Washington State
Attorney General's Office



HearMeWA Annual Report

October 2026

What's Inside

Letter from Attorney General Nick Brown 02

What is HearMeWA 03

HearMeWA Impact 04

Youth & Community Input 09

Training, Outreach, & Engagement 10

Next Steps 12

Letter from Attorney General Nick Brown

Dear Washingtonians,

This year marks the second anniversary of HearMeWA, a program dedicated to providing free support to young people across our state. The Attorney General's Office (AGO) began developing HearMeWA in 2021 at the direction of the Legislature. After years of hard work and close collaboration with youth, community partners, and statewide organizations, the AGO launched the program on April 30, 2024. HearMeWA is the only 24/7 hotline serving youth in Washington.

Here is a summary of what HearMeWA has accomplished since its launch:

- 395 youth and concerned individuals have reached out to HearMeWA for support. The most frequently reported concerns include **depression**, **bullying/cyberbullying**, and **anxiety**.
- The program reached individuals in **24 counties**: Adams, Benton, Chelan, Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Franklin, Grays Harbor, King, Kitsap, Klickitat, Lewis, Lincoln, Mason, Okanogan, Pierce, Skagit, Snohomish, Spokane, Thurston, Wahkiakum, Whatcom, Whitman, and Yakima.
- **Nearly one-third of school districts** now use HearMeWA, with 23% adopting it as their primary anonymous reporting system.
- HearMeWA made **1,000+ referrals** to schools (K-12 and higher education), behavioral health services, law enforcement, and child protective services.
- Youth take this resource seriously: only **2%** of reports were found to be non-credible or pranks.

HearMeWA serves as a vital resource for young Washingtonians by offering free, 24-hour support to anyone up to age 25. At a time when funding cuts are impacting youth resources in Washington and nationwide, HearMeWA continues to provide a safe, welcoming, and non-judgmental environment where youth can express their concerns and seek help, potentially preventing tragedies and acts of violence.

While budget challenges remain, my office will continue to work toward ensuring that every young person in Washington can access the care they deserve. Keeping this fundamental resource alive requires a collective effort, and I want to thank all HearMeWA partners who contribute to this program. Together, we will continue to ensure young Washingtonians are safe and have support when they are struggling, for as long as we can.

In partnership,



Washington State Attorney General

What is HearMeWA?

HearMeWA is a free safety and well-being helpline that connects youth (0-25) to existing support systems in their community. It was created when an LGBTQ+ youth from Kennewick advocated for the creation of a tipline to help combat a spike in youth suicides in his area.

HearMeWA accepts reports from anyone—including youth, families, and community members—regarding a wide range of concerns, such as bullying and cyberbullying, behavioral health concerns, violence, and safety threats.

The program serves as an early intervention tool to prevent tragedies by providing youth a place to share potential risks they and their peers are facing.

When contacting HearMeWA, or providing a "tip," youth can choose to identify themselves or remain anonymous. They talk with trained crisis counselors,[1] who are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and 365 days a year. HearMeWA works with partners across Washington who can provide additional support to youth. These partners, referred to in this report as "tip responders," include school staff, behavioral health professionals, emergency services, child protective staff, and law enforcement.

There are four ways to contact HearMeWA, and all methods are available in multiple languages and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act:



Call us at 888-537-1634



Get help online at HearMeWA.org



Text HEARMEWA to 738477



Download the mobile app

HearMeWA works with state agencies, community-based organizations, youth, and historically excluded communities to strive to be antiracist, trauma-informed, and youth-centered.

It is the only 24-hour helpline to exclusively serve youth in Washington state.

For the purpose of this report, historically excluded communities refer to groups disproportionally impacted by a combination of social, racial, economic, and health disparities. These groups historically suffer from inequalities in the system that perpetuate social and economic disparities, discrimination, and white supremacy. In this report, youth from historically excluded communities include those who identify as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), disabled, formerly incarcerated (interacted with the justice system), foster care, houseless/unsheltered, immigrant, English Language Learner (ELL), Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual (2SLGBTQIA+), low-income, military, neurodivergent, refugees/asylees, urban and rural Indigenous communities, federally recognized Tribes, teenage parents, and rural.

