



**now
matters
now**

Our Impact

2025



"We built NowMattersNow.org because we knew there was a giant gap for people trying to find help who were suicidal – and we knew we could make a difference."

A MESSAGE FROM URSULA

Dear Now Matters Now community,

What a year! Our community has grown in remarkable ways, and we've witnessed the transformational power of people finding each other in moments when they needed connection most. This is what happens when lived experience leads, when we share our stories, and when we make science-backed coping skills available to all—not just those who can afford them or can afford to wait.

None of this happens without you. Thank you to our members who show up with remarkable courage and compassion, our volunteers who give their time and hard-won wisdom, and our donors and so many cheerleaders who believed in this vision before the world caught up.

Looking ahead to 2026, we're focused on scaling our community to meet growing need. We're building toward a future where community-powered care is as accessible as AA meetings, where 24/7 virtual peer-led support is available for anyone struggling, and where lived experience is recognized as the expertise it truly is.

With deep gratitude and love,

Ursula Whiteside
CEO & Founder

GROWING OUR COMMUNITY

In 2024, just a year ago, we started our weekly peer-support groups. What started as four has now grown to nine weekly groups, and we are **adding an average of a group each month.**



We are so grateful to each and every person who chooses to join us each week. Here is what a few members have shared about our groups:

**“I am honestly amazed that I'm alive
- and I have a support system like
I've never experienced before now.”**

**“This group and community has been
more helpful to my mental health
than any therapist has ever been”**

**“I feel so comfortable with the NMN
community...
I don't think I would be here if it
wasn't for them”**

GENUINE CONNECTION

In the **anonymous surveys** we share after group we ask a series of questions to gauge what's working and where we can improve.

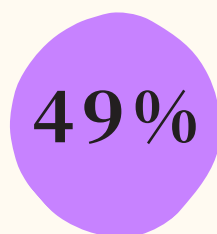
Here's a snapshot of what has been shared to date and what gives us so much hope to continue to grow our community.

On Arrival

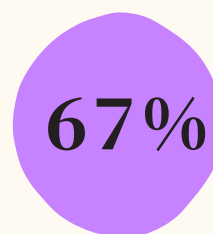


of attendees are actively suicidal

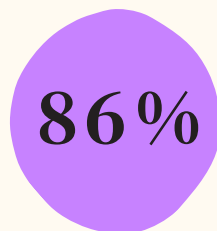
Post Group



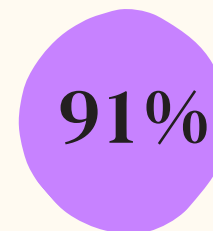
have decrease in suicidal thoughts



feel more connected



rate the group positively



plan to use the coping skills in the coming week



This means we're reaching the right people.

ONE SKILL AT A TIME

Skill practice is core to Now Matters Now. On our website you can find a growing library of evidence-based coping skills for self-paced learning.

Our weekly meetings bring these skills to life, offering guidance, context, and a supportive community of peers committed to using them in real moments of need.

2025
At A Glance

2,725

Total Meeting Attendances

291

Total Meetings

33k+

Skill Video Views

70k+

Website Visitors/Active Users



We launched new biweekly **Skill Drop-In** sessions to help reinforce skill usage between meetings.



Held **6 group trainings** for volunteers and have had **50 volunteers** helping run meetings.



Countless emojis sent in groups! We ❤️ our Chat Champions!



TAKING A STAND ON AI SAFETY

As AI is increasingly turned to in moments of emotional distress, it is critical those with lived experience have a seat at the table in shaping AI safeguards.

An Open Letter on AI Safety and Suicide Prevention

Last Updated: **Wednesday September 17, 2025**

AI is increasingly being turned to for support in moments of emotional distress. As clinicians, researchers, and lived experience leaders in suicide prevention, we call on AI developers to adopt evidence-based practices that prioritize human connection and safety.

To Leadership at OpenAI and Other LLM Developers,

We represent a group of suicide prevention clinicians, organizational leaders, researchers, and individuals with lived experience. We bring decades of expertise in evidence-based practice, program development, scholarly research, risk-management, policy, and lived experience leadership in suicide and crisis care.

We virtually convened a cohort of fellow suicide prevention experts to author an open letter to Chatbot developers.

It was signed by 25+ experts including the Former Director of NIHM and the Chief Medical Officer at AFSP.



