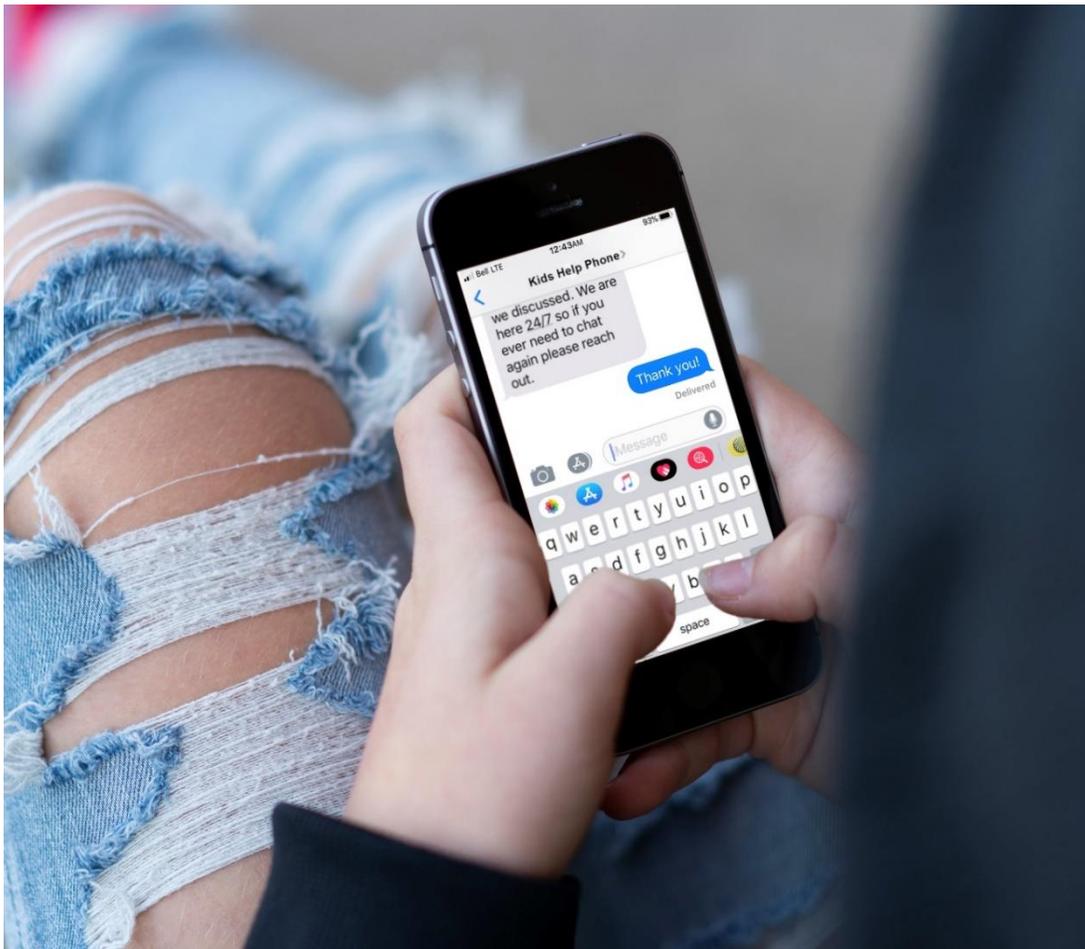


# Lindsay Rachel Giacomelli Memorial Fund and Kids Help Phone

March 2, 2021



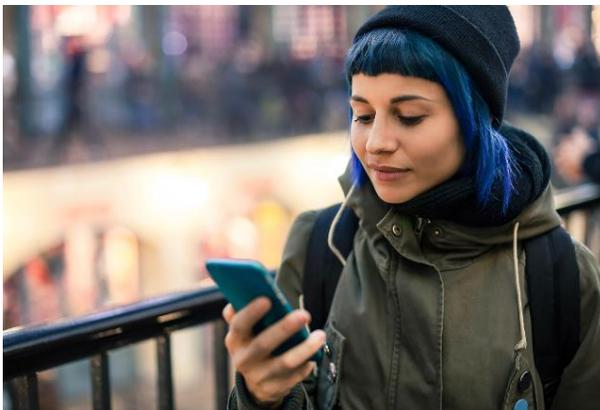
**Presented to:**  
Lindsay Rachel Giacomelli Memorial Fund

## Changing and Saving Lives

As you know, we are experiencing unprecedented increases in volume as a result of COVID-19, coupled with national and international crises including shootings, floods and racial injustice – all of which are impacting young people like never before.

So far in 2020, our teams of professional counsellors and volunteer crisis responders have interacted with young people over **4 million** times (and counting!) – compared to 1.9 million for all of 2019. Young people are reaching out to us in record numbers. It is your incredible support that enables us to be there for every single young person in their moments of crisis or need. You are the reason no young voice goes unheard during this unimaginable time.

