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1960s: In the beginning

1963: On August 1, 1963, 12-year-old Jill Marie Patten was brutally stabbed by a distraught postal worker who had sought help for several days and was unable to find the help he needed. The girl recovered, but her parents remained troubled. They felt the incident might have been prevented if the assailant had received help in time. They urged the establishment of an emergency service designed to aid people afraid of hurting themselves or others. On December 8th at Seattle University Unitarian Church, a community meeting was called to explore the possibility of establishing a crisis clinic. The group was led by Dr. David J. Danelski, Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Washington. At the next meeting on January 7, 1964, the name Crisis Clinic was adopted and the decision was made to have the phone number listed in the next telephone directory.

1964: Led by the first board president, Reverend Neal Kuyper, the board arranged for a phone number and Crisis Clinic was incorporated on February 27, 1964. At that time, the official name was Crisis Clinic of Seattle and King County, Inc. $115.00 was raised from eight individuals to finance start-up operations. The board also secured the donated services of Dr. Mack Knutsen, Supervisor of Psychological Services, WA State Division of Mental Health Services, to serve as the mental health liaison to the state.

In March, the phone number MU 2-1454 was published in the Seattle phone book and Crisis Clinic’s board members took 4-hour shifts answering calls from the office. In the evening, calls were taken by an answering service operator who asked for the telephone number and contacted the professional on duty who called the person back. Original volunteers answering calls were professionals – social workers, psychologists, doctors, psychiatrists and clergy – all of whom had existing training in working with people in crisis. Two volunteers, a psychiatrist, and a psychologist also offered an in-person counseling session or callers were referred to a local mental health agency. At the time, Crisis Clinic was unique in that it was the only organization like it in the world that was operating with no requisition of funds. Every dollar that went into its creation came from the pockets of the board members.

On May 4, 1964, Crisis Clinic opened its first office. Dr. Roger C. Hendricks, a Seattle psychotherapist, offered rent-free space at 1317 Marion Street. There, the Clinic had its first office with two telephones, one desk, two chairs, and a typewriter. Robert K. Lowe, Crisis Clinic’s first executive director said at the time, “If we had three people in the office, one sat on the floor.” Mr. Lowe, a social worker employed part-time by Crisis Clinic, handled the daytime calls, and in the evenings and on weekends the answering service routed calls to volunteers’ homes.
Dr. Ezra Stotland, UW Professor of Psychology, provided the training for the first group of lay volunteers on May 27, 1964. At that time, Crisis Clinic was receiving about 4 calls per day. A professional committee was established for the recruitment, screening, and training of community volunteers to answer the daytime calls. Professionals continued to answer calls at night. Additionally, follow-up calls were made to determine whether or not the crisis had been resolved. The practice of making follow-up calls continued through 1969.

In late June, the Boeing Good Neighbor Fund gave Crisis Clinic a $4,800 grant, enabling Crisis Clinic to extend Mr. Lowe to a full time director. Knowing these funds wouldn’t last long, the board immediately began gearing up for a $40,000 fundraising campaign to sustain operations. At that time, agencies needed to be in existence for at least two years before applying for United Good Neighbor (United Way) funding.

At the time of its establishment, it was reported that Crisis Clinic was the ninth crisis line in the nation. As Rev. Kuyper said at the time, “We are here to give immediate help, and sometimes this is all that’s necessary. If more is needed, we have an obligation to help people find the kind of treatment they need.” He thought of Crisis Clinic as a “battalion first-aid station.”

One of the first suggestions considered was that Crisis Clinic should have a telephone installed on the Aurora Bridge so anyone considering jumping would be able to get help. It took until 2012 for this occur!

1965: By the end of the first year, volunteers responded to 1,574 calls in the daytime and professionals answered 162 calls in the evening. The first year budget was about $10,000, but a goal for the second year was $42,000 which required a major fundraising campaign. The phone number was changed to EA5-5550.

Based on an article about Crisis Clinic by Shauna Alexander in Life magazine, a major motion picture, The Slender Thread, starring Sidney Poitier and Anne Bancroft and directed by Sidney Pollack, started filming in Seattle. Bancroft, a distraught housewife, takes pills and calls the Crisis Clinic, where Sidney Poitier, a UW student, answers her call and works to arrange for help. Ms. Alexander’s article was based on the true story of a Seattle resident, Mrs. X, who relayed her own call for help to the Crisis Clinic.

