

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**February 16, 2018**

***CRISIS TEXT LINE POWERED BY KIDS HELP PHONE***  
**NOW AVAILABLE FOR MANITOBA SERVICE TRIAL**

Confidential support for young people in Manitoba is just a text away with the pilot introduction of ***Crisis Text Line powered by Kids Help Phone***. Manitobans just need to text **TALK to 686868** on any text/SMS enabled cell phone to access help whenever they need it most.

Research has shown that 71 percent of young people prefer a non-verbal form of communication such as texting. To meet the growing demand for talking through text, Kids Help Phone is introducing this innovative, free, 24/7 help option through a service partnership with U.S. based helpline and technology pioneer, Crisis Text Line. Following the English-only service trial in Manitoba, it will be rolled out nationally in both English and French.

***Crisis Text Line powered by Kids Help Phone*** requires no data plan, internet connection or app and is especially relevant for young people living in remote or rural areas where such services can be limited. By eliminating barriers to seeking help, Kids Help Phone is ensuring youth receive the help they need, when they need it most and in a manner that suits them best.

By texting **TALK to 686868**, a connection is made with a trained volunteer Crisis Responder who is available to 'talk through texting' on any subject big or small. The intent is to provide active listening and to help move an individual from a hot moment to a cool calm using a five-staged structured conversation. At any time, the texter can type **STOP** to end the conversation.

Kids Help Phone's phone counselling and Live Chat service continue to remain available, where anonymous, professional counseling is provided.

**An Overview Of The Texting Process**

1. A person texts TALK to 686868 on any text/SMS enabled cell phone.
2. First time users receive an automated Kids Help Phone message providing details on its Privacy Policy and duty to report.
3. A connection is made with a trained, volunteer Crisis Responder who is available through a web-based online platform and can read and respond to text messages.
4. A texting conversation begins.
5. The volunteer Crisis Responder is trained to help bring an individual from a hot moment to a cool calm.

6. The texter's phone number is visible but all information shared with the Crisis Responder remains confidential unless it is necessary to call emergency services.
7. At any time, the individual can type STOP to end the conversation. No further communication with the Crisis Responder will take place.
8. There is no charge for sending or receiving texts and the service will not use up any prepaid texts as part of an existing texting plan.

Further information on how to become a volunteer Crisis Responder, use Crisis Text Line powered by Kids Help Phone or donate can be found at [kidshelpphone.ca/text](https://kidshelpphone.ca/text).

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#### **ABOUT KIDS HELP PHONE**

Kids Help Phone is a national charity known for its expertise and continuous innovation as Canada's only 24/7 professional counselling, referral and information service for young people. Since 1989, Kids Help Phone has offered kids, teens, and young adults a critical lifeline of hope and support through our free, anonymous services, which research shows significantly improves youth mental health. Young people reach out to Kids Help Phone's counsellors from every corner of the country via phone, Live Chat and the soon-to-be offered 24/7 texting service in addition to having access to Kids Help Phone's database of local youth-serving programs.

#### **ABOUT CRISIS TEXT LINE**

Crisis Text Line provides free, 24/7 support for people in crisis via text. [www.crisistextline.org](https://www.crisistextline.org)

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