

## **ONTX Ontario Online & Text Crisis Services**

### **Summary Report 2015-16**

The DCO member Centres of Durham, Spectra, Torchlight and Toronto have had an exciting and challenging year of service delivery, program implementation, and improvement while learning lots on the road to launching the Online Chat and Text (ONTX) Program which has operated for 12 hours a day since June 29, 2015.



With over 200 responders providing service to nearly 9000 visitors, the response to the service has been overwhelmingly positive and allowed us to capture new demographics who never-before would reach out for helpline service.

The first thing we discovered upon launch was the appeal of the service to youth – 75 percent of our visitors are under 24. This population, making up only a small portion of our helpline callers reports that if they couldn't get through to us, they would simply not be able to receive support. The ONTX Program is filling a critical need by allowing these visitors (many of whom struggle with self-injury, suicide, depression, and anxiety at higher rates than the helpline) an opportunity to receive our traditional emotional support, crisis intervention, and suicide prevention in a way that works for them.

Using iCarol's robust data collection combined with the SIOM schema and a pre- and post-chat survey that visitors use before and after they chat with an online responder, we have been able to collect data on exactly how our responders are helpful. The results show a nearly 30 percent reduction in distress on a 5-point scale, quantifying for the first time the ability of our responders to reduce distress and promote relief.

Feedback has been positive for both responders, who appreciate the opportunity to learn a new model of service delivery and increase their crisis management and suicide risk assessment skills, as well as from visitors who praise our non-judgemental, empathic approach. Visitors to the service report developing new ways of looking at their situations and feeling safer when able to reach an ONTX responder.

Because during the pilot phase the short-code is open across Canada, ONTX responders have had the opportunity for the first time to provide service outside Ontario. This has resulted in life-saving interventions in British Columbia, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Ontario, and Quebec – with 20 interventions in the first 9 months of the service alone. Daily visits to the service increase month over month as we train new responders to meet the ever-growing demand for this new service delivery model.

[Click for the full ONTX report](#) and to see more of the data collected.



**NUMBER OF CHATS AND TEXTS**

**8,921**

**TOTAL MINUTES OF SUPPORT**

**236,699**

**NUMBER OF RESPONDERS TRAINED**

**214**