1966: The Slender Thread had its world-premiere on March 24th at the Orpheum Theatre as a benefit for Crisis Clinic. More than 1,000 people attended the premiere. Paramount Pictures paid Crisis Clinic $7,500 for the use of the name in the film.
1967: Crisis Clinic moved to 905. E. Columbia to gain more space. Donald Berg was hired as the full time Executive Director. Work study students were hired to answer calls at night.

Crisis Clinic received a grant of $4,975 from the National Institute of Mental Health for a study entitled, “A Developmental Study of a Crisis Clinic.” The study explained how the organization started and how crisis line volunteers were screened, trained and evaluated.

Although Crisis Clinic received funding from United Good Neighbors (United Way), which helped to stabilize its operations, it was not without controversy. There was concern about having a stand alone “emergency telephone service” that was not integrated with mental health agencies and Crisis Clinic was encouraged to merge with another agency. Crisis Clinic considered merging with three different organizations, but in the end determined that one “emergency/crisis telephone number” was better than six separate phone numbers; one from each agency. Thus, Crisis Clinic established collaborative relationships with each of the existing mental health agencies.

1968: Crisis Clinic starts handling calls for tangible needs. United Good Neighbors (United Way) asked Crisis Clinic to handle calls to their UGN Information and Referral Service using the UGN phone number EA3-2100, and installed a special telephone extension between their switchboard and ours. This was Crisis Clinic’s first foray into addressing a wide range of social service needs beyond mental health services.

As Crisis Clinic grew, executive director, Donald Berg, expanded its services with Project Contact. Volunteers met on a weekly basis with patients discharged from Harborview Hospital after completing treatment related to their suicide attempt to provide support and encouragement. Crisis Clinic also began organizing with other social service agencies for United Good Neighbors to fund the Traveler’s Aid Society so they could address many of the problems of newcomers to the city. In 1968, Crisis Clinic responded to 10,000 calls.

1969: Crisis Clinic responded to 15,000 calls a year, of which 150 calls were related to suicide. Staff was actively involved in helping to establish new centers in Anacortes, the Tri-Cities area and at Central Washington State College. The agency now had five staff members—a full time executive director, full time secretary, full time social worker who managed volunteers, a part-time social worker, and Mary Curtis, who started a crisis line volunteer, but was hired as the new coordinator of the Resource Information Service, the project started by UGN. The Resource Information Service had seven to ten volunteers answering calls from 8 a.m.to 5 p.m.
1970s: A time of rapid growth

1970-1971: By the end of 1970, Crisis Clinic was responding to 19,000 calls per year using volunteers and work study students for the night shifts. Several special projects were developed with community partners, but were of a limited duration. They included having 911 directly transfer calls from people in emotional distress to the Crisis Line. This project lasted about six months because the number of calls didn’t justify the expense. We also had a specialized service and phone number for University of Washington students. The University paid Crisis Clinic to have additional staff to answer this line, but after nine months it was determined more students used our regular number so it was discontinued. We also started handling after-hours calls from Seattle (Sound) Mental Health and Eastside Community Mental Health Center clients. Robert Vaughn was hired as Crisis Clinic’s executive director. The total operating budget was $64,391.

1972: Crisis Clinic resumed operations of the Youth Hotline. At the request of the King County Mental Health Board, Crisis Clinic began collaborating with Youth Emergency Service (Y.E.S.) operated by Mental Health/North, which had been responding to calls for two years. The Mental Health Board wanted a single program that would serve all King County youth. Thus, the service was transferred to Crisis Clinic, along with 28 youth volunteers who underwent Crisis Clinic training. The hotline operated from 4 p.m. to midnight with volunteers and until 2 p.m. with paid staff. The Youth Hotline phone number was 329-3200. In 1976 it merged with the Crisis Line as the Youth Hotline calls declined because more youth called the regular Crisis Line and we lost a funded position which had managed the Youth Hotline. Crisis Clinic moved to new location at 17th and Olive (1701-17th Avenue) and doubled its office space.

