Impact Report 2020

A Message from the Executive Director

Who would have ever predicted that the world would be devastated by a virus and pandemic before this past year? For most of us, 2020 was a lot more stressful than we ever anticipated. COVID-19, job stress, furloughs, shelter-in-place orders, and virtual school all took a toll on us. While most of us found the upheaval distressing, teens found their whole world shaken and turned inside out. It meant transitioning to school at home and being isolated from friends, sports, activities, and important connections.

We saw this play out on the hotline with a nearly 30% increase in calls and texts from teens who felt alone, scared, anxious, and depressed. Some could paint 2020 as a picture of gloom and doom, but I want to suggest an alternate picture: one of courage, strength, compassion, and hope.

At the start of the pandemic, we made the courageous decision to expand services to meet teens where they are at. We added 60 hours of text time per month for teens stuck at home, unable to speak freely but able to text to reveal their struggles. We pivoted to provide virtual training to nearly 1,500 teachers and parents, helping them understand how the pandemic affects youth and how to recognize and respond to suicide risk. We also redesigned our website to make accessing help easier at teenlifeline.org.

Our teen volunteers were impacted too, but they showed true compassion and strength as they continued to show up, adhere to safety precautions, and be there for their peers in this great time of need. They connected nearly 35,000 youth to hope, supporting and encouraging them and each other through missed school milestones, COVID-19 diagnoses, personal loss, family financial struggles, and fears about how long this very abnormal situation would last. Their families proudly supported their commitment to making a difference. These Peer Counselors’ acts were those of superheroes. Their strength and compassion inspire me daily!

For all who supported us and our important work, we are truly grateful!

– Michelle Moorhead, Executive Director
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Community Support at Work

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A Critical Support Throughout COVID-19
When students, schools, and families needed support during COVID-19, Teen Lifeline acted immediately to provide critical support services. We extended our services for our hotline, our volunteers, and our prevention education to accommodate the needs of social distancing and address the mental health impact of the pandemic. We also made the difficult decision to postpone the 2020 Connections of Hope Gala, our largest fundraising event of the year, to protect the health of our community. All the while, our Peer Counselors continued to show up and support both hotline callers and each other through the challenges the pandemic brought. The virtual prevention education and 15 more texting hours per week that began in response to COVID-19 remain in place today, meeting our community to support them where they are at.

15th Annual Firetag Invitational Golf
The 15th Annual Firetag Golf Tournament on Friday, November 13, was our one and only in-person event. We opted for assigned tee times at the Silverado Golf Club to allow for social distancing, which players loved. And we completely sold out for the first time in history! While COVID-19 precautions made conversations more challenging, players loved the time they spent on the field with family, friends, & coworkers. In total, the tournament raised more than $60,000!

Thank you to our tournament sponsors Amazon, Gammage & Burnham, Mandy Purcell, Nancy & Mike Gray, and Old Republic Title. Also, thank you to our chair James Maguire, Honorary Chair Lanny Lahr, and committee members Dani Chronister, Jeff Fields, Joe Manders, Sabrina Havard, and Ben Runkle.

Teen Suicide Prevention Awareness Month
To accommodate the needs of a community learning and working remotely due to COVID-19, the 20th annual Teen Suicide Prevention Awareness Month expanded into the virtual world with virtual trainings, remote scavenger hunts, digital resources, and partnerships with Mercy Care, the National Quarterback Club, and the Grand Canyon State Gridiron Club. We pivoted to include parents in the month’s prevention efforts.

Since teens look to peers for support, the Gridiron Club produced a series of PSAs featuring Arizona high school football players encouraging troubled teens to reach out to our hotline for help. These messages of hope were channeled through teen athlete social media accounts and other outlets throughout September and reached nearly 17,000 people!
Peer to Peer Crisis Hotline

As the only peer-to-peer counseling hotline in Arizona, we provide a connection of hope teens are often desperate to find. Our **24-hour free and confidential peer counseling crisis hotline/textline** is answered by trained teen volunteers 3 - 9 p.m. daily and supervised by master’s level clinicians. We partner with Crisis Response Network for after-hours support.

When Arizona schools transitioned to distance learning in March of 2020, we immediately extended our weekday texting service hours to 12 - 9 p.m. This 15 hour per week increase helped students feeling displaced and isolated find a connection to hope while learning at home. This proved crucial as teens dealt with unexpected losses in extracurriculars and life milestones—in the first month of social distancing, calls/texts to the hotline increased by 10% compared to the prior year. These extended texting hours remain in place today, over a year later, and will continue as long as the need is there.

In 2020, we received more calls and texts than ever in our history; a nearly 30% increase. We began tracking anxiety as a call topic at the start of the pandemic and found it accounted for 7% of our calls/texts. Even as we are living through unprecedented times, **95% of callers/texters report feeling better** after talking with a Peer Counselor. Callers/texters feel that their conversation is safe and private, and they can talk openly and without judgment because the Peer Counselor can “relate” to the pressure they feel.

