

THE CENTENNIAL BRIEFING

CHEYENNE · ELBERT · KIT CARSON · LINCOLN · LOGAN · MORGAN · PHILLIPS · SEDGWICK · WASHINGTON · YUMA

Our mission is to achieve excellence in the provision of behavioral health services that lead to optimal health and well being

JOURNEY CORNER

The journey department would like to welcome Laura Otter on board as the new Youth/Family Case Manager. Laura will be a great asset to our team and work specifically with our young clients and their families.

The following is the menu for this week.

MENU

WEEK OF June 20 th - 24 th	
MONDAY	Granny's Shells with Garlic Bread
TUESDAY	TACO BAR!!!!
WEDNESDAY	Sandwiches, cookies, chips, pickles
THURSDAY	Mexi Hot Dogs with Fries
FRIDAY	Waffles with sausage links

CELEBRATING JUNETEENTH

Juneteenth is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States. From its Galveston, Texas origin in 1865, the observance of June 19th as the African American Emancipation Day has spread across the United States and beyond.

To learn more about this Federal Holiday visit
www.juneteenth.com.

Frequently Asked Questions: 988 & Crisis Response Services

This FAQ is designed to help answer common questions received from legislators and other decision makers when advocating for adoption of 988 legislation, and in particular when advocating for fee legislation or state budget funding for the 988-crisis response system.

For general information on the Lifeline's future transition to 988, please consult the following webpages:

- [AFSP: Funding for 988 and Crisis Response](#)
- [Vibrant and 988](#)

1. Is federal funding provided, and if so, why is state funding necessary?

While the Lifeline is a national program, federal funding goes toward managing call routing, best practice standards, public messaging, capacity building opportunities, and technical assistance for the nationwide network. Local crisis centers answering the calls are reliant on funding from state and local contributions to operate. Currently, the only regular federal funding that goes to local Lifeline centers is a small annual transfer request of \$1,500 to \$2,000. In 2020, the Lifeline received over 1.6 million calls, chats, and texts. Full implementation of 988 will result in even higher call volume, requiring more trained personnel to answer the phones, mental health professionals to do the triaging and assessment, and additional information systems, hardware, enablement, and maintenance costs and local investment to meet demand more than ever to ensure capacity to respond to a steadily increasing call volume and as state residents continue to face stressors during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The **National Suicide Hotline Designation Act of 2020** included language allowing each state to pass their own legislation funding 988 and thus local state crisis call centers the same way as 911, through monthly telecom customer service fees. It is critical that appropriate funding for the Lifeline network, individual crisis centers, and the crisis centers be allocated to serve more people in crisis. In 2015, fees for 911 generated \$2.4 billion to support that service; similar investment must be made for mental health and suicidal crisis.

2. What will happen if legislation is not passed before 988 goes into effect in July 2022?

The 988 dialing code will become nationally available in July 2022. State planning efforts should be well underway by now, including plans to address funding for the 988 crisis response system, as the transition has already begun with several states on site providers currently connecting customers to the Lifeline through 988. The week that we now have to support the implementation of 988 for the Lifeline's network of local crisis call centers, and strengthen state crisis capacity will end this new system up for success.

Passage of state 988 legislation will effectively establish the 988 crisis response system for individual reporting suicidal distress or a mental health crisis by supporting the crisis call centers to use state and mobile crisis networks to directly respond to individuals in need.

Continued...



3. Is the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline effective?

Since launching in 2005, the Lifeline call volume has increased 176% annually. Call centers in the Lifeline network down hundreds of thousands of calls from 911 every year and resolve 91% of calls without requiring emergency services. Evaluations and caller feedback show that Lifeline experiences are effective in reducing caller distress and suicidality and helping tens of thousands of people get through crises safely.

Callers experiencing a suicide or mental health crisis will soon be able to call 988, instead of 911, to receive appropriate care and avoid unnecessary law enforcement involvement. While this law enforcement time and resources could then be spent responding to crimes and other emergencies rather than people in emotional distress.

4. What happens if local call centers are unable to answer a caller from a state? Why is it important that 988 calls are answered in-state?

