

# A New Way to Offer Help: Implementing and Evaluating Text and Chat Based Technologies for a Child Abuse Hotline

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## Relationship of ASU and Childhelp



# Mission

Childhelp exists to meet the physical, emotional, educational, and spiritual needs of abused and neglected children.

We do so by focusing our efforts in the areas of advocacy, prevention, treatment and community outreach.



Founded in 1959 by Sara O'Meara and Yvonne Fedderson  
PREVENTION and TREATMENT of CHILD ABUSE

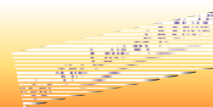


# Founded in 1959

- Childhelp was founded in 1959 by Sara O'Meara and Yvonne Fedderson.
- In the mid 1970's, our services changed to a domestic focus by helping abused and neglected children in the U.S.
- Childhelp is one of the largest and oldest non-profits focused on the prevention, intervention and treatment of abused children.



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**Programs**

- Childhelp Hotline
- Advocacy Centers
- Residential Treatment Facilities
- Foster Care
- Group Homes
- Prevention Education

**California**

- Childhelp Foster Family and Adoption Agency of CA
- Childhelp Group Homes of CA
- Childhelp Merv Griffin Village

**Arizona**

- Childhelp Children's Center of AZ
- Childhelp Mobile Advocacy Center of Arizona

**Tennessee**

- Childhelp Children's Center of East TN
- Childhelp Foster Family & Adoption Agency of East TN

**Virginia/DC**

- Childhelp Alice C Tyler Village
- Hotline satellite office

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## National Child Abuse Hotline

### 1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453)

- Available 24/7
- Confidential
- Staffed by professional counselors
- Provides:
  - Information
  - Education
  - Crisis counseling
  - Support
  - Referrals to community resources

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## PACTECH: Prevent Abuse of Children Text & Chat Hotline

# Why now?



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## PACTECH Implementation *Human elements*

- Recruit and hire *professional* counselors
  - Volunteer vs. professional
  - Anticipated hire for growth
- Create text/chat training curriculum
- Advisory Committee
- Best practices
  - Pre-populated messages
  - Policies & procedures
  - Youth dialogue



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## PACTECH Implementation *System elements*

- Increase resource database with text/chat options
- Marketing strategy
- Privacy & security considerations
- Pre and post questions for evaluation



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## Implementation Barriers

- Technology
- Social Media restrictions
- System resources not text/chat friendly



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JTLYK – Just to let you know

True or False



There is little research on the effectiveness of text/chat counseling.



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## Evaluation Research Questions

The purpose of the evaluation approach was designed to answer the three research questions:

- *RQ1:* What are the best practices and protocols in implementing text or chat-based technology for a hotline?
- *RQ2:* How effective is PACTECH at communicating, meeting needs and protecting the privacy of youth who may be victims of maltreatment?
- *RQ3:* How effective is PACTECH at sharing resources with youth who may be experiencing maltreatment and/or those seeking to prevent child maltreatment?



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# Evaluation Plan

- Pilot period
  - February 2019 through July 2019
- Quantitative Research
- Qualitative Research



# 7 questions that help measure outcomes

- Age
- Gender
- Stress
- Hopefulness
- Coping Skills
- Information
- Preference on how to get help



# Text Data Highlights



## Current Pilot Data Period

- February 2019 - May 2019



**15,848**

text exchanges  
between counselors  
and users





# Levels of Intervention – 3 classifications

### LEVEL 1

- Inquiry & tracking
- Information sharing
- Information regarding services
- Referral to relevant resources

Level 1 contacts include a help seeker only **requesting a contact number** for a local CPS office.

### LEVEL 2

- Level 1 assistance
- Educational instruction related to presenting issues
- Information regarding services
- Action Planning
- Referral to multiple resources

Level 2 contacts are **educational** and supportive based contacts, identification of presenting issues, assessment of **resources** available, and action planning.