1973: Crisis Clinic announced the expansion of the United Way Information and Referral Service to operate 24/7 in response to the economic recession. Federal funding through the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) provided funding for staff to answer calls as it became more difficult to recruit and retain volunteers. The 500 resources were updated via rolodex cards and site visits were made to agencies.

Also in conjunction with United Way, Crisis Clinic created the South King County I & R program at United Way’s East Valley Good Neighbor Center in Renton. The phone number was 854-3900.

Crisis Clinic handled 52,000 calls a year on three incoming lines, including more than 4,600 on the youth hotline. The budget was now $123,000.
1974: In consultation with many eastside mental health and social service agencies, on June 13, 1974, Crisis Clinic expanded its 24/7/365 Crisis Line service to East King County. This was in partnership with Eastside Community Mental Health, Youth Eastside Services, and Overlake Hospital. These organizations closed their crisis lines and began working with Crisis Clinic. The agencies developed outreach teams to better serve Eastside residents. Fran Moen was the first Eastside office director. The phone number was 641-3111. The expansion was funded in part with our $103,783 allocation from United Way. Vashon Island residents secured a Crisis Line phone number, ZE 8189, to ensure island residents could reach us.

Crisis Clinic also announced a new “Cancer Lifeline” service. The program began at the suggestion of Mrs. Gloria Gutkowski, who proposed this new service after her experience with cancer in 1970. The calls were handled by trained cancer lifeline volunteers, but the crisis line phone number was used to handle calls—325-5550.

1975: Crisis Clinic’s Eastside office completed its first year with two staff and forty-eight volunteers. The Information and Referral Service at the Good Neighbor Center in Renton moved to the Eastside location to consolidate operations and save money, but the phone number remained the same.

October 1, 1975, Crisis Clinic moved to a new location at 1530 Eastlake Ave E and Bill Hershey was introduced as the new executive director. The office had new furniture, including eight sound-deadening acoustical booths funded by a $9,460 grant from the Boeing Employee Good Neighbor Fund. According to Hershey, the agency’s budget was $200,000 but that didn’t cover the full cost of the move from an old house on Capitol Hill to the new facility. A new logo, designed by professionals at Safeco, was also unveiled. By now, the Clinic had 155 volunteers and 13 staff members.
1978: Crisis Clinic was accredited by the American Association of Suicidology.

Crisis Clinic’s annual meeting was on the Hyak, a WA State Ferry, where approximately 100 staff, volunteers, and board members paid $1.20 for the ride and celebrated their achievements. Ronald Boddie, the Clinic’s Resource Coordinator, noted the ferry ride guaranteed a “captive audience.”
1980s: Recession blues and budget cuts

1980: On March 1, 1980, Crisis Clinic “officially” went countywide. The Crisis Line’s new number was 447-3222 and it had six incoming lines. The Crisis Line also became the center of a countywide mental health emergency telephone network. We began scheduling next day appointments at seven community mental health centers. Working with the King County Division of Involuntary Treatment, we conducted a phone intake and referred callers to a mental health agency or to a County Designated Mental Health Professional for an outreach evaluation. This program expansion not only resulted in a 61% increase in calls (76,000) but increased the number of calls from people with serious psychiatric problems, changing the nature of the Crisis Line from a community-based line to one more integrated into the public mental health system.

Also in 1980, Community Information Line became the new name for the Information and Referral Service. It too began serving the entire county with a new phone number (447-3200) and four telephone lines. It replaced both Crisis Clinic and United Way’s Information and Referral lines. The resource center staff maintained more than 1,500 social and health services, including free and low cost shelter, job placement resources, and legal aid. There were nine staff and more than 30,000 calls were handled.

WA State, City of Seattle, King County and United Way were all involved with Crisis Clinic in the expansion of the Community Information Line and encouraged Crisis Clinic to move to a computerized information system. Each organization pledged $60,000 a year for five years to pay for the computer system and expanded service.

To develop its computerized database, Crisis Clinic spent $225,000 for a Prime I-400 minicomputer with a 300 megabyte Control Data Corp disk, a Kennedy Tape Drive for backup, and 20 terminals to connect to the Prime computer. They also purchased “Information,” a database program and had it customized by Escom in Kirkland in order to retrieve data in different formats. Guiding the process was a board member who worked for Boeing Computer Services.

