



If You Build It, They Will Come:

**Lessons Learned Through the Implementation of
Text and Chat Services for Youth**

Welcome! We are glad you are here. We will begin shortly.

Housekeeping

- This webinar is being recorded.
- All attendees are muted. Please use the Q&A feature to ask questions throughout the presentation.
- Closed captioning has been enabled for this webinar. To see captions, click on the CC button in the Zoom taskbar.
- The materials from today's presentation will be sent out via email following the webinar.

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Please note: This was a one-time funding opportunity.

Presenters



Michelle Fingerman, MS
Vice President, Prevention Programs
Childhelp, Inc



Larel Jacobs, M.Ed, MS
Director, Hotline
Childhelp, Inc



Childhelp's
PACTECH
Project

If You Build It They Will Come:
Lessons Learned through the implementation of text and chat services for youth



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Childhelp Programs

Advocacy Centers

Foster Care &
Adoption

Residential & Group
Homes

National Programs:
Hotline
&
Prevention Education



Launched in 1982

Available 24/7 with professional counselors

Approximately 100,000 contacts annually

Provides: Information, Education, Crisis Counseling, Support, Connection to Community Resources

Research Focus: Built on Academic Research-Hotline Collaboration

Evidence-informed Practice Model

Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline



Call or Text
1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453)

Live Chat: [Childhelpline.org](https://www.childhelp.org/childhelp/childhelp-hotline/)



Why text and chat?