### LEVEL 3

- Level 1 & 2 assistance
- Crisis identification & intervention
- Safety Planning
- Soft transfer to relevant resources

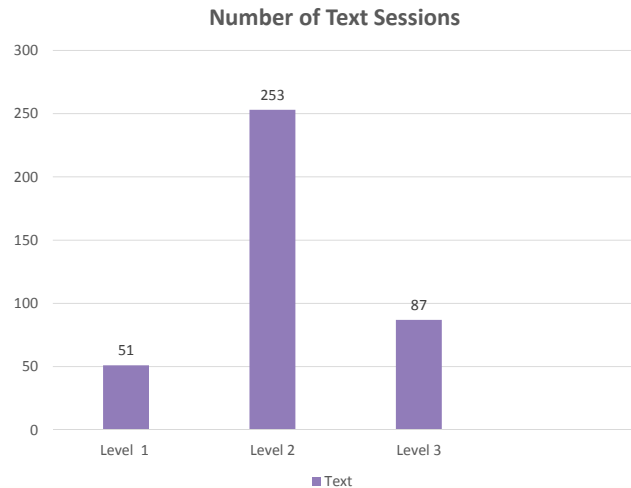
Level 3 contacts often consist of safety planning and at times a **live connection to local, relevant crisis services** (such as law enforcement, mobile crisis teams, child welfare agencies).



## TEXT

# Levels of Intervention for Pilot Data

(February, March, April, May 2019)



JTLYK – Just to let you know



True or False

The first crisis line in the US to accept text messages was launched in 2010.



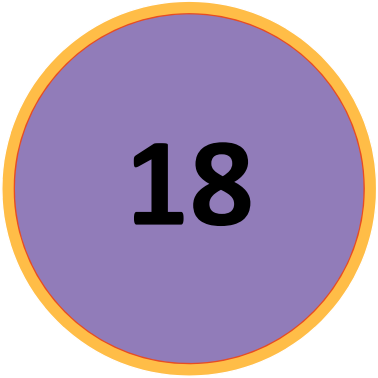
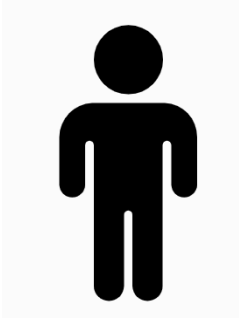
TEXT

Average Contact Time



**TEXT**

Average Age



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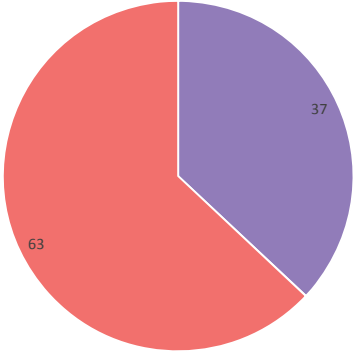