Information and Referral Director Dee Munday remembers, “The comprehensive system developed for user-friendly data entry and retrieval on all of Crisis Clinic’s service listings quickly attracted the attention of other crisis and information agencies across the country.

Demonstrations of the software utilizing a very refined search index were presented at the Alliance of Information & Referral Services (AIRS) conference in Boston, and to crisis and I&R services in several western states. Local agencies began to regularly ask Crisis Clinic to print lists of updated resource information and so we began charging a fee to recoup the costs of printing.”
This was the beginning of what would ultimately become our *Where to Turn* resource directories, which we still sell today!

The new countywide phone numbers and program expansions were successful and the call volume soared to 106,611 calls annually compared to only 63,973 in 1979. Also in 1980, Jean Lee was hired as executive director after running a Honolulu crisis center.

**1982: The Seattle Times** headline says it all: “Crisis Clinic: Recession Blues and Budget Cuts Hit Hard.” Funds from the City of Seattle and WA State were cut off and staff was reduced from 24 to 17. According to Jean Lee, “At the same, the calls have increased to about 8,000 a month. People are worrying about such basic survival needs as food, shelter and clothing.”

The Clinic still relied on 150 volunteers to answer the phones. At the time, many of the volunteers expressed anger and frustration about what was happening in the country. Many also said they began volunteering because, according to Lynn Schroeder, Volunteer Manager at the time, “They are angry and frustrated with Reaganomics.”

Indeed, the recession hit Crisis Clinic hard. The state dropped its financial commitment to the computerization project and the expansion of Community Information Line after the first year, but did arrange for a $25,000 federal grant. The City of Seattle withdrew at the end of 1981 and King County decreased its pledge by 50% in 1982 and wanted to cut it to less than $15,000 in 1983. Only United Way continued to fulfill its pledge. Thus, Crisis Clinic was required to initiate its own “capital” campaign to pay for the computerization project, a large undertaking for an organization with a budget of only $500,000.

Due to the funding cutback and low volume of calls, Crisis Clinic closed its Eastside office and handled calls only from its Seattle office.

Crisis Clinic began a Day Care Referral Line after DSHS eliminated its day care line due to budget cuts. United Way provided a $25,000 grant to aid in the transition so Crisis Clinic could take over the program. We maintained a database of more than 1,500 licensed day care providers and provided appropriate referrals. Calls were handled by trained volunteers and the phone number was 447-3207. By 1985, plans were underway, funded by Seafirst Bank, to expand this service statewide.
1984: In October, Crisis Clinic began its Survivors of Suicide support groups. The service included telephone and in-person support, an eight-week support group and referrals to other community services. After 20 years of service, Crisis Clinic was handling 115,000 calls annually and had 310 volunteers and a budget of $627,000. Alex Whitehouse was hired as the executive director to begin in 1985.

1986: Crisis Clinic assumes publication of Where to Turn directories from United Way. The first edition cost $2.00 and 5,000 copies were sold in the first six months.

1988: The Community Information Line implemented the Eastside Information and Referral Project, with additional phone lines and paid staff to handle Eastside calls. We also established a toll free phone number, 1-800-621-INFO, to better serve residents in the outlying areas of King County. The Community Information Line established the “bed bank” to track vacancies at local emergency shelters, as well as the homeless donation service. Crisis Clinic moved to 1515 Dexter Avenue to accommodate a growing staff. Roy Sargeant was hired as executive director.
1990s: Expanding to meet new needs

1990: The King County Mental Health Division funded Crisis Clinic to provide a centralized crisis phone response for people needing county-funded mental health services. The Crisis Line also began conducting screening and linkages to other services for people already receiving services through the public mental health system.

Crisis Clinic’s Day Care Referral Service was transferred to the King County Child Care Resource and Referral Agency as a result of a countywide study that determined there should be a specialized agency focusing on this important need of working families.

Crisis Clinic started a capital campaign to underwrite the cost of new computers and related technological equipment. Completed in 1992, the campaign raised $324,792 to replace the outdated computer system and to install a new phone system.

Along with other United Way agencies, Crisis Clinic received new “prefix” telephone numbers. The new phone numbers were: Crisis Line 461-3200, Community Information Line 461-3610, and 461-3210 for administration.