**AT A GLANCE**

- The hotline is open 24/7/365. Peer counseling is 3-9 p.m. daily. Texting is 12-9 p.m. weekdays and 3-9 p.m. weekends. Call or text **602-248-8336**.
- All calls and texts are supervised by master’s level clinicians.
- Adults can also reach out if concerned for a teen.
- Teen Lifeline has been accredited by the American Association of Suicidology since 2003.

**2020 HOTLINE EXPENSE**

$398,024

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Nearly **35,000** teens reached out for hope through our crisis & text hotline

**1 in 3** calls was from a teen considering suicide
Teen Lifeline is a safe place for both our callers and volunteers. For many Peer Counselors, we are a home away from home. Each year, selected teens undergo the rigorous 72+ hour Life Skills training required to become a Peer Counselor, equipping them with communication skills, life issues education, decision-making skills, support services, and self-esteem enhancement. Training is conducted in three phases, co-facilitated by program staff and fellow Peer Counselors who already completed the process. Once individually cleared to work the hotline by our Clinical Director, these teen volunteers confidently help other teens resolve problems ranging from relationship issues to abuse, self-injury, or suicide.

On average, Peer Counselors volunteer for three years. While we held fewer trainings last year due to COVID-19, many college Peer Counselors returned to help answer the record-high number of calls/texts our hotline received.

Our teen volunteers face the same struggles and obstacles our callers do. This is more evident today, during a pandemic, than perhaps ever before. As essential workers, our teen Peer Counselors took their role to heart and continued coming in to answer hotline calls/texts while continuing to social distance, wear masks, and constantly sterilize office equipment. Our volunteers are true superheroes, never leaving our callers to struggle alone.

If you know a teen who wants to become a Peer Counselor, visit teenlifeline.org/volunteer or contact Mark Williamson at mark@teenlifeline.org.

“Volunteering at Teen Lifeline helped me discover what I want to do for the rest of my life and that, ultimately, I just want to be there for people who need someone.”
— Amanda, Peer Counselor
With students separated by distance learning from friends, sports, clubs, activities, and important connections with school staff, Teen Lifeline quickly answered the call to supporting Arizona’s youth, families, and schools in the wake of COVID-19 and its mental health impact.

Though many classrooms were remote for most of 2020, the requirements of the Mitch Warnock Act to train all school staff in suicide prevention still needed to be met. Teen Lifeline was one of the first agencies to provide virtual suicide prevention training for schools using approved curriculum and giving support to schools who had to quickly learn how to remotely identify and help youth at-risk.

Virtual trainings take both three times as much time and three times as many staff to conduct while ensuring all participants feel supported and meeting best practice standards. Even still, our prevention department quickly transitioned to a virtual environment to meet our community’s needs. To limit the number of staff in our facility, our prevention team operated on rotation to maintain constant clinical support on-site for volunteers and schools while also creating physical distance. Our prevention education now includes a robust set of virtual trainings and eLearning units, meaning we can train schools and parents no matter if their classrooms are in-person, remote, or both.

Last year, our School ID Initiative was a crucial connection of hope for schools and teens across Arizona. Including our hotline and a message of hope on the back of student IDs, in messaging from the schools, and on stickers on school-provided laptops ensured students always had a connection of hope nearby.

If you are interested in our prevention services, visit teenlifeline.org/programs, contact Morgan Phillips at morgan@teenlifeline.org, or call 602-248-8337.

“I was worried about how the district would get everyone trained on suicide prevention, but Teen Lifeline’s training made me hopeful. I hope they provide all district trainings.”
— Teacher at a prevention education training
What can parents do?

Educating yourself is the first step to suicide prevention. Knowing how to build a healthy environment for your child is important, especially throughout the uncertainty of the pandemic and social distancing.

The way we handle arguments and diffuse stressful situations within our families can help teens learn positive coping skills and prevent suicidal thoughts. By practicing these steps, you can connect with your teens and reduce family stress:

**Validate feelings.** Ask your teen how they are feeling and really listen to the answer. Teens have had to sacrifice important moments in their lives during the pandemic. Acknowledge their lost experiences and that their feelings are valid.

**Encourage autonomy.** It is developmentally appropriate and expected for teens to want independence from their parents. Give teens real choices about how they spend their time. Trying to force your teen to do something sets your relationship up for conflict and rebellion.

**Support healthy friendships.** Being connected to friends is crucial for teens’ psychological development. Look for opportunities for teens to connect with each other, such as in physically distanced activities or through online activities like gaming, video calls, texting, or social media.

**Watch for stress cues.** People react to stress in different ways. Some may get stomach aches or headaches. Others may become forgetful, short-tempered, clumsy, or emotional. Observe the ways your teen responds to stress, and when you notice the signs, help them learn healthy ways to cope with their emotions.