When a state call center is unable to answer calls to the Lifeline, callers get re-routed to other centers out-of-state and into the Lifeline's national backup network. Low in-state answer rates put a strain on the backup network. When a caller is routed to the backup network, callers in crisis wait longer to be connected to a counselor and receive fewer follow-up to effective local care, making the use of in-state crisis centers an approved to a nationalized national help center critical.

In-state crisis centers connect callers to local counselors who are familiar with the community and better equipped to provide culturally competent support and referrals to local community resources and other following follow-up care. 988 is not only about answering calls. It's also about providing emotional support to people in crisis during the moments they most need it, which can include making appropriate and accessible referrals, or talking to mobile crisis teams and crisis stabilization programs that connect people to a continuum of care.

5. What are the state 988 components funded and supported by the legislation? What does an ideal state-wide crisis services system look like?

To more effectively build on the promise of 988, states lawmakers must take steps now to develop and fund an effective crisis response infrastructure that includes the key components: (1) Someone to answer the call this requires funding for 24/7 call centers adequately staffed by specially trained individuals to respond to a range of mental health and suicidal crises; (2) Someone to come help this requires funding mobile crisis teams that can be dispatched to the scene and are equipped to effectively assist people in crisis; (3) Someone to help in case this requires funding for crisis stabilization services to provide short-term observation as well as connection to follow-up care.

An ideal system should also include public education and awareness campaigns that promote the new 988 number and the availability of crisis services and that encourage and coordinate seeking help for suicide and mental health crises. Robust administration and oversight are also needed, as well as regular reporting of 988 services provided and population served. This will facilitate greater understanding of the 988 crisis care continuum and support a quality, standardized service for callers in need.

Mobile crisis response is critical for the implementation of 988 on the state level. States need the capacity to provide mental health crisis response when individuals call 988 need to go to new services. This responsibility currently falls upon emergency responders, most commonly law enforcement officers who are often not trained in managing a mental health crisis.

6. Why is the 988 system an improvement over the current status quo?

According to a 2019 report by the Treatment Advocacy Center to 2017 an average of 10% of law enforcement agencies' total budgets and 20% of total law enforcement staff time was spent responding to and transporting persons with mental illness. Fully implemented, 988 will reduce avoidable emergency department or hospital admissions for people in crisis and avoid traumatic engagements with the criminal justice system.

PRIDE EVENT IN STERLING

Some of our Centennial employees attended the first ever PRIDE event in Sterling this last weekend.



DIVERSITY WEEKLY

Better allyship starts here. Each week, Karen Catlin shares 5 simple actions to create a more inclusive workplace.

In today's newsletter, I'm focusing on Michelle MiJung Kim's fantastic book, *The Wake Up: Closing the Gap Between Good Intentions and Real Change*. I'm a fan of Kim, and long-time subscribers know I quote her guidance frequently. I'm excited to share more of her wisdom with you today. Each of the five items below includes direct quotes from the book, along with an action for better allies. —Karen

1 Go beyond the good/bad binary identity

In Chapter 1 of *The Wake Up* (When "Good People" Cause Harm), Kim wrote, "Many of us desire to be good people and to be *perceived* as being good by others." This mindset can cause us to think, "if we are not good, then that must mean we are bad ... and we do everything in our power to not cross over to the 'bad' list."

As Kim pointed out, "This binary narrative hinders us from separating our actions from our identities, making it incredibly difficult to receive any critical feedback about our impacts, feedback that could in turn make our actions better aligned with our desire to do good."

Allies, let's go beyond this good/bad binary. Instead of asking, "Am I a good person?" ask yourself, "Do my actions have a good impact?"

Then take it to the next step. Remember that you don't get to define *good*. A good action is defined by the people whom the action seeks to benefit.

2 Map out your hidden stories

As Kim wrote in Chapter 3 (Wake Up to Your Hidden Stories), "We often repeat the phrase *check your privilege*, but we also need to understand and remind ourselves of the deeper why." She implores us to wake up to our hidden stories. The times when we benefited from power, access, and resources that are out of reach for many marginalized people, or when we unwittingly weaponized them in ways that harmed marginalized people.

