

# SFY 2023 Annual Report

Your Life Iowa

April 2024



Health and  
Human Services



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## Acknowledgements

### SUGGESTED CITATION

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### FUNDING

Your Life Iowa is funded through the state and Federal appropriations to the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services.

## Executive Summary

Your Life Iowa (YLI) is funded by the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (Iowa HHS) and supports the Iowa HHS mission by providing high quality services that protect and improve the health and resiliency of individuals, families, and communities. The effort is uniquely tailored to advance optimal and equitable health outcomes for all Iowans.

YLI is a trusted 24/7 resource for all Iowans when they have a question or concern about gambling, mental health, substance use (including alcohol use) or suicidal thoughts or other related concerns. It serves as a beacon of hope that respects the individual courage it takes to reach out. There is no judgment, just help. YLI is committed to normalizing social perceptions and reducing the impact and stigma associated with gambling, mental health, substance use and suicide.

YLI has been operated by Foundation 2 Crisis Services, an Iowa-based nonprofit human service agency offering suicide prevention and crisis intervention programs to people of all ages, since 2017. Foundation 2 Crisis Services has provided crisis counseling since 1970.

In SFY 2023, Foundation 2 Crisis Services' expenses for YLI totaled \$1,420,910.63. Iowa HHS funding to support the YLI came from the following sources:

### STATE APPROPRIATIONS

- Addiction Services (\$200,000)
- Suicide Prevention (\$50,000)
- Children's Mental Health (\$231,000)

### FEDERAL

- Mental Health Block Grant (\$394,532.40)
- Substance Abuse Block Grant (\$296,455.63)
- Zero Suicide Prevention Grant (\$160,311.79)
- COVID-19 Emergency Response Grant (\$88,610.81)

SFY 2023 marked the sixth year since the launch of the Your Life Iowa project. Over that time, YLI received just under 150,000 contacts via phone, text, chat, and email; and over 1.9 million visits to yourlifeiowa.org.

#### Key accomplishments during SFY 2023 included:

- Answered 47,072 contacts via phone, text, chat and email to Your Life Iowa (includes 1-800-BETS OFF calls) resulting in 28,852 direct and indirect referrals. The number of **contacts increased by approximately 15 percent over SFY 2022.**

- Served 541,130 users of YourLifelowa.org, an **increase of 76.5 percent compared to SFY 2022**. This resulted in 645,101 sessions (up 77.2 percent over SFY 2022) and 847,716 pageviews (up 56.4 percent over SFY 2022).
- Thirteen (13) media campaigns increased awareness of Your Life Iowa by targeting messaging for adult and children’s mental health, suicide prevention, gambling, and substance use (alcohol, opioids, fentanyl) and stigma reduction.
- Expanded and updated website (yourlifeiowa.org) with improved quiz functionality, updates to the calendar, and enhancements to the facility locator.

## YLI STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The YLI Strategic Foundation was developed in SFY 2022 and provides an outline and overview of the approach and the corresponding operational activities to be implemented over the next five years to achieve operational goals and proposed growth in awareness and utilization of YLI services. Bold goals have been set to achieve 85% unaided brand awareness of lowans and 85% engagement of those referred to services.

### YLI and Care Continuum

The YLI Strategic Foundation addresses need of lowans across the care continuum by offering support and connection to services available to lowans. This ensures that YLI effectively targets its’ message to ensure we are effectively reaching individuals across all ages and stages of life and supporting each individual’s optimum wellness.



### YLI Pillars

Focus group research conducted amongst lowans in SFY 2019 identified key barriers:

- Lack of knowledge of where to start to get help.
- Fear of judgement and shame.
- No recognition of resources for help.
- Struggling with multiple issues of concerns.