**Do something fun.** Take time to participate in activities that are meaningful, relaxing, or fun for your teen or family. Find new hobbies, practice new skills, and just have fun as a family, which is especially important when stress cues begin to appear more frequently.

For more information, please visit [teenlifeline.org](http://teenlifeline.org) or call 602-248-8336 (TEEN).
Our Theory of Change

YOUTH POSSESS A SENSE OF HOPE & CONNECTEDNESS

VISION
All youth possess a sense of connectedness and hope for their future

MISSION
To prevent teen suicide by enhancing resiliency in youth and fostering supportive communities

IMPACT
By 2030, youth suicide will be reduced in Arizona by 50%

PROGRAMS THAT SUPPORT OUR GOALS
Pre/Inter/Post-vention Education and Awareness
Peer Counseling Hotline and Texting Services
Community Mobilization

Financial Highlights

In-Kind Contributions $571,447
Special Events/Fundraisers $177,405
Government Grants* $292,178
Contributions** $566,672
Other Income $3,903

Total Income $1,611,606

Total Expenses $1,581,152
Net Income $30,454

Total Assets $1,652,932
Total Liabilities $62,278
Total Net Assets $1,590,654

* Government Grants include: $144,700 PPP Loan Forgiveness Amount (subject to final approval)
** Contributions include: Employee Giving, Foundation & Corporate Grants, Service Clubs, and Individuals
Thank you so much to the hundreds of individuals who made an investment in the lifesaving work at Teen Lifeline. All supporters who gave gifts totaling $500 and above in 2020 are included below.

We are a qualifying charitable organization! (QCO code 20695)
Your donation to Teen Lifeline qualifies you for a dollar-for-dollar tax credit up to $800 ($400 if filing single).
Learn more and donate at teenlifeline.org/taxcredit

Thank you for your generous support!
Luis Barcelo, LuBarcelo@teenlifeline.org

Teen Lifeline is so grateful to the hundreds of individuals who contributed in 2020. Every effort has been made to ensure this listing is accurate. Please contact Luis Barcelo, Development Associate, at luis@teenlifeline.org or (602) 248-8337 with any corrections.

$200,000 +
Thunderbirds Charities

$199,999 - $100,000
Mercy Care
Judy & Frank Buonaro, Michael Buonaro Foundation

$99,999 - $50,000
Steve Neumann, Our Daily Bread Foundation

$49,999 - $25,000
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona

$24,999 - $10,000
City of Scottsdale
City of Tempe
Erik Olsson & Olsson Family Fund
Fenway Jones, Jasper's Game Day
Scottsdale Active 20/30 Foundation
The Moreno Family Foundation
Good Neighbor Award, National Association of Realtors

$9,999 - $5,000
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Alfredo J. Molina, Black Starr & Frost*
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Michelle & Jeff Moorhead*
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Corey Bleich
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The American Gift Fund
Aetna Foundation
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Sissie & Bob Shank, Chas Roberts*
Bill Jordan & Allied Tool & Die
Deborah Geiger
Danny Engler Sr.
Arizona State Employees Charitable Campaign
Lauren Hart & Sam Sciotto*
Carolyn & John Amidon
David Tinkelman
John Largay
Lori Turner
Luxury Home Tour
Nancy & Mike Gray
Old Republic Title Agency
Shannon & Joel Barthelemy

$2,499 - $1,000
Tuft & Needle*
Julie & Troy Bales*
American Express Employee Matching
Matt Heinzel
Ann & Paul Herrmens
Pamela White
Dorothy Kobik
Keri & Matt McWenie
Carla & Stephen Boyle
Kellie & Joe Manders
Ann Marie & Denis Henry
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Sticky Saguaro
Joan & Eric Pedicini
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Melissa Coy
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Hospice of the Valley
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Patrick Boris
Paul & Ann Herrmens
Randy Stolworthy, Tatum
Lynn & Music As Therapy
Rosenbluth Family Charitable Fund
Stephanie Connolly
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Gateway Golf Group
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American Express Foundation
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Lisa Jones
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Sharon & Jerry Carlson
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Dominique-Claude Laroche
Tina Firebag
Valley Toyota Dealers
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Tammy & Steve Rivers
Debbie & Michael Eberhard
John New
Jane Ceasar
Jin & Lisong Shao
Melissa & Matthew Armstead
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Keith Cramer
Leigh & Steven Wales
Maria & Stephen Dichter
Marilyn & Voie Coy
Mary & Bob Brown
Pete & Cathleen Bergmann Charitable Fund
Randall Bass
Rodney & Sasha Glassman
Sandy Chen
Sean Bonnette & Toni Garcia
Steven Ohlemann & Shuree Oldehoeft-Ohlemann
Simone & Anthony Truesdale
Taylor Mathis
Tracey & Larry Lytle
Yung Koprowski

*Includes In-Kind Support