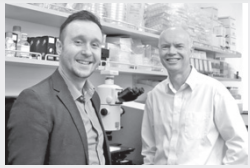


NEED TO READ

ONLINE
wnypapers.com



► Hauptman-Woodward Medical Research Institute and UB awarded \$1.5 million DOE 3-year grant for AI-assisted biomedical research

► Hochul encourages New Yorkers to get new COVID-19 vaccine as students return to school & respiratory illness season begins

► Old Falls Street announces 15th annual Niagara Falls Blues Festival

► Just 2 years into operation, Markside is Youngstown Business of the Year

► Heart re-schedules North America shows

► Francis Center's 'A Night of Jazz' to benefit children's & women's respite programs



best summer EVER

► Summer event listings and special deals

In print and online, we are your No. 1 source for local news

Niagara Frontier Publications and www.wnypapers.com

Opinions

Use of all submitted letters and editorials is at the discretion of Niagara Frontier Publications. All entries should include the writer's/organization's name, number and address. Submissions, which may be edited for content/style/accuracy, do not necessarily reflect the opinion of NFP staff.

Hochul signs legislation & launches new awareness campaign to prevent suicide and promote mental health

Student Lifeline Act requires state's 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline to be printed on college student ID cards

Gov. Kathy Hochul on Monday signed legislation and announced a new statewide, multimedia campaign to help prevent suicide and promote mental health.

Legislation S1865B/A6563A – the Student Lifeline Act – requires colleges across New York to print information about the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline on all student ID cards. In conjunction with Suicide Prevention Month in September, the governor and the state's Office of Mental Health launched a \$5 million campaign to raise awareness of 988, which is free, confidential, impartial, and can be accessed any time of the day or night by phone, text or chat.

"The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline means that help is always available, whether it's for someone experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis or who knows someone needing this assistance," Hochul said. "As we recognize Suicide Prevention Month, we must ensure all New Yorkers are aware of this critical resource and are willing to use it whenever they or someone they know needs help."

The Student Lifeline Act, sponsored by New York State Sen. Samra Brouk and Assembly Member Sarah Clark, requires all college student ID cards in New York to contain information about the 988 Lifeline by 2025. Under this law, colleges must also provide resources to students describing when to utilize the 988 number. Any colleges that do not issue ID cards will still be required to distribute the 988 information annually to students through other materials.

Led by the state's Office of Mental Health, New York's statewide \$5 million public awareness campaign will feature the slogan, "We Hear You," and is aimed at encouraging more New Yorkers to use the state's 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline whenever they or someone they know is experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis.

The campaign will include several ads that focus on distinct populations that could benefit from 988 but had lower recognition of this service in focus groups. This includes first-responders and health care professionals; school-aged youth and college students; and Black, Latina and LGBTQ+ individuals.

State Office of Mental Health Commissioner Dr. Ann Sullivan said, "The best way to prevent suicide is to ask for help early if you're feeling down, depressed, or troubled. And one of the most effective ways to get help is to call 988 and speak with a trained counselor and get whatever assistance you may need."

Brouk said, "Mental health and stress are affecting college students on a profound level. This student lifeline bill is lifesaving legislation that can prevent crises for students and their families. We must listen to young people when they say they need more mental health services in college. This legislation was formed as a direct response to student feedback and a critical need to center youth voices in the mental health conversation. With 988 on student IDs, young people have a direct connection to compassionate care."

Clark said, "Suicide is the second-leading cause of death for college students in the United States, and too many students consider suicide, attempt suicide, or cause intentional injury to themselves. When faced with these thoughts, it is vital that students throughout New York are aware of immediate resources. Ensuring the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline and the Crisis Text Line at 741741 are always easily accessible by including them on student ID cards is critically important. As a mother of a current college student, I know firsthand the need for more mental health supports and am immensely proud to have carried and passed the Student Lifeline Act in the Assembly.

Hochul's team said, "Supported in all 62 counties statewide, 988 provides a connection to trained crisis counselors who can help anyone thinking about suicide, struggling with substance use, experiencing a mental health crisis, or any other kind of emotional distress to receive personal support, get immediate help and connect with follow up services. The service is free, confidential, impartial, and can be accessed 24 hours a day and seven days per week."

Hochul's enacted budget expanded the capacity of 988 crisis contact centers by boosting funding for them from \$35 million to \$60 million per year.

More than 478,388 calls and 75,661 texts and chats have been directly routed to New York 988 crisis contact centers since 2022, including nearly 77,000 calls coming from former service members that connected directly via 988's dedicated veteran's crisis line.

