



DEPARTMENT OF
**PUBLIC HEALTH &
HUMAN SERVICES**

**988 Stakeholder Coalition
Meeting, October 7, 2025**

Agenda

- Introductions (In the chat)
- Montana 988 Update and Data Overview (John Tabb, Project Director and Amanda Knick, Project Evaluator)
- Call center updates (Voices of Hope, Fort Peck Tribes, Help Center, WMMHC)
- MT988 Update (Bruce Barnhart, MSU Art Department)
- Community Showcase – Blackfeet Glacier County Crisis Coalition
- Q&A



Montana Crisis Call Centers

Voices of Hope

Director, Jackie Gittins



988
Local Number
211

Help Center 211

Director, Christina Powell



988
Local Number
211

Western Montana Mental Health Center (soon to be AWARE)

Director, Aubrey Reed

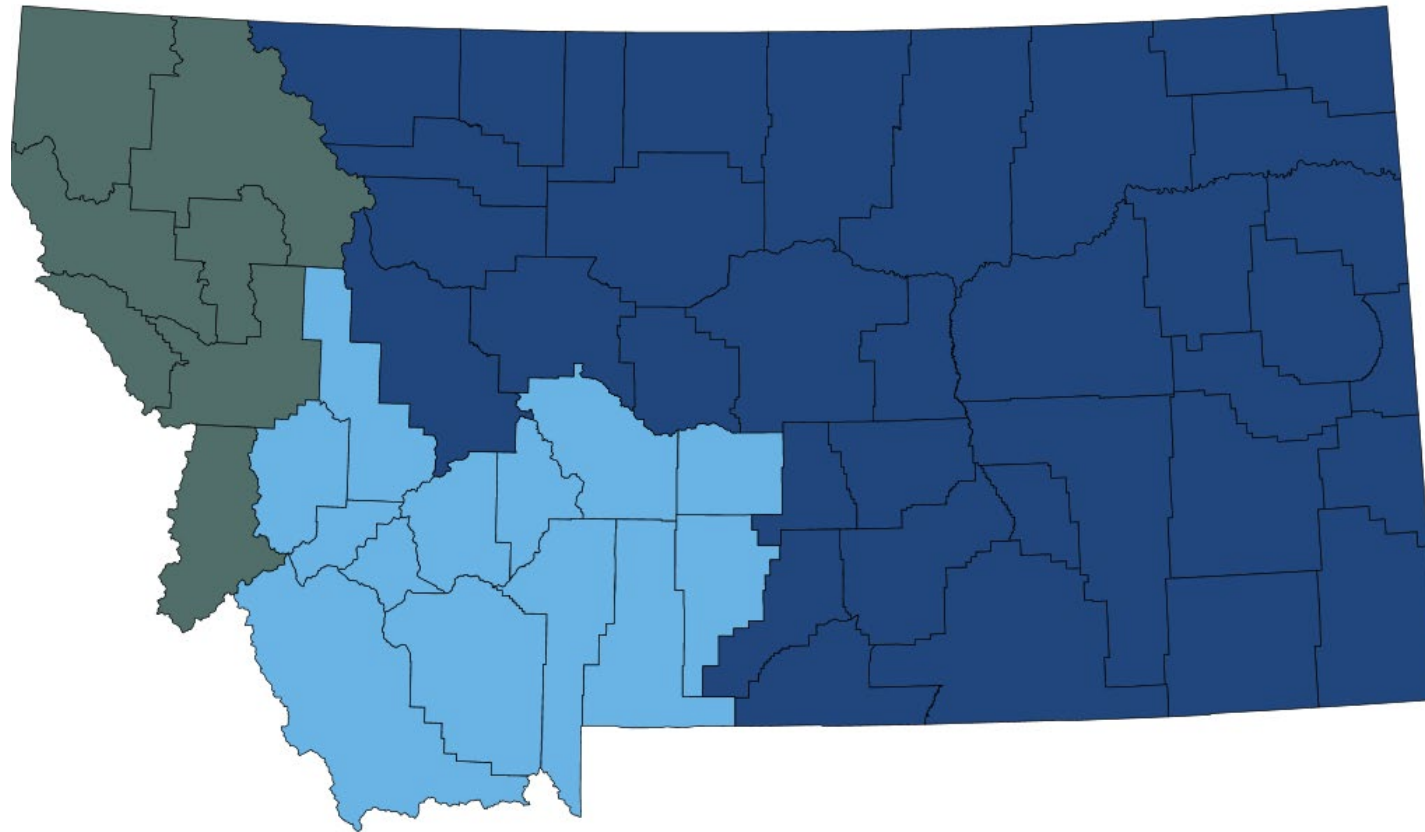


988



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988 Coverage by Call Center



Fort Peck Tribes Crisis Call Center

Director, Phoebe Blount

- A local suicide crisis line on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation, which operates from Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 7:00 am, and on weekends when staff is available.
- The only operational crisis call center on an American Indian Reservation; funded through a SAMHSA 988 Tribal Grant.
- Offers case management services, postvention services and takes referrals from law enforcement, child protection, social services, hospitals, clinics, the Tribal Court and school-based clinics.