Success Story

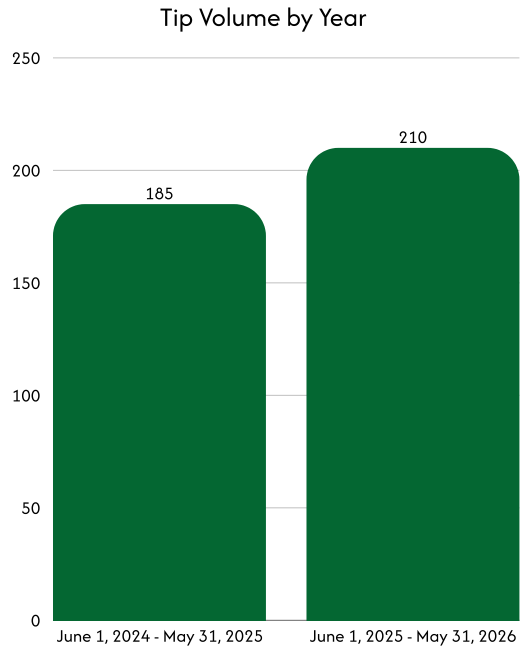
A youth contacted HearMeWA and shared they were experiencing suicidal thoughts due to severe bullying at school. During the conversation, the student disclosed that they had ingested pills.

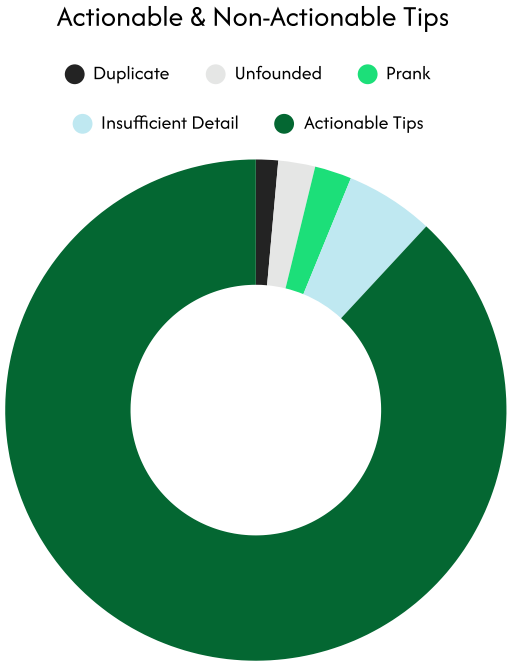
Recognizing the immediate danger, the crisis center prioritized the report as life-safety and notified their school and law enforcement. Emergency medical services and law enforcement rushed to the youth's home for a welfare check. Thanks to this rapid coordination, the youth was transported to the hospital by ambulance, preventing a tragedy and saving a life.

> A lot of people are finally starting to acknowledge how mental health is just as crucial as physical health. However, resources that support and advocate for mental health are still limited, and many times, unknown or inaccessible even when they are out there. HearMeWA provides real resources youth can use.
>
> S.K., Youth Advisory Group Member, 17 years old.

