



# STRONG

By Jennifer Kissic • President-Alabama Court Reporters Association

**I** ask you, my fellow court reporters, whether you want to be weak or if you want to be strong? Even a young child will respond, “strong” if asked this question. No one wants to be weak. Our whole lives we have heard that there is strength in numbers. Since we know this to be true, then why, might I ask, are we sitting on our backside, bootie, bum, caboose, derriere, fanny, duff, haunches, heinie, keister, rear end, rump, tail end, tush – there’s your spelling words for the day – and not asking every court reporter you know to join ACRA? Our numbers have dropped over the last few years. Am I worried about the revenue? No. What I am worried about is our numbers as we stand to fight for the vitality of our profession in our state and in our country!! We must unite and mobilize our efforts and respond to the inferior method that is threatening the court reporting profession. This is the only way that we will prevent digital recording from becoming the primary method of taking the record.



Jennifer Kissic  
ACRA President

For decades, we have heard that electronic recording technology would be taking our jobs “someday.” Some of you are saying, “Yes, we

have. And they haven’t.” Well, not yet. But don’t you doubt for one second that they aren’t looking for loopholes and crevices to sneak in and snatch that job away from you. Since I have been on ACRA’s executive board, my eyes have been opened to the national scene and I have been enlightened to the plague of digital “reporting” taking over in other states. At NCRA’s conference in Las Vegas last year, Cyndi Tumlin and I spoke to a very nice gentleman with a private court reporting firm that had a vendor booth. He was handing out all kinds of swag. I wanted the glasses to take home to my girls. So, Cyndi and I had a very nice conversation with him. He really was a nice guy and an even better salesman. He might have even had me thinking, “Well, if I was freelancing,” but he lost me real quick when he mentioned digitals and used the word, “inevitable.” Cyndi and I both got on our soapbox and let him have it. We were not ugly, but we stood firm and let him know where we stood in our best sweet, but spicy southern drawl.

This initiative was fueled in our board by Jordan Groves, who will chair this committee well, was stoked by Alan Peacock and others who brought the Protect Your Record Project

*STRONG... continues on page 4.*

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## 2022 - 2023

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## Mac & Cheese

River Version

1 lb Elbow noodles (cooked al dente with salted water)  
1 lb block Velveta, cubed  
2 cups hand shredded cheddar cheese  
4oz. cream cheese, softened  
1 stick butter, cubed  
1 tsp. (heaping) dry mustard  
1 tsp. white pepper  
1 cup whole milk  
1 cup Half & Half  
3/4 can Pet Milk  
8oz. package shredded Parmesan cheese

Mix all but Parmesan together and put into a sprayed 9x13 casserole dish. Cover with Parmesan cheese. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes, stirring every 15 minutes or until well mixed and creamy.

## Groves Cobbler

Jordan Groves

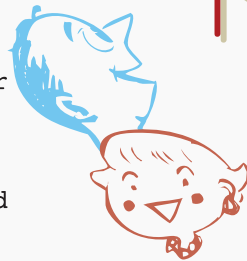
6 tbs. butter  
1 cup self-rising flour  
1 3/4 cup sugar  
5 1/2 tbs. cocoa  
1/2 cup milk  
1 tsp vanilla  
1 1/2 cup boiling water

Melt 6 tbs. butter and pour in a 9x13 pan. Combine flour, 3/4 sugar, 1 1/2 tbs. cocoa, milk, and vanilla in a bowl. Stir together and then spoon in globs into the melted butter in pan. DON'T STIR!

Mix 1 cup sugar and 4tbs. cocoa in a bowl. Drizzle over the batter globs in the pan. DON'T STIR! Pour boiling water over the top and Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

Cool on rack and eat it over ice cream (or by itself)

# Recipes



## Buffalo Chicken Beer Cheese Dip

Vicki Clark

2 (8 oz.) packages cream cheese  
1 cup sour cream  
1/2 cup Frank's RedHot Buffalo Wings Sauce  
1/2 cup IPA beer  
3 tbs. dry ranch dressing & seasoning mix  
2 cups shredded (cooked) chicken  
1 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese  
1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese  
1/4 cup Progresso plain panko crispy bread crumbs

Microwave cream cheese, sour cream, sauce, beer, and seasoning mix in a bowl (uncovered) on high for one minute. Stir well. Add chicken and cheeses; stir. Spread in an ungreased 8-inch (square) baking dish. Sprinkle bread crumbs on top.

