



# Childhelp PACTECH Practice Model

## Qualitative Research Project

### **Background:**

Founded in 1959, Childhelp® is a national 501(c)(3) non-profit dedicated to serving the physical, emotional, educational, and spiritual needs of abused, neglected and at-risk children. Childhelp is headquartered in Scottsdale, Arizona, which also houses the National Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-4-A-CHILD®). The Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline is dedicated to preventing child abuse. Serving the United States, its territories, and Canada, the hotline is staffed 24/7 with professional crisis counselors who, through interpreters, can provide assistance in over 170 languages. The hotline offers crisis intervention, information, and referrals with thousands of emergency, social service, and support resources. All contacts are confidential. The hotline has received more than 2 million contacts since it began in 1982. These come from children at risk for abuse, distressed parents seeking crisis intervention and concerned individuals who suspect child abuse may be occurring. The hotline is a valuable resource for mandated reporters who suspect abuse, such as school personnel, medical and mental health professionals and police and fire investigators. The Hotline has been saving lives by serving as the “first responder” in the organization’s continuum of child abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment services. The Hotline efficiently and cost-effectively provides high-quality crisis intervention, information, and referral services to all callers. The Hotline’s primary goal is to provide high quality crisis intervention services and local resource referral to callers across the country.

The hotline has traditionally served contacts through phone, with the primary users being adults calling on behalf of, or with concerns about, children experiencing child abuse and/or neglect. In recent years, the hotline began to examine methods in which youth could more directly connect to the hotline for support and assistance. National text and live chat began in 2019 as a result of funding through a grant from the US Department of Health and Human Services/ACYF Children’s Bureau. Early indications show the majority of help seekers using text and live chat are ages 13 through 24 years of age. Technology is becoming a more important component of assisting help seekers reaching out for support and assistance through a hotline. The initial year of the research-based grant has focused on quantitative data of help seekers using the text and live chat services. A youth call comparison group is also being examined.

Childhelp, Inc. is the recipient of the “Best Practices for the Use of Text and Chat-Based Technology in Child Maltreatment Reporting, Detection, and Reporting” grant from the US Department of Health and Human Services/ACYF Children’s Bureau that is being solicited through a formal RFP process. The Prevent Abuse of Children Text and Chat Hotline (PACTECH) is the subsequent program of this funding opportunity. Childhelp has partnered with Arizona State University-Southwest Interdisciplinary Research Center (ASU- SIRC) to complete the quantitative evaluation portion of the project. The purpose of the quantitative evaluation approach is to answer the research questions: 1) what are the best practices and protocols in implementing text or chat based technology for a hotline; 2) how effective is PACTECH at communicating with youth, who may be victims of maltreatment and protecting their privacy, 3) How effective is PACTECH at engaging with youth to build skills, provide resources and information to meet the need for which they sought help; and, 4) What are the demographic characteristics and presenting issues of help seekers that use a text and chat feature of a child maltreatment hotline.

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### Purpose and Objectives:

The purpose of the qualitative evaluation approach is to answer the following research question: What are the best practices for counselors that will engage help seekers in text and chat-based interactions. Childhelp, Inc. seeks to contract with an experienced qualitative researcher/organization to help develop a PACTECH Practice Model for this evolving method of delivering hotline support via text and chat conversations. From our preliminary work, it appears there are specific components and characteristics of communications that have emerged as important when corresponding via text/chat interactions. The goal of this contract is to develop a PACTECH Practice Model with key components and methods that support successful text and chat-based conversations to the Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline. This practice model would be used to train PACTECH hotline staff as well as serve as a foundation for articulating promising practices for other text and chat hotlines around the county. We envision that the Practice Model will help Childhelp develop materials for replication, sustainability, and ongoing trainings.

Individuals/organizations applying should have experience in qualitative research methods and the ability to closely collaborate with Childhelp staff to 1) compile and analyze existing data, 2) develop and test a practice model, 3) transform study findings into a training curriculum for PACTECH staff, and 4) disseminate findings nationally.

### Scope of Work:

Early qualitative research is in progress, including the initial review of text and live chat transcripts, development of a coding framework, and a second review team applying the coding framework. The PACTECH team is now seeking an experienced qualitative researcher to advance this research further.