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**TEXT**

Gender

Female – 63%

Male – 37%



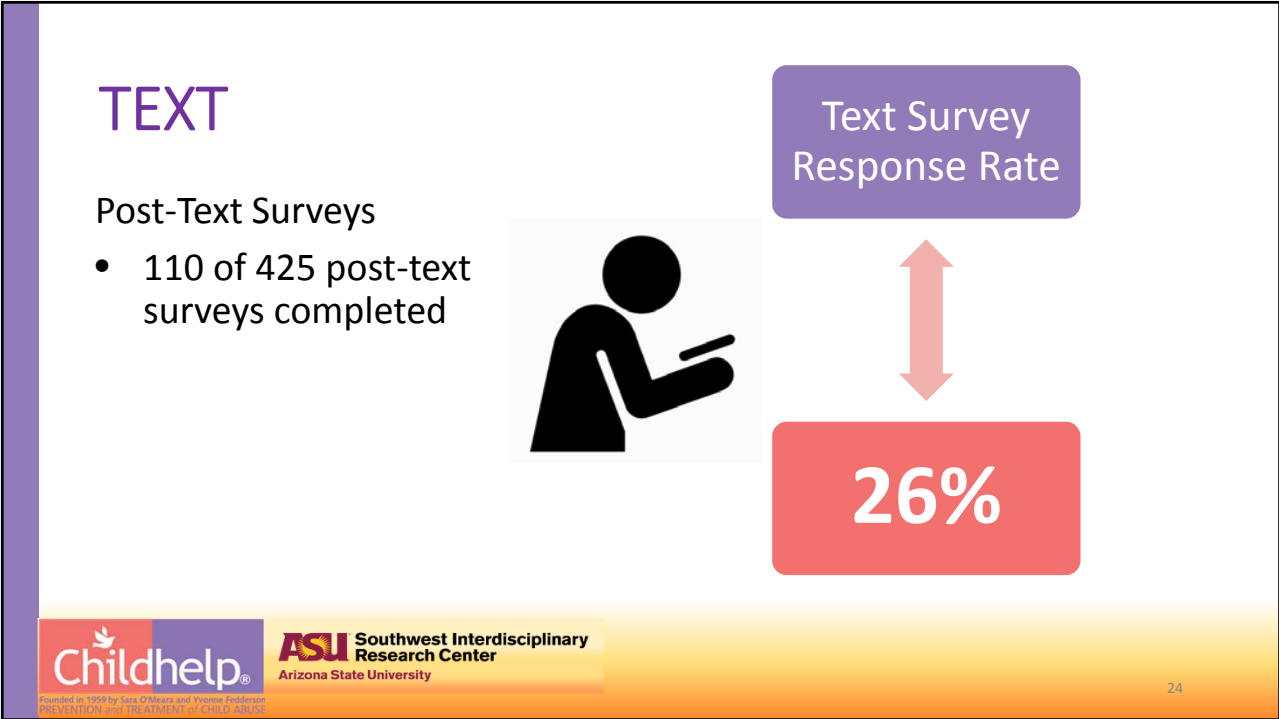
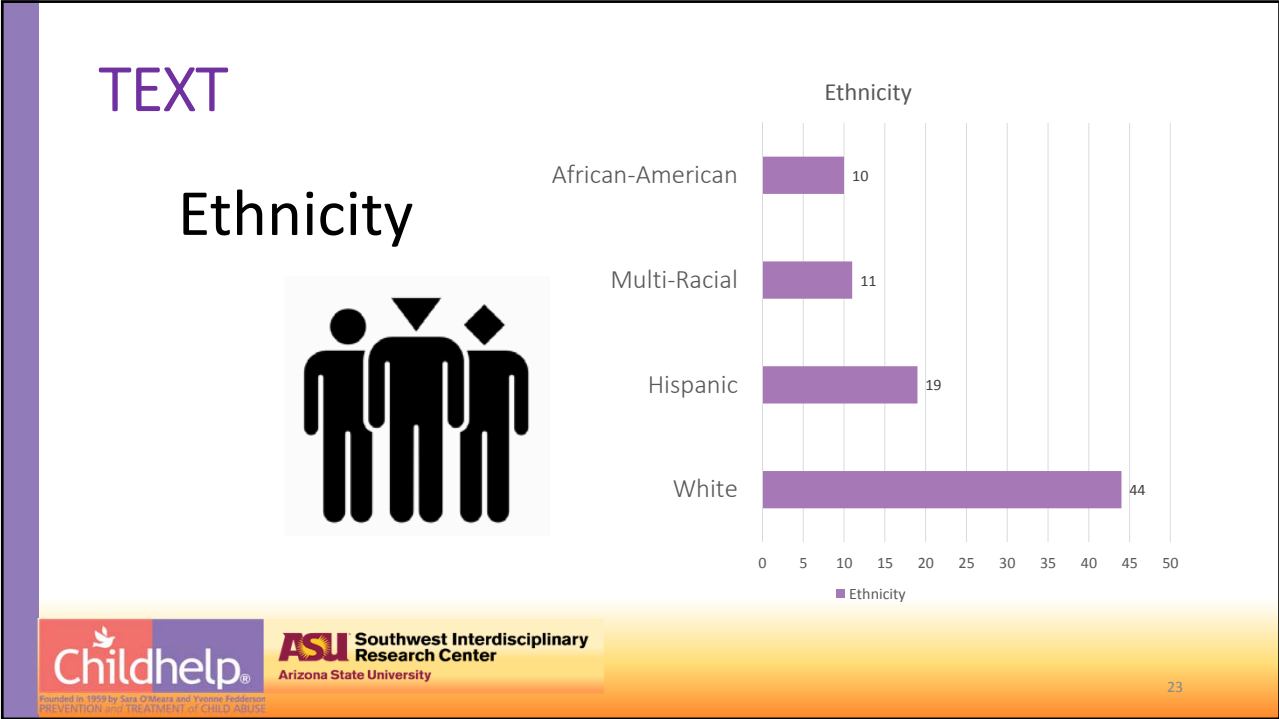
Gender

■ Male ■ Female

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# Example of Survey Questions and Responses



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## Hopefulness



**Counselor**

**Help-Seeker**

Does counselor feel help-seeker increased their hopefulness/more positive after this text session?