Bake at 350 degrees for about 20 minutes or until hot and bubbly.

Recipes ... continues on page 4.

## ***STRONG...***

*continued from the front cover page.*

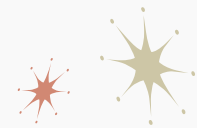
to our attention, and I hope that we continue to raise awareness and advocate more diligently from this point forward. While the Strong committee is just getting started, we are currently looking at ways to educate the public and legal community in Alabama. We need to educate judges, lawyers, legislators, our local and state bar associations, even law students of the importance of stenographic reporting to preserving the record. I encourage you all to bring those boots by encouraging other court reporters to be members of ACRA!

Is this something you want to be a part of? Got ideas on what we can do? Know of an issue that needs to be addressed? Contact us and let us know!



## ***Recipes...***

*continued from page 3.*



### **Squash Casserole**

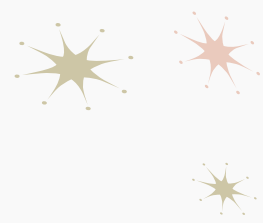
Jessica Pitts

- 2 (16 oz.) packages frozen sliced yellow squash
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 3 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1/2 cup Ritz crackers (crushed)
- 1 (4 oz. env.) buttermilk Ranch dressing mix
- 1 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese
- 1 cup soft bread crumbs
- 1 tbs. butter (melted)

Cook squash and onions with light salt. Drain very well. Mix together mayonnaise, eggs, crackers, dressing mix, and cheese. Fold in with squash and onions.

Place mixture in a 9x13 casserole dish. Mix bread crumbs with butter and sprinkle over the mixture. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 to 25 minutes.

\*serves 8



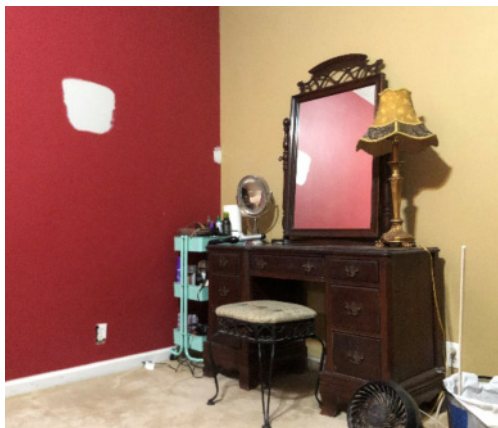
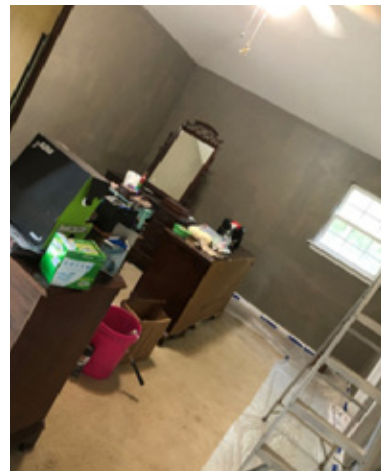
# COURT REPORTERS NEED HOBBIES

By Paula Price • ACRA District 4 Director

**A**s a Court Reporter, I know I struggle with needing to work all the time it seems. Deadlines are usually lingering over our heads, and everyone wants their transcript yesterday. Time is a thief. We are so busy. But you know what? We need outlets. Stress is a killer.

Recently, I discovered something I truly enjoy doing. It is painting and refurbishing furniture. Covid was useful in helping me find a hobby, so I guess something good came out of the time at home. I discovered a particular paint called Heirloom Traditions Paint. And while this is not a sales pitch for them, I would be so wrong not to mention their product because it is the reason for my love. You see, this paint is very user-friendly and very forgiving. It is a self-leveling paint. The only prep needed for painting with this paint is cleaning your item or deglossing it with their cleaner. It is akin to chalk paint, but has a much prettier look upon finishing. So if you've worked with chalk paint, you understand the ease of working with certain paints versus others.