In response, three foundational message priorities were born and have become the YLI Pillars:

- **JUDGMENT FREE** | *Your problem is our problem. We want to make sure you’re put on the right path to have a successful future. That’s why we leave our judgment at the door. It makes it easier to help put you on the right path to recovery.*

- **YOU'RE NOT ALONE** | *Many of us face these same challenges every day. We know it's hard, but when you have someone there for you every step of the way, it helps. We're always here. When you're tempted. We're here. When you're struggling. We're here. When you just need someone to talk to. We're here.*
- **GUIDE TO BETTER HEALTH** | *We offer the information, support, and guidance to help you get your life back to a good place.*

# Your Life Iowa | Annual Report

This document contains the Your Life Iowa State 2023 Annual Report. This report covers the time from July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023.

## OVERVIEW

Your Life Iowa (YLI) is a statewide resource where individuals can turn when facing a question, concern, or problem with substance use, gambling, mental health, or suicidal thoughts. YLI provides trusted information, resources and support which can be accessed 24/7 via phone, online chat, text, or at [yourlifeiowa.org](http://yourlifeiowa.org).

YLI services include free, 24/7 phone, text and chat crisis support services for all Iowans, regardless of age, income, location, or any other factor. Additionally, limited support is provided via email to clients who prefer email communication. Additional support and resources can be found on [yourlifeiowa.org](http://yourlifeiowa.org) and on the Your Life Iowa Facebook page (@YourLifelowa).

YLI services are provided by Foundation 2 Crisis Services, a non-profit crisis services organization based out of Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

YLI counselors provide gentle, non-judgmental listening and guidance and connect callers with information and connect them with help they may be seeking.

## KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

### Performance Measure #1

Increase the number of people across Iowa finding and accessing the information and/or resources they seek. This includes supporting people along the care continuum by meeting them where they are at and removing barriers to care.

### Key Metrics

**Metric:** Increase contacts to YLI (call, text, chat) by 15% year-over-year.

Contacts	SFY 2022	SFY 2023	Change
Total Contacts	41,111	46,933	+14.2%
Phone	35,925	40,094	+11.6%
Text	2,247	2,885	+28.4%
Chat	2,939	3,984	+35.6%

Table 1: Total contacts, phone, text, chat and percentage change by state fiscal year

**Metric:** Maintain at least a 90-percent answer rate for phone, text, and chat.

Outreach Method	Target	SFY 2023	Change
Phone	95%	93.9%	-1.1%
Text	95%	95.8%	+1.8%
Chat	95%	100%	+5%

Table 2: Answer rates for phone, text, and chat contacts in SFY 2023 compared to the target rate, with the percent difference.

**Metric:** Increase visits to YourLifelowa.org by 15-percent each year.

Outreach Method	SFY 2022	SFY 2023	Change
Visits	362,216	847,716	+134%
Users	306,406	567,510	+85.2%
New Users	306,406	541,285	+76.7%

Table 3: Website visits, users, and new users for SFY 2022 and SFY 2023, with percent change between years.

## Performance Measure #2

Utilize a deliberate and integrated approach for defining and promoting the YLI brand and corresponding topics and services, including gambling, mental health, substance use and thoughts of suicide.

This includes:

- Leveraging various funding sources to optimize pace of marketing efforts.
- Leveraging available media platforms and resources for implantation of campaigns.
- Participating in key regional and state opportunities for networking and service promotion.

## Key Metrics

**Metric:** Complete comprehensive YLI Annual Marketing Plan by August 31 of each fiscal year.

- SFY 2023 | Completed

**Metric:** Designate annual funding specifically to build brand awareness and engagement across Iowa. Allocate a minimum of \$1.5M for raising awareness of YLI brand.

- SFY 2023 Amount | \$1,604,578

**Metric:** Leverage Discretionary Grant and other Iowa HHS funds to raise awareness of an YLI topic.

- SFY 2023 Amount | \$3,996,782
  - Suicide Prevention | \$507,509
  - Gambling (1-800-BETS OFF) | \$1,084,219
  - Alcohol | \$460,370
  - State Opioid Response (SOR) | \$914,800
  - SPF Rx (Prescription Drugs/Counterfeit Pills) | \$553,656



- OD2A | \$117,964
- Prevention (various campaigns) | \$104,595
- Adult & Children’s Mental Health | \$223,164

## YLI CONTACTS

Since the launch of YLI in July 2017, just under 150,000 contacts have been made to YLI. With 47,072 contacts, SFY 2023 represented a **six-fold increase since our first year**.

