

SEASONAL TOOLKIT

Mental Health Awareness Month



About this toolkit

May is Mental Health Awareness Month—a time to create space for conversations about how we're doing, how we can help one another and where we can turn for support, like 988.

The 988 Oregon campaign is rooted in a simple idea: support should feel within reach—at any time, for any reason. We created this toolkit to help make sharing that message a little easier.

Inside, you'll find a range of ready-to-use materials and ideas to support your outreach, whether that's posting on social media, sharing resources or starting conversations in your community.

There are many ways to participate in Mental Health Awareness Month. You might:

- Share messages about 988 and available support
- Start conversations about reaching out and supporting one another
- Use graphics, videos or printed materials in spaces where people gather
- Highlight local resources, partnerships or events

Some of these ideas may be more relevant to you than others. Feel free to use what fits and adapt materials so they reflect your community and the people you serve.

Together, we can help more people in Oregon feel comfortable reaching out.

Technical assistance

We're here to help you share 988 in ways that feel meaningful and relevant to your community.

Coates Kokes (CK) offers free communication support to help you adapt, create and share materials that connect with the people you serve. This can look different for every partner, from small tweaks to existing materials to fully customized outreach.

Available support can include things like:

- Communication strategies
- Graphic design (social media graphics, posters, co-branded materials)
- Video creation
- Translation and transcreation
- Media and messaging training
- Paid promotion (e.g. social/digital ads, local placements)
- Toolkits and templates
- Dissemination strategies and development of printed materials like flyers and mailers

If you're not sure where to start, we're happy to talk through ideas and find an approach that works for you.

To learn more or request support, reach out to [Claire Coffey](#), Account Director at Coates Kokes and [Lauren Palma](#), Interim 988 and Behavioral Health Crisis System Manager at Oregon Health Authority.

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Access graphics

You can access all graphics for Mental Health Awareness Month below. These files are stored in a shared Dropbox folder to make it easy to browse and download materials for your outreach.

Once you open the folder, you'll be able to explore what's available and download the files that work best for you. You can select individual items or download multiple materials at once.

If you have trouble accessing the folder or need help finding the right materials, please don't hesitate to reach out.

DROPBOX FOLDER

Graphics and flyers

Visual materials can be a helpful way to share information and make messages about 988 more visible in your community.

For Mental Health Awareness Month, these [graphics](#) and [flyers](#) are designed to support conversations about reaching out, understanding what to expect and reminding people that support is available. They can be used in a variety of ways, depending on what makes sense for your outreach. That might include sharing graphics on social media, adding visuals to newsletters or websites, or placing printed flyers in spaces where people gather.

[Flyers](#) can be especially useful for reaching people in everyday settings. You might consider sharing them with:

- Community centers
- Health clinics or waiting rooms
- Libraries
- Schools or campuses
- Workplaces or break rooms
- Local businesses, with permission

If you have questions, need different sizes or are interested in co-branding, contact [Claire Coffey](#), Account Director at Coates Kokes and [Lauren Palma](#), Interim 988 and Behavioral Health Crisis System Manager at Oregon Health Authority.

[DOWNLOAD FLYERS](#)

[DOWNLOAD GRAPHICS](#)



Social media

Social media can be a simple way to share information, start conversations and remind people that support is available.

Mental Health Awareness Month is a natural time to bring more visibility to resources like 988 and help more people in Oregon understand how it works and when they can use it. Whether you're posting regularly or just a few times throughout May, even small efforts can help more people feel comfortable connecting to support.

The sample posts below are designed as a starting point. You can use them as-is or adapt them to better reflect your voice, your audience and what's happening in your community.

You might consider pairing posts with graphics or videos, highlighting local resources or sharing messages that reflect everyday experiences like feeling stressed, overwhelmed or just needing someone to talk to.