- Partnered with Voices of Hope in Great Falls and will be providing them with a Fort Peck resource directory and a training manual on the unique culture and history of the Fort Peck Assiniboiné and Sioux tribes.
- Goal is to become a satellite office of Voices of Hope 988.



**FOR HELP,
call the crisis
hotline **988** or
406-653-2000**

Federal and State 988 Funding

- State General Funds - \$200,000 (Renewed annually.)
- Mental Health Block Grant - \$500,000 (Through 2026)
- SAMHSA 988 Capacity Improvement Grant - \$1,018,223 (Annual incremental through 2026)
- Total yearly reduction in Federal funding of \$550,000 starting in 2026



Get to know the call services in your area

- For most of the state, 988 and 211 are managed by one of our call centers.
- These centers (Voices of Hope and Help Center) delegate management of 211 to the United Way in Billings, Helena and Missoula.
- 911 Public Service Answering Points (PSAP) are different in every community, but it would be helpful to open a dialogue with them about your crisis system.



Help is three numbers away.

211

NON-EMERGENCIES

Food
Housing
Utility Assistance
Healthcare Services
Transportation
Legal Services
Counseling

988

SUICIDE AND CRISIS

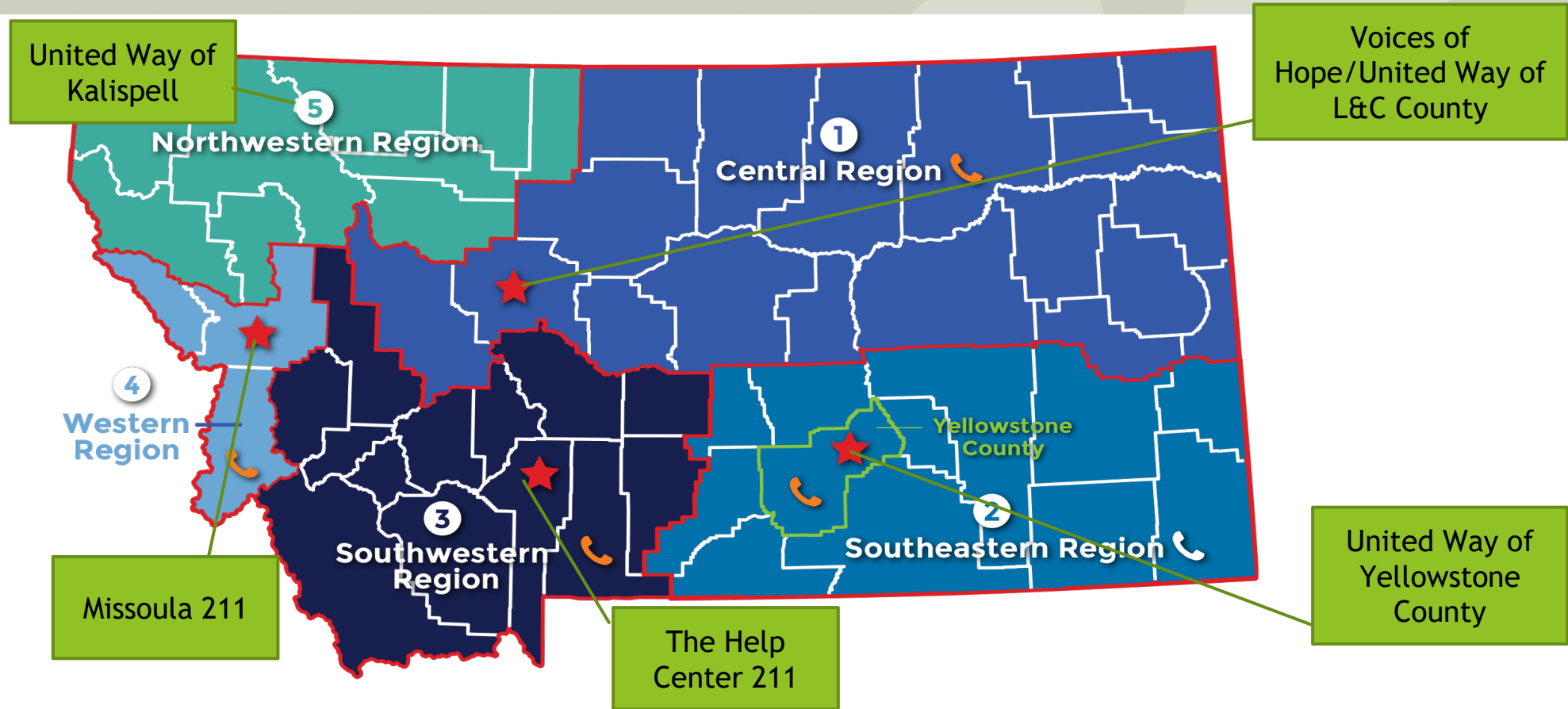
Thoughts of Suicide
Mental Health Crisis
Substance Abuse Crisis
Emotional Distress
Veteran Crisis