Scope of Project

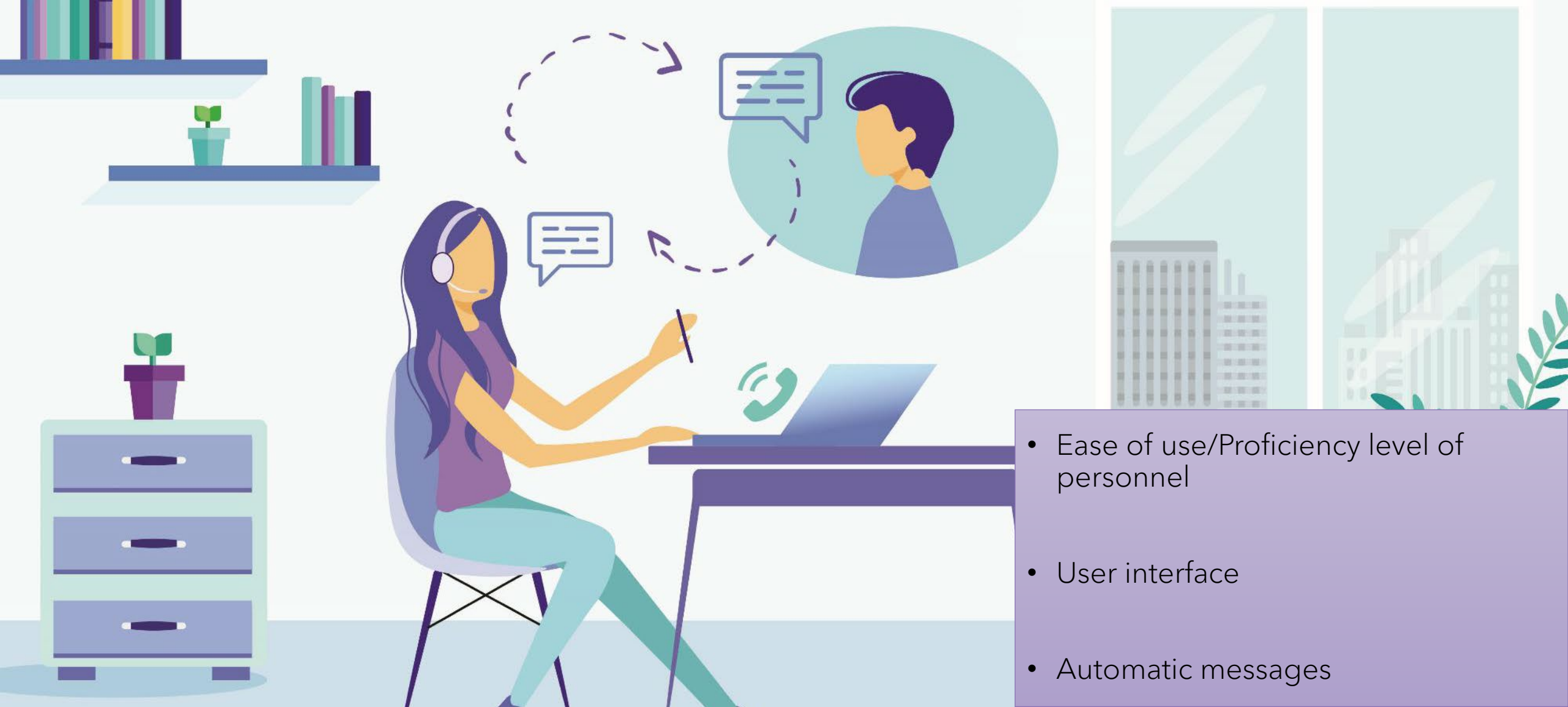


Initial Operational
Considerations:
Technology Requirements

Team Input

*Internal

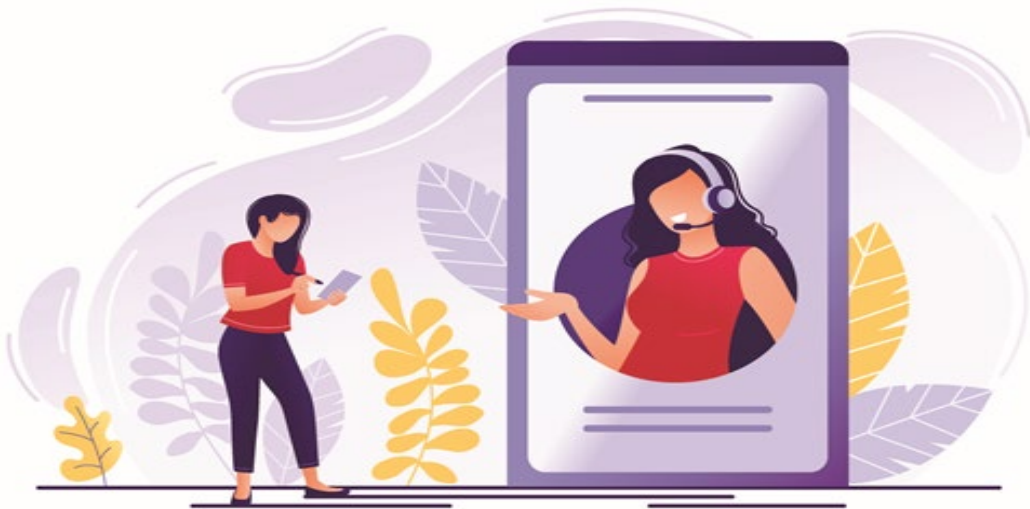
*External



- Ease of use/Proficiency level of personnel
- User interface
- Automatic messages

Initial Operational Considerations: Technology Requirements

Initial Operational Considerations: Technology Requirements



Do all staff take all
contacts?

Terms of Service

Initial Operational Considerations:
Legal Considerations

Mandated Reporting

Anonymous vs
Confidential

Retention of &
Requests for
transcripts



Initial Operational Considerations: Data

Data Collection

What data do you want to collect through contact?

Pre & Post survey considerations

- Open vs closed questions
- Opt out
- Reading level
- Brief
- Based on evaluation outcomes

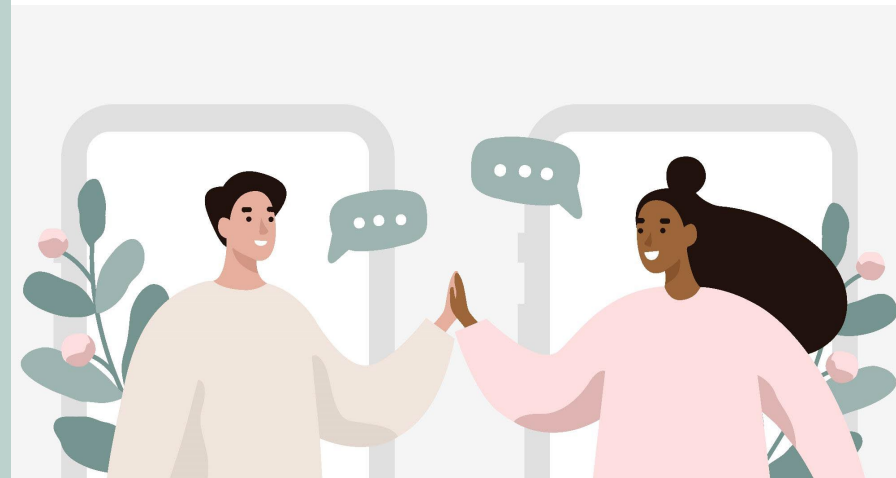
Data Management

Plan for large amount of data

Who will analyze data

Data Use

Leveraging to inform services



Clinical Considerations



Expanding hotline approach

- *Youth versus adult population*
- *Information-giving versus attending to emotional dynamics & needs*
- *COVID-19 impact*