While Your Life Iowa’s mission is to be the go-to resource for Iowans, YLI does not block non-Iowa area codes from contacting YLI, as some Iowans have out-of-state area codes. About 21% of the total contacts are from non-Iowa area codes.

Contacts from Iowa Area Codes	Contacts from Non-Iowa Area Codes	Total Contacts
37,318	9,754	47,072

Table 4: Overall contacts (phone, text, chat, and email) from Iowa area codes, non-Iowa area codes, and the total for SFY 2023.

YLI monitors how the contact is initiated (phone, text, chat, email) and the topic(s) (gambling, mental health, substance use, suicide, and social determinant of health), and the outcomes of those contacts.

### Phone, Text, Chat and Email

While phone remains the primary way of contacting YLI (85%), we have seen an uptick in the percentage of individuals reaching out text and chat.

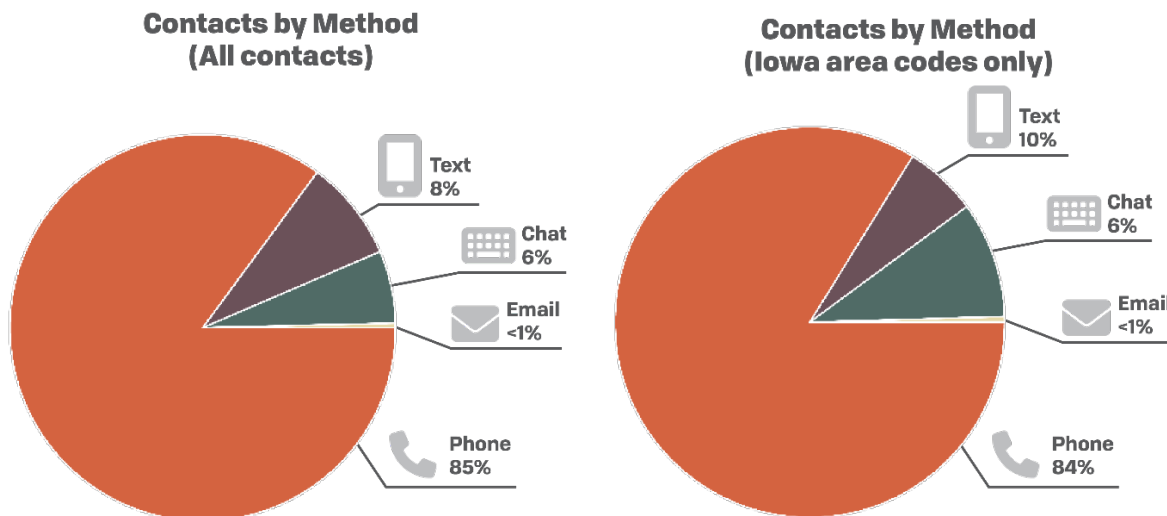


Figure 2: Pie chart illustration of number of contacts per method type through Your Life Iowa during SFY 2023 for all contacts and Iowa area codes only.

All YLI Contacts	Phone Contacts	Text Contacts	Chat Contacts	Email Contacts	Total
Number of contacts	40,064	3,976	2,852	180	47,072
Percent	85.1%	8.4%	6.1%	<1%	100%

Table 5: Total number of contacts per method type through Your Life Iowa during SFY 2023. This includes contacts from Iowa area codes and contacts from non-Iowa area codes.

Iowa YLI Contacts	Phone Contacts	Text Contacts	Chat Contacts	Email Contacts	Total
Number of contacts	31,290	2,263	3,590	175	37,318
Percent	83.5%	6.1%	9.6%	<1%	100%

Table 6: Number of contacts from Iowa area codes per contact method through Your Life Iowa during SFY 2023.