911

EMERGENCIES

Medical
Fire
Abduction
Crime
Domestic Violence
Impaired Driving
Suspicious Activities

211 Regions



Updating/Maintaining 211

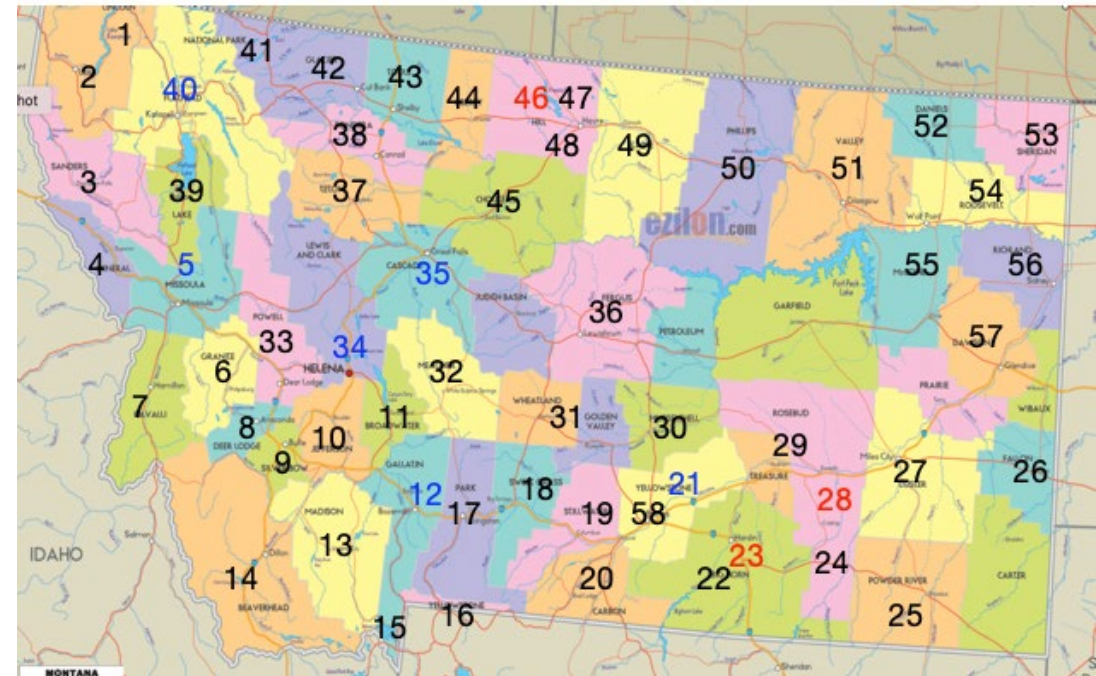
- Call centers, or United Way 211 programs can walk you through updating the resource list for your area.
- Review what currently exists for your area and ensure that it is appropriate for your community. For example, is the resource listed a statewide resource, like Shodair Children's Hospital, but it appears local when someone finds it in a search?
- Think of resources in your community that might meet the needs of an at-risk population, but that might not have thought of being listed in 211. An example might be an equine therapy program, or a food pantry. Help them get added.
- We need **211 champions** at the county/tribal level, constantly update your community's listings so that resources are always active and not expired.



911-988 Interoperability

- 3 call centers have to work with 57 911 jurisdictions.
- A highly complex network of dispatch procedures and list of available responders.
- Highly diverse sets of equipment: large metros tend to have the latest and rural communities less so.
- High level of liability risk associated with warm hand-off.
- DPHHS presented a vision of 911-988 interoperability to the State 911 Council in 2024.
- Call centers commissioned an interoperability analysis for every PSAP, completed in 2025.
- A number of new MOUs have been generated as a result, with more to follow.

