



Ravalli County Behavioral Health Coalition Information Update

Program Lead: Jaime Biesiot

March 2025

Purpose



- To provide updates on use of Crisis Diversion Grant funds and program implementation
- To introduce the Behavioral Health Coalition members, their work, and key facts about the state of behavioral health in Ravalli County
- Highlight key actions, successes and gaps to work toward addressing citizens needs
- Provide you relevant data to engage with county and state leaders

Behavioral Health Coalition Goals



- Serve Ravalli County citizens with the most appropriate response to their needs
- Reduce unnecessary law enforcement demands freeing up resources
- Assess the needs of a more efficient Ravalli County Crisis Response leveraging other successful models

SOMEONE TO
CALL

SOMEONE TO
RESPOND

SOMEWHERE
TO GO

Coalition Members

- Ravalli County Sheriff's Office
- Hamilton Police Department
- Bitterroot Health
- Western Montana Mental Health Center
- West House
- Olive Branch Counseling
- Youth Court
- Council on Aging
- Ravalli County Public Health
- SAFE
- Ravalli Services



Ravalli County Behavioral Health Coalition Mission Statement:

To enhance and implement a county appropriate system of response, treatment, and care to community members experiencing behavioral health crises, in an effort to provide every Ravalli resident the right service, in the right place, every time.

Grant County Member Matching

RCSO: \$521,700 total.

- One CIT academy per year over life of grant and wages for those attending
- Detention center behavioral health services
- Emergency behavioral health services

Bitterroot Health: (\$70,500)

- _Facilitate mental health evaluations through Intermountain Healthcare
- Monitoring of patients awaiting placement by the County Attorney or Westhouse following their evaluations

Hamilton Police Department: (\$27,500)

- Send officers to Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) to the 40 hour CIT Course
- Member of its command staff participate on the leadership committee.



Ravalli County Sheriff's Office

Behavioral Health Unit

Jaime Biesiot- Behavioral Health Manager

Detective Dan Mendonca- CIT Lead/Wellness Coordinator

Victoria Miralda- Community Care Coordinator/ Veteran Liaison

Deputy Scott Domingo- CIT Lead

Accomplished to Date

- Developed a Sequential Intercept Map tailored to the needs of Ravalli County
- Coordinate Monthly Behavioral Health Coalition meetings
- Crafted Ravalli County Strategic Plan for Behavioral Health
- Host Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Training
- Developed the Ravalli County Sheriff's Office Wellness Program
- Utilized Montana Opioid Abatement Trust award to purchase the Cordico App
- Critical Incident Stress Management Team (CISM) Agency and County Steering Committees
- Community Care Coordination



