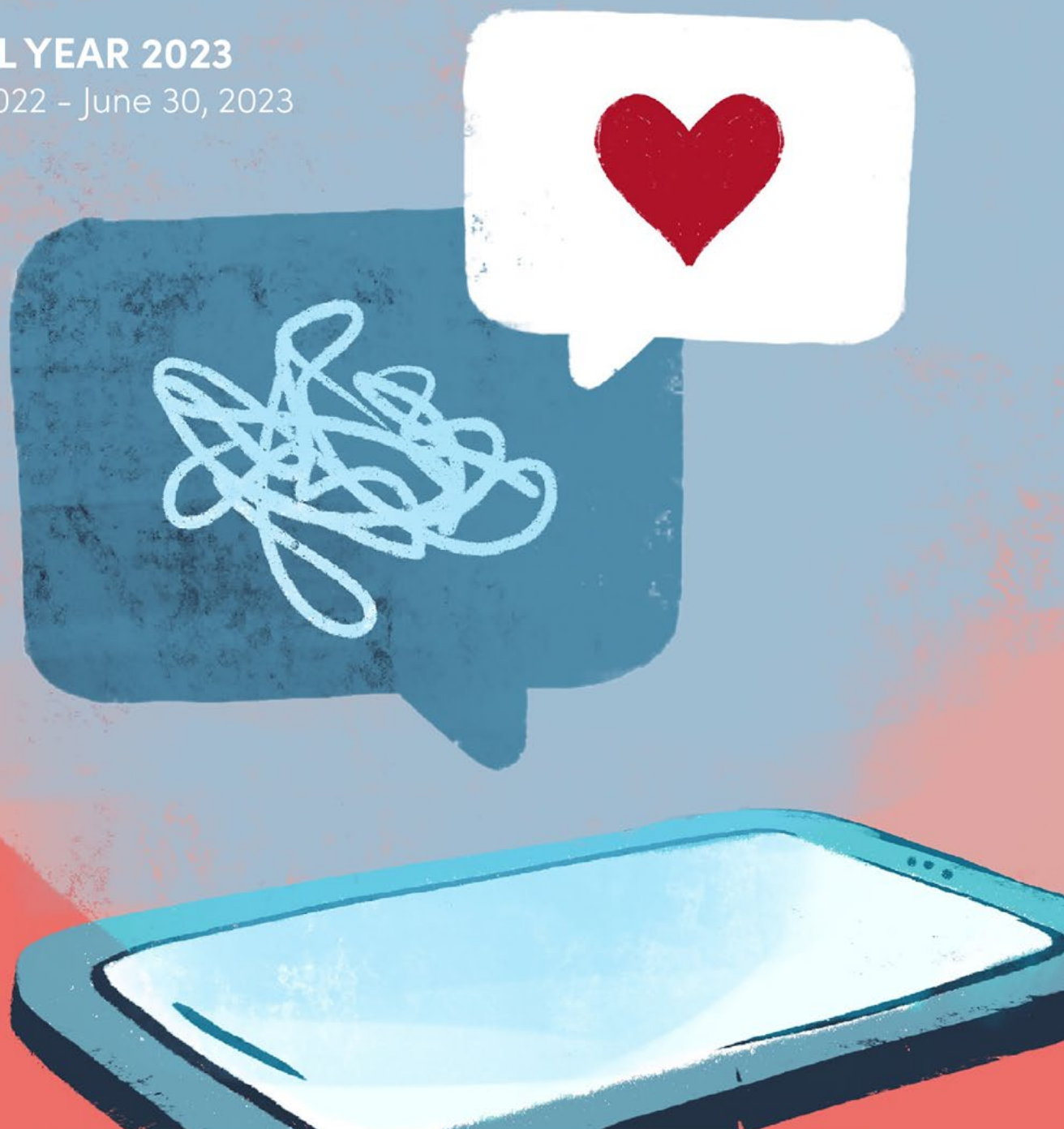




# ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2023

July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023





**Available 24/7**

**Call, Chat, or Submit a Tip**

**Always Confidential**



Services provided by: UNIVERSITY OF UTAH HEALTH  
Program supported by: SAFEUT & SCHOOL SAFETY COMMISSION

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# THE SAFEUT STORY

## Any Size Crisis. Any Time.

SafeUT was developed in response to Utah’s unacceptably high youth suicide rate, the leading cause of death for young people aged 10–24. The program was created through legislation and is supported by the SafeUT & School Safety Commission (commission). The commission is chaired by the Utah Attorney General’s Office with representation from statewide partners in public and higher education, behavioral health, law enforcement, elected officials, and members of the general public.

The SafeUT app provides a way for students, parents/guardians, and educators to confidentially connect to a licensed counselor at Huntsman Mental Health Institute (HMHI). Counselors are ready to listen to any sized crisis or concern at no cost, 24/7, 365 days a year. Users can start a real-time chat with master’s level counselors, submit tips to crisis counselors who triage concerns—such as bullying, school safety threats, and potential acts of violence—to school administrators, or directly call a certified crisis worker.

## Far More Than an App

SafeUT is far more than an app—it’s a mental health system of care. Crisis help can be provided via chat messaging—the primary mode of communication for young people—factoring into SafeUT’s success. Use is confidential, and SafeUT counselors do not inquire about identifying information except in emergency situations. SafeUT is nationally recognized for its effectiveness in saving lives and de-escalating potential school threats using a behavioral health-first approach.

**“Utah has some tools that other states don’t have. It’s one of the reasons we encourage the SafeUT app to be downloaded in every school on every smart device.”**

– Utah Governor Spencer Cox

## SafeUT’s Community Impact



**885,519+**  
Students with access



**30,503**  
Total chats (all apps)



**9,204**  
Total K-12 & higher education tips



**536**  
Lifesaving interventions\*



**1,160,727**  
Overall back-and-forth chat messages (all apps)



**1,118,602**  
K-12 and higher education back-and-forth chat messages



**109,369**  
Back-and-forth messages for tip conversations



*\*Of the 536 lifesaving interventions that took place, 269 lifesaving interventions included law enforcement and/or emergency medical services (EMS) response. 267 were de-escalated by counselors and involved collaboration with the user’s school and parent/guardian. In past annual reports, the number of lifesaving interventions only included those that involved law enforcement.*



**TIP**

SafeUT offers support for those who may have concerns about themselves or someone they care about. **Topics SafeUT can support with include:**

- Thoughts of suicide and/or self-harm
- Bullying
- Potential school threats or acts of violence
- Depression and anxiety
- Drug and alcohol problems
- Loss and grief
- Relationship difficulties
- Any life challenge

## Who SafeUT Supports

Youth and young adults, parents/guardians, educators, frontline workers, Utah National Guard members, and their families need mental health support, particularly considering the social and emotional impacts from the aftermath of the global pandemic. SafeUT puts help in the palm of their hand.

**Even with the rise of risk factors, suicide rates have remained relatively flat in Utah over the last year. This is likely due to preventative and supportive mental health services, such as SafeUT.**



### Youth & Young Adults

Suicide is the leading cause of death for young people aged 10-24 in Utah.



### Parents, Guardians & Educators

Parents, guardians, and educators may struggle with their own mental health challenges while caring for their students.



### Frontline

From pandemic to protests, the past few years have been tough on Utah's frontline workers.



### Utah National Guard

Military service can contribute to unique personal and professional life challenges.

# History

## Exploring Solutions

Suicide is the leading cause of death for youth and young adults, ages 10-24, in the state of Utah. In 2014, School Safety Tip Line Commission (S.B. 232) legislation was introduced by Utah State Sen. Daniel Thatcher to explore solutions to both the mental health crisis and school safety threats. The commission was chaired by the Utah Attorney General's Office and included legislators, state agencies, and members of the public with the intent to provide recommended solutions in the following state legislative general session. In 2015, the School Safety and Crisis Line legislation (S.B. 175) was introduced and passed, implementing a commission that expanded to include the University of Utah's Neuropsychiatric Institute (now HMHI) as the crisis services provider. **The SafeUT app became available to Utah's middle and high schools in early 2016.**

## Development and Expansion

The SafeUT program was developed with state funding and the original app was designed and donated by a private company. After seeing its success, the University of Utah redesigned the SafeUT app to ensure its future capabilities to respond to mental health and school safety crises. Starting in 2018, **SafeUT expanded its services to Utah elementary schools, higher education institutions and colleges, the Utah National Guard (2019), and Utah's first responders and their families (2020).**



# SafeUT is a Symbol of Hope and Support

"SafeUT provides the instant, confidential counseling, and network of care that gives people in crisis a fighting chance to survive their darkest moment. Hundreds of Utahns are alive today because of SafeUT—well over 500 in the last year alone. You probably know some of them. While we can count up the messages, conversations, and dollars spent, what matters most is each person that reached out and survived, and each family that continued to enjoy life with their loved one close. My deepest thanks and respect go to the visionary team of commissioners, staff, legislators, and Attorney General Sean Reyes who breathed life into Sen. Thatcher's vision and built SafeUT into a model for the nation. To those currently experiencing moments that may be overwhelming, please know that you can trust us. Reach out. We've got you."