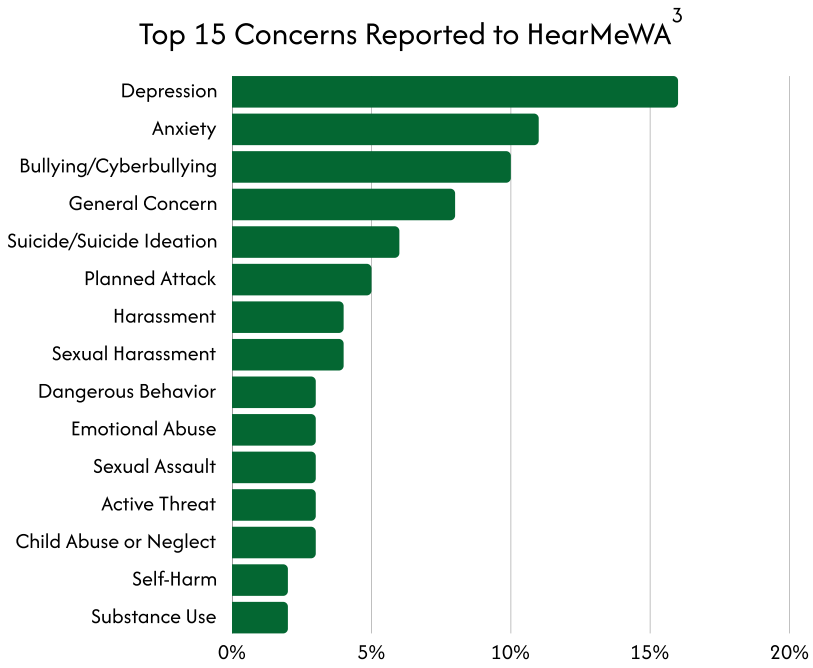
HearMeWA Impact

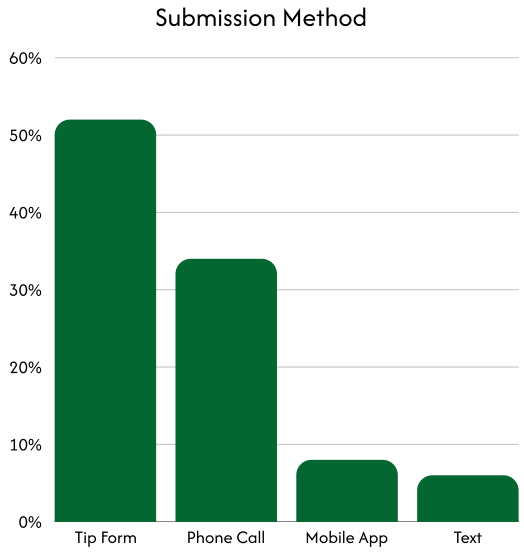
HearMeWA received 395 reports in its first two years. Over the last year (June 1st, 2025, to May 31st, 2026), the number of tips to HearMeWA increased 13.5% compared to the previous year. The vast majority of the reports (88%) were actionable and included enough information to allow the crisis center to provide youth with the services they needed.



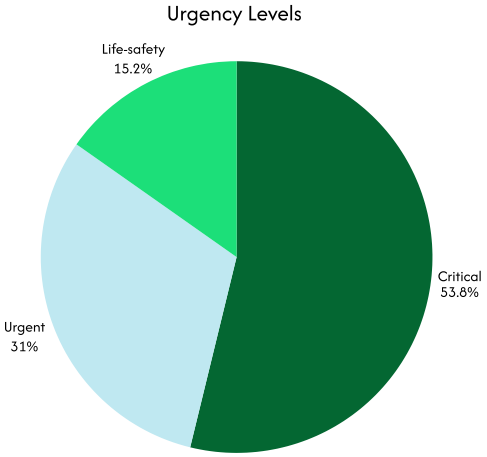


Youth contacted HearMeWA about 40 different issues, ranging from behavioral health-related concerns to violence.[2] Over half of the tips were submitted through the HearMeWA tip form.





Of the 210 reports sent to HMWA in the last year, 15% (32) were categorized as "life-safety". These 32 life-safety incidents were imminent threats where immediate intervention may have avoided a tragedy.



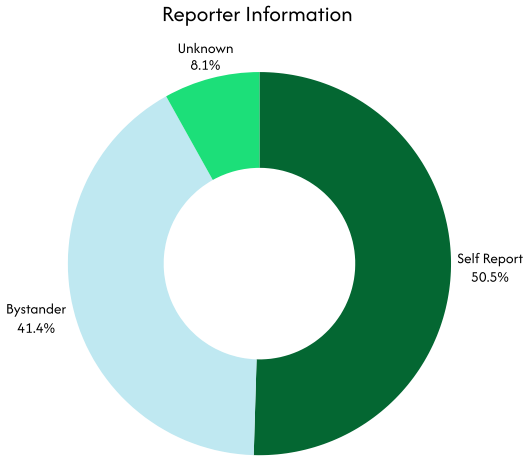
Urgency Level	Description
Life-safety	Imminent threats. Actions in progress and/or that require immediate intervention.
Urgent	Actions past, present and future that can put someone in danger but do not meet the threshold of a life-safety threat.
Critical	Actions past and present that do not present imminent risk-danger nor meet the criteria for urgent.