Crisis Now Continuum

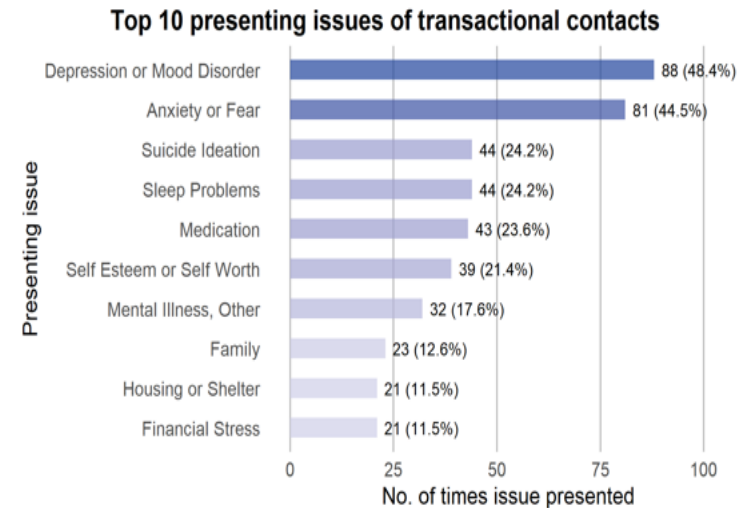


86% of 988 Calls are
Mental Health Crisis

**Presentation of Ravalli
County crisis data
February 5, 2025**
Stephanie Cole
JG Research & Evaluation



Calls by presenting issue, January - December 2024



988 Findings

CRISIS RESPONSE

EMS

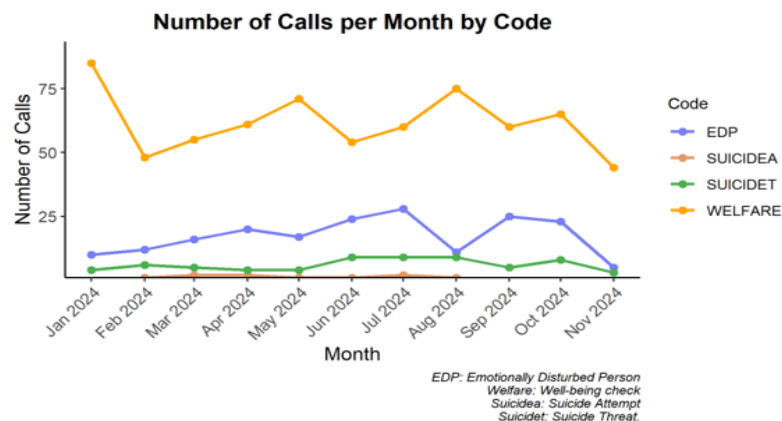
EMS Incidents, January – December 2024

Category	Incidents	Percent
Total number of BH incidents	613	100%
Incidents w/ BH primary impression	359	58.6%
Incidents w/ SUD primary impression	83	13.5%
Incidents w/ MH primary impression	262	42.7%
Incidents w/ primary co-occurring impression	14	2.3%

Notes: Data are EMS incidents with a behavioral health (SUD or MH) code from January 01, 2024 to December 31, 2024.

911 DISPATCH

- January 1- December 31 2024
Number of calls per month by crisis related dispatch code.





Outline

- Introduction: Purpose & Crisis Diversion Goals
- Kari Auclair: **West House, Western Montana Mental Health Center**
- Stacey Umhey: **SAFE**
- Tiffany Webber: **Public Health**
- Christina Dunbar: **Human Resource Council**
- Nicole Emery: **WECARE**
- Cathy Orr: **Council on Aging**
- Tami Klapwyk and Clint Arneson: **Olive Branch Counseling and Youth Court**
- Tom Price & Sara Monroe: **Bitterroot Health**
- Victoria Miralda: **Ravalli County Sheriff's Office/Veteran Liaison**
- Summary and way ahead
- Questions, Discussion
- Conclusion: Jaime Biesiot & Victoria Miralda

Kari Auclair: Director, WestHouse Crisis Facility



Number of voluntary clients?

- Number of Unique Clients - 570
- Number of Enrollments - 891

Number of Emergency Detention clients?

- Number of Unique Clients - 135
- Number of Enrollments – 148
- County breakdown:
 - Deer Lodge 1%
 - Flathead 1%
 - Hamilton 1%
 - Lewis & Clark 1%
 - Park 1%
 - Silverbow 1%
 - Gallatin 3%
 - Unknown 5%
 - Missoula 41%
 - **Ravalli 46%**

Data Dates - 8/1/2020 to 2/21/2025

WestHouse Crisis Facility

Average length of stay for both groups (Vol and ED)

- Voluntary avg LOS – 4 Days
- Involuntary avg LOS – 4 Days

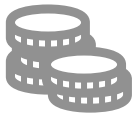
Dispositions of Emergency Detention clients ie/ State Hospital, Community Commitment, 14 Day Diversion, released)

- Transferred to higher level of care by LEO 1%
- Detained by LEO 3%
- Transported to Detention Center 3%
- Unknown 9%
- Transported for court by LEO 14%
- Transported to higher level of care 14%
- Stepped down to a Voluntary unit 24%
- **Discharged to Community 32%**



SAFE in the Bitterroot

- The only provider of emergency shelter and services in Ravalli County for survivors of domestic and intimate partner abuse.
- Provide services to an average of 400 people a year (492 in 2023)
- Provides shelter to an average of 82 adults and children annually (2023 - 87 adults and children)
- Residents stay in the shelter for an average of 34 days (2024 to date - 46 days)
- In the past three years, 20 survivors identified that they have mental health disabilities, while 6 survivors self-disclosed cognitive disability.
- 6 referrals to West House and 2 people to WeCare



OVW Rural and TH
DPHHS FVPSA
MBCC VOCA
HUD

www.safeinthebitterroot.org

Tiffany Webber RN/Director

Ravalli County Public Health & WIC



“Prevent, Promote and Protect”

- Our primary focus is population health
- Public Health works in collaboration with other community partners to track communicable disease, injury and trends in health in order to quickly identify needs of the community.
- We work with our partners to implement the appropriate evidence based education to prevent injury, spread of communicable illness and promote healthy living for our community.