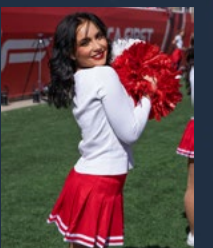
- Ric Cantrell, Commission Chair & Utah Attorney General Chief of Staff

"Growing up I was always taught to reach out to a trusted adult if I ever needed crisis help or to report any worrying comments and actions. I know I'm not alone when I say sometimes it can be intimidating and even embarrassing to speak up.

When I entered high school, I was introduced to the SafeUT app. Among all the assemblies and introductions, the one thing that stood out to me was that it was [confidential]. Through that ability, I finally felt like I found solace in a resource, knowing that I could access help no matter the time, no matter the place—all from my phone.

SafeUT has not only been a lifeline for me but has also empowered me to extend a helping hand to those around me. There was a time when I overheard a classmate making worrying statements, and my heart sank with concern. Without hesitation, I reached out to SafeUT, reported the situation, and within hours my classmate received the help they desperately needed. I found comfort in knowing that I didn't have to upset my friend by outwardly 'snitching' on her, but instead, it was handled confidentially without the worry of ruining any type of trust between us. The peace of mind that comes from knowing such a powerful tool exists, one that can save lives and support the well-being of students, is immeasurable. I am forever grateful to the creators of this app, their commitment to our mental health, and the lifesaving impact of the SafeUT app."

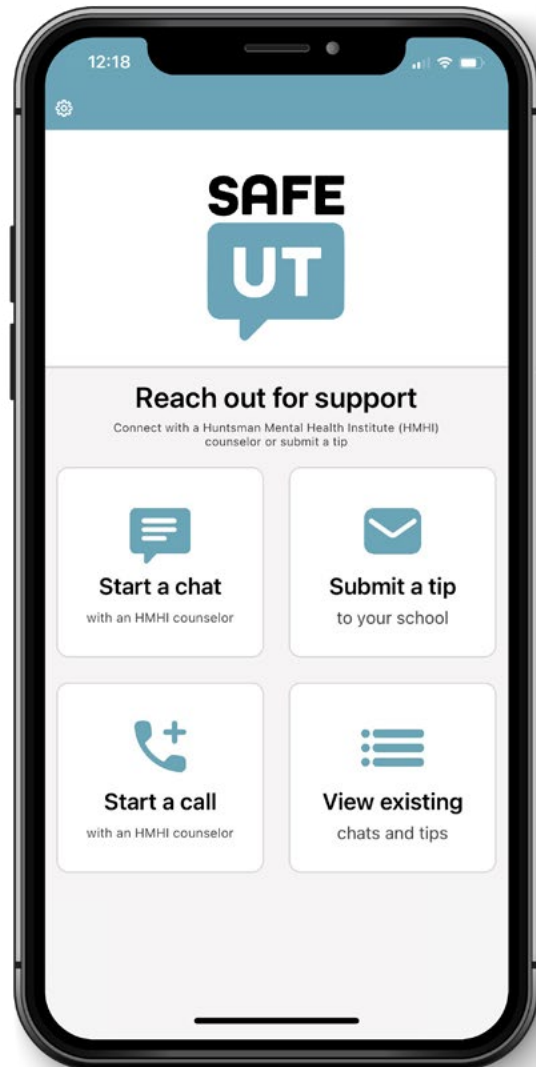
- Shelby McDonald



"The SafeUT app is great because kids are always on their phones. This app provides a place to go and a soft spot to land. I know it's helped many students at this school. It brings me peace knowing it exists. I love that the state of Utah has invested its efforts into [SafeUT], too. It's making a difference. It's keeping kids afloat. It's keeping people alive, and I think that's powerful."

- Caitlin Thomas, Lehi High School faculty

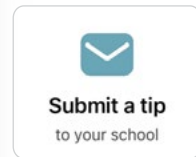
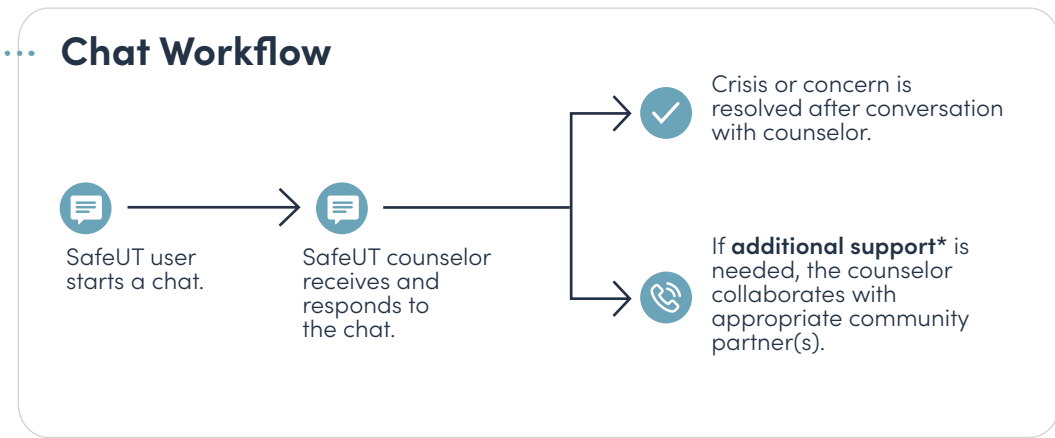
# How SafeUT Works



## Start a Chat

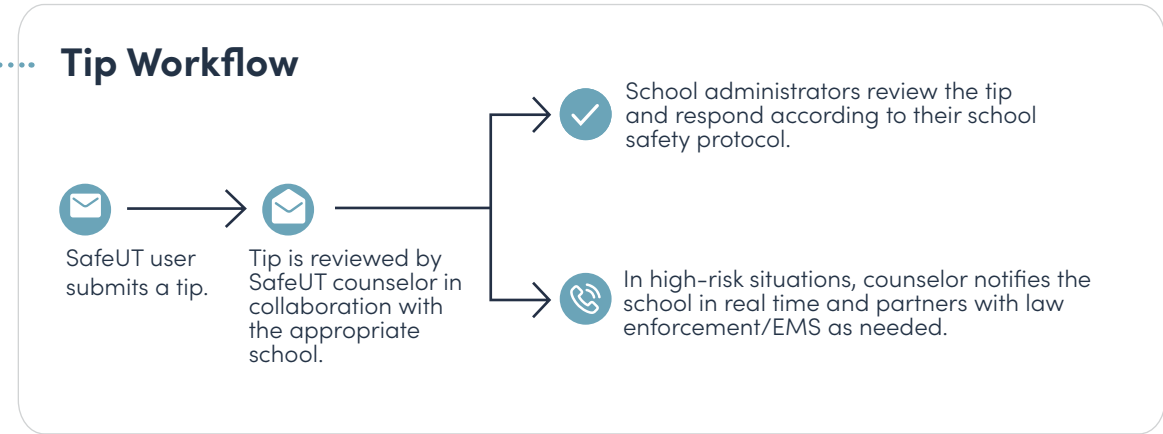
The chat feature offers real-time communication with SafeUT master's level counselors who are available 24/7.

SafeUT can be accessed by students, parents/guardians, and educators at no cost (standard data usage and rates may apply).



## Submit a Tip

Students, parents/guardians, and educators of schools participating in SafeUT can submit confidential tips on concerns including bullying, school safety threats, and violence. Tips can be submitted with photos in addition to text content.



## Start a Call

As SafeUT is an integrated system of care available 24/7, users can also call a certified crisis worker with the Utah Crisis Line on the app.