Crisis Clinic was featured on the prime time series RESCUE 911, hosted by William Shatner, after a man called the Crisis Line saying he had a gun and intended to kill himself. The phone worker kept the man on the line until the police could initiate a rescue. The grateful caller agreed to re-create the situation for the film crew.

Crisis Clinic celebrated its 25th anniversary with a dance at the Avalon Ballroom in Seattle. Crisis Clinic now had 50 staff and 200 volunteers, with a budget of $1M a year.

1991: Crisis Clinic operated a month-long “Puget Sound Gulf War Info Line” at the request of United Way. There was concern that this first war since Vietnam would generate anxiety and stress from the public concerned about the duration and intensity of the war.

1992: Crisis Clinic was presented with 1992 Community Service Award from the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy for our exceptional contribution to families.

The City of Seattle provided funding to improve access to services for homeless persons that allowed for an expansion of hours on the Community Information Line and the hiring of a Housing Specialist. This supported our role in monitoring the status of shelter vacancies through the Bed Bank, a service we continue into 2014!
1994: Celebrating its 30th anniversary, Crisis Clinic responded to 120,000 calls; 77,411 on the Crisis Line and 41,480 on the Community Information Line, which included providing rental assistance screening through the new Housing Stability Project.

Susan Eastgard was promoted to Executive Director after serving as the Clinical Director. A new logo was also launched at this time.

Calls to the Crisis Line increased from about 205 a day to nearly 325 a day in the weeks following the suicide of Kurt Cobain. Sue Eastgard spoke at his public memorial service at Seattle Center and gave many media interviews, as there was much concern about suicide contagion with youth.

After the murder of a Crisis Clinic employee’s daughter, Crisis Clinic began planning and fundraising for a teen help line, which eventually became Teen Link.

1995: Crisis Clinic developed contracts with several mental health agencies to handle their after-hours calls. This year, we also began contracting with ATT Language Line for telephone interpretation service.

1996: In March, Crisis Clinic began doing payment authorizations for people seeking a psychiatric hospitalization through a subcontract with United Behavioral Health.

On March 18, 1996, Teen Link is launched and teen volunteers begin answering the help line. Teens answered calls Sunday-Thursday, 6-10 p.m. Staff and volunteers also trained more than 2,000 students in youth suicide prevention.

On the same day in 1996, Crisis Clinic opened a Community Information Line satellite office in Redmond at the Family Resource Center. It was staffed 15 hours a week to handle walk-in and telephone requests for assistance.

In addition to organizing the 3rd annual Survivors of Suicide conference for family and friends who had lost someone to suicide, we joined with Virginia Mason’s Separation and Loss Institute to hold a symposium for professionals.

Crisis Clinic continued to be the only center in WA State accredited by the American Association of Suicidology and Executive Director Susan Eastgard was elected to their board.
1997: Crisis Clinic works with the City of Seattle to make our community resources database available to the public via the City’s public access network. Teen Link published its first Where to Turn for Teens resource guide.

1998: Teen Link began answering calls seven nights a week and added a toll free phone number, 1-888-431-TEEN. Staff trained more than 6,000 youth in suicide prevention with the assistance of two Americorps volunteer staff members! It continued to be funded solely by community contributions. Kathleen Southwick was hired as executive director.
2000s: New millennia, new opportunities

2000: Crisis Clinic began responding to calls for 1-800-SUICIDE, the national crisis line of the newly created HOPELINE organization. We handled calls from 9 western states.

Teen Link began receiving sustaining funding from United Way, King County, the City of Seattle and suburban cities, thus solidifying the program. Teen Link was awarded the Outstanding Service Innovation Award by the King County Mental Health Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services Division.

Crisis Clinic began working with other local information and referral providers in the state for the development of a statewide “2-1-1” service. This new organization is called the Washington Information Network 2-1-1 (WIN211).

Crisis Clinic is funded by the City of Seattle’s Aging and Disability Service to offer two new programs as a part of the Community Information Line—Disability Information and Assistance Service and Caregiver Information and Assistance Service. We hire program specialists for each new service.

After a major brand study, Crisis Clinic launches a new brand, logo and mission and values statement.

2001: Crisis Clinic began a “capacity building” campaign to transition our Community Information Line to a 2-1-1 service.

We received a $10,000 state grant to provide respite services to families caring for a person with a mental illness and another $10,000 grant from King County to provide youth suicide prevention training in area schools.