Montana 911 Jurisdictions



When would 988 be useful to first responders and emergency rooms?



When an individual has come to the ER, experiencing a suicidal or mental health crisis, and has to wait to see a provider.

When first responders encounter a person in suicidal or mental health crisis and no mobile mental health crisis assets are available.



Eighty Percent of 988 callers are stabilized on the phone with no further intervention necessary



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988 Marketing

- Currently materials designed by MT988 are produced and distributed by DPHHS.
- Thanks to the the recent Behavioral Health Services for Future Generations (BHSFG) commission process, \$500,000 annually has been allocated out the \$300 million provided by HB 872 for 988 marketing.
- We are currently going through the RFP planning process to find a marketing firm to do the work on a much larger scale than what has been possible within the department.



[illegible][illegible]

Grassroots Promotion Efforts

- A number of communities and local artists have collaborated to create installations that promote 988 around the state.
- We encourage this and would like to highlight such activities in the media and among our stakeholders.



Belgrade artist, Jim Dolan's phone booth project, with installations along the Highline.

State Website

MT988 Website

- ▶ Links to national 988 pages.
- ▶ 988 Marketing materials
- ▶ Updated presentations from coalition updates and local presentations.

[Montana 988 \(mt.gov\)](https://mt.gov)

MONTANA DPHHS

[ABOUT](#) | [NEWS AND EVENTS](#) | [CONTACT](#)

SEARCH DPHHS

[Suicide Prevention](#) / Montana 988

MT988

Montana's Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Crisis Lifeline

If you or someone you know is in crisis, please call 988 to be connected to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline or 911 if a person is in immediate danger.

Starting on July 16, 2022, the current ten-digit Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-TALK) will change over to 988. Much more

Suicide Prevention

- [Additional Information and Resources](#)
- [Suicide Prevention Report for Committee](#)
- [Suicide Prevention Interactive Toolkit](#)
- [Crisis Action School Toolkit on Suicide](#)

Montana 988

- [Crisis Systems Information and Resources](#)
- [988 Launch Event, July 12, 2022](#)



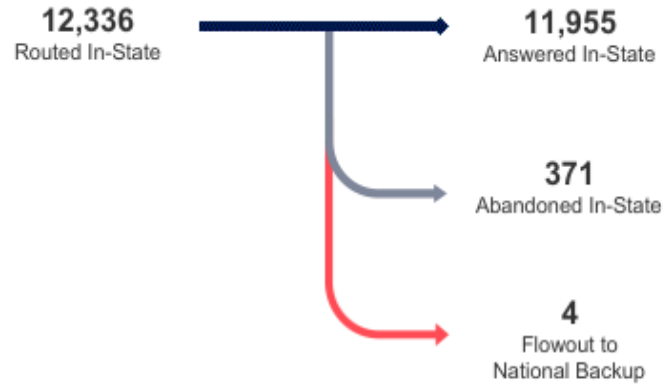
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What you can do

- Establish close, working relationships between crisis management agencies and the call center servicing your county, or tribal community.
- Ensure that all crisis resources for your county or tribal community are reviewed and updated in the 211 system, maintained by your call center, or a local United Way that maintains it in your area.
- Push for Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) between call centers and community-based crisis services providers: Mobile crisis response teams, crisis stabilization facilities, emergency departments, 911 Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs)
- Develop local messaging campaigns using National and State guidance and branding, including school art projects, local social, TV, radio and print media.
- Some other states have pursued legislative solutions for sustainable funding streams. Where appropriate, pursue such initiatives at your communities.



Understanding In-State Call Flow



Answer rate

96.9%

Average speed of answer (ASA)