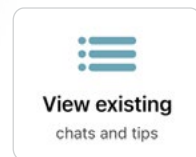
This feature is like 988, the three-digit dialing code that connects people to the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, in that callers are supported by the same staff in Utah. The app presents another way to access support in a space where users may already be familiar.

**\*Additional Support**  
(between July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023)

**1,527** calls SafeUT counselors made to community partners to coordinate additional support

**Breakdown of calls made:**

- 54%** Schools & Family
- 51%** Community Resource
- 21%** First Responders
- 4%** SafeUT User



## View Existing Chats & Tips

SafeUT saves users' chats and tips for future personal reference. As always, the app offers confidential and password-protected services.

Scan or click to learn more and download the SafeUT app  
Available on Apple & Android devices



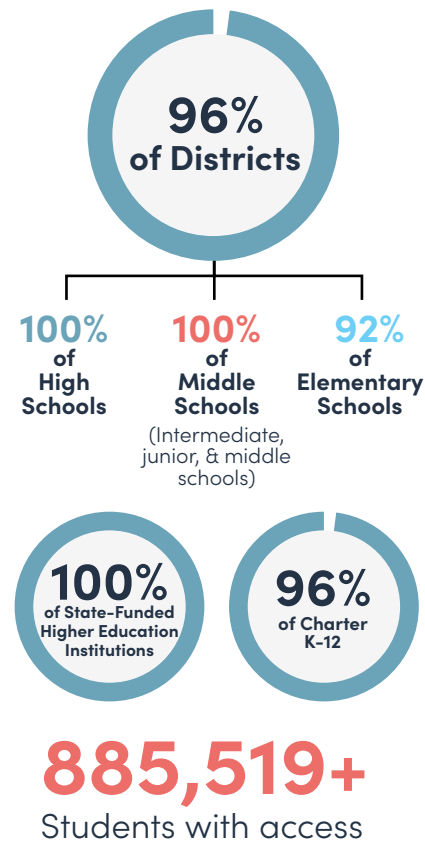
# SCHOOL IMPACT

## School Participation

SafeUT has almost all Utah public and charter schools participating in its program with 96% registered in the app, as well as more than 20 private schools.

Participating schools are listed within the SafeUT app, and school administrators are trained to handle submitted tips received through the app. All tips submitted through the app are immediately reviewed by SafeUT counselors.

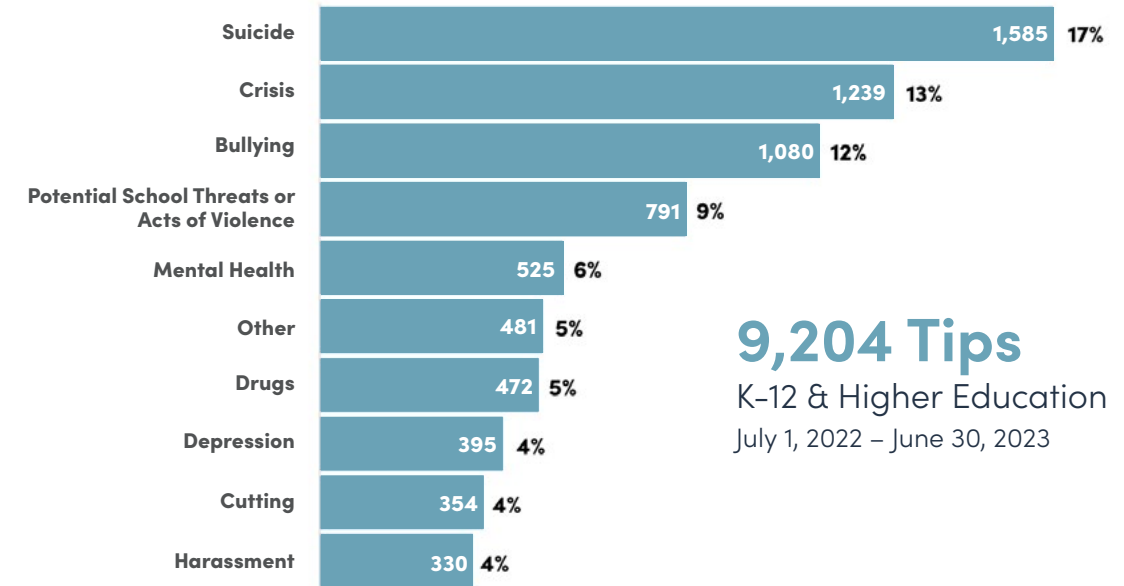
Non-urgent tips are sent daily to appropriate school administrators, and tips of a more threatening nature, including violence or planned school attacks, are triaged by SafeUT counselors who may involve law enforcement and administrators to quickly resolve the crisis.



## School Safety Tip Line Success

Students, parents/guardians, and educators of schools participating in SafeUT can submit confidential tips on concerns they have about classmates or school safety threats. Suicide was the top reported tip, making up 17% of total tips submitted, followed by crisis, bullying, and potential school threats or acts of violence.

Students, parents/guardians, and educators can also submit tips on potential threats they see or hear. Guns (25%) and assault (12%) were the top threat tips reported, followed by fighting and planned school attacks. In certain cases, these tips proved crucial in preventing school attacks.



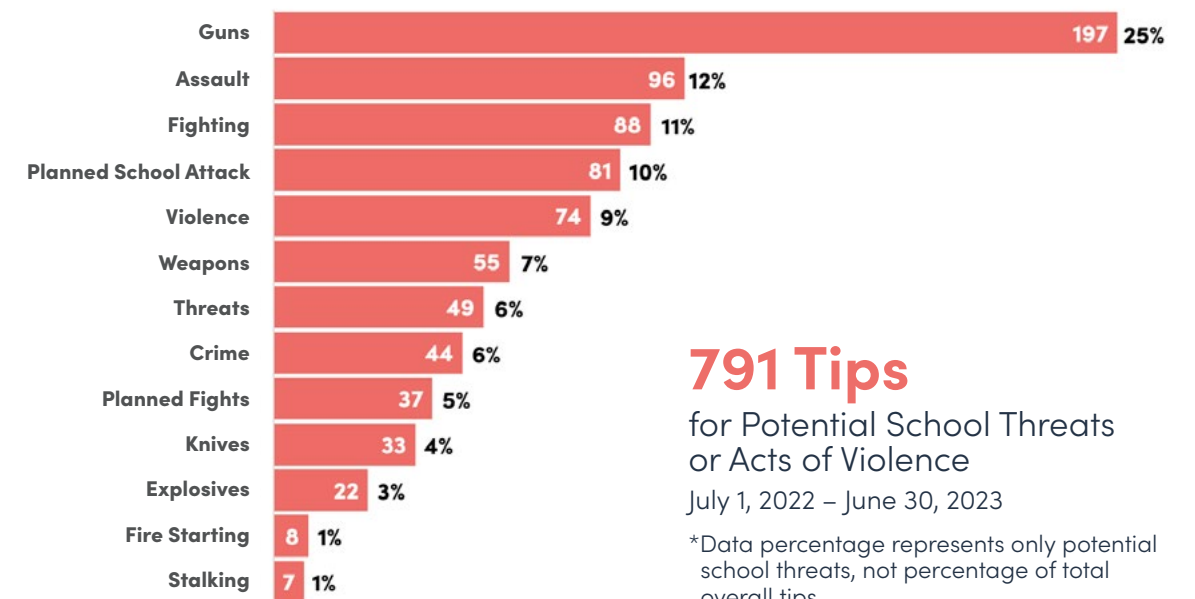
**9,204 Tips**  
K-12 & Higher Education  
July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

**29,534**  
Total K-12 & higher education chats

**1,118,602**  
K-12 and higher education back-and-forth chat messages

**5%**  
increase in chat utilization compared to FY22

**109,369**  
Back-and-forth messages for tip conversations



**791 Tips**  
for Potential School Threats or Acts of Violence  
July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

\*Data percentage represents only potential school threats, not percentage of total overall tips

## Keeping Schools Safe

One of the key pieces to school violence prevention is knowing **there is no profile of students who plan school attacks**. They're someone's child. They're someone's friend. **They're someone in crisis**. Those who plan school attacks have grievances; however, they often have an underlying and secondary motive such as having social stressors or being suicidal.