## Melissa’s Story

Melissa called Your Life Iowa while pulled over in a parking lot on her way to work. She was struggling with intense thoughts of suicide. She was having a difficult time deciding if she should turn around and go home or go to work. Melissa explained she had a large amount of prescription medications at home and was tempted to attempt suicide by overdose. She explained that she felt her life was falling apart. Her job was physically taxing, she had minimal family support and felt overwhelmed and unheard. She also had financial burdens that made her feel hopeless. After talking with the YLI counselor, Melissa felt that she would be okay if she could get to work. Melissa talked to the crisis counselor while she continued to work and arrived safely. She planned on how to relax before her shift and made a safety plan for returning home, including a follow-up call prior to arrival. Melissa collaboratively agreed to follow-up with YLI and was thankful for the support provided.

## YLI TOPICS

Your Life Iowa users can reach out with questions or concerns about wellness for themselves or a loved one. During SFY 2023, on average, there were 1.3 topics mentioned per contact.

Tracked topic areas are:

- Gambling
- Mental Health (adults)
- Mental Health (youth)
- Substance Use (including alcohol)
- Suicide
- Social Determinants of Health

YLI has continued to see a year-over-year increase in the percentage of contacts related to suicide. Just over 1 in 4 contacts to YLI is related to suicide.

YLI Topics	Gambling	Substance Use	Suicide	Mental Health (Adult)	Mental Health (Youth)	Social Determinants of Health
All Contacts	1,523	6,898	12,137	19,019	2,317	19,146
Iowa-Only Contacts	924	6,508	10,806	16,198	2,167	15,402

Table 7: Number of contacts per topic through Your Life Iowa during SFY 2023. All Contacts includes Iowa and non-Iowa area code contacts.

## Average Contact Length

Every phone call, text exchange and chat is different, and our YLI counselors are trained to listen and respond to best serve everyone reaching out to Your Life Iowa. The length of the contact varies based on the acuity and nature of the contact and related concern.

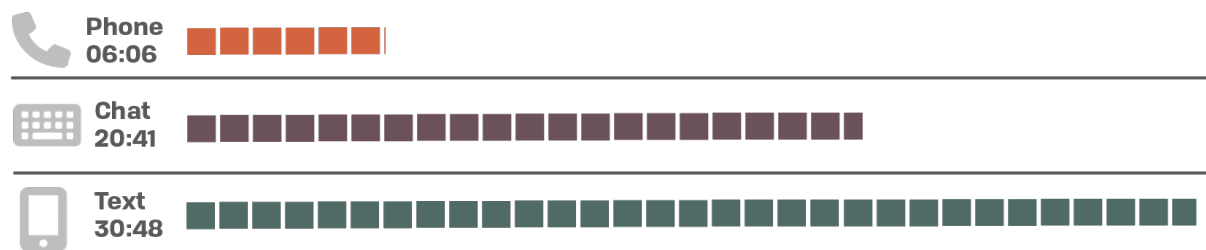


Figure 3: Average length of contact per type, illustrated as mm:ss. This encompasses all contacts, including Iowa area codes and non-Iowa area codes.

## Jake’s Story

*Jake, age 15, called Your Life Iowa on speakerphone in the middle of the night with the assistance of his mom. Jake explained that he had a history of depression and had been struggling with thoughts of suicide for months. That night, Jake was experiencing thoughts of suicide and had envisioned a specific plan. Jake shared that he’d been envisioning these thoughts and immediately went to wake up his mom instead of acting upon them. He was feeling miserable and hopeless. None of his typical coping skills were working. Jake collaborated with the YLI counselor on new coping skills and connected with mobile crisis response for further, in-person crisis support.*

## YLI REFERRALS

When contacting Your Life Iowa, individuals often seek information, support, and help for themselves or someone they know. YLI counselors receive comprehensive training to assess the nature of the contact. They work with the individual to identify the appropriate information, support, and local resources that could be of benefit. This is an Information Referral.

