



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES
DEPARTMENT LAUNCHES TEXT-BASED CRISIS COUNSELING OPTION**

(Santa Clara County, CA) Emotionally or mentally distressed residents in Santa Clara County now have access to a 24-7 text-based crisis counseling service.

The County of Santa Clara Behavioral Health Services Department has partnered with Crisis Text Line, Inc. to provide free, text-based, confidential assistance to people in need in Santa Clara County. To receive text-based support from trained Crisis Text Line counselors, Santa Clara County residents can text RENEW to 741741. The support is free, accessible 24/7, and confidential.

To date, Crisis Text Line, a national organization, has answered more than 84 million messages. The organization has more than 4,500 active Crisis Counselors with strict safeguards and protocols to provide care, safety, and confidentiality for each user.

“The ability to offer text-based support to people in need adds a new dimension to our services, and is an especially important tool to offer to young people in Santa Clara County,” said Toni Tullys, Director of the County of Santa Clara Behavioral Health Services Department, adding, “It’s important to make access to counseling easy and approachable, and text-based support does both.” The vast majority of Crisis Text Line users are under age 25; partnering with Crisis Text Line is an important to address the issue of youth suicides, including college-age youth.

The County’s Behavioral Health Services Department already offers a 24/7, free, confidential Suicide and Crisis Hotline at 1 (855) 278-4204, mental health services information and referrals at 1 (800) 704-0900, and substance abuse services information and referrals at 1 (800) 488-9919.

About half of adults will experience a mental health challenge over the course of their lifetime, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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About the County of Santa Clara

The County of Santa Clara government serves a diverse, multi-cultural population of 1.9 million residents in Santa Clara County, the fifth largest county in California. With a \$6.5 billion budget, more than 70 agencies/departments and 20,000 employees, the County of Santa Clara plans for the needs of a dynamic community, offers quality services, and promotes a healthy, safe and prosperous community for all. The County provides essential services including public health and environmental protection, medical services through Santa Clara Valley Medical Center (SCVMC), child and adult protection services, homelessness prevention and solutions, roads, parks, libraries, emergency response to disasters, (more)

protection of minority communities and those under threat, access to a fair criminal justice system, and scores of other services, particularly for those members of our community in the greatest need.

About Crisis Text Line

Crisis Text Line provides free, 24/7, confidential support for people in crisis via text. www.crisistextline.org. Text 741741 to be connected to a live, trained Crisis Counselor. We are here for people of all ages who are in a mental or emotional state that has left them in a dangerous condition or unable to cope in a functional or productive way. Our crisis interventions offer in-the-moment support of active crisis situations. Crisis Counselors complete a 30 hour training and have 24/7 supervision by full time Crisis Text Line mental health professionals.