Training elements

Content
knowledge

Core
competencies

Reflective
Supervision

Vicarious
Trauma/Resilience



Counselor Competencies

Knowledge

- Child Welfare laws and systems (including types of abuse, mandated reporting, and difference from adult welfare programs or law enforcement)
- Manifestations of crisis and/or trauma
- Developmental norms and growth (both to interact with youth directly and provide guidance for parents/caregivers)
- Unique needs of various help seekers that commonly reach out to hotline. This may include:
 - LGBTQIA+
 - Minority/undeserved/POC/Diverse ethnicity
 - Youth (children and teens)
 - Adult survivors
 - Parents
 - Perpetrators/obscene/prank
- Psychological aspects of various mental health risks
 - Suicide or self-harm
 - Substance use
 - Mental illness

Skills

- Clinical assessment
 - Ability to prioritize issues
 - Asks questions that seek necessary facts
 - Assesses safety/risk/severity
 - Establishes rapport
 - Establishes and maintains boundaries
- Intervention planning
 - Active problem-solving/suggests solutions
 - Identifies and encourages reasonable actions
 - Identifies and recommends relevant resources
 - Avoids advice-giving or quick fixes
 - Recognizes and addresses resistance/barriers
- Effective communication
 - Clear, concise written language (word choice, grammar, punctuation)
 - Maintain calm, professional, warm tone of voice {Phone}
 - Ability to adapt messaging to cognitive and developmental needs
 - Active listening
 - Crisis de-escalation
 - Strong attention-to-detail (person-centered)
- Data Collection
 - Accurate
 - Objective
 - Comprehensive
 - Recognizes value of data fidelity

Perspectives

- About self
 - Growth mindset/receptive to feedback
 - Implicit bias awareness (about the system, developmental differences, mental health)
 - Self-care and healthy boundaries
- Towards help-seekers
 - Trauma-informed
 - Non-judgmental/de-stigmatizing
 - Collaborative and empowering
 - Honest and genuine
 - Kind and hopeful
 - Cultural competency



Initial Outreach: target population

Advertising and Awareness efforts



Social Media:
Meta
TikTok
YouTube

Additional:
Spotify
Online magazine
Streaming services



Automated Messaging

Finding balance between inviting messaging and initial disclaimers

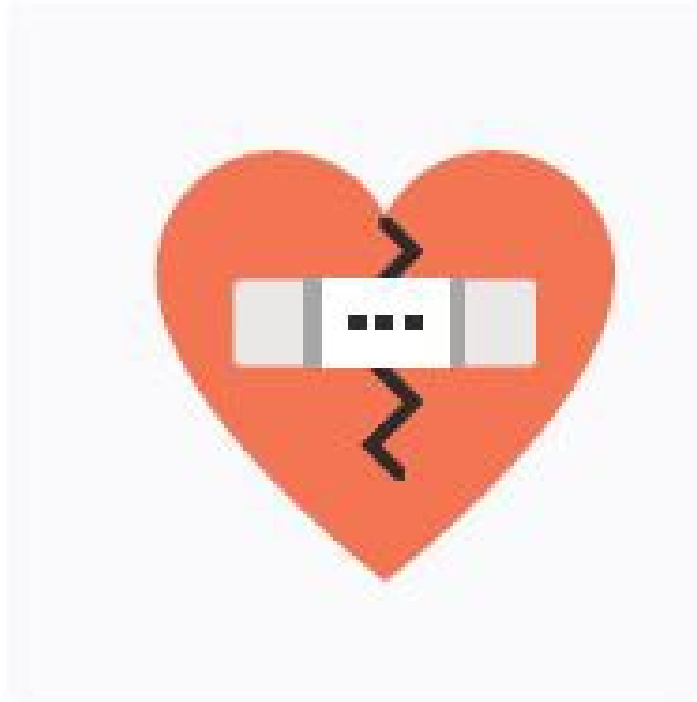
{ *Hello. I am a Childhelp counselor. How can I help you today?* }

{ *Hello. I am a Childhelp counselor. This text line does not take reports of abuse but we are here to listen and to help by providing information, resources, and emotional support to individuals that are concerned about child abuse issues. How can I help you today?* }

{ Use of scripts – pros & cons }

{ *Are you a bot?* }

Other considerations: Misuse



Examples:

- *Spam*
- *Overuse*
- *Deceit/prank*
- *Obscene/abusive*

Tips to address:

- *Implement safeguards*
- *Leverage user info*
- *Establish protocols*
- *Train and empower hotline employees*



- Complicated work
- Balance
- Length and cost
- Evaluation—
partnerships beneficial
- Pilot period;
adaptability
- IT support crucial