In some cases, a YLI counselor will initiate a warm hand-off to connect the individual directly with a treatment provider. This is often at the request of the individual who has contacted YLI. This is a Direct Referral.

Information Referrals	Direct Referrals	Total Referrals
28,374	478	28,852

Table 8: Number of Information Referrals, Direct Referrals and Total Referrals for SFY 2023.

Referrals can be made for these topics:

- Gambling
- Mental Health (Adult)
- Mental Health (Youth)
- Substance Use
- Suicide
- Social Determinants of Health

Referrals	Gambling	Substance Use	Mental Health (Adult)	Mental Health (Youth)	Suicide	Social Determinants of Health
Number of Referrals	789	7,292	8,199	1,327	5,060	6,185

Table 9: Number of Referrals (Information and Direct) by topic for SFY 2023

### Referrals to Integrated Provider Network Programs

A total of 5,373 referrals were made by Your Life Iowa counselors to Integrated Provider Network (IPN) providers in SFY23. This includes direct referrals and referrals for information.

Referrals were made for:

- Gambling
- Substance use

A total of 5,270 Information Referrals were made to IPN providers by Your Life Iowa counselors in SFY 2023. Most of these Information Referrals were for substance use questions or concerns.

A total of 103 direct referrals were made to IPN providers by Your Life Iowa counselors in SFY 2023. Most of these direct referrals were for substance use questions or concerns.

IPN Information Referrals	IPN Direct Referrals	Total Referrals
5,270	103	5,373

Table 10: Number of Information Referrals, Direct Referrals and Total Referrals to IPN Programs for SFY 2023

## CONCERNS REPORTED BY IOWANS

### Gambling

Of contacts that included a concern about gambling (835 total), the most common concerns were related to casino table games (29.9%), followed by slot machines (25.3%).

Gambling	Casino Table Games	Slots	Other Online/ App (Internet, Gaming)	Sports Wagering	Lottery/ Scratch Tickets	Other
Percentage	29.9%	25.3%	24.9%	9.7%	6.4%	3.8%

Table 11: Types and frequency of top gambling concerns Iowans reported during gambling-related contacts to YLI in SFY 2023. This includes only Iowa area codes. Sports Wagering includes Fantasy Sports and racetrack wagering.

### Taylor's Story

Taylor called 1-800-BETS-Off and shared that he was concerned about his recent increase in gambling. He felt that his gambling habits were increasing his anxiety and making daily life difficult. Taylor said he already saw a therapist to help address his anxiety, but he was unsure who to talk to about his gambling habits. The YLI counselor talked to Taylor about his experiences and offered to connect him with a local gambling counselor. Together, the counselor facilitated a warm transfer to a local gambling agency and helped Taylor get started with care.

### Substance Use

Of contacts that included a concern about substance use (4,095 total), the most common concerns were related to alcohol (59.8%), followed by methamphetamine (13.5%).

Substances	Alcohol	Methamphetamine	Marijuana	Opioids	Cocaine and other Stimulants
Percentage	59.8%	13.5%	9.0%	8.7%	4.0%

Table 12: Types and frequency of top five substance use concerns Iowans reported during substance use-related contacts to YLI in SFY 2023. This includes only Iowa area codes.

## Mark's Story

Mark called Your Life Iowa looking for inpatient substance use disorder treatment that accepted state insurance. He felt that his mental health was greatly contributing to his alcohol consumption. He was interested in getting treatment but wasn't sure where to go. The YLI counselor walked Mark through available options, completed an IPN referral, and collaboratively scheduled a follow-up several days later to check in. Mark agreed to call back for a follow-up to ensure he connected with care.

## Mental Health

Of contacts that included a concern about mental health (14,795 total), the most common concerns were related to depression (22.9%), followed by anxiety disorder (19.8%).

Mental Health	Depression	Anxiety Disorder	Schizophrenia	Thoughts of Suicide	Self-Harm	Bi-Polar Disorder	PTSD
Percentage	22.9%	19.8%	11.4%	9.2%	6.7%	6.4%	6.0%

Table 13: Types and frequency of top seven mental health concerns Iowans reported during mental health-related contacts to YLI in SFY 2023. This includes only Iowa area codes.

