

Text-a-Tip FAQ

What is Text-a-Tip?

[Text-A-Tip](#) is an anonymous texting service that allows teens to find immediate help. The service targets middle and high school students, and it is available 24/7, is completely anonymous, and is staffed with trained, licensed counselors to support teenagers who have a concern or a crisis.

Who supports Text-a-Tip?

The texting service is supported by local law enforcement agencies and school districts across McHenry County.

When will the service be rolled out to students?

The new texting service will be introduced to students during the first few weeks of school. Each student will receive one sticker which contains information on how to connect with Text-A-Tip. In addition, posters will be displayed throughout our buildings and the community.

Who are the counselors responding to students' texts?

The counselors are licensed, trained professionals. Counselors are provided by LEAD (Linking Efforts Against Drugs), a non-profit organization focused on promoting healthy family relationships and preventing alcohol and drug use and other risky behaviors by youth. The response team consists of licensed/certified mental health professionals from The Child, Adolescent, and Family Recovery Center in Hoffman Estates. The Recovery Center will be working closely with the McHenry County Crisis Center, who will take over as the response team within 6-12 months after launch.

How does it work?

Anyone who sends the text message **MCHELP** to **274637** will receive an immediate text response from a trained, professional counselor.

Thanks to a system that routes calls through a cloaking server, texters are completely anonymous, allowing teens the freedom to reach out for help without fear. In the case of a life-threatening condition, emergency responders will be notified and be given as much information as possible to help the person in need.

Have other school districts used this service?

Bannockburn District 106, Deerfield Public Schools District 109, North Shore School District 112, and Township High School District 113 launched the service earlier this year.

How is this service funded?

Funding for Text-A-Tip has been provided by the McHenry County Community Foundation through an anonymous private donor. We are grateful to the foundation for taking an immediate interest in this initiative and to the individual who generously donated the funds to it possible. In addition, we thank Konica Minolta and Crystal Lake Graphics for donating printing services for the various marketing materials.