However, these stories can make us uncomfortable. "Waking up to them threatens the widely held and proselytized belief that our society is a meritocracy in which people are given equal opportunities to succeed, and everyone's success is determined solely by their merit and hard work." Kim went on to explain, "sometimes we may want them to remain hidden because of our own fear, shame, guilt, and insecurities."

Yet, Kim says, "we have an obligation to understand our privileges because we have a responsibility to understand the repercussions of our ignorance; [as well as] the opportunities we have that come from having particular keys to unlock certain doors."

Allies, here's just one question to start mapping out your hidden stories. How have you benefited from access to knowledge, spaces, resources, and networks?

Armed with your stories, you can then start kicking open the doors gating valuable information and resources that others don't have access to.

3 If you weren't the first, be the "second courageous"

In Chapter 10 (Disrupt the Pattern), Kim lays out this common scenario: "You're in a meeting, and someone makes a racist or sexist joke or uses offensive terminology. A courageous soul intervenes, using the tactics they learned in a bystander training. Everyone shifts in their seats; the air thickens with an awkward tension." Kim explains the most likely response: "'Oh, stop being so sensitive. It's just a joke,' or 'Come on, lighten up,' followed by a few chuckles in the room."

Kim then explained, "The moment will quickly pass, and the group will move on to a different topic, with everyone desperately wanting to forget the momentary discomfort. ... That quick dismissal of the first courageous will signal to the rest of the people in the room to abandon future attempts to shake the status quo." Everyone leaves the meeting reminding themselves to keep quiet.

That's not all. As Kim wrote, "Sideliners who watch the first courageous without also jumping into the arena have an irritating habit of engaging in what I call *delayed camaraderie*." Kim went on to explain how they might reach out afterwards with, "Hey, what you did in the meeting was really brave and inspiring!" Or, "I totally agree with what you said back there."

Allies, instead of being a sideliner to the first courageous, be the second courageous who doubles down on the intervention *in* the moment, when your support will have the greatest impact. Kim shared how a simple, "Hey, I didn't find it funny either," will validate the original intervention and send a powerful signal that the behavior isn't welcome.

And as Kim pointed out, "maybe next time, someone else will try on the role of the first courageous, knowing they can count on the support of others."

4 Reflect on what you're willing to give up to practice your values

In Chapter 11 (Know What You're Willing to Give Up), Kim posed a powerful question: "Instead of asking, 'What can I do to achieve equity and justice?' what if we asked, 'What am I willing to give up?'"

Kim explained "These trade-offs can come in a variety of forms: they can be measurable like money ('Am I willing to pay more money to purchase the same product from a small local business instead of big corporations?') or time ('Am I willing to spend my time volunteering on a Saturday?')." She added that they can also be "immeasurable, like reputation ('Am I willing to risk my professional reputation or social standing by calling out my boss?') power ('Am I willing to give up my decision-making power or my seat at the table to make room for marginalized people?'), ego or pride ('Am I willing to admit I was wrong or be called out publicly?')." Kim also addressed the issue of personal comfort: "('Am I willing to interrupt harmful jokes in a social setting?')."

Kim wrapped up the chapter with, "Purposeful and deliberate choice making is a lifelong practice that enables us to become closer to who we say we want to be every day."

Allies, what are you willing to give up to practice your values?

5 Avoid glorifying resilience

While I could have easily shared about a dozen or so more everyday actions for allies from *The Wake Up*, I decided to focus on this advice from Chapter 12 (Hold Trauma With Care):

"Though well-intentioned, statements like 'You're so strong!' or 'I could never be like you!' can reduce trauma to an individual experience and place responsibility for overcoming it solely on the individual, thereby raising expectations for the marginalized and absolving the rest of us and systems from responsibility."

Kim then implored us to think differently. She wrote, "Instead, let's get in the habit of asking ourselves: 'What can I/we do so that marginalized people do not have to continuously be resilient?' 'What can I/we contribute to aid in others' healing?'" She encouraged us to, "Acknowledge the unfair burden of overcoming inequity-induced traumas that is placed on marginalized people. Consider statements such as, 'I am really sorry you had to experience that.' 'That must have been incredibly challenging. Is there anything I can do to support you?'"

Allies, you know what to do.