## Social Determinants of Health

Of contacts that included a concern about social determinants of health (24,947), the most common concerns were interpersonal relationships (21.9%), followed by family relationships (17.9%).

SDOH	Interpersonal Relationships	Family Relationships	Financial Job	Basic Needs	Physical Health	Loss/Grief	Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault
Percentage	21.9%	17.9%	9.3%	9.2%	8.8%	5.4%	4.4%

Table 14: Types and frequency of the top seven social determinants of health concerns Iowans reported during social determinants of health-related contacts to YLI in SFY 2023. This includes only Iowa area codes.

## MARKETING

### Advertising

Your Life Iowa contracts with ZLR Ignition, Learfield Communications, and Customized Newspaper Advertising (C.N.A) for marketing and promotion, with secondary outreach support from Foundation 2 Crisis Services.

### Media Examples

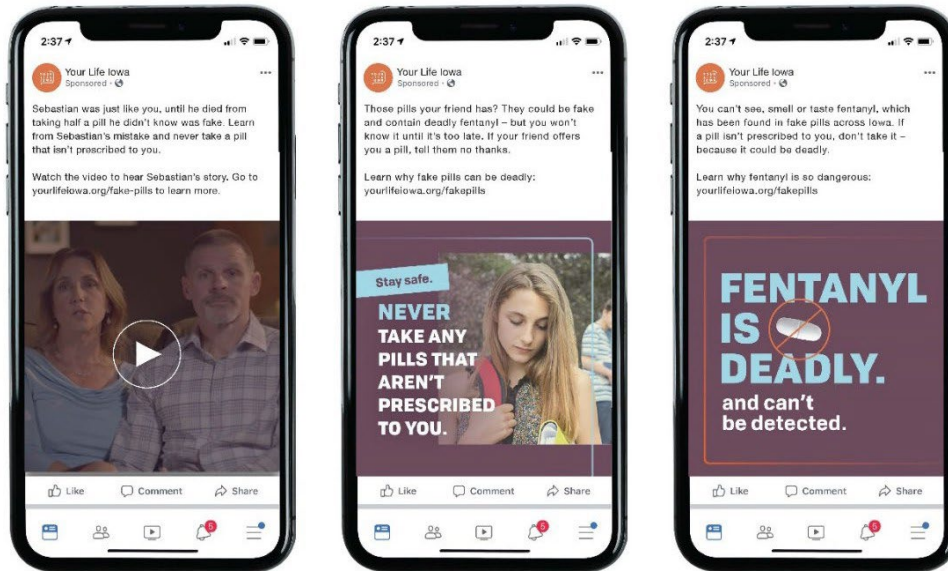


Figure 4: Three examples of paid advertising about substance use by Your Life Iowa during SFY 2023.

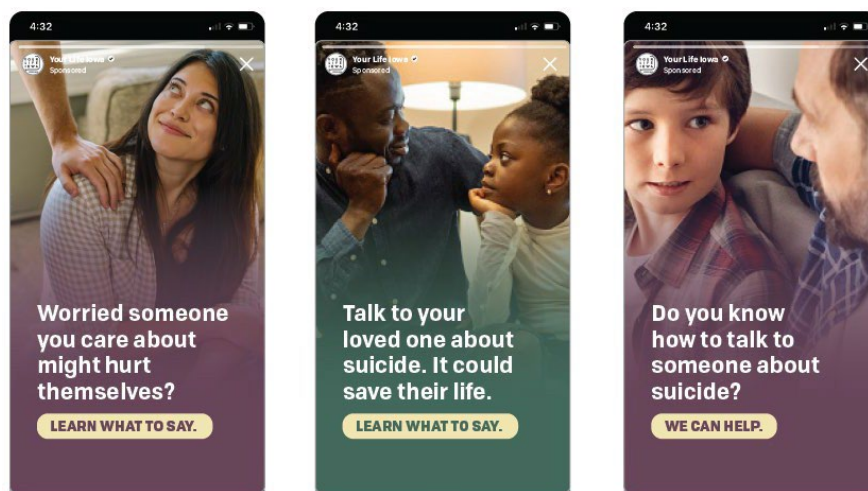


Figure 5: Three examples of paid advertising about thoughts of suicide by Your Life Iowa during SFY 2023.