The U.S. Secret Service's National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC) studied averted school attacks, finding there are almost always intervention points available before a student's behavior escalates to violence. Based on the 2021 study, the NTAC shared key findings that should be considered when developing policies and protocols for multidisciplinary school threat assessment teams. SafeUT is one piece of a larger goal towards safer schools.



### Students

**Students are best positioned to identify and report concerning behaviors displayed by their classmates.** If a student has a concern about a classmate, they can use SafeUT's "Submit a Tip" feature to confidentially report their concern.



### Families

**The role of parents, guardians, and families in recognizing concerning behavior is critical to prevention.** It's recommended that parents, guardians, or family members talk to their student about any concerns they may have about happenings at school or another classmate. If the student doesn't feel comfortable using the SafeUT app to report their concern, adults are strongly encouraged to confidentially submit a tip so the information gets to the proper authorities.



### Schools

Schools should seek to intervene with students before their behavior warrants legal consequences.

**School resource officers play an important role in school violence prevention.**

**Students displaying an interest in violent or hate-filled topics should elicit immediate assessment and intervention.**

**Removing a student from school does not eliminate the risk they might pose to themselves or others.**

If an educator, school administrator, or anyone working at a school notices concerning behavior from a student, they can confidentially report their concern through the SafeUT app.



### Communities

Prevention is a community effort. When students, families, and schools work together to provide one another with their own information, intervention can take place to thwart a school threat before it's too late.

Knowing these three things have proven to be helpful in school attack prevention efforts:

- **Students were most often motivated to plan a school attack because of a grievance with classmates.**
- **Targeted school violence is preventable when communities identify warning signs and intervene.**
- **Many of the student plotters had access to weapons, including unimpeded access to firearms.**



Scan or click the QR code to learn more

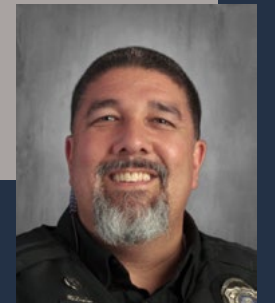


"SafeUT has helped our schools in many ways, one of which is informing us of kids who are at risk. It provides a confidential, easy path for kids to report something that's hurting them physically or mentally, or [share] things that are on their mind. [For tips we receive,] I've been able to take immediate action and call these kids into my office to have healthy, meaningful conversations where they benefit because of SafeUT—whether they themselves created a tip or someone has created a tip for them confidentially.

The resource of SafeUT has been fantastic. It creates a collaboration between parents and families, school administration, and school law enforcement—which is school resource officers. There's a gap that exists between law enforcement and the community, and SafeUT is one of the ways we bridge that gap.

When these kids are empowered to know what to do, then they'll know what to do in a moment of crisis."

- Chris Ruiz, Alpine School District School Resource Officer



## TIP

U.S. Department of Homeland Security research shows that if we "know the signs" of violence, we can prevent it. If you don't know what to look for, it can be easy to miss the signs. **Critical warning signs of planned attacks or hurting others include:**

- Suddenly withdrawing from friends, family, and activities (including online via social media)
- Expressing persistent thoughts of harming themselves or someone else
- Bullying, especially if targeted towards differences in race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation
- Making direct threats toward a place, another person, or themselves
- Excessive irritability, lack of patience, or becoming angry quickly
- Bragging about access to guns or weapons
- Experiencing chronic loneliness or social isolation
- Recruiting accomplices for an attack
- Directly expressing a threat as a plan





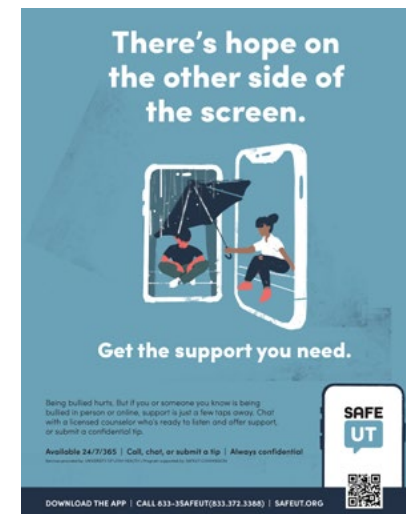
## Fighting Back Against Bullying

### Jazz Foundation Supports SafeUT Anti-Bullying Campaign

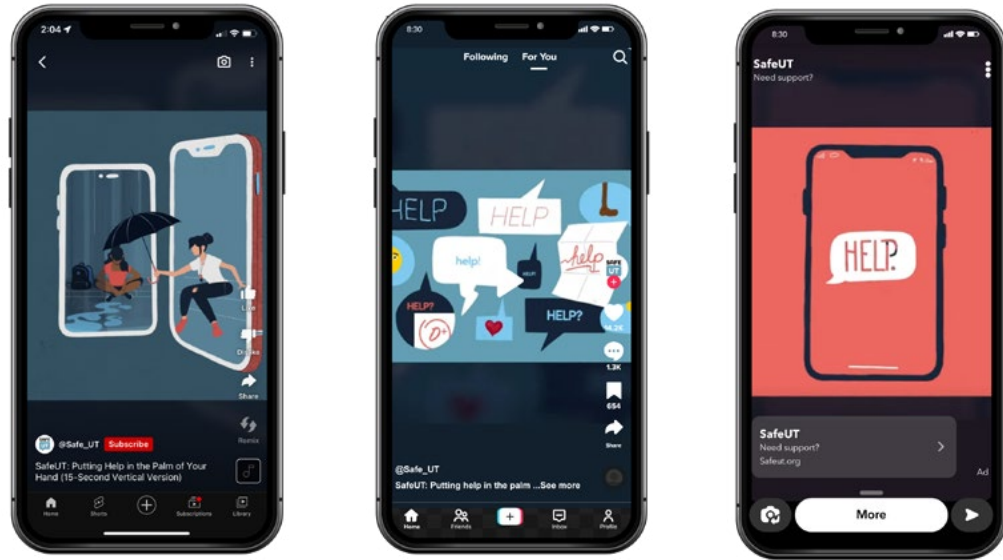
In November 2021, Isabella “Izzy” Tichenor, age 10, died by suicide. Her death came as a stark reminder of the challenges she and other young people face and helped galvanize the entire community to act and ensure resources were being provided to support them. To honor Izzy and her family, and help other young people, the Utah Jazz Foundation made a generous donation to SafeUT to support an anti-bullying campaign and suicide prevention resources.

Thanks to the donation, SafeUT developed a bullying prevention campaign that launched in 2022 and reached more than 885,519 students. The campaign encouraged students to think about how their words—in person and online—affect others and called on students, parents/guardians, and educators to use the confidential SafeUT tip feature if they or someone they know is being bullied.

**Anti-bullying posters were provided to every school participating in SafeUT and were seen by 885,519+ students across Utah.**



Anti-bullying digital ads were targeted towards students and parents/guardians, leading to an increase in overall SafeUT website traffic by 107% compared to the previous quarter. Paid media efforts drove more than 2.8 million impressions.



Collaborations with local social media influencers helped spread anti-bullying messaging and awareness of the app to parents/guardians on Instagram, reaching more than 46,500 accounts and totaling relatively high engagement rates for the influencers' accounts.



"We are committed to ensuring that every young person knows that they are valued for who they are. And we want to ensure that there are resources available, places to go, and people who can be a lifeline when they need it.

We knew that SafeUT has the potential to reach every student and young person and give them a place to turn during a crisis.

Any death by suicide is one too many. We want every young person to feel loved and accepted and supported for who they are. Feelings of sadness and depression are real and valid. But if young people know they can turn to SafeUT, they can see they are not alone and there is hope and happiness ahead."

- Mike Maughan, President of Utah Jazz Foundation



When people feel listened to,  
they are more likely to accept help.