Key Services:

- WIC (Nutrition education and support for Women, infants and children under 5)
- Communicable Disease Surveillance (follow-up on reportable conditions and mitigation education and support)
- Immunization (including review of Daycares for compliance with immunization requirements)
- Injury Prevention (providing education on instillation of car seats, fitting children with helmets and providing safe sleep ed with pack n plays)
- Tobacco Education and Cessation (including follow up on clean indoor act violations)
- Public Health Emergency Preparedness (partnering with OEM and RCSO)

Ravalli County Public Health

Key Demographics:

- We provide services to all demographics with focus on women, infants and children.
- **Funding Sources:** Mostly State and Federal grant funding with some salaries covered through county dollars.
- Ravalli County Public Health employees 8 staff: 2 admin, 1 finance admin, 2 RN's, a tobacco coordinator, PHEP coordinator and department director



Public health program 'Back to Safe Sleep' offers free cribs

[Visit >](#)



Public health dept, DUI Task Force, team up for safe driving promo - Bitterroot Star

[Visit >](#)



COVID vaccinations begin at Ravalli County Public Health

[Visit >](#)



Christina Dunbar

- Human Resource Council

- Housing
 - Rental Housing Assistance
 - Homeless Youth Assistance
- Energy Assistance
 - Utility Emergency Assistance
- Energy Conservation
- Workforce Development
 - Youth and Adult Services
 - Training Tuition and Assistance
- 211 Information and Referral

“We Care” Behavioral Health



- Provides care coordination services, outpatient therapy services, and a crisis line, answered by crisis trained staff
- Services to children age 4-17, adults 18 and over
- Care coordinators/Case Managers are experienced social workers who advocate for people with limited ability to connect with professional services
- These services include but are not limited to:
 - Connecting individuals with medical and/or psychiatric providers
 - Providing community based rehabilitation and support
 - Meeting regularly to identify and address barriers to progress

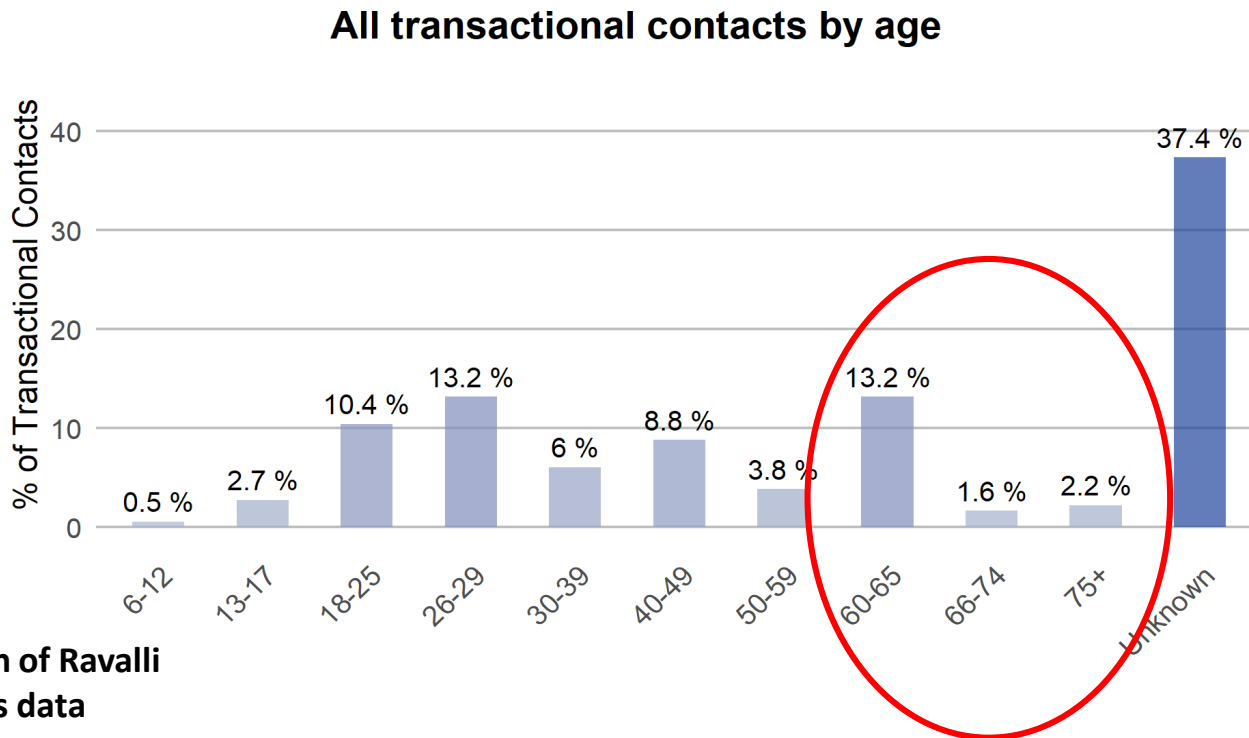
Nicole Miller-Emery, Office Manager
nemery@wecarebhp.com, P: 406-241-8567

Crisis by Age-

Understanding the impacts and needs

988 Calls by age, January- December 2024

17% Confirmed Age 60 and older



Presentation of Ravalli

County crisis data

February 5, 2025

Stephanie Cole

JG Research &

Evaluation

Ravalli County Council on Aging



Ravalli County
Council on Aging

Federal (OAA –
Older American's
Act), State, and
County Funds along
with grants,
donations, and
program fees.

