

Teen Lifeline delivers hope and help for Arizona youth

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Teen Lifeline, a 2022 grant award recipient from the Blue Cross® Blue Shield® of Arizona Foundation for Community & Health Advancement, delivers hope and help to Arizona youth with suicide prevention resources and a teen-to-teen hotline.

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September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. Since 2019, it has also been designated Teen Suicide Prevention Awareness Month in Arizona. According to the Arizona Department of Health Services, between 2010 and 2020 suicide was the second leading cause of death for Arizonans ages 10–19.

Youth suicide disproportionately affects those living in Arizona's rural counties. And the incidence of suicidal behavior is even higher for youth in other groups, including those in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, LGBTQ+ youth, American Indian and Alaska Natives, and military service members.

One in 5 teens reports thoughts of suicide*

With a mission to prevent teen suicide through enhancing resiliency and fostering supportive communities, Teen Lifeline has provided youth development and suicide prevention education services to Arizona teens for 35 years. Earlier this year, Teen Lifeline became one of the first organizations to receive mental health grant funding from the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona Foundation for

Community & Health Advancement. As part of its flagship focus on mental health, the Foundation is investing \$5 million over three years—including \$2 million in 2022 alone—in mental health programs and applied research.

A connection to hope

In a time of crisis, know what to do, and where to get help—for your patients and others, even for yourself. Save these contacts in your phone and share them to build awareness:

988 – Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

602-248-8336 (TEEN) – Teen Lifeline

1-800-248-8336 (TEEN) – Teen Lifeline (outside Maricopa County)

Teen Lifeline’s grant will provide training, consultation, and ongoing support to 7,047 students at 27 schools in four Arizona counties (Maricopa, Pinal, Pima, and Yuma), helping teachers to take action when they identify a student at risk for suicide. It will also increase student help-seeking behavior on campuses.

At the heart of Teen Lifeline’s efforts is the teen-to-teen crisis hotline—the only one of its kind in Arizona. In 2021, peer counselors answered over 42,000 calls and texts. Teen Lifeline answers phone calls 24/7/365 at 602-248-8336 (TEEN) or 1-800-248-8336 (TEEN) outside of Maricopa County. It also responds to texts from noon to 9 p.m. on weekdays and from 3 to 9 p.m. on weekends.

The organization works with schools, communities, families, and teens to ensure that everyone in a teen’s life is suicide aware, and to spread the message that hope and help are just a call or text away. Visit the [Teen Lifeline website](#) to learn more about this organization, find resources, and read success stories.

Read more about the Foundation and its grantees at azbluefoundation.org and be sure to sign up to receive updates on Foundation activities, including grant cycles.

For additional resources, visit [Teen Lifeline](#), [NAMI: National Alliance on Mental Illness](#), or [SAMHSA: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#).

*TeenLifeline.org

BCBSAZ member ID cards are available for download via eligibility and benefits search results.