### Top Barriers to Receiving Mental Health Treatment

Barriers to SafeUT are part of a larger challenge—impediments to mental health treatment. When asked, these are the top five most common mental health barriers for SafeUT users who are 18 years old and younger and in K-12:

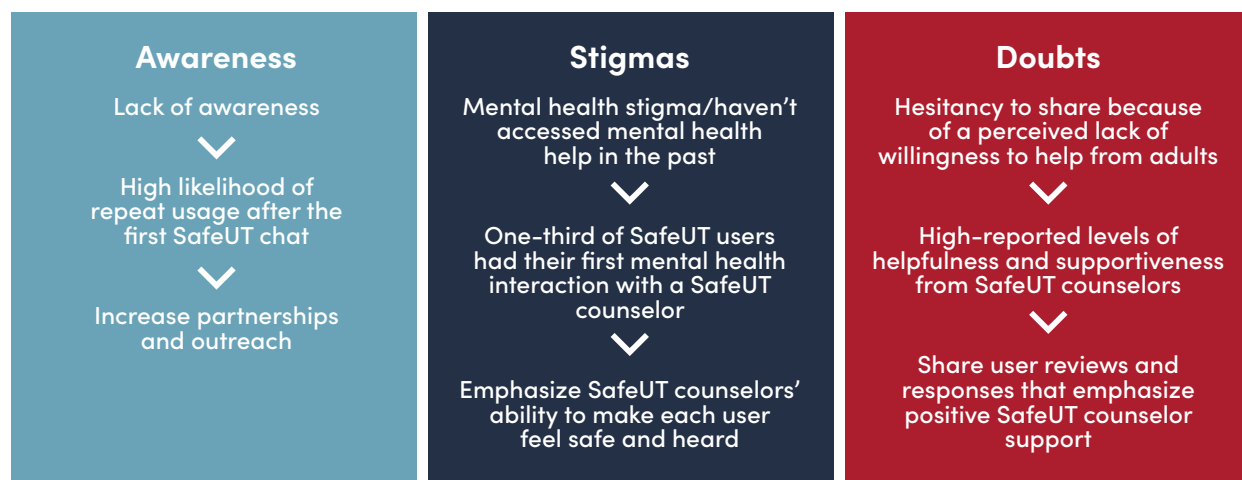
- 42% Not wanting to talk to a parent/guardian about it
- 30% Too overwhelming
- 27% Cost
- 19% Availability of services
- 19% Stigma

## Overcoming Barriers

To make a bigger impact in Utah, SafeUT conducted research to identify barriers that may exist for users.

What keeps students and adults from downloading the app? What prevents people from using the app once they're aware of SafeUT? What keeps rural residents from using the app?

Findings revealed promising information to help understand why and how SafeUT should move forward with regard to the following three areas:



## SafeUT Listens

Where youth may often feel like their opinions and struggles are ignored or devalued, SafeUT provides a listening ear to support hurting youth on their journey to recovery. In a survey of SafeUT users:

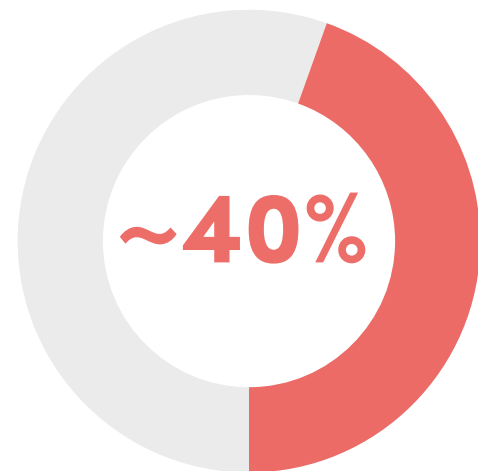
- 94% of users feel the SafeUT counselor "usually" or "always" **showed respect** for what they had to say
- 89% of users reported feeling the SafeUT counselor either "usually" or "always" **carefully listened** to them
- 87% of users feel "very **supported**" or "somewhat supported" by SafeUT counselors
- 87% of users feel the SafeUT counselor "usually" or "always" **explained things** in a way they could understand
- 84% of users feel "very **satisfied**" or "somewhat satisfied" after using the SafeUT app

## Ongoing Research and Quality Improvement

Efforts are currently underway to investigate the influence of SafeUT on mental health service utilization among its users and to develop a better understanding of barriers to care SafeUT users face. There's also an effort to explore the experiences of lifesaving interventions among SafeUT users and their families. This information will help shape process and program improvement efforts to make SafeUT an even better service for the community.

### User Feedback

School counselors and administrators have reported SafeUT has fast turnaround times for tips, negligible increase in workload, and substantial positive impact upon student well-being.



of youth said they followed through with resources, supports, or options that were provided by the SafeUT counselor in the two weeks after using the app

**"It's just a constant thing that they're sending them messages, 'You've got a student who's struggling with this or that.' We drop everything we're doing and we offer support to those students every time. So it's a very well-developed app and it's worth every cent in my opinion. It's very effective."**

- Cade Douglas, Superintendent of Sevier School District

## SafeUT Success Story

**"I have had many problems with homicidal thoughts and I am scared that they will get the best of me,"**

a SafeUT user chatted into the app in winter 2022.

The SafeUT counselor who responded to the chat de-escalated the situation and, with the SafeUT user's help, contacted their parents. In a quality improvement follow-up call with the parents, SafeUT learned the intervention encouraged more open communication within the family and the SafeUT user's outpatient behavioral health team.

Additionally, it made them aware of the need for further diagnostics and treatment options. The family shared that they were impressed with how comfortable the SafeUT user felt chatting with the SafeUT counselor and with the app's ease of use. They were also glad the SafeUT user is now more open to talking about their thoughts and feelings without shame, and said they were "extremely likely" to refer others to use the SafeUT app.



## SafeUT is for Parents, Too

When it comes to supporting students with their mental health, SafeUT values the crucial partnership with parents/guardians. SafeUT counselors always encourage students to talk with a trusted adult in their life. While SafeUT offers a listening ear and qualified support in times of crisis, no one can truly replace the influence of a loving parent/guardian.

And because the most important resource for a child's mental health is a trusted adult, SafeUT is not only available for students but also parents/guardians. Use of the app by parents/guardians may include struggling to know how to support their student, needing someone to listen because they're personally dealing with life challenges, sharing a concern about safety at their student's school, and more.

### Not sure how to start the conversation about mental health with your student?

SafeUT and Utah State Board of Education's Conversation Starters can help with a little guidance and talking points.

Scan or click the QR code to download Conversation Starters



Scan or click the QR code to learn more about parent resources



"This app has made such a huge difference in my life. My only regret is that I wish I had known about it earlier. This can help so many people, especially our youth and adults. Everybody struggles with mental health and we need to talk about it more. We need to make sure that we're reaching out and getting the help that we need."

- Tia Stokes, Parent

## Support for Educators & School Administrators

An educator's job involves more than just instilling facts or numbers in the minds of students. It can also involve looking out for those students' emotional well-being and the safety of their school. With SafeUT, they don't have to do it alone.

It's also important for educators and school administrators to take care of themselves. The long days and nights of the job can be emotionally taxing, and SafeUT is there to offer support and referral assistance any time.

Whether there's a concern about a student, school safety, or the stressors of life are piling up, SafeUT counselors are available to listen and provide support.

**Interested in promoting self-care in the classroom?** Give students time to complete the SafeUT Coloring Page with their favorite colors. SafeUT provides many resources for educators whose schools participate in the program.

Educators and school administrators can also connect with the SafeUT Marketing & Outreach Team to request a classroom or assembly presentation.

Scan or click the QR code to download the SafeUT Coloring Page



Scan or click the QR code to learn more about educator resources



"The dynamic in schools has drastically changed over previous decades. With these changes comes untold types of pressures and concerns not present in the past. Whether it be weapons in school, juvenile suicidal ideation, or harassment/bullying, SafeUT allows students and faculty to report all these issues to the appropriate people."


- Chase Hebert, Canyons School District School Resource Office




# FRONTLINE

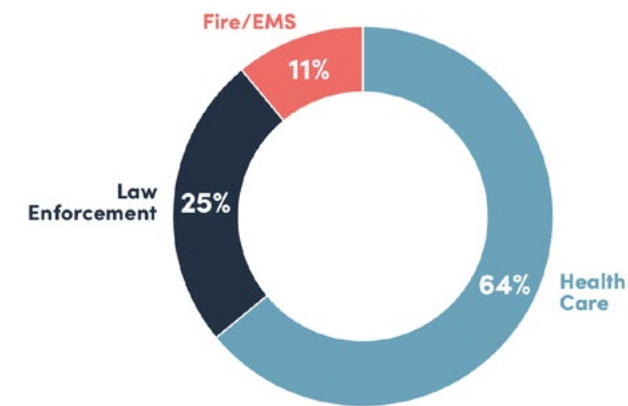
The SafeUT Frontline app provides a way for Utah’s health care providers, fire/EMS, law enforcement, and their families to confidentially connect to licensed mental health professionals trained to understand the unique challenges front-line workers face on a daily basis. SafeUT counselors are available 24/7 to listen, support, and provide essential resources.