RCCOA provides the “Opportunity for Independence” for seniors aged 60 + and adults with a qualifying disability. We help people remain happy, healthy, and safe in their homes as long as possible.	310 Old Corvallis Rd, Hamilton
Meals on Wheels, Congregate Meals, BitterRoot Bus, Lifeline Medical Alert, Loan Closet, SHIP Counselors, SMP (Senior Medicare Patrol), Money Management,	RCCOA serves the entire Bitterroot Valley.
Older adults age 60+	Seniors aged 55 and up make up 36% of our County population.
	32 staff members (16 part-time, 16 full-time)



Ravalli County Council on Aging



Clint Arneson—Chief Probation Officer

- Juvenile Court

Detainment & Family Services Data

Calendar Year	2022	2023	2024	2025
Number of Undup Youth	15	30	27	2
Total Detainments	21	42	30	2

Family Services Youth	Date Detained	Days Detained	Cost of Detention	Olive Branch Family Support Start	Detained After Olive Branch	Cost of Olive Branch to Date
Youth 1	12/7/23	4	\$952.00	12/23	No	\$5,634.96
	2/8/22	1	\$238.00		No	
Youth 2	4/7/22	1	\$238.00	12/23		\$956.88
	2/17/23	6	\$1,428.00		No	
	5/17/23	22	\$5,236.00			
	4/19/23	8	\$1,904.00		No	
	11/29/23	8	\$1,904.00			
Youth 3	12/30/23	5	\$1,190.00	12/23	Yes	\$26,155.44
	7/14/24	1	\$350.00			
	10/19/24	2	\$700.00			
Youth 4	12/24/23	2	\$476.00	2/25	No	\$637.92
	3/12/24	8	\$1,904.00			
Youth 5	3/29/24	54	\$12,852.00	6/24		\$4,465.44
	1/30/25	1	\$350.00		Yes	
Youth 6	3/9/24	5	\$1,190.00	6/24	No	\$3,083.28
Youth 7	3/9/24	5	\$1,190.00	6/24	No	\$3,933.84
Youth 8	10/24/23	2	\$476.00	8/24	No	\$5,634.96
	6/12/24	8	\$2,800.00			
Youth 9	3/9/24	5	\$1,190.00	9/24	No	\$2,658.00
Youth 10	5/1/24	1	\$350.00	6/24	No	\$12,546.48
Youth 11	3/2/24	17	\$4,046.00	4/24	No	\$13,821.60



- Building Resilient Individuals, Families, and Communities Right Here In the Bitterroot Valley

Please see our website for more information:

www.olivebranchcounselor.com



Left backrow: Dustin, Brynn, Wes, Bill, Kayla, Tami (not pictured: Liz, Jessica, Amy and the many volunteers that help create our community)

Olive Branch Currently Serves Ravalli County In the Following Ways

Therapy and Counseling

- **Participants: Over 290 individuals currently engaged in counseling.**
- Addiction Services: 40 active clients who receive individual, group counseling and support. Additionally, we provide support for participants in the Drug Treatment Court.
- Additionally, clients of Olive Branch Counseling have 24/7 access to support through the Spruce system, allowing them to reach out when in need.

Youth and Family Support Services

- Department of Family Services Contract
 - Families Served: Approximately 10 to 15 families supported each month.

Youth Probation Contract:

- Participants: Serving 10 to 12 youth and their families monthly.

Educational Workshops

- Parenting Classes:
- Free classes that enhance parenting skills and address common challenges.

Life Skills Classes:

- Ongoing classes focusing on essential skills like budgeting, interview skills, cooking, and more.
- Resource Center

Facilities Available:

- Access to a computer and various informational resources to support community members in finding and applying for resources, jobs, writing resumes, and any other needs.

Community Outreach

- Support for Basic Needs:
- Programs to assist community members with essential needs like food, clothing, and a safe home like atmosphere.