I wanted to share my pictures with you of our bedroom that I completely redid in 2020. Our bedroom was an early 2000s version, way outdated, of the red and tan painted walls with mismatched furniture pieces. It was not a place of comfort for me.



*Court Reporters Need Hobbies . . . continues on page 6.*

## *Court Reporters Need Hobbies. . .*

*continued from page 5.*



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As you can see, the room was totally transformed. It is now a place of peace for me. I must make a note here to let you all know that I did not paint the walls with this paint, but a Sherwin-Williams color. I have since painted several other things in our home. My husband has accused me of painting anything that doesn't move. But, I have found that this is relaxing for me and gratifying as well. I am by no means an expert, but I have fun making things pretty again.

If you've been on the fence about trying to paint, don't hesitate any longer. It is fun and rewarding (and sometimes a little stressful). If you don't like what you've done, simply repaint it! We all need outlets. If this is not for you, find a hobby. Our jobs are so stressful and it helps to blow off steam somehow. Just find something fun for you. Exercise is another form of wonderful stress release as well. I discovered that I actually enjoy that, too. But we'll save that for another article.

ACRA AT THE

# Judges Conference



## NCRA A to Z<sup>®</sup> ONLINE PROGRAM

**AUG. 12-SEPT. 16**  
**iPad users only**

Asynchronous - Participants complete the six-week program at their own pace.

**Register by Aug. 10**

**Register now!**

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Participants meet from 7-9 p.m. Eastern every Thursday for live classes during the six-week program.

**Registration  
opens  
Sept. 13**



## **CONTINUING EDUCATION UNITS**

**(best known as CEUs)**

**Y**our earned CEUs from ACRA's August 13, 2022;



THE  
OMPLEAT  
COURT REPORTER  
*Zoom Webinar*

Conference have been uploaded to ACRA's and NCRA's website for your review and printing capability.

President-Elect Sabrina Lewis presented her first virtual conference with a stellar lineup of speakers. It was great seeing so many people participate in ACRA's summer virtual conference this year – earning you up to 5 CEU hours. We had several guests from out of state attend as well. Kudos, Sabrina – you ROCK!

If you have any questions about your CEUs, please do not hesitate to contact me.

– Karen Strickland Planz

# **Congratulations!**

**Alan Peacock & Sabrina Lewis**

for placing in all three categories and overall in the National Speed Contest at the 2022  
NCRA Convention in Orlando, Florida!

# COURT REPORTERS MANUAL

By Ashley Dickey • ACRA Membership Services Chair

I'm thrilled to announce that the Court Reporters Manual update has finally been completed. Some of you might already know what the Court Reporters Manual is, while some of you might be wondering. It is a comprehensive guide for all court reporters. It contains information about depositions, continuing education requirements, ethics and professional conduct, resources, and daily, rush or expedited original certified transcripts. There are also chapters for officials regarding HR policies and procedures and expense claims.

Whether official or freelance, most court reporters will find themselves reporting in a court setting at some point in their career. Questions arise about what should be done with exhibits and how long transcripts and exhibits should be retained. The Manual provides information on these topics. Navigating the appellate procedure can be especially confusing, so the Manual includes a step-by-step method on how to successfully complete that process.

The last update to the Court Reporters Manual was probably around 20 years ago. Obviously, a lot of information has changed. Updating the Manual was a huge project that has taken several years. In the future, the manual will be updated more regularly to ensure all information contained therein is the most current information available. The people who created the original manual are to be commended for the job they did.

The Court Reporters Manual can be found on ACRA's website at [www.alcra.org](http://www.alcra.org) under the tab CR Manual. It's also linked on Alacourt ABCR's website. This Manual is intended to be available to all court reporters in Alabama as a valuable resource. I hope you will refer to it often. The luxury of updating the Manual now is that we have taken advantage of the available technology, so it includes hyperlinks to laws, rules, and forms to make accessing this vital information very simple.

Court reporters who are employees of the Unified Judicial System were emailed a pdf copy of the Manual by AOC. It contained an acknowledgement form that AOC requires you to sign stating that you have received and read the Manual. Please follow the instructions provided in that email for returning your signed acknowledgement.