Do you feel more hopeful/positive after this text session?

*Counselor Ratings*

*Help-Seeker Ratings*


	L2	L3
<i>A lot or some</i>	<b>70%</b>	<b>85%</b>

	L2	L3
<i>A lot or some</i>	<b>56%</b>	<b>52%</b>



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# Stress



**Counselor**

Does counselor feel help seeker decreased their stress after this text session?

*Counselor Ratings*



	L2	L3
Yes or Maybe	83%	93%

**Help-Seeker**


Do you feel less stress after this chat or text session?

*Help-Seeker Ratings*

	L2	L3
Yes or Maybe	70%	77%





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# Chat Data Highlights



**Pilot Data Period**

- April 2019 - May 2019



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# CHAT

## Levels of Intervention for Pilot Data *(April, May 2019)*

Level	Number of Sessions
Level 1	6
Level 2	8
Level 3	11

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# CHAT

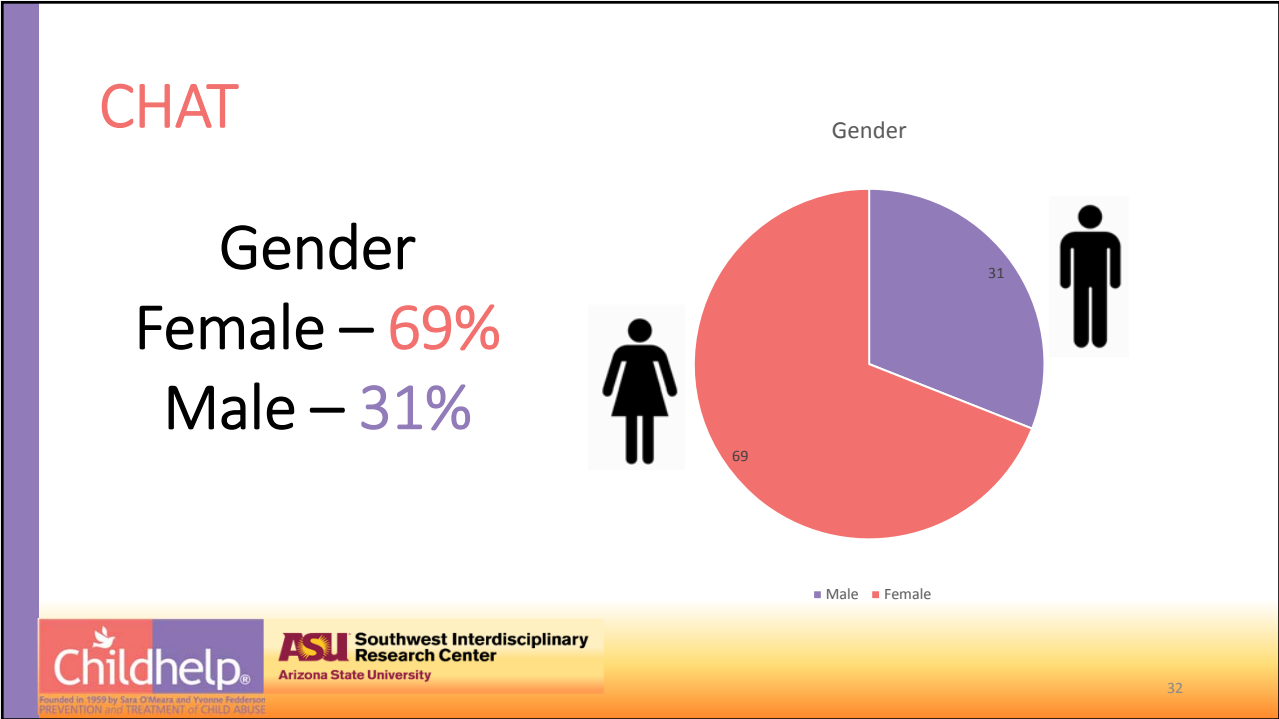
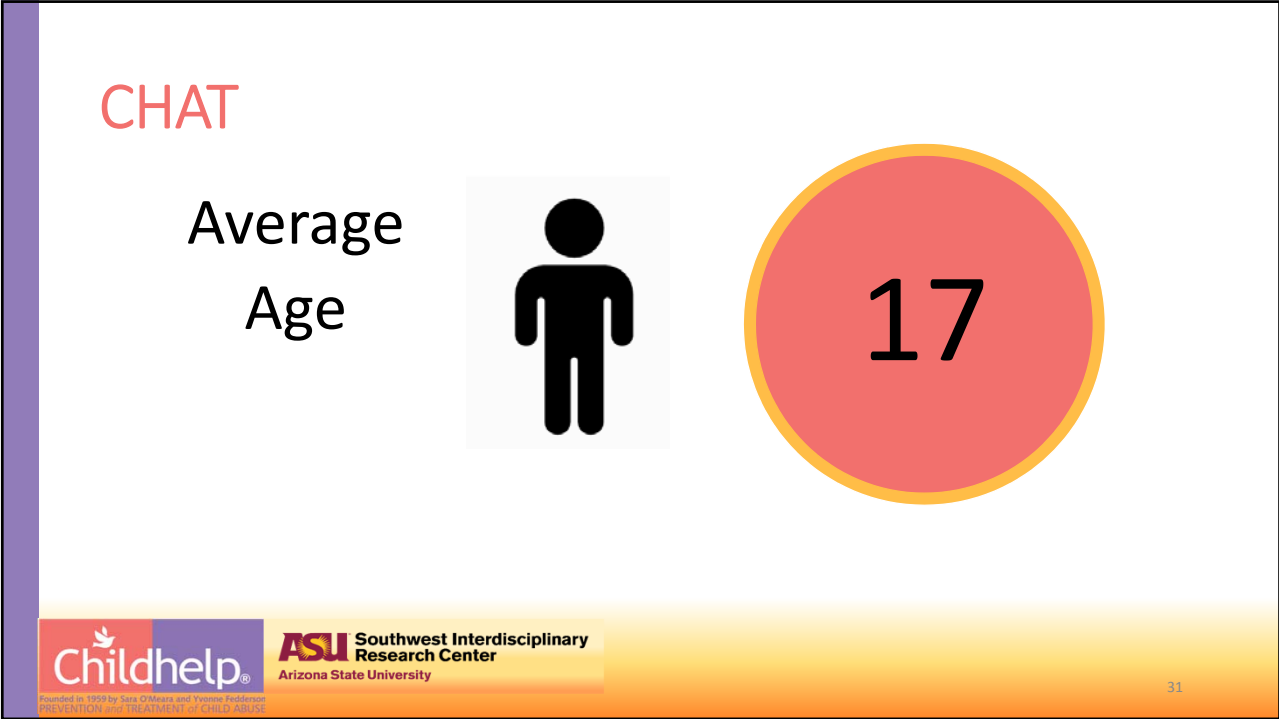
## Average Contact Time

**39 minutes**

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# CHAT

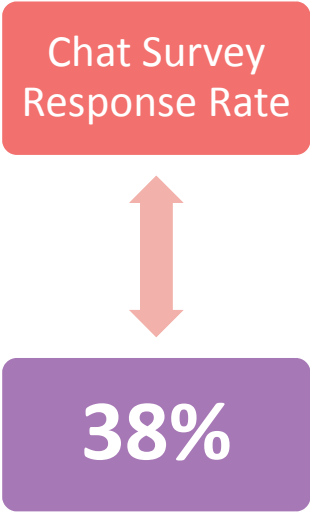
Post-Chat Surveys



- 11 of 29 chat-text surveys completed



Chat Survey Response Rate

38%





 

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# Contact Information

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Call or Text: 1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453)  
Live Chat: [www.childhelphotline.org](http://www.childhelphotline.org)

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