When posting on social media, here are some best practices and tips to consider:

- Tag organizations whenever relevant (use the @ symbol and then type out their name or Instagram handle)
- If a link is too long or messy, you can shorten it using bit.ly
- You don't have to use the image that is auto-populated from a link you're using. We recommend using one of the photos we've provided.
- It can be tough to keep up with posting throughout the month. It's easier to schedule everything all at once at the start.
- The copy that we've provided is good to post, but also, no one knows your communities better than you. Feel free to tweak things as needed if you think your edits make more sense when speaking to your specific communities.
- People may have questions about the campaign and 988 in general. Try to keep track of what's being said and asked in your comment sections and answer as best as you can. Don't be afraid to reach out to us for additional information and clarification.
- We're dealing with very sensitive subjects in this campaign. You'll want to make sure that your posts are places where people can feel safe communicating in. If there are any comments where people are being rude or using foul language, be sure to hide those.

[**DOWNLOAD SOCIAL MEDIA**](#)

Post (copy)	Link	Visual
<p>May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Our minds deserve just as much care as our bodies. 988 Oregon provides free, confidential support to anyone in Oregon going through a tough time.</p> <p>Whether you're lonely, stressed, having financial concerns, not feeling seen, or just need someone to listen, call or text 988 to connect with trained, caring counselors.</p> <p>#MentalHealthAwarenessMonth #988</p>	<p>988oregon.org</p>	
<p>Wondering what happens when you call or text 988? Here's what to expect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ You'll be connected to a real person. ✓ Trained counselor will treat you with understanding and respect. ✓ You'll be heard and supported to get through this moment. ✓ You'll be connect with more resources in your community, if needed. <p>#MentalHealthAwarenessMonth #988</p>	<p>988oregon.org</p>	
<p>Who should reach out to 988? Anyone, any time, for any reason.</p> <p>If it's on your mind, it matters. Call or text 988 when you're stressed, worried or just feeling down. If you're having suicidal thoughts or worried about a friend or family member, 988 is here for you.</p> <p>#MentalHealthAwarenessMonth #988</p>	<p>988oregon.org</p>	

Mental Health Awareness Month is about awareness and action. If you're feeling overwhelmed, caring counselors are here to chat. Just call or text 988 for support.

#MentalHealthAwarenessMonth #988

988oregon.org



Did you know that having a good listener can improve mental health?

Whatever you're dealing with, sometimes we just need someone to talk to. Call or text 988 to get connected with a trained counselor.

#MentalHealthAwarenessMonth #988

988oregon.org



It's hard to know what to do if someone you care about is having a hard time. 988 counselors are here to help. Call, text or live chat 988 and they'll help you with next steps. Signs that someone may be struggling include:

- ✓ Excessive drinking or smoking
- ✓ Using drugs, including over-use of prescriptions
- ✓ Lack of energy
- ✓ Trouble focusing or remembering
- ✓ Anger, feeling edgy, lashing out
- ✓ Sleeping too much or too little

#MentalHealthAwarenessMonth #988

988oregon.org



Talking points

Preparing for a news interview, connecting with a local leader or talking with community members during Mental Health Awareness Month?

The talking points below are designed to support those conversations and help raise awareness of available support, including 988. They reflect a compassionate, trauma-informed approach and are meant to be a starting point.

You may find it helpful to adapt these talking points based on your organization's work or the needs of your community. Adding local context, examples or insights can help make your message feel more relevant and meaningful for the people you're trying to reach.

If you have questions or would like help preparing a media advisory for your event, please contact [Claire Coffey](#), Coates Kokes Account Director, and [Lance Heisler](#), Coates Kokes Public Relations Director.

Mental Health Awareness Month

- May is Mental Health Awareness Month, a time to recognize that mental health is an essential part of overall well-being and that everyone deserves compassion, understanding and access to support.
- Mental Health Awareness Month helps reduce stigma by creating space for open, honest conversations that make it easier for people to seek support without fear of judgment.
- It reminds us that mental health affects everyone. Whether directly or through someone we care about, mental health challenges are common and awareness helps normalize that reality.
- In Oregon, 988 is a free, confidential resource available 24/7, 365 days per year, that connects people to trained counselors who are there to listen and provide support, no matter what someone is going through.
- Early support can make a meaningful difference. When people recognize signs of stress, anxiety, or depression sooner, they're more likely to reach out and get help before challenges grow more serious.