All reports receive quick action and are often referred to multiple tip responders, who can coordinate their response.

- 77% of the reports were directed to education services, including schools, colleges, and universities.
- 55% were referred to behavioral health services.
- 34% of the reports were shared with law enforcement and/or 911.
- 4% of the reports were sent to child protective services.[4]

HearMeWA crisis counselors also refer youth to additional services available within their community including housing resources, youth peer support lines, resources for sexual assault survivors, and many others.

While other states' tiplines center on school violence prevention and rely heavily on the K-12 system, HearMeWA was designed to be broader and more inclusive. By integrating public safety and behavioral health partners, the program reaches youth outside public school settings and functions as a direct support line. Consequently, while bystander reports make up 90% of contacts in states like Colorado, 51%[5] of HearMeWA users contact the program to seek help for themselves, enabling earlier intervention and support before crisis situations escalate.

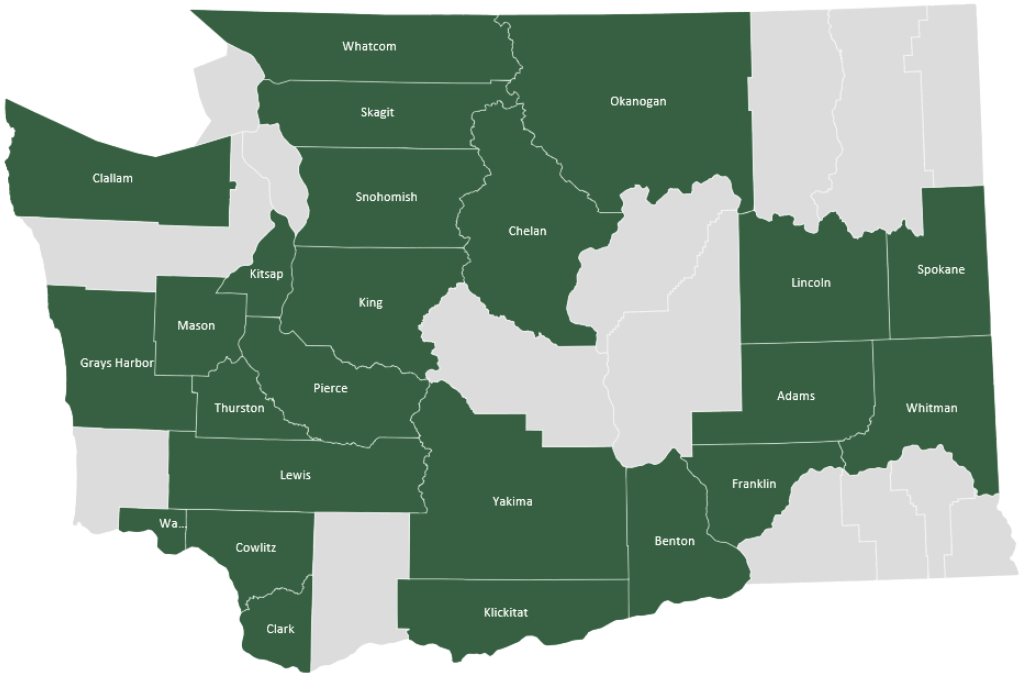




Statewide Reach

Since its launch, HearMeWA received reports from individuals in 24 counties, including major population centers and metro areas as well as rural counties where emergency services are often the first and only resource for youth in crisis.

HearMeWA Reach



> As someone who lives in rural Washington, I know firsthand that where you live can shape the opportunities you have access to. In many rural communities, long travel distances, limited transportation, workforce shortages, and a lack of nearby services make it much harder for young people to access mental health care, extracurricular programs, leadership opportunities, and other forms of support.
>
> C.E., Youth Advisory Group Member, 24 years old.

Frequently Reported Concerns: Depression, Anxiety and Bullying

Depression, anxiety and bullying are the top three most reported concerns to HearMeWA. According to the 2025 Healthy Youth Survey (HYS), these are also significant issues among Washington state students[6]:

26% of 10th graders felt sad and hopeless in the past year.

60% of 12th graders reported feeling anxious, nervous, or on edge in the past two weeks.