Read the Open Letter [🔗](#)

Making Chatbots Safe For Suicidal Patients [🔗](#)

Published in **Psychiatric Times**
Co-Authored by
Allen Frances, PhD &
Ursula Whiteside, PhD (11.18.25)



Protecting Americans from Suicide-Related Harms in Chatbots [🔗](#)

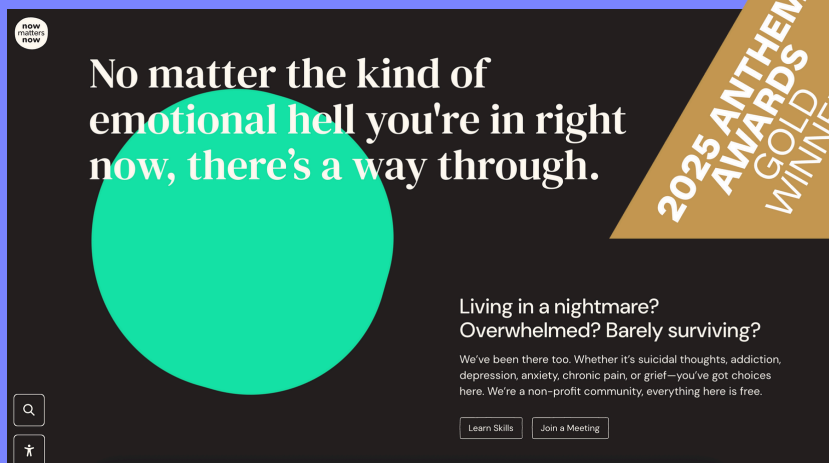
Congressional Educational
Brief

Submitted 9.25



RECOGNITION

NowMattersNow.org won a Gold Webby Anthem Award for Best Health Education Platform 🎉



NOW MATTERS NOW IN THE NEWS



As more teens use AI chatbots, parents and lawmakers sound the alarm about dangers (10.2025) [🔗](#)



Hold the Hope: A song for suicide prevention (12.2025) [🔗](#)



This 3-Step Technique Can Pull Someone Out of Emotional Crisis and Possibly Save Their Life (9.2025) [🔗](#)

MAKING RESEARCH ACTIONABLE


New Study Finds
[NowMattersNow.org](https://www.nowmattersnow.org)
Significantly Reduces
Suicidal Thoughts and
Emotional Distress
(JMIR/Nov 2025)

Our research paper "*User-Reported Mechanisms of Change on a Suicide Prevention Website: Single-Arm Pragmatic Trial*" was published by JMIR this Fall.

SUMMARY FINDINGS

- **Over half of people** arriving at the site with suicidal thoughts or high distress **reported feeling better** after engaging with the site's lived-experience videos and coping tools.
- **Suicidal thoughts dropped by 12.5%** and negative emotions by 15.5% —a change large enough to help someone move from "crisis mode" to a state where they can use coping skills or reach out for more help.
- For comparison, **reductions of this size are often greater than what's seen in therapy session-to-session studies** (typically 4–8% decreases).



bit.ly/NMNReducesSuicidalThoughts 

Participants shared why the site helped:

“It distracted me.”

“I felt less alone.”

“I learned something.”

“I felt cared for.”

It wasn't just one group who benefited. **Native and Indigenous visitors, LGBTQI folks, and people dealing with alcohol or substance use all reported feeling better** after visiting NowMattersNow.org. That lines up with earlier studies showing the site helps young people (ages 12–24) and middle-aged men (ages 36–64) — two groups at high risk for suicide.



Ghazaleh
Shokouhaghahi,
MA, Operations
Manager

“At NowMattersNow, research is not an abstract exercise—it is an expression of our values and a tool for accountability, learning, and growth. Every study we conduct is designed to improve access to life-saving skills, strengthen the quality of peer-led programs, and ensure our work is effective, ethical, and responsive to those we serve.

Through ongoing evaluation of our programs, we identify what is working, where barriers exist, and how we can more effectively reach individuals at risk for suicide. Research allows us to honor the trust participants place in us by continually striving to do better.”

BUILDING THE FUTURE

At the end of the year we were named **one of ten grantees for The Tow Foundation 2025 Innovation Fund**. This 3-year partnership is focused on **expanding access to mental health and well-being for young people**.

What does this mean?

At a time of rising mental health challenges and persistent barriers to care, this partnership helps us:

- Expand our youth peer-led support groups
- Launch new family & friends groups to support caregivers of suicidal youth
- Expand our library of real youth stories of coping

It also means we are that much closer to realizing our vision of being **the most trusted and accessible online space for suicide support**.



“We designed the 2025 Innovation Fund to advance new solutions to unmet mental health challenges faced by young people.

NOW MATTERS NOW stood out for their creativity, credibility, and commitment to young people.”

Frank Tow,
Chair of the Innovation
Fund Committee and
Board Member of
The Tow Foundation



Peer-Led



Science-Backed



Free Forever



**now
matters
now**

**Now Matters Now is a 501(c)(3)
non-profit organization**

www.NowMattersNow.org