Who can use 988?

- You don't have to be in crisis to reach out. If it's on your mind, it matters.
- People contact 988 for many reasons, including stress, loneliness, relationship challenges, grief, or simply having a hard day.
- 988 helps lower the barrier to getting support. By making it as simple as calling, texting or chatting, 988 offers many ways for people of all ages and backgrounds to reach out in ways that feel comfortable to them.

What should you expect when you reach out?

- Every interaction with 988 is grounded in empathy and respect.
- Trained counselors listen without judgment and help people feel heard, which can be a powerful step toward hope and healing.
- It's important to understand the difference between 988 and 911. Both play important, but different roles.
 - 988 is for emotional, mental health or substance use support.
 - 911 is for immediate medical or safety emergencies.
- Most of the time when you contact 988, a conversation is enough. In about 98% of 988 interactions, the call, text or chat itself provides the support someone needs in that moment, without involving emergency services.
- 988 is part of a broader, community-based system of care in Oregon. When additional support is needed, people can be connected to local resources, including mobile crisis teams that respond without law enforcement involvement.

What services are available through 988?

- 988 answers calls, texts and chats in English and Spanish, with interpretation services in more than 240 languages.
 - People who speak Spanish can connect directly to Spanish-speaking crisis counselors by calling 988 and pressing option 2, texting “AYUDA” to 988 or chatting online at 988lineadevida.org or 988Lifeline.org.
- There’s also specific support available for veterans, service members and their families. Callers can **press 1** or text **838255** to connect with the **Veterans Crisis Line**.
- People who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing or prefer using American Sign Language can [connect directly with a trained 988 counselor in ASL](#).
- Follow-up calls and referrals to community resources are offered and available for callers who are interested.
- People can learn more at **Nine-eight-eight-Oregon-dot-org**.

Why is 988 so critical in this moment?

- The most recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Oregon Health Authority show:
 - In 2024, Oregon had the 9th highest rate of suicide in the U.S., with a total of 941 deaths. This is the first time Oregon has experienced over 900 deaths and is the highest number of suicides Oregon has experienced in a year.
 - The increase in 2024 appears to be largely driven by increases in older adult suicide deaths and suicides among Oregonians living in urban counties.
- **Oregon youth and suicide:**
 - In Oregon, [suicide is the second-leading cause of death](#) among people ages 5 to 24.
 - OHA’s 2024 Youth Suicide Intervention and Prevention Plan (YSIPP) [Annual Report](#) showed:
 - A decrease in age 24 and younger youth suicides in Oregon in 2024. This continues an overall decreasing trend in youth suicide in Oregon since a peak in 2018.
 - In 2024, Oregon had the 15th highest youth suicide rate in the United States.
 - Suicide among youth identified as white has declined since 2018, but the number for youth of other races/ethnicities has remained the same or increased. National data

shows that among youth of color (Hispanic, Asian, Black, Pacific Islander, two or more races) and American Indian or Alaska Native youth, combined suicide deaths increased by 9 percent.

- **Oregon adults and suicide:**

- A 24-year trend shows that the age-adjusted rate for suicide in Oregon (20 per 100,000) is significantly higher than the United States rate (13.7 per 100,000).
- The suicide death rate is highest among men throughout the lifespan. The highest is among older men ages 85+.
- The suicide death rate for women increases with age until age 59. The highest rate for women is between ages 55-59.
- Non-Hispanic American Indian and Alaska Native individuals have the highest rate of suicide of any racial group.
- Veteran suicide rates continue to be significantly higher than non-veteran rates (55.8 per 100,000).