24% of 8th graders reported being bullied in the past month, and

43% described having no, very low, or slight hope.

Students who identify as sexually or gender diverse reported feeling sad or hopeless at more than double the rate of their peers who do not identify as sexually or gender diverse. Students who identify as transgender or questioning are even more likely to be bullied at school than their peers.

Frequently Reported Concerns: Suicide and Suicide Ideation

Suicide ranks as the fifth most reported concern to HearMeWA and is among the top three concerns submitted to similar youth tiplines including those in Colorado, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Utah and Wyoming.[7]

- Suicide is the second leading cause of death among Washington youth up to 25 years old[8] and the eighth leading cause of death among all residents.[9]
- The HYS reveals that 14% of students in eighth grade have considered attempting suicide in the past year, while eight percent have attempted suicide.

These statistics highlight the importance of accessible youth-centered resources like HearMeWA, which offers free, nonjudgmental support to young people in Washington any time they need it. HearMeWA serves as a prevention tool by providing a safe environment for youth to express their concerns and seek help, potentially preventing tragedies.

> HearMeWA gives young people a safe place to reach out when they're dealing with stress, anxiety, or difficult situations, no matter where they live in Washington. It removes barriers that often keep youth from getting help and makes sure they have someone to turn to when things feel overwhelming. HearMeWA truly makes a difference by meeting youth where they are and supporting them when they need it most.
>
> V.E., Youth Advisory Group Member, 16 years old

Success Story

A youth contacted HearMeWA seeking help for active suicidal thoughts. They shared that they had been struggling for a long time and had a history of self-harm.

While a crisis counselor kept the student engaged in a supportive dialogue, the team flagged the report as life-safety. The crisis center worked with the student's school and local police, who acted quickly to locate the youth. Once found, officials conducted a welfare check to ensure the youth's safety and both the crisis center and the school team provided the necessary resources and support.

Frequently Reported Concerns: Violence Prevention

Data from the past year shows that planned attacks and active threats rank among the top 10 reports submitted to HearMeWA. This is also a common trend in other states with similar programs, where threats to school safety (e.g., planned attacks, shooting threats), fighting, and weapon possession are among their most common reports.

The past few years have seen a rise in nihilistic violent extremist groups like the True Crime Community (TCC) and "764" network. These groups target and manipulate young people online, glorify violence, and provoke youth into self-harm and violent acts like school shootings and other mass attacks. High rates of loneliness and social media use among young adults,[10] exposure to online violence and extremism, and lack of a safety network can make youth particularly vulnerable to nihilistic groups.

According to the 2025 HYS, more than 10% of Washington 12th graders do not have an adult to turn to when they are feeling sad or hopeless. Programs like HearMeWA can serve as a prevention tool for online violence and extremism. Research indicates that people seem more comfortable seeking support through confidential or anonymous platforms than speaking with someone directly.[11]

HearMeWA's anonymous reporting capabilities allow youth to report planned attacks without the fear of negative consequences for speaking up.

Support for HearMeWA

"I hope this program continues to grow because every young person deserves the opportunity to be heard. Expanding programs like HearMeWA is essential to ensuring that rural, underserved, and disenfranchised youth have a seat at the table and that the future of Washington reflects the voices of all its young people, rather than just those who live where resources are easiest to access."

C.E., Youth Advisory Group Member, 24 years old

"HearMeWA's commitment to accessibility, the effort it is putting into educating and increasing awareness of its resources through various community outreach, and its dedication to keeping their program youth-focused are what make HearMeWA such an essential resource in our community."

S.K., Youth Advisory Group Member, 17 years old.



A young person who contacted HearMeWA multiple times shared that they prefer this program over other resources because they can talk to the same people consistently, which helps them make real progress.

They expressed gratitude for the program, noting that it has helped them manage their stress and work through their emotions.

Youth & Community Input

HearMeWA Youth Advisory Group

The HearMeWA team facilitates the Youth Advisory Group (YAG), made up of 25 young people aged 10-24 from 15 counties in Washington. The group provides feedback and helps the program to remain youth-centered. The YAG meets every other month. So far in 2026, the group has talked about:

- The HearMeWA program history, call triage and referral protocol.
- HearMeWA data trends, and outreach efforts.
- Youth resources, including presentations from community-based organizations across Washington.