Last, but certainly not least, I want to thank the committee members that worked so diligently to make this happen, as well as the Administrative Office of Courts' Legal (Bob Maddox) and Human Resources (Vonda Sanders) Divisions. Bob especially was invaluable to this project. We wouldn't have a completed manual were it not for his help and the enormous amount of time he gave to us, including a lot of his personal time. He was there working with us in the evenings and on weekends when he didn't have to. We can't express our gratitude enough to him for everything he's done. Please thank him if you get the opportunity!

# Alabama Board of Court Reporting (ABCR)

## Alabama's Court Reporting Licensure Board

By Cindy Greene • ACRA Parliamentarian & Legislative Chair

The Alabama Board of Court Reporting (ABCR) held a called meeting on August 10, 2022, at the offices of the Administrative Office of Courts in Montgomery.

Attorney Jennifer Egbe was sworn in as a board member. Jennifer is a partner with the law firm of Huie, Fernamburq & Stewart, LLP in Birmingham.

One of the items on the agenda to be discussed was the proposed changes to the ABCR Rules & Regulations. The proposed changes have been published on the ABCR website since June 21, 2022. The board recessed the meeting to conduct a public hearing on the proposed revisions. Several individuals who signed up to speak were given five minutes to address the board on the proposed revisions. Following the public hearing, the board held a lengthy discussion, then approved the proposed revisions to the Rules & Regulations with amendments.



Meetings of the Alabama Board of Court Reporting (ABCR) are open to the public. The date, time and location of each meeting is published on the ABCR website as well as the Secretary of State website in advance of the meeting.

ABCR has a newly designed website that is very informative and user friendly. It also has more information concerning each licensee, including license expiration date, employer, address and phone number. ACRA encourages its members to visit the ABCR (licensure board) website at [www.abcr.alabama.gov](http://www.abcr.alabama.gov) and make sure the information listed is current. The website also has the licensure laws and rules & regulations that all court reporters should read and become knowledgeable as to the requirements of being a licensed Alabama Certified Court Reporter.

***Have you visited the ACRA Website lately?***

**P**lease visit us at [www.alcra.org](http://www.alcra.org). We are working on adding lots of information for our members. We welcome any suggestions you have for content on our website.

# What is the Difference Between the ACRA and ABCR?

## State Association – ACRA

Alabama Court Reporters Association is an association made up of court reporters who advocate for the court reporting profession in the state of Alabama.

- Represents Alabama Court Reporters
- Provides continuing education opportunities

## State Board – ABCR

Alabama Board of Court Reporting is the board whose purpose is to solely protect the public welfare by ensuring that the public is served by competent and honest court reporters by establishing minimum standards of court reporter practitioners.

- Represents the Alabama consumer
- Handles your license application and renewal

As ABCR states in a document on their website, *“Although our purposes are different, one the consumer advocate and one the profession’s advocate, it benefits the state as a whole as our two organizations work together creating confidence in court reporting services in Alabama.”*

Check out their websites for more information!

ACRA – [www.alcra.org](http://www.alcra.org)

ABCR – [www.abcr.alabama.gov](http://www.abcr.alabama.gov)

## DATES TO REMEMBER

**ABCR License Renewal Deadline:** September 30, 2022

**CCR Testing:** October 7, 2022 At Gadsden State Community College  
(Gadsden State Court Reporting School - Register Online)

**ACRA 2023 Conference:** January 20 & 21, 2023 (Location TBA)

**ACRA 2023 Business Meeting:** January 21, 2023

**NCRA 2023 Conference & Expo:** July 27 - 30, 2023 (Houston, Texas)

# Favorite Briefs

By Lori May • ACRA District 1 Director

LEK	Let me ask you
LEX	Let me ask you this
SKAOIMS	Let me ask you some questions
LOEMS	Let me show you
LEFRZ	Let me rephrase that or let me rephrase the question
PIBT	Plaintiff's Exhibit
DIBT	Defendant's Exhibit
NEND	at the end of the day
TETS	at the time of the accident
TERK	at the time of the wreck
NORT	incident report
PLORT	police report
SDORT	accident report



THE RECORD NEVER FORGETS  
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ASSOCIATION



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## ATTENDING THE 2022 NCRA CONFERENCE & EXPO

ORLANDO, FLORIDA

By Mary Frances Heinfeld • ACRA Vice President

**T**hank you, ACRA, for the opportunity to attend the 2022 NCRA Conference & Expo in Orlando, Florida! I attended some great seminars. One of the most notable was Don't Make Us Say We Told You So: Grassroots and Advocacy in State Courts. The speaker was Stefanie Allison, RPR. She has been a court reporter for 23 years, nine of which she spent freelancing and the remainder as an official in the Omaha, Nebraska metro area. Stefanie is currently on the board of Nebraska Court Reporters Association.



