

NAMI-MN is seeking an endorsement from MASE:  
(John Klaber • October 11, 2019)

NAMI-Minnesota is seeking our endorsement of a recommendation that beginning in the 2020 school year, school IDs have the national crisis text number printed on the back of student IDs. Life Touch is supporting this endeavor and will create materials that can be shared out to schools shedding a light on the adding the number to the IDs.

Initial support for this initiative was provided by reps from MSBA, MASA, EdMN and MASE with the expectation that we would bring the proposal to our boards. We would anticipate other school id/picture companies embracing the initiative.

The Crisis Text Line is a national text line funded by government, corporations and individual donations. It is available to anyone in the country 24/7, 365 days a year. If someone in a mental health crisis wants to reach out for help, all they have to do is text MN (or NAMI or HOME or HELLO or other words) to 741741 and they will be connected with a crisis counselor. This connection usually takes place in less than five minutes and will give the person in crisis someone to listen to their issues and help developing a plan to feel better. Crisis counselors are volunteers, but they are trained to work with someone in a crisis. The crisis counselors bring texters "from a hot moment to a cool calm" using techniques in empathetic listening. Once they've built rapport and trust, explored the issues, and established the texter's goal, they collaboratively problem-solve to help the texter come up with a plan to stay safe. If someone is in more immediate danger they take additional steps such as calling crisis teams or police for a health and welfare check. They do collect data on the number of calls to a state, what the issues are, which days of the week or times have the greatest number of calls, etc. Putting information about the crisis text line on student ID cards will raise awareness about this important and effective suicide prevention service.