> By having a [group] like the Youth Advisory Group, HearMeWA ensures that the voices of young people across Washington are not only heard but also genuinely taken into account, so the program can continue to grow and better serve youth. As a member of the Youth Advisory Group, I have had the opportunity not only to learn more about the [program], its resources, and other community organizations working to support youth, but also to share my own perspectives and help promote HearMeWA's resources.
>
> S.K., Youth Advisory Group Member, 17 years old.

> "[The] HearMeWA Youth Advisory Group really helped me understand the struggles of marginalized groups across Washington, and the innumerous challenges they face when trying to get support. The resources that the HearMeWA Youth Advisory Group was able to provide helped me identify possible people that may need more help, and helped me understand how to help them, while making sure they felt understood and believed."
>
> Y.J., Youth Advisory Group Member, 14 years old.

HearMeWA Advisory Committee

The HearMeWA Advisory Committee was established in 2022 by ESSB 5092 (2021)[12] and continues to meet voluntarily to support program goals and keep key partners engaged.

The 2026-2028 HearMeWA Advisory Committee cohort has 31 members, representing education services (K-12 and higher education), behavioral health, child welfare and social services. They provide advice and input on:

- Outreach and training strategies.
- Tip trend data and identifying areas for improvement.
- Possible solutions for any challenges with program usage and tip responses.
- An evaluation plan to assess the program's effectiveness and whether it is being implemented equitably across the state.

For more information about the HearMeWA Advisory Committee, including previous meeting agendas and notes, please visit the website.

Training, Outreach, & Engagement

The HearMeWA team conducts outreach to stakeholders across the state, including:

- Youth,
- Youth-serving organizations, particularly those that serve historically excluded youth,
- Schools and other education services,
- Law enforcement, and
- State and local agencies.

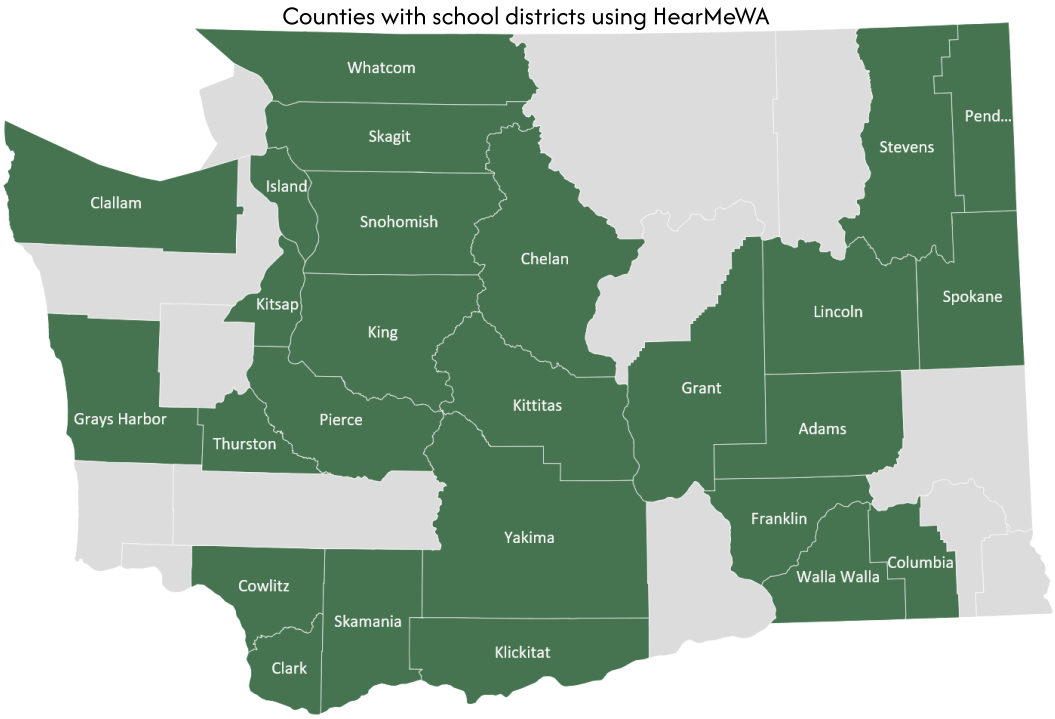
Over the past year the HearMeWA team:

- Conducted 366 virtual and in-person meetings and presentations;
- Reached 409 agencies and organizations;
- Attended 28 events across the state;
- Reached 5,642 people; and
- Provided eight training sessions for education services and law enforcement.

