, texts, and chats from people who are not themselves in crisis but want to know how to support someone who is. The counselor will be able to offer resources and information for the family member or friend who is experiencing crisis and will ensure the person who is calling has whatever resources or support they may need themselves as a support person.

COMMON QUESTIONS FROM SCHOOL STAFF

If a student wants me to contact 988 with them, is that okay?

Yes. Many people call, text, or chat with someone in their life who is struggling.

Is 988 connected to our local county crisis program?

No. Although 988 is separate from county crisis programs, a 988 counselor can connect you with your local county crisis program, if appropriate.

What can 988 offer that is different than the school counselors?

988 offers the opportunity to remain anonymous and talk with a counselor that is not connected with their school. 988 counselors receive specialized training in mental health and substance use concerns specific to youth. Counselors are able to identify and provide resources appropriate for any age group, including youth having suicidal thoughts. 988 counselors can also provide local resources to anyone in Wisconsin.



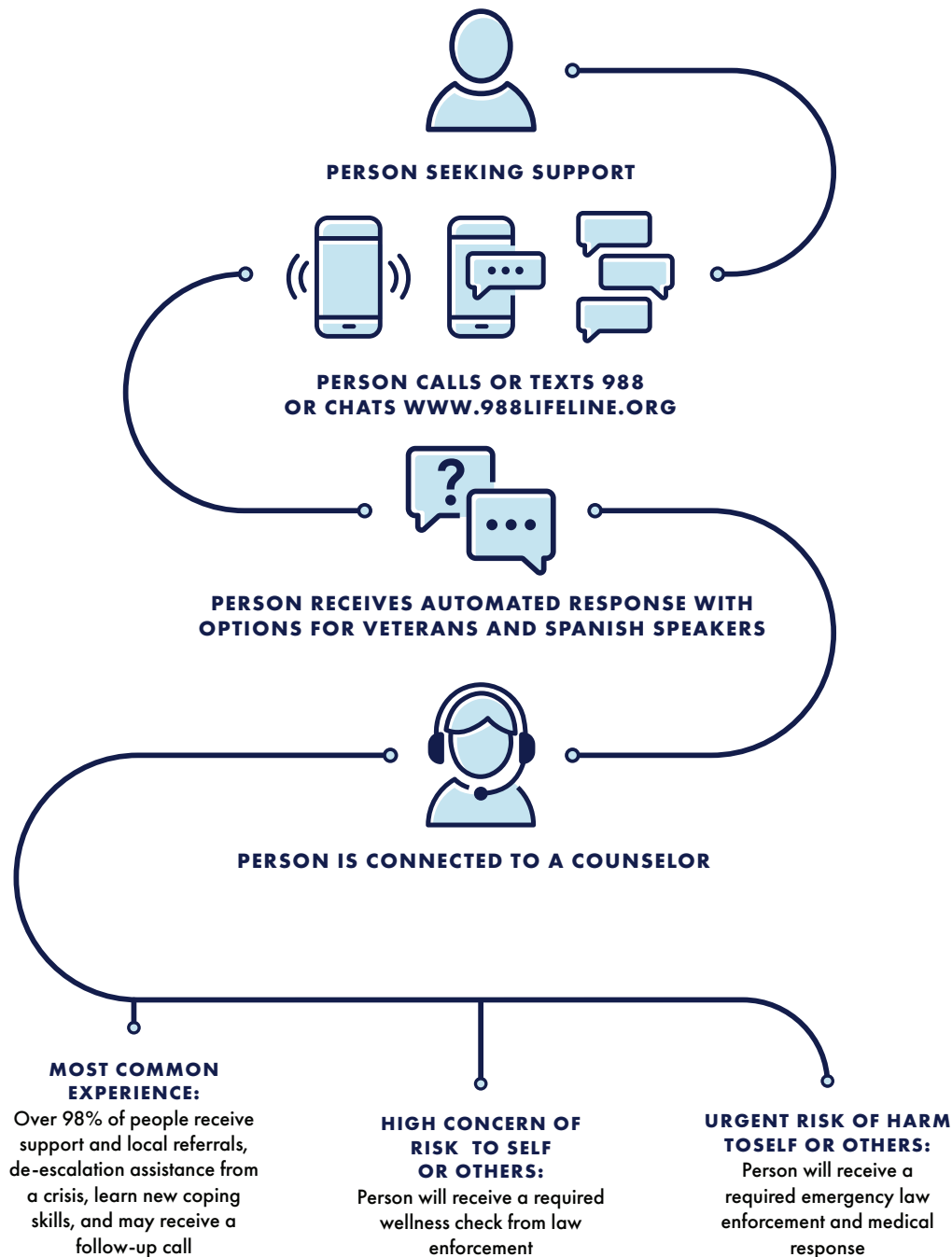


988 | SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

24/7 CALL, TEXT, CHAT



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU CONTACT 988?



WHEN TO CALL 911

If you or someone you know is in imminent danger, **call 911**, not 988.

