

FROM PAIN TO PURPOSE

February 18, 2022

UPDATE: The Miles Hall Lifeline Act - AB 988 Suicide and Mental Health Crisis Hotline

In June of 2021 we reported on the good work being done by the Miles Hall Foundation – especially as it relates to **The Miles Hall Lifeline Act: AB 988 Suicide and Mental Health Crisis Hotline** which is in the California Senate now. Even though the California Assembly passed this (70 ‘yea’ 0 ‘nea’), it is not a done deal in the Senate. That is why we need your help. We hope you’ll share this with family and friends throughout California. This is critical legislation that will protect all of our families.

You can read about AB988 here: <https://www.justiceformileshall.org/ab-988>. In a nutshell, it calls for a new three-digit phone number, 9-8-8, for suicide prevention and immediate, localized emergency response for individuals in mental health crisis by trained mental health professionals and more. We hope you will use the easy-to-follow ‘*Action Items for AB 988 – Miles Hall Lifeline – Suicide and Mental Health Crisis Hotline*’. You can access it on our Dialogue for Change webpage here: <https://srvumc.org/dialogue-for-change/>. Help us get the word out to our legislators and to governor Newsom. Tell them how important this legislation is for our families. **Mental illness knows no race or gender.**

Miles Hall was a 23 year old black man with mental health issues who lived with his family in Walnut Creek. On June 2, 2019 he was in the midst of a schizophrenic mental health crisis when his Walnut Creek family called the only source of help available – 911. Despite having information about Miles’ condition, officers resorted to lethal force and he was shot and killed within a minute of their arrival. We know too well that Miles’ story is not isolated. People of color are especially vulnerable when the only means of getting help for them is to call law enforcement. The outcomes are often tragic. Miles would have been 26 years old February 15, 2022. He deserved to live.

San Ramon Police Chief Craig Shields opened an April 21, 2021 Mental Health Awareness webinar with this alarming information: *“In 2020, in the City of San Ramon, we saw an 80% Increase in Welfare and Institution Code 5150 commitments. These individuals were determined to be a danger to themselves or a danger to others or were considered gravely disabled. Most concerning, 36% of these were juveniles.”*

We already know that life for teens in this valley can be difficult – disengagement, peer pressure, stress related illness, drugs, anxiety, depression – all risk factors for youth suicide. And the uncertainty of the past two years has only made it worse. The good news: It has been shown that improving access to mental health resources for families and communities can help prevent youth suicide. **AB988 is that help.** Every city and town in our Valley (and beyond) has committed its name to the AB 988 Supporter List. See <https://www.justiceformileshall.org/ab-988>. That tells you how important the legislation is. Please help us get the word out. Thank you. Dialogue for Change