



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

NEWS RELEASE

NFHS Partners with Crisis Text Line to Support Teens' Mental Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (September 7, 2022) — The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) has partnered with Crisis Text Line (CTL) to encourage mental health support for teens across the country. Crisis Text Line provides free, 24/7, high-quality text-based mental health support and crisis intervention in English and Spanish by empowering a community of trained volunteers to support people in their moments of need.

This partnership aligns with the 2021-2025 NFHS Strategic Plan and the NFHS Board of Directors Priorities, both of which have identified Student Mental, Emotional and Physical Wellness as one of the most important areas of concern in high school sports and performing arts programs.

“The last several years have been particularly challenging for many students in high school activity programs, with the pandemic and other pressures felt by students today,” said NFHS CEO Karissa Niehoff. “We are glad to be able to offer another avenue of help for students nationwide through this partnership with Crisis Text Line. We need to let students know there are individuals who can help in times of need.”

Crisis Text Line promotes mental well-being for individuals, wherever they are. Individuals are encouraged to text a keyword to 741741 if they are experiencing a mental health crisis – anything from suicidal thoughts or abusive relationships to difficult conversations with parents or anxiety about

school workload. At any time, texters can connect with volunteer Crisis Counselors who will provide confidential support. Crisis Text Line recently expanded its service to include Spanish language support, becoming the first organization to provide free, text-based mental health support for Spanish speakers in the United States.

“We truly admire the work NFHS does for student-athletes by promoting respect, integrity and sportsmanship as well as fostering the inclusion of diverse populations,” said Dena Trujillo, CEO at Crisis Text Line. “Our goal is to provide all teens with text-based mental health support 24/7 so they never feel alone.”

This agreement furthers the relationship between the NFHS and Crisis Text Line that began at the 2019 NFHS National Student Leadership Summit in Indianapolis. Attendees of the Summit were provided bag tags advising those in crisis to text the keyword “SHIELD” to 741741. The NFHS will continue to promote the use of “SHIELD” as its keyword through this agreement.

While individuals of any age can utilize the service, approximately 70 percent of Crisis Text Line’s texters are under the age of 25.

“The NFHS is excited about this relationship because it provides an exceptional resource not only for the young people in our nation’s schools, but for our member state associations who will be able to receive data on the issues affecting students in their states,” said Elliot Hopkins, NFHS Director of Sports and Student Services. “Identifying these issues greatly impact the targeted response. We want to promote this option to those who need support and encouragement.”

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About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and performing arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and performing arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 17 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 19,500 high schools and 12 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7.9 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; offers online publications and services for high school coaches and officials; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, speech and debate coaches, and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS website at www.nfhs.org.

About Crisis Text Line

Founded in 2013, Crisis Text Line, nonprofit organization that provides free, 24/7, high-quality, text-based mental health support and crisis intervention, empowers a community of trained volunteers to support people in their moments of need. Crisis Text Line is committed to creating an empathetic world where nobody feels alone. Those seeking care can text 741741 to be connected to a live, trained volunteer crisis counselor in English. Individuals can text HOLA to 741741 or text to 442-AYUDAME in WhatsApp for Spanish service. Visit Crisis Text Line on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). Additional information is available at www.crisistextline.org.

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