In 2021, Nebraska's Supreme Court started making changes which prompted the court reporters, with help from the legal community, to address misconceptions about our profession and why the stenographic method is the "gold standard." She shared this link from the Omaha Bar Association Town Hall: <http://protectTheRecord.org/video>, which I recommend watching.



Digital recording is an issue that we all need to familiarize ourselves with and be prepared to address as well. The ACRA Board of Directors voted on August 13<sup>th</sup> at our board meeting to form a special committee on the subject. There isn't a formal name for the committee yet, but we will keep you all informed when the name is chosen. Jordan Groves and I will be serving on the committee and welcome any information you want to share. My email address is [maryhccr@gmail.com](mailto:maryhccr@gmail.com).



I am grateful for the opportunity to serve Alabama court reporters!

# MONEY MAKER

**R**ecently, a friend mentioned the rise of inflation. We talked about how an item – pickles – were \$3 cheaper just one month ago, how the economy has rapidly changed, and how home and auto prices are still on the rise.

When I started thinking about that \$3 difference, a thought crossed my mind: What if you put \$3 in a savings account every day? What if you put more? The opportunity to save money is endless!

Submitted by Tatelyn Noda

Deposit	Total	Deposit	Total
Day 1: \$1.	\$1	Day 16: \$16.	\$136
Day 2: \$2.	\$3	Day 17: \$17.	\$153
Day 3: \$3.	\$6	Day 18: \$18.	\$171
Day 4: \$4.	\$10	Day 19: \$19.	\$190
Day 5: \$5.	\$15	Day 20: \$20.	\$210
Day 6: \$6.	\$21	Day 21: \$21.	\$231
Day 7: \$7.	\$28	Day 22: \$22.	\$253
Day 8: \$8.	\$36	Day 23: \$23.	\$276
Day 9: \$9.	\$45	Day 24: \$24.	\$300
Day 10: \$10.	\$55	Day 25: \$25.	\$325
Day 11: \$11.	\$66	Day 26: \$26.	\$351
Day 12: \$12.	\$78	Day 27: \$27.	\$378
Day 13: \$13.	\$91	Day 28: \$28.	\$406
Day 14: \$14.	\$105	Day 29: \$29.	\$435
Day 15: \$15.	\$120	Day 30: \$30.	\$465



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**Written Knowledge Tests**



Registration open **September 1-30**  
 for testing **October 4-19**

# RESILIENCE

By Sabrina Lewis • ACRA President-Elect

**A** CRA Vice President Mary Heinfeld and I represented the Alabama Court Reporters Association at the NCRA Conference in Orlando, Florida, July 21-24, 2022. The event took place in the gigantic Hyatt Regency Orlando hotel and meeting center. If you like walking, this was the place for you! It was an honor to represent our state association while getting reacquainted with old friends at National and other state associations.

Jason T. Meadors, FAPR, RPR, CRR, CRC, of Fort Collins, Colorado, was installed as NCRA President. Jason will serve with an imminently qualified board that includes President-Elect Kristin Anderson, RPR, of Denton, Texas.

The seminars Mary and I attended were very educational and inspirational. We brought back excellent ideas that have already benefitted our members.

The highlight of the conference for me happened during the Premier Session on Friday. Jim Davidson, mountain climber and resilience expert, was giving the keynote address. Perhaps there was some miscommunication. Maybe he was late for another engagement. Whatever the reason, Mr. Davidson seemed intent on squeezing a 20-minute speech into 10 minutes.



Davidson was speaking so fast that I couldn't see his lips moving. The man was stringing words together that shouldn't have been together and breaking other words that shouldn't be broken.



I think every reporter in the room was doing the same thing I was doing: mentally writing Mr. Davidson's speech and being blown away in the process.