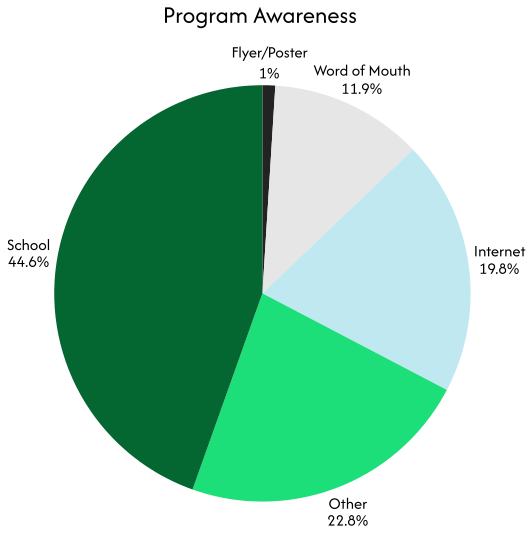


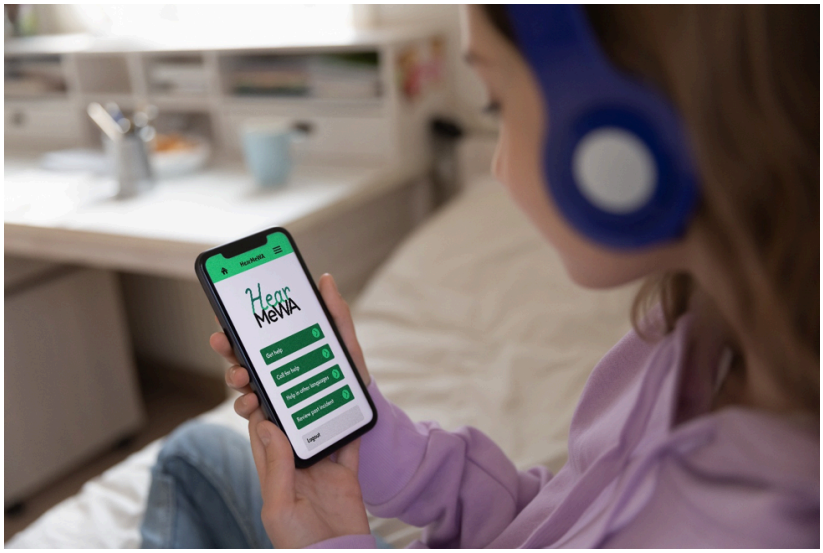
HearMeWA in Schools

While schools in Washington are not legislatively required to use HearMeWA,[13] nearly one third of school districts (31%) in the state use the program, with 23% of districts adopting it as their primary anonymous reporting system. These school districts are located across 26 counties.



Schools and other educational services are excellent partners in promoting the program among students, families, and teachers. When asked how they heard about the program, 45% of respondents indicated that they learned about HearMeWA through their school.





Additional Resources HearMeWA Provides at No Cost:

Training and technical support for schools and law enforcement on how to use and advertise the program.

Presentations to community partners including youth, schools, law enforcement, behavioral health services, community-based organizations, and more.

Digital and physical marketing materials to agencies, organizations and individuals who want to help raise awareness about HearMeWA.

Monthly newsletters with program data and updates.

HearMeWA Best Practices Toolkit - a comprehensive guide for local partners to use when investigating cases and assisting youth, parents, and guardians.[14]



Next Steps

Earlier this year, the Legislature cut funding for HearMeWA for fiscal year 2027 (July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027). However, the AGO remains committed to HearMeWA's mission, and will continue to ensure young Washingtonians are safe and have support when they are struggling, for as long as it can.