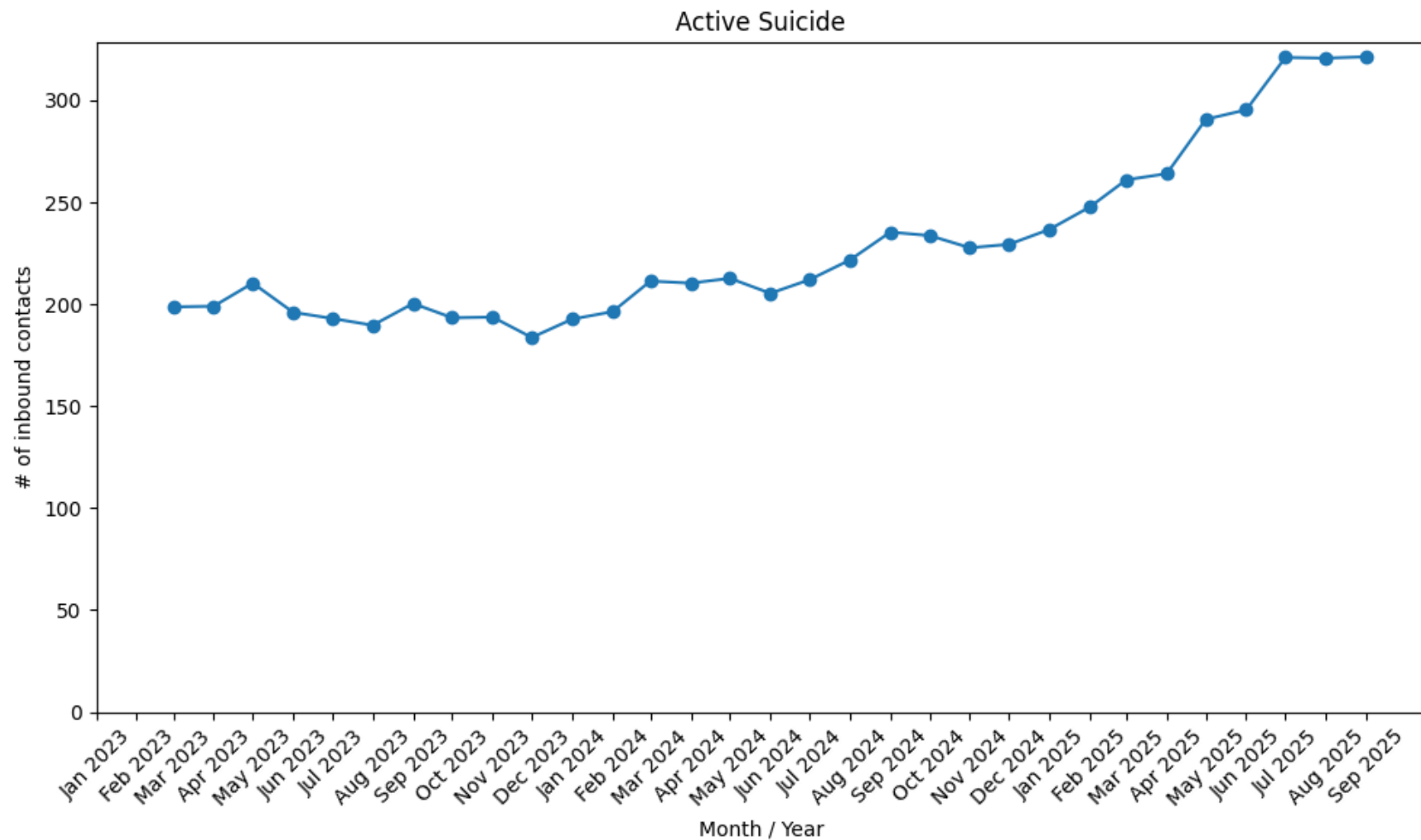
9.8 seconds

Talk time

12.7 minutes

SERVICE
METRICS

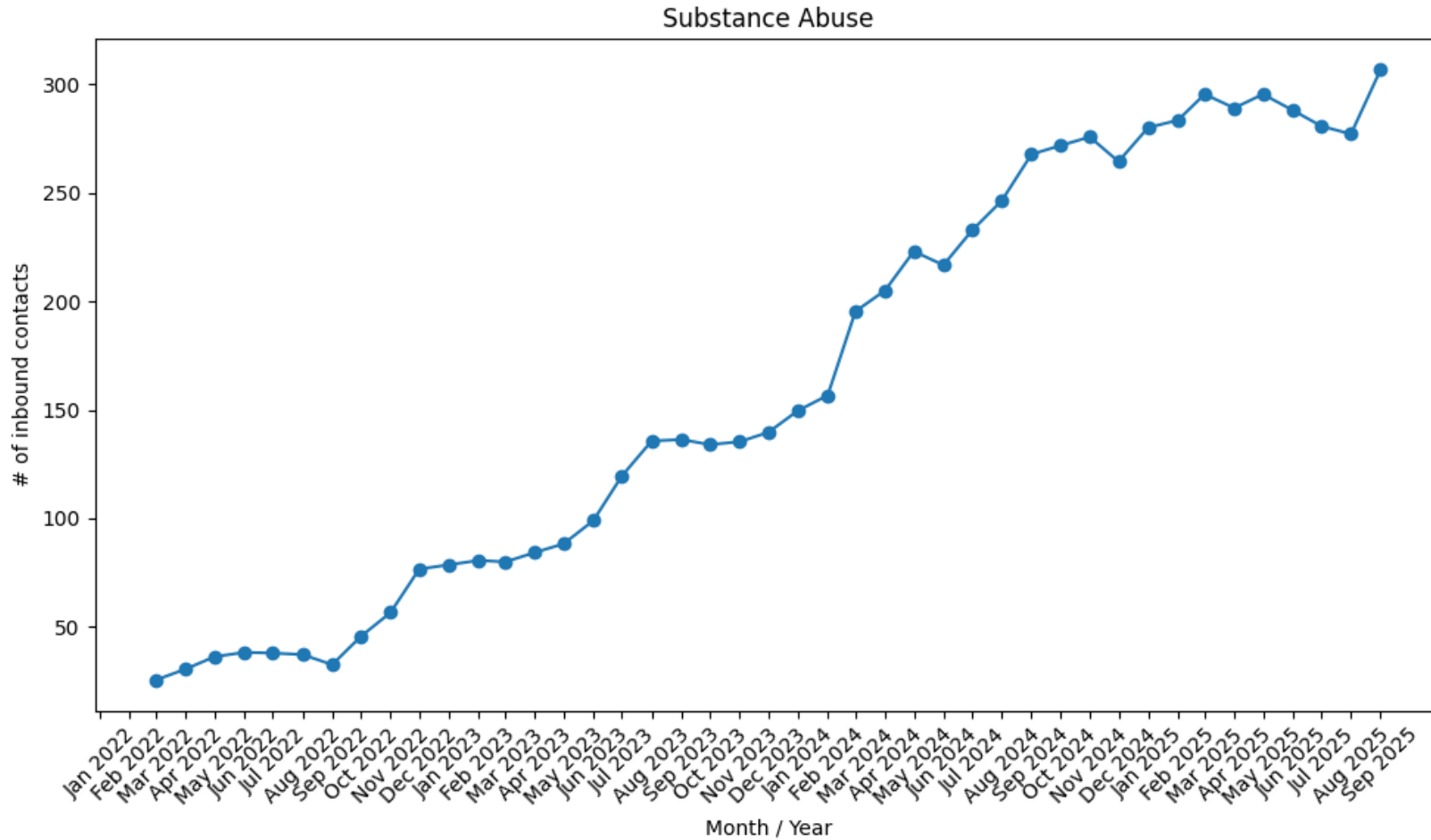
988 CALLS
JAN-SEP 2025



ACTIVE SUICIDE CALLS

43% INCREASE