As the pandemic has progressed, our texting service has become increasingly embedded in the landscape of youth mental healthcare in Canada – recently surpassing **300,000** texting conversations since inception in 2018. This reflects the critical role this service plays to ensure every young person has somewhere to turn in their time of need. In 2020 alone, youth reached out to us through text more than **168,000** times. During the pandemic, we expanded our texting service, and it is now available for all ages across Canada. This was all possible thanks to you.



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*"I have not felt listened to in a long time. The listening without judgement means a lot to me. I have felt alone and helpless. It means a lot to know there are people that care and want to help. Thank you."*

*-Kids Help Phone service user*

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## Your Impact on Youth

When we needed support to meet the growing needs of youth during the onset of COVID-19, Lindsay Rachel Giacomelli Memorial Fund answered the call. You are the reason no young voice goes unheard during this unimaginable time.

We are pleased to share a number of updates and improvements to our service since mid-March that donor support made possible, to ensure barrier-free access to our services:

- **20 new counsellors** were on-boarded in just 2.5 weeks, with **34** more counsellors in recruitment and orientation
- **More than 4,000 volunteer crisis responders** were trained to provide support, information and referrals through our texting service, with more being trained every day
- Launched our crisis response texting service **for all ages (text 741741)** across Canada
- **Supported young people during their return to school**, when our data showed that one in three youth reaching out via text felt distressed about returning to school

- Published up-to-the minute, expert-informed **COVID-19 resources** on our website
- **Youth who speak Arabic** can now access our phone counselling service through a pilot program facilitated by Arabic-speaking interpreters
- Committed to taking decisive action to acknowledge and eliminate any existence or influence of systemic **anti-Black racism** and racism across our organization, and in the ways we interact with Black and Indigenous youth and people of colour reaching out to us for help. **We will not waver in our fight against anti-Black racism and racism or prejudice against any group.**

Young people from every province and territory in Canada reach out to us every single day – and reaching out takes courage. The top issues young people are talking about right now in communities across the country are: Relationships; Anxiety or Stress; Depression; Suicide; and Isolation. And we continue to perform an average of **10 active rescues** every day through our texting service – meaning you help save 10 young lives each day. Thank you for saving lives.

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*“Thank you SO much for all your help. You really calmed me down and we're such a great supporter. I'm happy I could talk with you, a fellow Indigenous person. You really really impacted my night I'm so grateful for that. You are a light in this world. Keep being amazing!!!”*

*-Indigenous service user*

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## Accelerated Innovation

Thanks to your support, we have met volume increases across all of our service channels, and continue to ensure and expand access for youth to our life-saving services. We are thrilled to share the following ways your support has enabled innovation:

- As a trusted leader in virtual mental health, we are collaborating with our mental health partners to provide free online resources, tools, apps and connections to trained volunteers and qualified mental health professionals through a newly established web resource, [Wellness Together Canada](#). The Government of Canada awarded a bid to a consortium of organizations (Kids Help Phone, Stepped Care Solutions, Homewood and more), investing in this virtual mental health solution for all people across Canada.
- Launched [Kids Help Phone Insights](#), a first-of-its-kind data platform sharing up-to-date information about how young people across Canada are feeling and what they are experiencing. Our unique dataset – the largest in the world – will inform proactive programming, public policy and curriculum, and drive meaningful systemic change to ensure all youth mental health supports in Canada are rooted in evidence and designed to meet the unique needs of young people today.

- Began **providing callers with information about where they are in our short phone queue**. Because the length of our calls vary significantly, we are not able to estimate the average wait time for a call to be answered – though we typically reach all callers in under five minutes. Beginning in October, we added the functionality to let callers know how many calls are in front of them. We anticipate this will significantly improve caller’s experience as it lets them make a more informed decision around whether to wait or call back at another time. We will be evaluating this new feature in the coming months to ensure it is improving the experience of youth.
- Gave youth a new way to access the support they need, in the moment they need it – by expanding our service to offer our crisis texting service through **Facebook Messenger**, thanks to generous funding from RBC Foundation and an Anonymous Donor. The Facebook Messenger service has been seamlessly integrated into Kids Help Phone’s confidential texting platform, and connects users with our trained crisis responders. This service is being piloted in English only with expansion to French in the coming months.
- **Indigenous texters can now request to be connected directly to Indigenous crisis responders**, one of 37 actions outlined in [Finding Hope: Kids Help Phone’s Action Plan for Supporting First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Young People](#). Despite unparalleled demand, we continue to adapt to be relevant, equitable and accessible to Indigenous young people from coast to coast to coast. Your support enables innovative advances like this one, so we can serve Indigenous youth with greater cultural sensitivity.

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*“There are people who can help. Reach out to Kids Help Phone, you can call them or text them...They’re there to listen, they’re there to support you, they’re there to make sure that you know that you are not alone and help you and all of us through this no matter where you live, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, in French and in English.”*

*- Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister, Canada*

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## Thank you, Lindsay Rachel Giacomelli Memorial Fund

Thank you. Your commitment ensures we can meet kids where they are today and tomorrow. With Lindsay Rachel Giacomelli Memorial Fund by our side, we can continue to be there for more youth than ever before.

On behalf of the young people we serve, we cannot thank you enough.