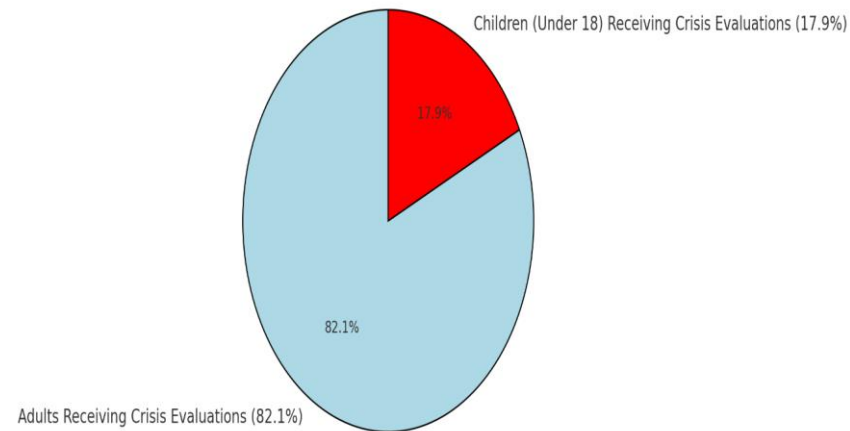
Bitterroot Health Daly Hospital

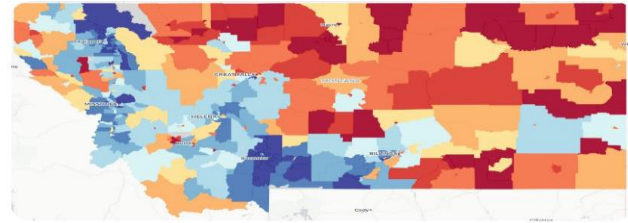
Mission: Commitment to quality, accessible, personalized health care for the Bitterroot Valley

ER Behavioral Health Crisis Evaluations

- ER volume 910 avg number of patient's seen per month
- Of those patients 1.7% are getting a Crisis evaluation, 15 per month
- Of those 15 per month 17.9% are under the age of 18, @ 2.6 kids per month.
- Based on these evaluations many of these patients are placed here locally
- Others end up having to go as far as Sheridan Wyoming, Salt lake City Utah and Spokane
- Pediatric and Elderly patients are always the hardest to find placement on