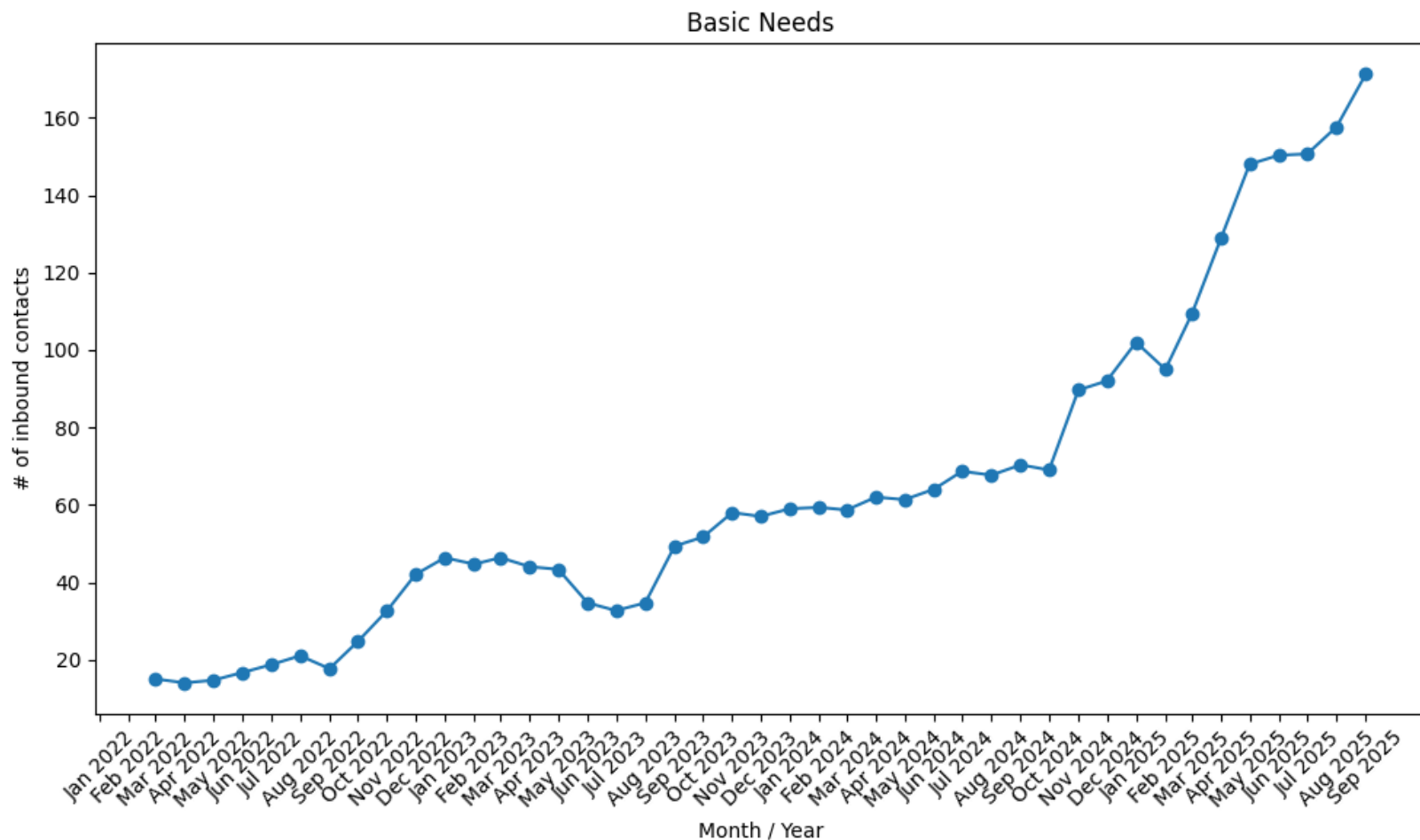
Mental health crisis calls only. Comparing the monthly average from Jan 2022 to December 2024 to the monthly average from Jan 2025 to Sep 2025