Davidson chattered along at 300 words a minute. The audience members, aghast, began looking around the room at each other. The session was being captioned!

*Resilience . . . continues on page 16.*

**Resilience...**  
*continued from page 15.*

I was sure the captioner was getting shredded. Out of respect, I fought to avert my eyes from the captions. Powerless to stop myself, though, my gaze descended to the text. I was amazed to see that the captioner was withstanding the onslaught!



A brave soul in the audience shouted to Mr. Davidson, “Slow down!”

That broke the spell of fear in the room. There was a smattering of laughter, applause, and cries in agreement.

Davidson, totally clueless, thought we were expressing appreciation for what he was saying. “Well, if you like hearing about the rock-climbing, just wait until I get to the ice-climbing,” Jim bragged.

He picked up the pace.

As his breakneck speech continued, a courageous audience member stood, walked to the stage, and whispered in Mr. Davidson’s ear. You could almost see the light bulb go on above Davidson’s head. “Oh! Now I get it,” Jim crowed, and settled into a more respectable 250 words a minute for the remainder of his presentation.

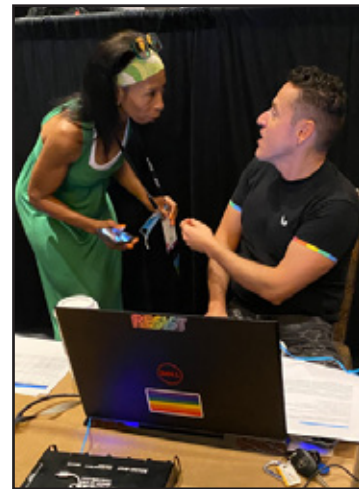
Finally, Mr. Davidson ended the riveting account of his quest to climb Mt. Everest. (**Spoiler Alert!** He was eventually successful, having survived earthquakes, avalanches, and the demise of his climbing partner, Mike.)

The moderator advanced to the stage and thanked Mr. Davidson for his speech. She also acknowledged the captioner, Anthony Trujillo, of Orlando. A loud roar of applause erupted and there was a standing ovation for Mr. Trujillo, who had provided excellent captions for the presentation.

The audience slowly filed out. I noted a line of people outside of the banquet room. Davidson was selling his books and autographing copies.

The longest line and biggest crowd, though, were the people who, like me, had gathered around Mr. Trujillo at the captioner’s station. Anthony shyly smiled and humbly endured the congratulations, the hugs, the photo requests. When I reached the front of the line, I could only bow to Mr. Trujillo. I was in the presence of greatness.

One of Mr. Davidson’s quotes was “You’ve got to look inside yourself and find your source of resilience.” That’s exactly what Anthony Trujillo did that day.





## 988: New Number to Call for People Facing Mental Health Crises

Everyone deserves access to the support they need when they need it – and that includes mental health support. Available now, anyone facing a mental health crisis can call 988 and be connected to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

The line is staffed with mental health professionals who can provide guidance and support. The phone line is staffed 24/7 and is free and confidential.

What happens when you call 988:

- You will be directed to your closest crisis center based on your area code.
- Once connected, the trained mental health professional will listen and help address the issue by providing support and resources.
- You will be connected to a backup location if your local center is unavailable.

Having concerns about your mental health is a common experience. It's time to make this kind of support just as common. This is why 988 is an easy three-digit phone number to remember. If you're ever feeling like you need help with a mental health or substance use crisis but are not sure how or where to start, dial 988 for a direct connection to compassionate, accessible support.

It's never too early – or too late – to seek help. In the U.S., the average amount of time between the onset of symptoms of a mental health condition or challenge and a diagnosis is eleven years. If you're facing a mental health crisis for the first time reaching out can help.

Lifeline and other hotlines work. Studies show that hotlines are effective in helping people who are experiencing thoughts of suicide or having a mental health crisis. 66% of people said that the chat intervention feature offered by the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is helpful.

Mental health challenges and crises are widespread. This is why there are resources and support available for anyone facing mental health and substance use issues. If you or someone you know needs help, please do not hesitate to call 988 for assistance.

**Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides free and confidential assessment and counseling services. If you are struggling with issues or have had suicidal thoughts, reach out to your BHS Care Coordinator to be provided with resources. BHS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling 800-245-1150.**



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