Hochul's team added, "September is recognized nationally as Suicide Prevention Month, dedicated to promoting awareness, education and action to prevent suicide. The recognition honors the lives lost to suicide, supports the survivors of suicide loss, and reinforces New York's commitment to mental health and wellness for all."

"Suicide claimed the lives of more than 1,700 individuals in New York in 2022. It is the second-leading cause of death among individuals between the age of 25 and 34, and the third-leading cause of death for youth and young adults between the age of 10 and 24.

"Earlier this year, the state provided five conditional awards totaling \$15 million over five years to help community-based service providers to develop innovative programs that will help reduce suicide risk among youth from historically underserved populations. The funding through the Connecting Youth to Mental Health Supports program will help develop programs and suicide

prevention strategies among racial and ethnic minority populations and LGBTQ+ groups, including those in rural areas.

"The state also reconvened the suicide prevention task force with a goal of building upon the recommendation made by its predecessor. These recommendations included strengthening public health approaches, enhancing health system competencies, improving data surveillance methods, and infusing cultural competency in the state's suicide prevention strategy."

Last year, New York began a five-year \$10 million effort funded through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to address mental and behavioral health problems among youth, with the goal of ensuring equitable access to underserved populations. In addition, OMH received a five-year, \$3.5 million federal grant to expand the Zero Suicide model – a systemic approach toward integrating suicide prevention in the health care system – among 13 Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics.

In addition to these initiatives, the Suicide Prevention Center of New York, which is housed at OMH, provides technical assistance to advance the state's prevention efforts and offers free resources that are available by request. The center also conducts extensive training, with nearly 194,000 New Yorkers completing suicide-specific course material since 2018.

The center developed the CARES UP Initiative, a prevention effort aimed at fostering a supportive environment among uniformed personnel where mental health is prioritized. The \$3 million OMH-funded initiative provided grants to 13 agencies to enhance suicide prevention efforts and wellness programs for first responders and military veterans.

Niagara County Tribune/Sentinel

Founded February 14, 1987

PUBLISHER
Skip Mazenauer
GM/MANAGING EDITOR
Joshua Maloni
EDITOR IN CHIEF/SENTINEL EDITOR
Terrence P. Duffy
WEBSITE/SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR
Joshua Maloni
ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES
Colleen Rebmann, Jeff Calarco
ACCOUNTING/OFFICE MANAGER
Kim Stacharczyk
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
Roxanne Dorato

PRODUCTION MANAGER/ GRAPHIC DESIGNER
Wendy Juzwicki
CLASSIFIED MANAGER
Wendy Puffer
CIRCULATION
Kim Stacharczyk
SENIOR REPORTERS
Michael J. Billoni, Patrick J. Bradley, Alice Gerard, Karen Keefe
CONTRIBUTORS
Kevin and Dawn Cobello, Michelle Blackley Glynn, Wayne Peters,

©2024 Niagara Frontier Publications
1859 Whitehaven Road
Grand Island, N.Y. 14072

Phone 716-773-7676
Fax 716-773-7190

Editorial:

Dispatch@wnypapers.com
Sentinel@wnypapers.com

Advertising:

NFPDesign@wnypapers.com

Classifieds:

NFPClassifieds@wnypapers.com

Circulation:

NFPcirculation@wnypapers.com

Legals:

legalnotice@wnypapers.com

Website:

wnypapers.com

Grand Island Publishing Corp. Newspaper is printed in the U.S.A. and all rights reserved. © 2024 by **Grand Island Publishing Corp.** No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without written permission of the publisher. Unsolicited manuscripts and photographs will be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

All letters, news releases and photos received will be treated as unconditionally assigned for publication or brochure and are subject to **Grand Island Publishing Corp's** unrestricted right to edit, comment or reject.

All original artwork, layout and design remain sole property of **Grand Island Publishing Corp.** Reproduction in whole or part of any advertisement is strictly forbidden.

Grand Island Publishing Corp. will not be liable for errors appearing in advertisements beyond replacement of the space occupied by the error. The

publisher reserves the right to reject any advertisement at his sole discretion. Notification must be made in writing within one week of publication. Verbal notifications will not be accepted.

Grand Island Publishing Corp. does not knowingly accept any kind of fraudulent advertising. We suggest you investigate thoroughly any advertisement before you reply.

Verbal cancellations will not be accepted. Written authorization to cancel a display or commercial classified ad must be received by **Grand Island Publishing Corp.** before deadline for insertion.

The **Tribune** is published weekly.

Display Ads Deadline: MONDAY 5 PM

New York State Press Association, Niagara County Builders Association, Grand Island Chamber of Commerce, Wheatfield Business Association Inc., Niagara River Region Chamber of Commerce, The Niagara USA Chamber.



NIAGARA FRONTIER PUBLICATIONS