Crisis Evaluations: Adults vs. Children

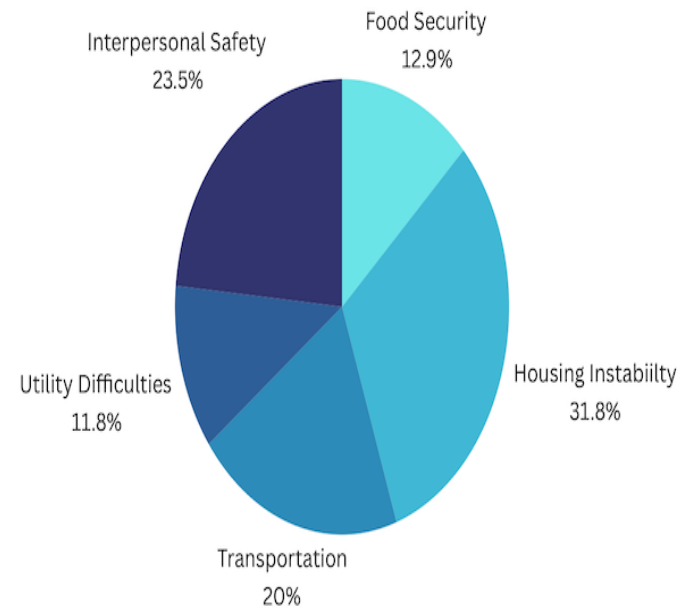




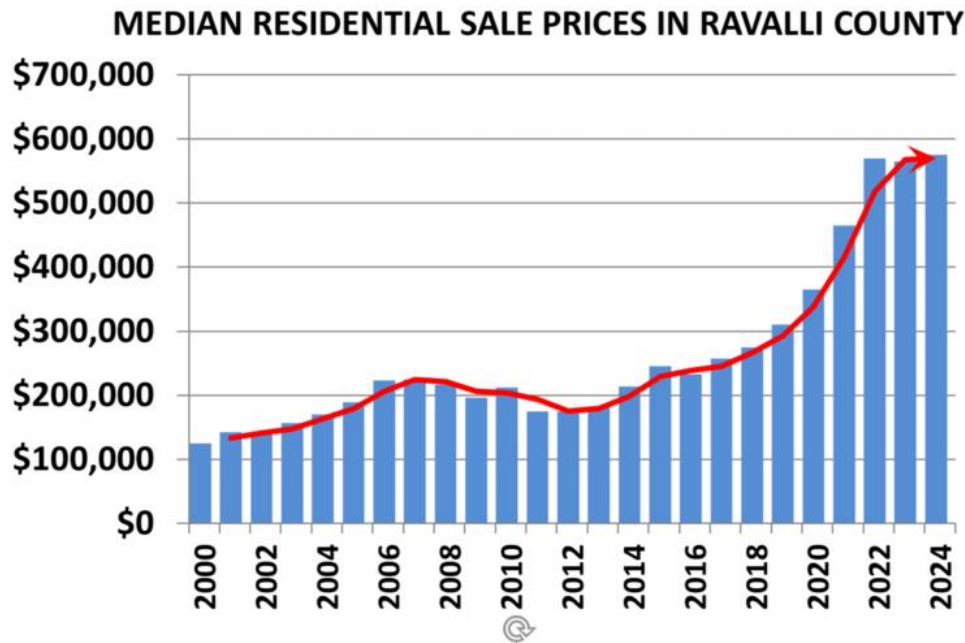
2024 Healthcare Access Data

- In 2024, we gathered data from patients across our healthcare system, including clinic visits, hospital admissions, and surgeries. The goal was to identify barriers preventing people in the Bitterroot Valley from seeking care.
- **Total patients screened: 7,432** (12-month period)
- **Patients reporting hospital insecurities: 311 (4.2%)**

Hospital Insecurities (311 patients)



One of several drivers: *Housing Insecurity*



- In Ravalli County, the median home sales price went from \$280,000 to \$575,000 from 2018 to 2023 (a 105.4% increase). This is the highest % increase for this time frame in all of Montana.

Figure 5. Housing and Transportation Costs as Percent of Income



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019 and Center for Neighborhood Technology, 2019

2024: The National Association of Realtors reports that, based on median income versus housing costs, Montana is the least affordable state in the nation. Within their report, Ravalli County is listed as the least affordable in the state, meaning Ravalli County is the least affordable in the entire nation!

https://ravallirepublic.com/news/state-and-regional/montana-housing-crisis/article_4d2d3d1e-ca98-5608-9385-2f6d7e3efad.html

City of Hamilton projected growth rate is 17% over the next 10 years. US Census Bureau, ACS 5-year estimates, 2022 Hamilton Impact Fee Study

Local Veteran Care Status and State Demographics

- Ravalli County does not have a VA mental health provider, despite VA efforts
- VA Mental Health Providers in Ravalli County provided primarily remotely
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), reports some of the critical concerns for veterans include homelessness, trauma, risk of suicide, and problems with *behavior-related health matters that sometimes involve the criminal justice system.*
- Montana's veteran population is predominantly concentrated in seven counties (Cascade, Flathead, Gallatin, Lewis and Clark, Missoula, Ravalli, and Yellowstone), together totaling 65% of the state's *veterans (a. Decennial Montana Veterans' Long-Term Care Needs Assessment Legislative Report- Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS))*
- Improving the overall well-being of Montana veterans requires addressing their physical, mental, and social health needs through comprehensive, coordinated efforts (see Appendix F for health considerations for Montana veterans). Source: b. *Decennial Montana Veterans' Long-Term Care Needs Assessment Legislative Report, Delivered by: Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) September 2024*

Why does Montana have such a high rate of suicide? It's not one factor, but rather multiple factors all occurring at the same time. It is a cultural issue. (a)

Lack of psychiatrists and integrated behavioral health into primary care.

Ravalli County Veterans Service Center

The RCVSC provides veterans and their families assistance with VA benefits and local resources in a dignified, confidential, and efficient manner, Veterans service officers are nationally accredited through the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers

Services Provided: (New Hamilton VA Medical Clinic Opened March '25)

- Counselors on site
- VA Disability Claims
- VA Health Care Benefits
- VA Burial Benefits
- Guidance on VA Education and Benefits



Photo by: Emily Brown/MTN News

Ravalli County Veterans Service Center

217 N 3rd St Ste L, Hamilton. [\(406\) 363-9838](tel:4063639838) veteransservices@rc.mt.gov

Summary/ Way Ahead



- Increase awareness of local resources, commercial, non-profit, and county
- Connect more people to needs, housing and food security are major issues integral to addressing the BH crisis
- Increase local resources- community effort
- Integrate with Dispatch for faster response
- Continually assess and improve crisis response
- Align with MT “State Behavioral Health Crisis Strategic Plan”
- Ensure our Commissioners have the data they need to engage at the State and Federal level on behavioral health topics



For Further Info on the Ravalli County Behavioral Health Coalition contact:

Jaime Biesiot

Behavioral Health Manager

Ravalli County Sheriff's Office

205 Bedford Street, Suite G |

Hamilton, Montana 59840

Cell: 406.550.1636 |

Victoria (Tori) Miralda

Community Care Coordinator

Ravalli County Sheriff's Office

205 Bedford Street, Suite G |

Hamilton, Montana 59840

Cell: 406.677.0524 |

For additional assistance with resources:

citreferral@rc.mt.gov

Back-Ups

Why does Montana have such a high rate of suicide?