SUBSTANCE ABUSE/ ADDICTIONS

116% INCREASE

Mental health crisis calls only. Comparing the monthly average from Jan 2022 to December 2024 to the monthly average from Jan 2025 to Sep 2025

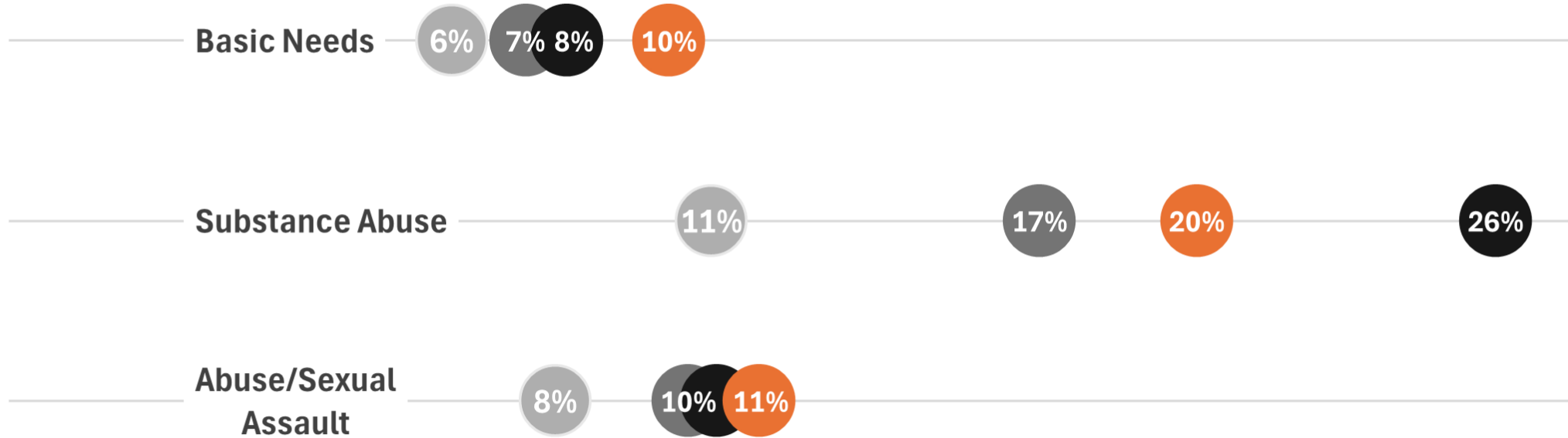


BASIC NEEDS

207% INCREASE

Mental health crisis calls only.
Comparing the monthly average from Jan 2022 to December 2024 to the monthly average from Jan 2025 to Sep 2025

The percentage of mental health crisis calls with coexisting issues increased from 2022 to 2025. The largest increase was for substance abuse.