Lessons learned

Continued growth

- Evidence based decisions as the norm
- Expanding services
 - YAC
 - Website enhancements
- Mitigate change fatigue



Upcoming Webinars

Webinar 2: Data Matters: Leveraging Research to Inform and Evaluate Youth Needs in a Hotline Environment

Date: Wednesday, July 19

Time: 1pm EST/10a PST

Webinar 3: It's Complicated: Providing High Quality Support Services to Youth through Digital Interactions

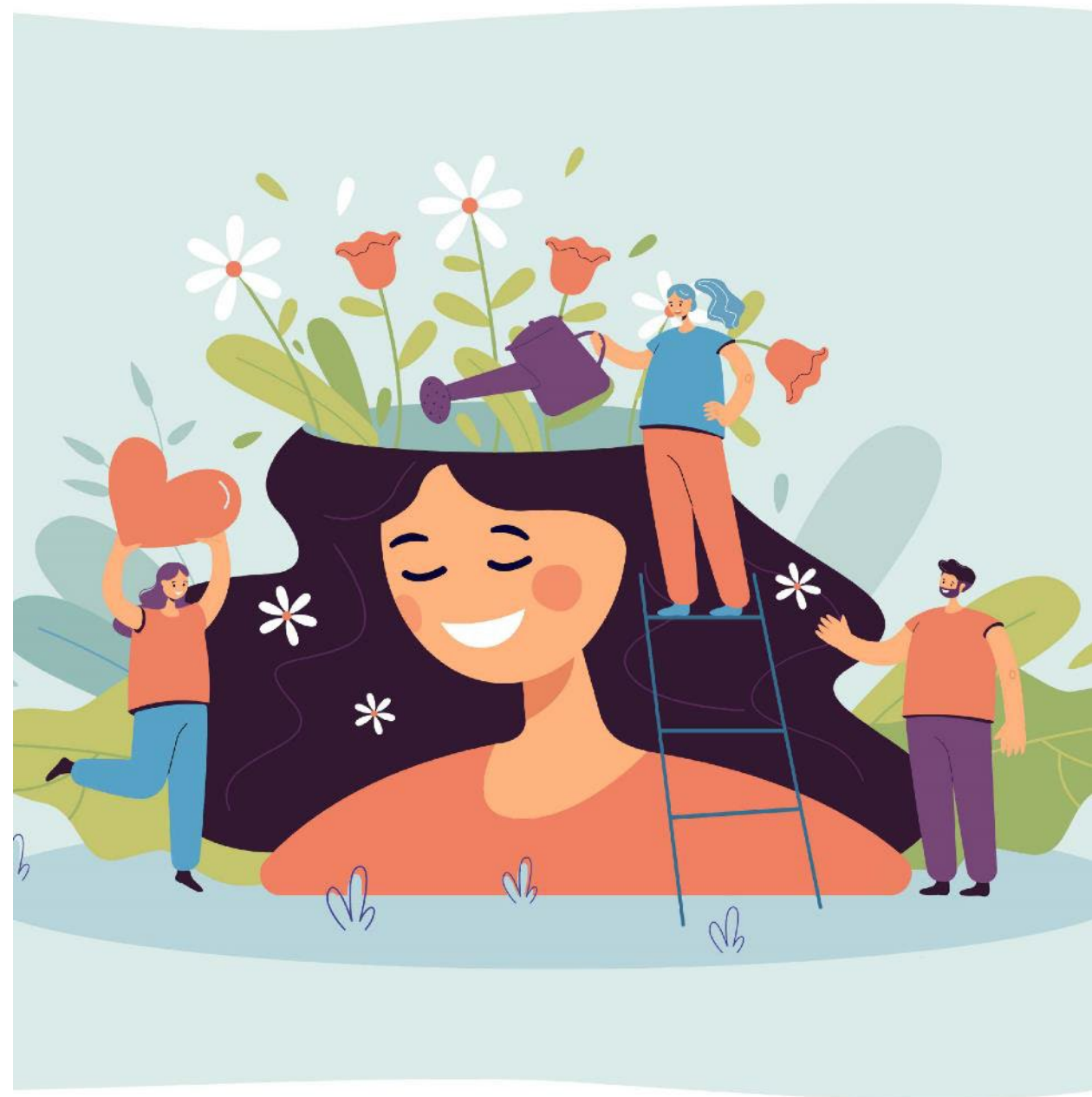
Date: Wednesday, August 23

Time: 1p EST/10a PST



Additional Information

*Supporting Youth through Text and Chat
Hotline Services: Key Considerations and
Implementation Recommendations*



Let's Talk About It

Q & A



Contact Information



Larel Jacobs

ljacobs@childhelp.org

Michelle Fingerman

mfingerman@childhelp.org