It's not one factor, but rather multiple factors all occurring at the same time.
It is a cultural issue.

Vitamin D Deficiency (correlated with increased risk of depression)

High concentration of Veterans, American Indians, and middle age White men

Alcohol as a coping strategy (alcohol in the blood at the time of death is 2x the national average)

Altitude

Metabolic stress caused by long-term oxygen deprivation. Worldwide, above 2,500 feet, you see a spike in suicides. The average suicide in Montana occurs at 3,500 feet

Social Isolation

Montana has 6.7 people per square mile. The national average is 88.7

Access to Lethal Means

Nearly 65% of suicides are by firearm and nearly 90% of all firearm deaths in Montana are suicides

Socioeconomic

1/5 Montana kids live more than 100% below the federal poverty level

Lack of Behavioral Health Services

Lack of psychiatrists and integrated behavioral health into primary care.

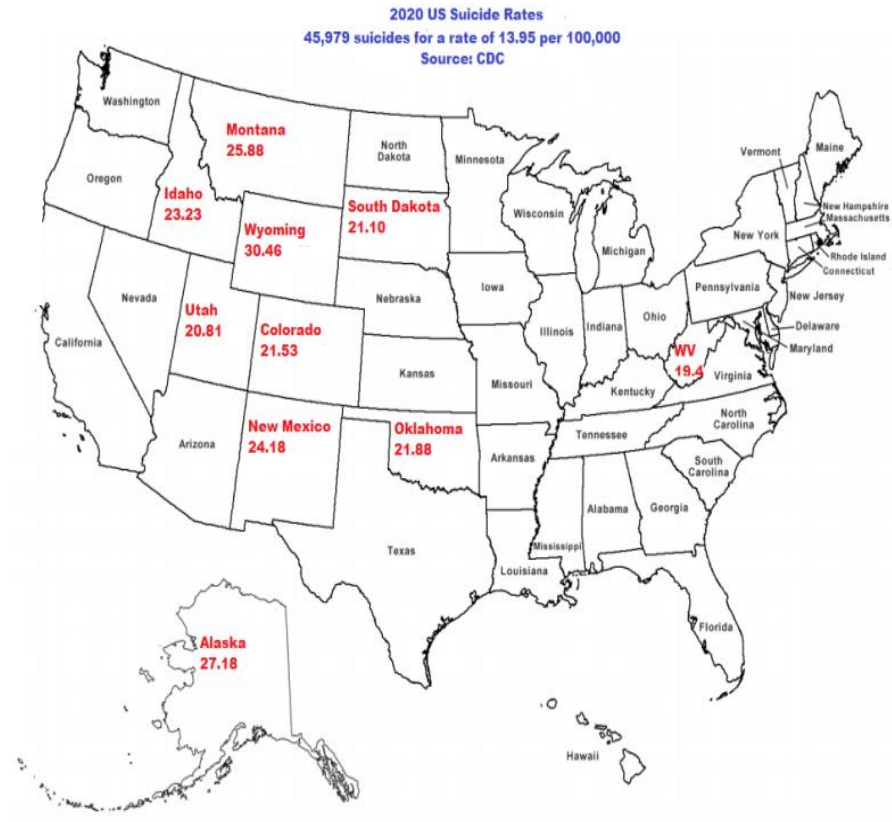
STIGMA

We see depression as a weakness, that we are a burden. And if you think you are a burden, how likely are you to ask for help?

Montana Suicide Prevention Program



March, 2022



988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

Western Montana Mental Health Center

General information

- Formally known as National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
 - 988 went live July 2022
- Operating 24/7
- Montana based chat/text to come in 2024
- Highest call volume
 - Mondays, Wednesday, Friday
 - 2pm to 12am, full moons
- Always recruiting volunteers