87% resolved over the phone

2% called 911/LE

1% went to ER

0.5% dispatched CRT/MCT

0.1% went to crisis stabilization

DISPOSITIONS ON
MENTAL HEALTH
CRISIS CALLS

JAN-SEP 2025

NEW AND UPCOMING

- Montana Behavioral Health Crisis Data Dashboard
- Quarterly County Crisis Reports
 - Enhanced definitions/explanations
 - More relevant metrics
- Crisis Call Center Dashboard
 - Trends in presenting issues
 - Demographics
- What would be helpful to you? What else would you like to see?

QUESTIONS

Amanda Knick

amanda@jgresearch.org

Call Center Updates

- **Voices of Hope**
- **Fort Peck Tribes**
- **The Help Center**
- **WMMHC**



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Calls: 1,616

205 backup 988 calls from Missoula 988 as they transition.

Reservations:

Blackfoot – 14

Fort Peck – 21

Rocky Boy – 23

We have seen an increase as they continue to market 988; awareness is key

Marketing/Awareness:

- General Awareness Ads ran through Townsquare Media (7-10 times daily)
- Suicide Awareness month –
 - ✓ Golf for Hope Awareness/Fundraising Event held on September 6
 - Awareness ads broadcast all month long thru Townsquare Media
- ✓ 988 Day September 8
 - Media Campaign recognizing the day (Townsquare Media)
 - Webpage
 - Social Media

Collaborations:

- Continue to work with Fort Peck tribe to improve their crisis line.
- Attended a workshop with Many Rivers and AWARE to the Rural CCBHC Academy that is designed to focus on sharing best practices and implementing effective mental health services.
- Working with the Blackfoot Tribe to improve crisis services in there area – have been asked to present in late October.
- Work with Third Signal to develop formal MOU's with 911.

Voices of Hope 988 and 911 MOU'S



Great Falls 988 VOH	Status
1. Blackfeet 911	Done
2. Glacier Co 911	Close to being signed
3. Lewis & Clark Co 911	Done
4. Cascade Co 911	Done
5. Toole Co 911	Done
6. Liberty Co 911	Were afraid of 988 for a while but now ok; need more meetings
7. Blaine Co 911	Done
8. Phillips Co 911	Done
9. Valley Co 911	Done
10. Roosevelt Co 911	Jeff is close to having it signed
11. Sheridan Co 911	Done
12. Daniels Co 911	Chatted with Sheriff; I had been using an old email
13. Richland Co 911	Sheriff John is still working on it
14. McCone Co 911	Done

15. Southeast MT 911	Lynn is OK with 988 and close to signing the MOU
16. Big Horn Co 911	Yet to have our discussions
17. Powder River Co 911	Dennetta is on board and working on the MOU
18. Northern Cheyenne 911	Monica is new to the position and a bit swamped
19. Rosebud Co 911	Done
20. Carbon Co 911	Sheriff Josh missed our zoom; trying to reschedule
21. Stillwater Co 911	David is on it and I hope to get the MOU soon.
22. Musselshell Co 911	Scheduling with Cheryl soon
23. Golden Valley Co 911	Still trying to get the initial meeting scheduled
24. Central MT 911	Carmen is somewhat new but very short and working on the MOU
25. Choteau Co 911	Done
26. Pondera Co 911	Done
27. Hill Havre	Done
26. Fallon	Done
29. Teton	Done
30. Yellowstone	Justin is new to Billings 911 but seems bright; working on MOU
31. Laurel	Susan has been hard to pin down but we have chatted on the phone
32. Glendive	Done
33. Rocky Boy	Had a few phone calls with Sean, but yet to schedule 988 training



Help Center 988 211 Stakeholders Meeting

988 Follow Up & 211

- July-September
 - Saw a total of 185 new follow up periods
 - Periods can be the same person enrolled in follow up
 - We average reaching 70% of people we follow up with
 - We made 860 follow up calls
- 911-988 MOUs
 - 7 of 13 counties MOUs completed
- 211 Database Merger
 - Merging the 5 databases into 1 statewide
 - Makes coordination amongst centers easier and makes the I&R/Crisis Counselor job easier to find resources
 - In the first review of the individual databases and drafting the new database
 - Implementation is currently scheduled for early November



thank you



HELP CENTER 988 211
BOZEMAN, MT



**To request MT988 materials, send
the address where you would like
them sent to john.tabb@mt.gov**



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Questions



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