Fill-in-the-blank media advisory

Will you be holding a community event for Mental Health Awareness Month? Considering inviting local news outlets to a press conference about mental health support and resources in your community?

A media advisory is one way to bring attention to your event and the work you're doing this May. Typically sent as a short email to reporters, a media advisory invites them to attend an event, whether that's highlighting local resources, sharing a new initiative or hearing from key leaders in your community on a specific topic.

Media advisories can be useful for a range of gatherings, especially during Mental Health Awareness Month when there's an opportunity to raise awareness and connect people to resources like 988.

It's important to remember that a media advisory is an invitation meant to spark interest and encourage attendance. Many partners find it helpful to include a clear, engaging headline and a few key details, while leaving room for reporters to learn more by attending the event.

The fill-in-the-blank media advisory below is designed as a starting point if you're planning an event this May. It includes sample language, along with optional headlines and subheads you can adapt. You can tailor it with your event details and local information to reflect what's most relevant in your community.

If you have questions or would like help preparing a media advisory for your event, please contact [Claire Coffey](#), 988 Account Director, and [Lance Heisler](#), CK Public Relations Director.

YOUR LOGO HERE

MEDIA ADVISORY

May ##, [year]

Media Contact:

Name, Organization, Title

Email Address, Phone

Headline options to consider, depending on the event or announcement:

1. **Hope starts here: Mental Health Awareness Month gathering for people living in [County/City]**
2. **Care, connection and community: [County/City/Organization] brings people together for Mental Health Awareness Month**

Subhead options to consider, depending on the event or announcement:

1. [County/City/Organization] is holding a community gathering focused on conversations surrounding mental health and local resources for support
2. [County/City/Organization] to highlight mental health support and 988 resources during Mental Health Awareness Month

WHAT: This May for Mental Health Awareness Month, [County/City/Organization] is calling attention to mental health and community resources available to people in need of support, such as 988. Mental health challenges are common, and every person deserves compassion, understanding and someone to listen. Awareness helps reduce stigma and normalize that reality. 988 is a free resource available 24/7 that connects people to trained counselors who can help them through challenging moments in their lives, whether they're stressed, going through a breakup, struggling at work or just need someone to talk to.

[Insert event description or local information here]

WHEN: Date and time

WHERE: Street address
City, State, Zip

WHO: [Insert names, titles and organizations of key speakers; this is typically a bulleted list]

DATA: The most recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Oregon Health Authority show:

- In 2024, Oregon had the 9th highest rate of suicide in the U.S., with a total of 941 deaths.
- This is the highest number of suicide deaths Oregon has experienced in a year.
- In 2024, suicide is the second-leading cause of death among people ages 5 – 24.

ABOUT: [County/City/Organization]

[Insert a paragraph description of your organization here]

Sample newsletter

Subject line: May is Mental Health Awareness Month—988 is here for you

May is Mental Health Awareness Month—a time to check in with ourselves and others, and to make sure people know where they can turn for support.

988 is one of those resources. It's a free, confidential way for people in Oregon to connect with a trained counselor by call, text or chat.

Support through 988 is available for many different experiences, including grief, feeling overwhelmed, substance use or simply needing someone to talk to. You don't have to be in crisis to reach out.

When you contact 988 in Oregon, you're connected to trained counselors from local call centers—[Lines for Life](#) or [Northwest Human Services](#)—who are ready to help, for any reason, with no judgment. They may ask a few questions to understand what's going on, but you can share as much or as little as you'd like. Most conversations are simply that: a chance to talk things through and feel heard.

You can also reach out to 988 if you're worried about a friend, family member or someone in your community.

In [\[your community\]](#), support can also look like:

- [\[Insert local resources, such as community organizations, support groups or services\]](#)
- [\[Highlight local events, conversations or activities happening during May\]](#)

This Mental Health Awareness Month, you might consider checking in with yourself or reaching out to someone you trust. And if you need someone to talk to, 988 is always there.

To learn more, visit 988Oregon.org.