 **632**  
Total Frontline chats  
Health Care 401  
Law Enforcement 159  
Fire/EMS 72

 **26,336**  
Frontline back-and-forth chat messages

 **272%**  
Increase in utilization compared to FY22

By Profession:



 Scan or click to learn more and download the SafeUT Frontline App  
Available on Apple & Android devices



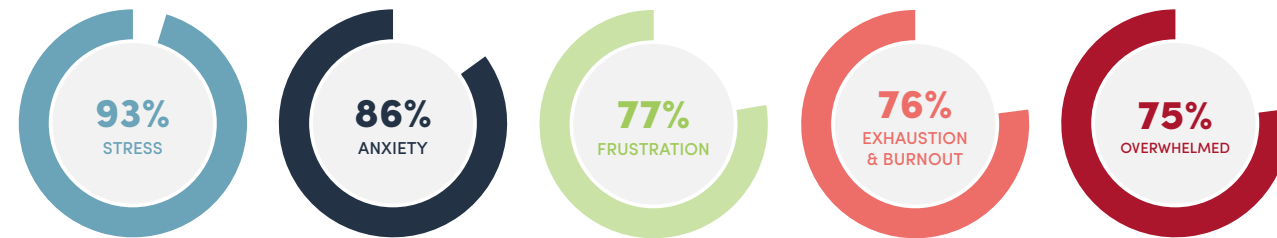
## TIP

SafeUT Frontline offers support for Utah’s frontline workers and their families who may have concerns about themselves or someone they care about, such as a colleague or loved one. **Topics SafeUT Frontline can support with include:**

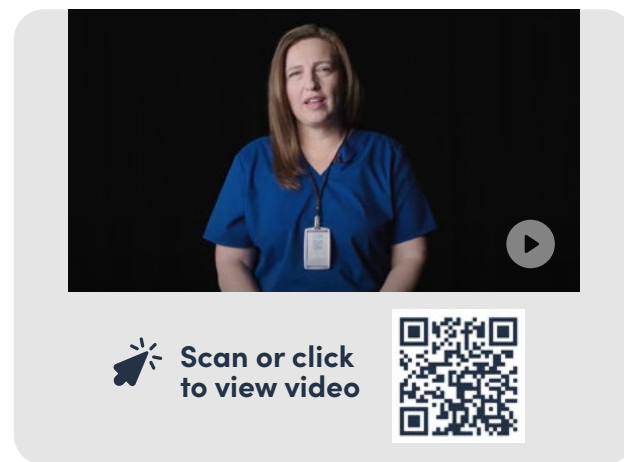
- Thoughts of suicide and/or self-harm
- Personal stress
- Work-related stress
- Burnout
- Depression and anxiety (PTSD, PTSI)
- Drug and alcohol problems
- Relationship difficulties
- Any life challenge

## Health Care Professionals

Health care workers reported experiencing:



Stretched too thin, and living within a culture of helping others, health care workers often experience pervasive thoughts that they shouldn't need help themselves. While this issue became more pronounced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and continues today, **nearly 80% of physicians reported feeling burnout prior to the pandemic and 70% of nurses experience anxiety symptoms, with 38% having anxiety at a moderate or severe level.** SafeUT is committed to focus on supporting health care workers. The service is also available to family members as they often are the first to notice changes in their loved one.



"SafeUT has 24/7 access. And there's a response time that's really fast...I have this on my phone so I have a place or an option to go when I'm feeling overwhelmed at 2 in the morning."

- Crystal Armstrong, MD, University of Utah Health

## Fire & EMS

A Suicide Prevention Resource Center survey for firefighters found that:



When paired with the staggering number that more than **80% of firefighters say asking for help would make them seem weak or unfit for duty**, this group became a SafeUT priority. The service is also available to fire and EMS responders' families as they often are the first to notice changes in their loved one.



"The SafeUT app is really easy to use to point you in the right direction as to where you need to get help... If I were to do it again, I would have started way earlier with therapy and mental health work."


- Scott Pickle, Retired Firefighter

<https://mhanational.org/mental-health-healthcare-workers-covid-19>


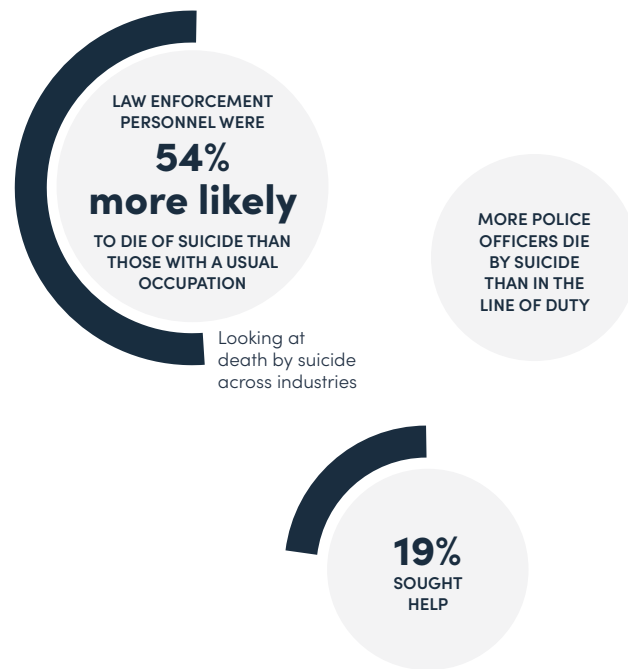
## Law Enforcement

According to the latest law enforcement statistics courtesy of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), police officers report much higher rates of depression, burnout, PTSD, and anxiety than the general population. In addition, **almost 25% of police officers have experienced suicidal ideation at least once in their lifetime. In the smallest departments, the suicide rate for officers increases to almost four times the national average.**

There is a stigma that those who seek mental health services are unfit to serve as officers in the criminal justice system. **Consequently, fewer than 20% of police officers with confirmed mental health issues have sought services in the past year.** SafeUT wants to decrease the stigma by increasing confidential services for officers, and their families, in Utah.

Scan or click to view video

“SafeUT is an absolutely fantastic [program] that’s available for all folks across the state of Utah. It was designed originally for kids in schools and has branched out. SafeUT Frontline is an app for first responders—police, fire, EMS, frontline medical workers—to help them deal with the stressors and challenges of their mental wellness in their jobs to serve their community.

This is real intelligence and real people. When you use the app, you’ll be chatting with a live person who’s clinically trained, someone who’s certified—a real counselor who knows how to deal with some of the challenges that are unique to first responders.

I had a police officer reach out who was having some challenges with substance abuse of alcohol. This particular officer was looking for a place to go, so I referred them to SafeUT Frontline. They got great help right then, right at that moment—that’s what this is all about. It’s the kind of help you need when you need it, right in front of you.

This is help that will help you get through the crisis so you’re not left wondering ‘What do I do with my life?’”

– Ken Wallentine, Chief of the West Jordan Police Department



“I felt this great weight lifted off me when I was able to share with someone I felt comfortable with. That’s why we have things that are available like the SafeUT app.”

– Sergeant Sam Winkler, Retired

Scan or click to learn more and download the SafeUT Frontline app

Available on Apple & Android devices



<https://www.nami.org/Advocacy/Crisis-Intervention/Law-Enforcement> or NAMI  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8056254/> 2021

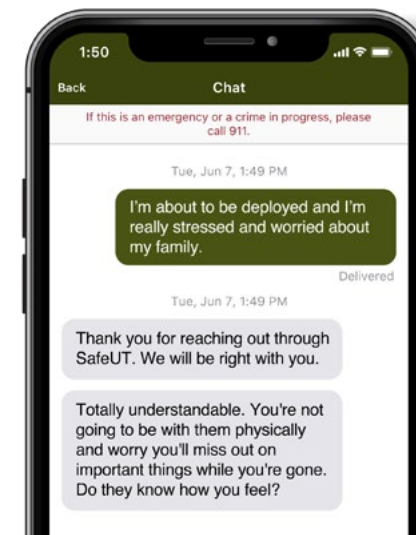





# NATIONAL GUARD


SafeUT National Guard was launched in December 2019 in collaboration with HMHI, U Health IT, and the Utah National Guard. Since launching, the app has had more than 4,000 downloads.