Crisis Clinic was well-prepared to respond to the doubling in calls as a result of the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, D. C on Sept. 11th. Many volunteers took extra shifts and past volunteers called in to help out. The Resource Center put together lists of resources for families looking for survivors and service providers on the east coast.

2003: Crisis Clinic is selected to operate the In-Patient Authorization program on behalf of King County Mental Health, Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services Division. This was an extremely large contract that helped the stability of our crisis services department. We hired designated staff to conduct the in-patient screenings, a medical director and had psychiatrists available 24/7 for consultation.

2004: At its 40th anniversary, Crisis Clinic handled more than 176,000 calls. Teen Link trained more than 4,800 students and distributed more than 35,000 free Where to Turn for Teens resource guides. We developed a partnership with Seattle-King County Public Health to handle
overflow calls to their West Nile Virus line. This is the beginning of our relationship with Public Health to handle disaster related calls.

2006: On February 22, 2006, after more than eight years of planning, the Community Information Line officially became King County 2-1-1, using the three-digit FCC-designated dialing code. Three other call centers in WA State also became 2-1-1 providers as part of the statewide Washington Information Network 2-1-1. Funding from the state legislature enabled King County 2-1-1 to operate seven days a week, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m., with plans to go 24/7/365 in the future. With extensive publicity, calls to 2-1-1 increased to 87,000 a year!

In May, the 24-Hour Crisis Line received a score of 100% from CONTACT USA, the first year we were accredited by this national organization. In May, the Alliance of Information and Referral System (AIRS) accredited our 2-1-1 program, citing many of our policies and procedures as “best practices.”

2009: The economic recession hit families hard as many people lost their jobs at the same time government reduced funding to human service providers. King County 2-1-1 saw a tremendous increase in incoming calls—more than 190,000 calls and helped more than 120,000 callers find help—a record number.

Fortunately, Congressman Jim McDermott was concerned about how Washington families were faring and invited Crisis Clinic Executive Director Kathleen Southwick to testify before the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Income Security and Family Support. In her testimony, she highlighted the tremendous increase in calls, especially from middle income families who never had needed government or social services help before. Calls had increased in length also, as people had multiple and complex needs, which required more time working with them to explain the social services system. While the need for help increased, funding decreased and providers were left trying to fill the gaps, in many cases having to lay off their own staff.
2010s: New innovations in crisis response

**2010:** In March 2010, Crisis Clinic moved to the Northgate Executive Center II, 9725 3rd NE Suite 300 and secured 12,000 sq feet to accommodate program growth.

Through a partnership with CONTACT USA, the Crisis Line joined a national network of crisis centers offering chat services through the website www.crisischat.org. Trained volunteers respond to chats three nights a week. Teen Link, using a similar chat platform, also uses teen volunteers to respond to youth chats three nights a week.

**2011:** Crisis Clinic was selected by the Washington State Division of Behavioral Health Resources to operate a new statewide helpline offering emotion support and linkage to referrals for people addressing substance abuse, problem gambling and mental health issues. The Washington Recovery Help Line debuted on July 1, 2011 with a 24/7/365 help line and its own website, www.WARecoveryHelpLine.org.

**2012:** Teen Link became the first teen help line in the nation to be accredited by CONTACT USA. Teen Link paved the way for the development of new standards specifically for youth help lines.

King County 2-1-1 became the entry point for homeless families seeking housing by screening families and setting appointments for a personal assessment with Catholic Community Services. Our role is a key one in King County’s response to establish a “coordinated entry” system for those seeking a home.

Crisis Clinic responded to 232,000 calls, an all-time high! The organization has 83 employees, 286 volunteers and a budget of nearly $4 million.

**2013:** Crisis Clinic assumed operation of the Warm Line, a peer answered help line for people living with a mental illness. The Warm Line, which operated for four years solely with volunteer support found it could no long sustain operations without a sponsor and approached Crisis Clinic. On May 1st, Crisis Clinic assumed operation and developed plans for its growth, including renaming it the Washington Warm Line indicating our desire for it to support people throughout Washington State.

Crisis Clinic was one of three contact centers in the nation selected by Crisis Text Line to pilot the first national crisis text line response for youth. We hired staff and began responding to texts on August 26, 2013.