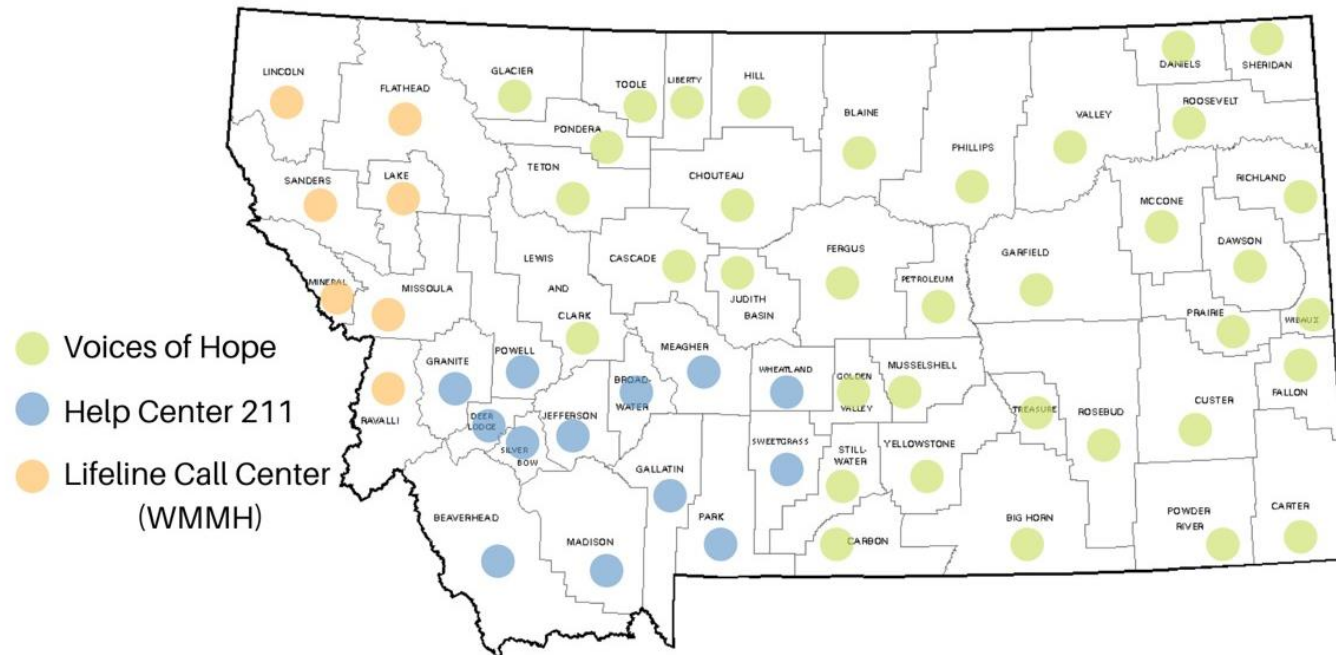


SOMEONE TO
CALL

SOMEONE TO
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SOMEWHERE
TO GO

Designated Counties



Source: State of Montana Department of Health and Human Services website
<https://dphhs.mt.gov/suicideprevention/988>

Questions & Answers

- **What is 988?**

- 988 is a hotline that can support individuals experiencing thoughts of suicide or homicide, mental health or substance use crisis, or emotional distress. Specialists can provide emotional support, resources, safety planning guidance, follow ups and engage third parties.

- ▶ **Who can access 988?**

- ▶ Individuals concerned about a loved one
- Professionals in the community needing to consult with a 988 specialist
- Individuals seeking support for mental health or substance use crisis

- **How can an individual reach 988?**

- Dial 988 or 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- Text 988
- Chat at 988lifeline.org/chat

Questions & Answers Continued

- **Will the police be dispatched?**
 - 988 uses a least invasive method of intervention model
 - 911 will be called for imminent risk of suicide/homicide (plan, means, intent) or for safety concerns that warrant a welfare check/MST.
 - Law enforcement is contacted for less 10% of calls.
- **Will individuals living in MT receive a MT center?**
 - Routing is based off caller's area code + prefix, and on center call volume.
 - Individuals out of state can be warm transferred to their preferred state or vice versa.
- **How are resources found?**
 - Montana211.org & TheBrightApp
 - Active collaboration within each community to identify local resources

Erica Alberda

Client Access Specialist – WMMHC Hamilton and Missoula



Mental Health, Behavioral Health, Crisis, Addictions

- Improve safety for all parties involved in the experience of, response to, and resolution of a behavioral health crisis event.
- Increase appropriate connections to effective and timely behavioral health crisis professionals, services, and supports.
- Strategically use law enforcement during behavioral health crisis situations, such as when there are imminent safety threats or criminal concerns, while also increasing the role of behavioral health professionals and other community supports in de-escalating a crisis and connecting to care.
- Reduce the trauma experienced during a behavioral health crisis, and thus contribute to a neighbor's long-term resiliency and recovery.
- Continuously enhance Ravalli Co.'s response to individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis through ongoing quality improvement and routine evaluation.
- From January 1, 2022-January 1, 2025, **3,963** individuals became NEW clients to WMMHC. These clients were referrals from outside providers to include: hospitals and ER's. Who have never had any services with WMMHC before. The client's captured for the number all attended their initial appointments and completed a full intake process. The total number I asked directly for, was to show the growth of Montana population, the growth of those needing Mental Health help. Note: We are just one provider in Montana.