The SafeUT National Guard app is designed for Utah Air and Army National Guard members, veterans, civilian personnel, and their families, linking them to licensed mental health professionals who are trained to understand their unique challenges. Users can confidentially and directly chat with a SafeUT counselor to receive support with any challenge the service member or a family member may be facing.



 **337**  
Total National Guard chats

 **15,789**  
National Guard back-and-forth chat messages

 **261%**  
Increase in utilization compared to FY22

## TIP

SafeUT National Guard offers support for Utah Air and Army National Guard members, veterans, civilian personnel, and their families who may have concerns about themselves or someone they care about, such as a colleague or loved one. **Topics SafeUT National Guard can support with include:**

- Thoughts of suicide and/or self-harm
- Personal stress
- Work-related stress
- Burnout
- Depression and anxiety (PTSD, PTSI)
- Drug and alcohol problems
- Relationship difficulties
- Any life challenge

## Increase in Mental Health Challenges

The National Guard reported **120 suicides in 2020 nationwide**, a 32% increase from 2019. Diving in deeper, the Department of Military Psychiatry found that **35% of those surveyed reported a mental health challenge 12 months after deployment**. Increased deployment during protests and riots in 2020 led to greater potential for increased mental health challenges for Utah's National Guard. SafeUT is here to support Utah's service members, civilian personnel, and their families.

"As a mental health provider, I want every guardsman and family member to have this quick connection in their pocket for when they need it. The Utah National Guard has protected our community; always ready, always there. SafeUT National Guard is here for them."

- Annika Hunt, LCSW  
Wing Director of Psychological Health  
for the Utah Air National Guard



Scan or click to learn more  
and download the SafeUT  
National Guard app  
Available on Apple & Android devices



[https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/20513681/#:~:text=Results%3A%20A%20higher%20proportion%20of,44%25%20versus%2035%25\)%20postdeployment](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/20513681/#:~:text=Results%3A%20A%20higher%20proportion%20of,44%25%20versus%2035%25)%20postdeployment)

"We had a soldier in crisis who reached out to his first-line leader, who then reached out to me. Before I was able to meet with the soldier, the leader told him about the SafeUT National Guard app. The soldier downloaded the app and reached out [to SafeUT]. When I counseled with the soldier a little later, he indicated that the app was very effective. The counselor who helped him, in his words, "talked him out of it," and supported him with some resources. He said that it really helped him.

I was able to build on what HMHI did through the app and help the soldier get further connected with some resources that we have available. [SafeUT] really came through for a soldier in crisis."

- Tom Berry, Utah Army National Guard Full-Time Support Chaplain

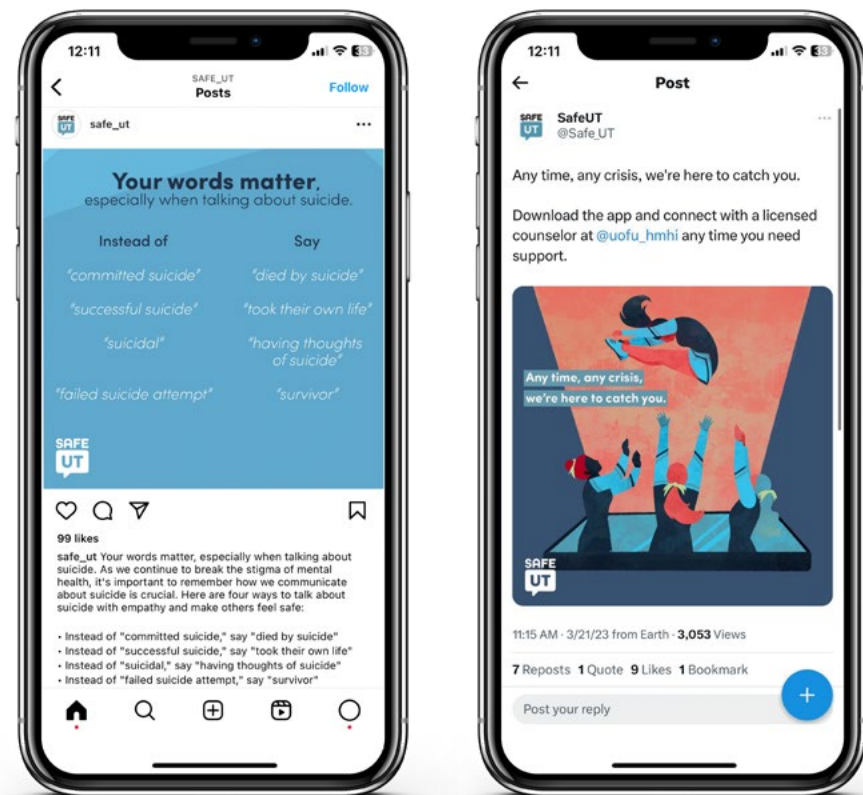


# MARKETING & OUTREACH

SafeUT's Marketing & Outreach Team is dedicated to educating the public about the app, supporting schools participating in the program, and promoting mental wellness, suicide and bullying prevention, school safety, and more.

## SafeUT Marketing

SafeUT uses several marketing and advertising strategies to connect with its wide variety of users, including marketing toolkits for participating schools, social media, sponsorships, digital ads, and promotional giveaways.



Follow us on social media @Safe\_UT for educational, informative, and empowering posts



## SafeUT Outreach

Another marketing strategy SafeUT focuses on is meeting community members where they are. From tabling at larger events with thousands of people in attendance to intimate classroom presentations, there's a variety of outreaches in which SafeUT participates, meeting nearly 27,000 people across the state of Utah. SafeUT was the title sponsor of the SafeUT Safe Kids Fair in March 2023 with more than 6,000 attendees.

**"SafeUT has established a strong reputation for its expertise in addressing various safety concerns that affect children, including mental health issues, bullying, and self-harm. By partnering with SafeUT, iHeartMedia aimed to leverage their specialized knowledge and resources to enhance the fair's impact on promoting child/youth safety and well-being"**

*- Judy Copier, President of iHeartMedia Salt Lake*



## SafeUT Frontline Marketing & Outreach

SafeUT additionally focuses its efforts on outreach opportunities dedicated to Utah's frontline workers and their families to promote SafeUT Frontline. Events range from conferences to meeting with frontline workers in their workplace.

**A lifeline for the line of duty.**

Overwhelmed? Need support? We're here to listen.

Confidential counseling, any time you feel like you need it.

Call or chat. It's all on your phone.

CALL 833-3SAFEFL (833.372.3335) • DOWNLOAD THE APP • SAFEUT.ORG

Services provided by UNIVERSITY OF UTAH HEALTH • Program supported by SAFEUT COMMISSION

**Self-care is health care, too.**

Overwhelmed? Need support? We're here to listen.

Confidential counseling, any time you feel like you need it.

Call or chat. It's all on your phone.

CALL 833-3SAFEFL (833.372.3335) • DOWNLOAD THE APP • SAFEUT.ORG

**When emergency personnel have personal emergencies.**

Overwhelmed? Need support? We're here to listen.

Confidential counseling, any time you feel like you need it.

Call or chat. It's all on your phone.

CALL 833-3SAFEFL (833.372.3335) • DOWNLOAD THE APP • SAFEUT.ORG

## Requests

### SafeUT Outreach Request

Want SafeUT to attend an event in your school or community? Request a virtual or in-person presentation by completing our Outreach Request form.

A member of the SafeUT Marketing & Outreach Team will contact you within three to five business days. We make every effort to get back to you as soon as possible; however, if you're working on a deadline, please make note of it and give us as much notice as you can.

Scan or click the QR code to request SafeUT at your event

### Marketing Materials Request

Looking for SafeUT marketing materials for your organization, community, or event? Want to use our logo? Please complete our Marketing Materials Request form.

Scan or click the QR code to request SafeUT marketing materials

Email the SafeUT Marketing & Outreach Team at [SafeUT@hsc.utah.edu](mailto:SafeUT@hsc.utah.edu) and visit [SafeUT.org](https://www.safeut.org) for more information



Scan or click to learn more and download the SafeUT app

Available on Apple & Android devices

# STATEWIDE SUPPORT & RECOGNITION

SafeUT is made possible by the Utah legislature's ongoing support and funding. Thanks to their investment, SafeUT can continue its efforts in improving Utahns' mental health and preventing suicide and acts of violence. SafeUT is continually recognized for its lifesaving work by leaders across the state.

