

MEDIA RELEASE

August 27, 2019

Distress and Crisis Ontario is pleased to announce their new short code to text for support is up and running!

ONTARIO – Suicide prevention, crisis intervention, emotional support and community referrals are just a short text away for Ontarians in crisis or distress. The ONTX Ontario Online & Text Crisis Service is now fully up and running with their new 258258 short code. This service is a collaborative of DCO member service delivery organizations in Durham, Niagara and Windsor, with other partners coming on board soon, and with admin and technical support from Distress and Crisis Ontario.

ONTX has been providing our online crisis text and chat program to thousands of Ontario residents since June 2015. ONTX provides two options for reaching out: you can text SUPPORT to 258258, or you can chat online by going to <http://dcontario.org/ontx.html>. Both will take you to trained Responders who are there to provide support. If you prefer telephone support you can find a list of our member organizations at <http://dcontario.org/centres.html>.

The text/chat service, ONTX, was introduced by DCO to Ontario communities with participating DCO Member Organizations in June 2015 as a pilot project to help support individuals needing help who were uncomfortable or unable to reach out by phone to their local Distress lines. In that first year, 156 trained Responders provided 5,732 hours of support to 6,301 individuals who reached out through text or chat for help. These numbers have grown consistently over the years to our last year's numbers of 246 Responders providing 10,115 hours of support to 20,467 Service Users across the province.

Neta Gear, Executive Director of Distress and Crisis Ontario states, "We feel this service is a vital one in all communities and the Boards, Staff and Volunteers across our network are committed to increasing our efforts to support the growing numbers of individuals reaching out to our Centres through the ONTX services. We only expect these numbers to grow and DCO is committed to being there to help those who reach out!"

How to reach a local Distress Centre:

Find a listing of Ontario's Distress Centres at www.dcontario.org at the GET HELP link (upper left corner). Find a local Distress Centre in most telephone books on the inside cover or emergency contact pages.

Distress and Crisis Ontario:

Distress and Crisis Ontario is an association that is the recognized leader in promoting collaboration and building capacity in organizations that provide distress and crisis response.

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To learn more about the ONTX Service or DCO services and statistics, please contact:

Neta Gear, Executive Director

Distress and Crisis Ontario/Détresse et Crise Ontario

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