## Social Media

The Your Life Iowa Facebook page is updated daily with content designed to support Iowans' health and wellness, connect them with support, and reduce barriers to care. Facebook content is a combination of daily organic posts and intermittent paid advertising. Between SFY 2021 and SFY 2023, organic reach has increased by 64%.

Organic Reach	Paid Reach
55,349	3,824,721

Table 18: Organic and paid reach for the Your Life Iowa Facebook page for SFY 2023.

### Organic Post Examples

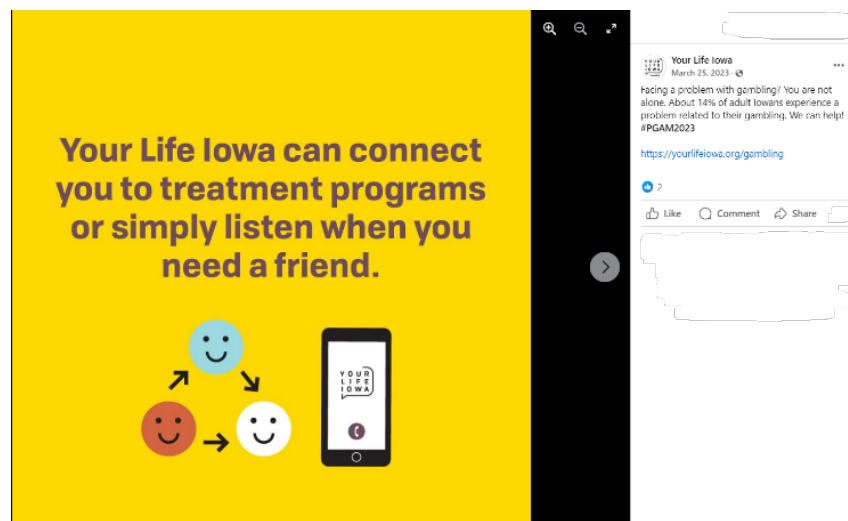


Figure 6: Example of an organic post from March 2023 encouraging social media users to use Your Life Iowa resources.

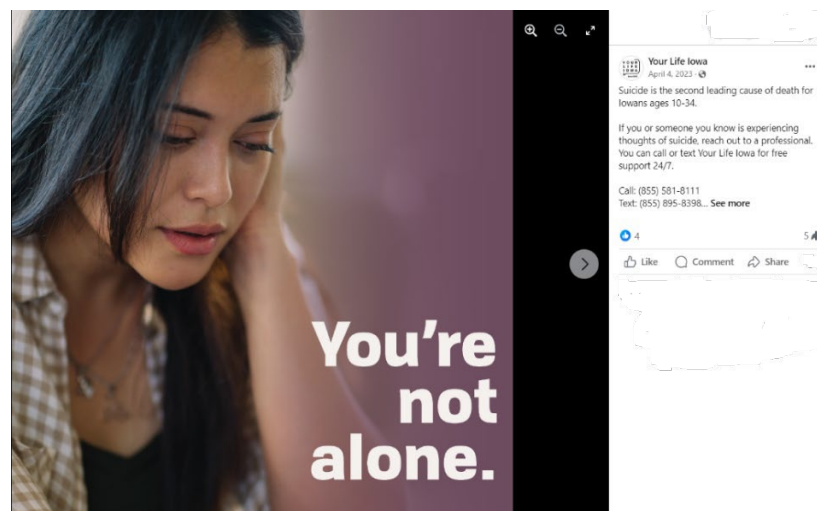


Figure 7: Example of an organic post from March 2023 encouraging social media users to use Your Life Iowa resources.