As HearMeWA continues to receive reports from youth across the state, the HearMeWA team will conduct an ongoing evaluation to assess whether the program is aligned with the AGO's vision, is implemented equitably across the state, and is achieving its desired outcomes. Data collected through the implementation of this program, along with input from the YAG and the Advisory Committee, will help to continuously improve the program and experience for youth.

For questions regarding this report or the HearMeWA program, please contact the HearMeWA team at InfoHearMeWA@atg.wa.gov.

Endnotes

[1] HearMeWA collaborates with the Sandy Hook Promise (SHP) National Crisis Center, whose crisis counselors receive, triage, and respond to all reports sent to HearMeWA. These crisis counselors are accredited with the American Association of Suicidology and go through numerous trainings, including but not limited to the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST); crisis intervention; culture, diversity, and inclusion; culturally competent care for LGBTQ youth; trauma-informed care; working with individuals with disabilities; and structural racism.

[2] See HearMeWA Tip Form, for a complete list of "concern/event types:" https://www.p3campus.com/TipForm.aspx?ID=5007&TemplateID=166&Override=1.

[3] Full list of reports submitted to HearMeWA: active threat, alcohol/cannabis sale, anxiety, assault, bullying/cyberbullying, child abuse or neglect, dangerous behavior, depression, domestic violence, drug distribution/possession, eating disorder, emotional abuse, exploitation, general concern, harassment, hate crime/hate speech, hazing, homelessness, kidnapping, life-threatening health issues, loss and grief, other planned attack, post-suicide trauma, request for behavioral health services, self-harm, sexting, sexual assault sexual harassment, stress, substance use, substance use disorder, and suicide/suicide ideation.

[4] Total percentages exceed 100% as individual reports may require notification to multiple agencies.

[5] Colorado Attorney General's Office. Safe2Tell Colorado Annual Report. (2025). Retrieved August 7, 2026, from https://safe2tell.org/app/uploads/2026/06/Safe2Tell-2024-2025-Annual-Report-Final.pdf.

[6] Washington State. (2025). Healthy Youth Survey. Retrieved June 18, 2026, from https://www.askhys.net/.

[7] For more information, see annual reports:

- Colorado: https://safe2tell.org/app/uploads/2026/06/Safe2Tell-2024-2025-Annual-Report-Final.pdf.
- Michigan: https://www.michigan.gov/ok2say/-/media/Project/Websites/ok2say/2025/Annual-Report/2024_OK2SAY_Annual_Report_10YearAnniversary.pdf.
- Pennsylvania: https://www.safe2saypa.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/2024-2025-Annual-Report.pdf.
- Utah: https://safeut.utahhealth.acsitefactory.com/sites/g/files/zrelqx271/files/media/documents/2026/safeut_annualreport_fy25_digital-2_0.pdf.
- Wyoming: https://www.safe2tellwy.org/_files/ugd/91152c_c7b6611e0e8f4d9889a1d6ed327e0f7f.pdf.

[8] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. WISQARS Leading Causes of Death Visualization Tool. (2023). Retrieved June 25, 2026, from https://wisqars.cdc.gov/lcd/?o=LCD&y1=2023&y2=2023&ct=10&cc=ALL&g=+53&s=0&r=0&ry=2&e=0&ar=lcd1age&at=custom&ag=lcd1age&a1=0&a2=25.

[9] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Leading Causes of Death. (2024). Retrieved June 25, 2026, from https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/states/washington/wa.htm.

[10] Urban@UW. Loneliness in Washington tops national average. (2024). Retrieved July 16, 2026, from https://urban.uw.edu/news/loneliness-in-washington-tops-national-average/.

[11] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Preventing school shootings and suicide using technology. (2025). Retrieved July 16, 2026, from http://cdc.gov/firearm-violence/php/research-summaries/technology.html.

[12] ESSB 5092 – 67th Legislature (2021-2022): Making 2021-2023 fiscal biennium operating appropriations. Retrieved August 5, 2026, from https://lawfilesext.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2021-22/Pdf/Bills/Senate%20Passed%20Legislature/5092-S.PL.pdf

[13] Other states with similar programs have regulations requiring schools to use their respective youth tiplines, which is not the case in Washington.

[14] HearMeWA Best Practices Toolkit. (2024). https://hearmewa.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/HearMeWABestPracticesToolkit.pdf.