## 2023 Best of State Award

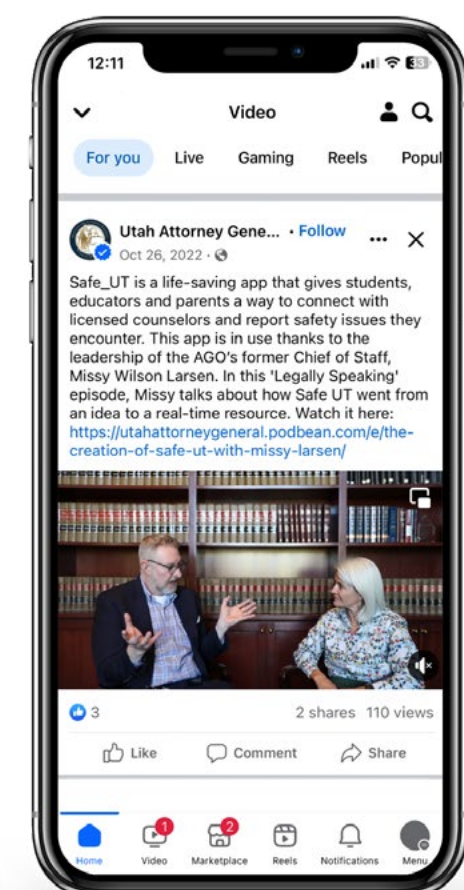
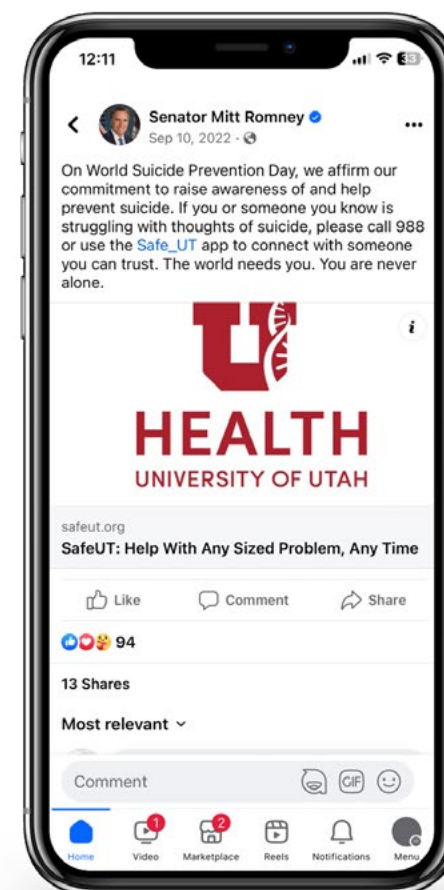


SafeUT has been recognized as **Utah's Best Web-Based Community Resource** for six consecutive years (2023, 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019, 2018)

WINNER  
BEST OF STATE



UTAH 2023



# The SafeUT & School Safety Commission

SafeUT wouldn't be possible without the support and aid from dedicated partners and commission members.

Thank you to all who contribute to this great cause.

## Commissioners:

-  **Ric Cantrell** - Commission Chair, Utah Attorney General Chief of Staff
-  **Sen. Daniel Thatcher** – Utah State Senate
-  **Rep. Steven Eliason** – Utah State House of Representatives
-  **Kris Coles** – Utah System of Higher Education
-  **Shauntelle Cota** - Utah State Board of Education
-  **Nichole Cunha** - Utah Department of Health & Human Services
-  **Rachel Lucynski** – Huntsman Mental Health Institute
-  **Amy Mikkelsen** – Utah Department of Health & Human Services
-  **Ken Wallentine** – Law Enforcement & Emergency Response
-  **Missy Wilson Larsen** – Representative of the Public
-  **Barbara Stallone** – Representative of the Public

## Our Partners:



# NEXT STEPS

## Future Lifesaving Services

A 2018-19 legislative audit of crisis services determined SafeUT was historically underfunded due to challenges with predicting the success of 24/7 lifesaving services. For many years, the Utah legislature has increased its investment in SafeUT and allowed for expanded and ongoing support of SafeUT's lifesaving services. Even with these efforts, current inflation and competitive job market trends have caused a strain in our system of care. SafeUT, like other health care services across the country, has experienced challenges filling master's level mental health clinical positions—even after increasing compensation and benefits packages. If you or someone you know would like to join SafeUT's lifesaving team of mental health counselors, open positions can be found on [employment.utah.edu](https://employment.utah.edu).

To meet current demand and projected growth, SafeUT is focused on hiring additional staff, contributing to statewide workforce expansion initiatives, improving the app experience, and expanding marketing and outreach efforts. These efforts include continued focus on anti-bullying and school safety messaging; outreach to rural communities and areas of underutilization; increasing collaboration with higher education and degree granting institutions; engaging with frontline workers; and ensuring parents, guardians, and educators understand the app is for them as well.



## Turn Knowledge Into Action

Understanding warning signs that someone is not ok, knowing what to ask if you see something that worries you, and being able to refer others to mental health resources can be lifesaving.

### How to GIVE Help:

#### What to do if you see warning signs:

- Find out the urgency and level of risk they're facing by asking direct questions.
- Asking if they've had thoughts of suicide doesn't make someone more likely to attempt suicide. It can actually save their life.
- Help them develop a safety plan—a list of strategies and sources of support—and encourage them to work with a mental health professional (like those with SafeUT). Sitting with them to download the SafeUT app or call the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline can ensure they get the support they need.
- Be there for them, whether it's physically or digitally, and listen to what they have to say. Make sure you follow up with them, and reach out for professional support as needed.

#### Don't say...

#### Say...

What's wrong with you?	Maybe it's me, but I was wondering if you're okay? I'm worried about you.
I know how you feel.	I want you to know I am here for you whenever you want to talk.
How can you be so crazy to do this to yourself?	Are you harming yourself?
Suicide is selfish.	Are you thinking about suicide?



Scan or click codes to view more about conversation starters





## TIP

### Increasing Awareness for Location Services for SafeUT

Imagine what would happen if you called 911 and they were unable to track your exact location in order to send emergency services to help.

Allowing location access while using the SafeUT app has the same potential impact for saving lives. SafeUT will never access or use the information unless it may actively save a life. This only happens about 1% of the time SafeUT is used. Will you commit to helping increase awareness for allowing location access for SafeUT? **Will you share information about SafeUT with kids and teens, and please remind them to allow location access while using the app?**

## How to GET Help:

### What to do if you're worried you or someone else is in immediate danger:

- Download the SafeUT app and ask for help, or call the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. Help is available 24/7/365 at no cost.
- Call 911 if there is a medical or physical emergency.

## Helpful Resources:



Download the SafeUT app to connect to licensed counselors who are ready to confidentially listen to any sized crisis or concern 24/7.



A national network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24/7. Call, chat, or text 988.



A statewide effort to prevent suicide by promoting education, providing resources, and changing the culture around suicide and mental health.



A campaign dedicated to sharing when and how to have a conversation about mental health with someone you care about.



## FAQ: How does 988 chat and text impact SafeUT?

With the national launch of 988 chat and text in July 2022, many people ask how it impacts SafeUT in Utah.

- SafeUT is a robust behavioral health system of care with unique collaboration between licensed counselors, schools, and law enforcement/EMS.
- The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline services are part of a national network of more than 200 crisis centers across the country. In Utah, calls, chats and texts route to the Utah Crisis Line, staffed by a separate team of certified crisis workers at HMHI.
- SafeUT is a smartphone app developed in Utah, for Utah, with versions for schools, frontline workers, and National Guard.
- 988 chat and text is initiated on the 988lifeline.org website or by sending an SMS text to 988.
- SafeUT counselors and Utah Crisis Line staff work separately but collaboratively to ensure the appropriate support, resources, and response is offered to SafeUT app users or 988 chat and text users.
- Both services will continue to exist in Utah 24/7/365 at no cost to users.





Available 24/7 | Call, chat or submit a tip | Always confidential

[SafeUT.org](https://SafeUT.org)