## WEBSITE

Yourlifeiowa.org is a hub of information and resources for Iowans. The website includes helpful information on gambling, mental health, substance use, and suicide; local and national resources; and opportunities to connect with providers quickly and easily.

Between SFY 2021 and SFY 2023, website users increased by 139%.

Website Users	Website Sessions	Page Views
541,130	645,101	847,716

Table 19: YourLifeIowa.org website visitor data for SFY 2023.

## TOP TEN PAGES

Homepage visits (168,652) have been omitted from the table.

The top three pages with highest traffic are:

- Gambling (118,183)
- Suicide (89,605)
- Drugs (68,300).

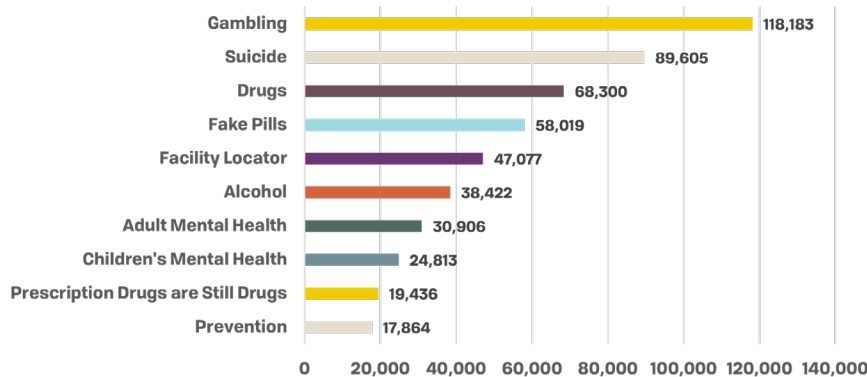


Figure 8: Top 10 webpages on YourLifeIowa.org for SFY 2023. Homepage visits have been omitted.

## Glossary

**1-800-BETS OFF:** Helpline and website devoted to raising awareness of problem gambling and aiding those Iowans who are being negatively impacted by gambling and related behaviors.

**Direct Referral:** A written order from one health professional to another health professional or health service, asking them to diagnose or treat someone for a particular condition.

**Gambling:** The act or practice of risking the loss of something of value upon the outcome of chance or future contingent event not under his/her control to gain something of greater value.

**Gambling Disorder:** Persistent and recurrent problematic gambling behavior leading to clinically significant impairment or distress.

**Information Referral:** The field in which information about services is aggregated in community resource directories and delivered (via referral) to people seeking help.

**Integrated Provider Network (IPN):** The IPN is a statewide community-based, resiliency- and recovery-oriented system of care for substance use and problem gambling services. The IPN launched in January 2019 because of a competitive request for proposal (RFP) process.

**Organic Facebook Reach:** Number of people who see page's content without paid distribution.

**Paid Facebook Reach:** Number of people reached by Facebook ads.

**Problem Gambling:** Participation in any form of gambling activity that creates one or more negative consequences to the gambler, their family or loved ones, employer, or community.

**Social Determinants of Health:** For the purposes of this report, Social Determinants of Health refer to contacts related to assault, basic needs, child abuse, domestic violence, elder concerns, family relationships, financial/job, interpersonal relationships, loss/grief, natural disaster, ongoing support, physical health, school, sexual assault, and world events.

**Website Session:** a period of interaction between a user and a website. A session begins when a user accesses the website and ends when they navigate away from the website.

**Website User:** An individual accessing a website through a browser. This is a duplicate number, including unique individuals' multiple times if they visit a website more than once within the given time period.

**Your Life Iowa:** The 24/7 integrated resource for free and confidential help and

information for alcohol, drugs, gambling and suicide concerns. Information and assistance are available through the telephone helpline at 855-581-8111, online at [YourLifelowa.org](http://YourLifelowa.org), through text at 855-895-8398, and through mobile-friendly internet-based online chat and social media messaging.