

TEXT-A-TIP: Help in Hand for Teens

Text "224HELP" to 274637

Envíe un Mensaje "224AYUDAME" al 274637

March 2, 2015 - Beginning today, teenagers in Bannockburn, Deerfield, Highland Park, Highwood, and Riverwoods can use their preferred method of communication - text messaging - to reach out for help for themselves or friends. Text-A-Tip is available 24/7, is completely anonymous, and is staffed with local counselors to support teenagers (and others) who have a concern or a crisis.

Text-A-Tip is sponsored by:

- Local school districts
 - Bannockburn District 106
 - Deerfield Public Schools District 109
 - North Shore School District 112
 - Township High School District 113
- The Jordan Michael Filler Foundation
- The City of Highland Park, the Village of Deerfield, and the Village of Bannockburn, including the police departments of those communities

The service and counselors are provided by [LEAD \(Linking Efforts Against Drugs\)](http://www.leadingefforts.org), a non-profit organization focused on promoting healthy family relationships and preventing alcohol and drug use and other risky behaviors by youth. (<http://www.leadingefforts.org>)



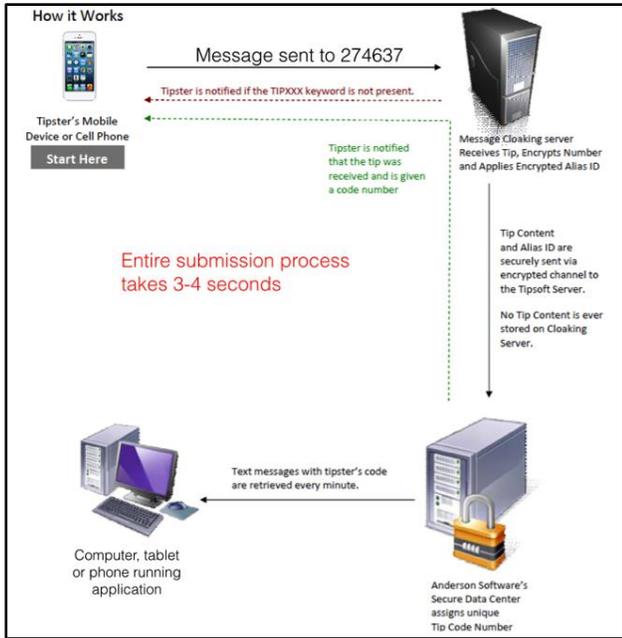
Why Text for Help? Teenagers today use their devices in every aspect of their lives: education, entertainment, news, making friends and connecting with them. Text-A-Tip allows teens to find anonymous, immediate help for themselves if they are struggling with drug or alcohol abuse, depression, difficult family situations, bullying, or any of the many challenges they face today.

How It Works: Anyone who sends a text message "224HELP" or "224AYUDAME" 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 freedom to reach out for help without fear. Posters and signs are now in all schools in Districts 106, 109, 112 and 113, as well as in public areas throughout the communities of Bannockburn, Deerfield, Highland Park and Highwood. They include digital QR Codes that students can scan to connect as well:



Is It Really Anonymous?

Texts sent to Text-A-Tip are untraceable. Here's how the cloaking server works:



Who Responds to the Texts? The response team consists of licensed/certified mental health professionals from The Child, Adolescent, and Family Recovery Center in Lake Bluff. They are local clinicians who already understand the needs of our communities. Response team members rotate via a pre-established on-call schedule and are responsible for appropriately responding to each communication and for following up and reporting whenever necessary. In the case of a life-threatening condition, emergency responders will be notified.

Who Should Use Text-A-Tip? Text-A-Tip is available for communication of any kind of concern, though it is primarily intended for community members to use when they need immediate mental health assistance or have a drug/alcohol abuse concern for themselves or a friend. The anonymity makes it a comfortable

place for someone to share a concern about another individual without risk of someone knowing who sent the report.

Substantial funding for Text-A-Tip has been provided by the Jordan Michael Filler Foundation (<http://www.jordanfiller.org>), a 501(c)(3) organization that was established in memory of Jordan Filler, who grew up in Highland Park and succumbed to heroin addiction at the age of 23. The Foundation creates awareness of drug addiction. Through educating children and their parents, primarily through schools; working with legislators to improve privacy laws to enable treatment providers to work more effectively with families; and expanding a program called "text a tip," which provides students an opportunity to anonymously get help for themselves or others, the Foundation will make a difference in the prevention and treatment of substance abuse (including heroin). A large portion of the cost of printing of promotional material was generously donated by State Graphics in Wheeling.

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