The following activities will be completed under this project:

- ✧ **Develop a research plan:** This should include volume of data to review, timelines, and incorporation of program staff into the process to continue to refine the coding structure and develop the practice model.
- ✧ **Analysis:** Conduct a thorough analysis of qualitative data (i.e., transcripts) using enhanced coding structure. Conduct focus groups of existing program staff to validate and inform the analysis.
- ✧ **PACTECH Model:** Develop draft PACTECH Practice model, review in partnership with program staff, and complete modifications/testing, as needed. Finalize model for implementation.
- ✧ **Training curriculum:** Work with program staff to develop a training curriculum for new text- and chat-based counselors. Identify areas for additional staff training and/or develop fidelity items to explore impact on outcomes.
- ✧ **Dissemination:** Publish findings through journal articles, present at a minimum of 2 national conferences, and complete visual materials of findings.
- ✧ **Reporting:** The researcher will provide progress reports to Childhelp on a quarterly basis no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month following a quarter for the term of resulting subcontract. Recipients typically must submit monthly financial reports/invoices with back up documentation, as requested by Childhelp.

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### Funding Availability:

This is a 15-month contract that may be renewable for up to one (1) additional 12-month period, contingent upon funding availability from HHS/ACYF, compliance with terms and conditions, programmatic and financial performance, and through the submission of a renewal application.

### Project Timeline:

The outlined activities are necessary components of this project. In the proposal submission, develop a timeline in which each activity will be completed.

Activity	Timeline	Deliverables
1.) Review activities completed to date		
2.) Develop research methodology		✓
3.) Conduct analysis		
4.) Develop draft practice model		✓
5.) Refine and finalize practice model		✓
6.) Develop training curriculum		✓
7.) Dissemination Activities		✓
8.) Follow up review, based on new training curriculum linked to outcomes ensuring fidelity.	No later than 6/30/2021	✓
9.) Program report - quarterly	9/30/2020 – 9/30/2021	✓

### Qualifications:

Seeking individual with experience in the following areas:

- ✧ Qualitative research analysis
- ✧ Developing program models
- ✧ Collaboration with program staff
- ✧ Developing training curriculum
- ✧ Developing fidelity measures to ensure quality of practice being provided to help seekers
- ✧ Knowledge of the child welfare field

### Proposal Requirements:

The following sections should be included as part of the proposal.

- ✧ **Introduction:** Demonstrate understanding of project, including relevant research within the hotline industry.
- ✧ Overall approach to the project, including **research methods, sampling approach, activities, and timeline** for meeting project requirements.
- ✧ **Development of training curriculum:** Describe the approach to the development of a training curriculum, including replicability within the child welfare industry. Describe plans to identify areas for additional staff training ensuring fidelity to program outcomes.

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- ✧ **Dissemination activities:** Describe a plan in which the findings would be disseminated within the child welfare field on a national scale.
- ✧ **Qualifications:** Include resume for lead researcher and note within narrative if additional personnel to be utilized for the completion of this project.
- ✧ **References:** Provide 2 references for lead researcher, including name, contact information, and work experience with the reference person.
- ✧ **Budget:** It is the intent of Childhelp, Inc. to enter into a contractual agreement with the selected researcher based upon the scope of services outlined within this proposal and the subsequent revision (if necessary) to the scope based upon negotiations. The proposal should contain the total cost of your proposed services.
  - Provide a total lump sum fee for completing the services described herein.
  - Provide an estimate of the hours and hourly rates that will be required by various levels of your staff to complete the services and all major deliverables described herein.
  - Identify all non-labor costs including data processing, printing, travel, and all other expenses.
  - Provide hourly rates for additional meetings with staff and partners beyond those provided for in the specifications.
  - Provide hourly rates for additional oral presentations beyond those provided for in the specifications.

Expenses incurred by the respondents in replying to the RFP are at the respondents' own expense and risk.

### Proposal submission:

The proposal narrative should be double-spaced with 1-inch margins, not exceeding 10 pages of 8½ by 11 inches, and use a standard 12-point font, preferably Times New Roman. Pages should be numbered "1 of 10," etc. The tables, charts, pictures, etc., including all captions, legends, keys, subtext, etc., may be single-spaced, and will count in the 10-page limit. Qualifications, references, and budget will not count in the narrative 10-page limit, but may not exceed 15 additional pages for a total 25-page limit.

### Deadline for submission:

Proposals should be received no later than **Friday, May 1, 2020 by 5:00 p.m. MST**. Packages should be emailed to Jodi Hall, Program Manager Grants at [jhall@childhelp.org](mailto:jhall@childhelp.org). Responses received after this date and time will not be considered.

### Point-of-Contact:

Respondents shall restrict all contact and questions regarding this RFP and selection process to the individual named herein. Questions concerning terms, conditions and technical specifications shall be directed in writing to: Jodi Hall, Program Manager Grants via email at [jhall@childhelp.org](mailto:jhall@childhelp.org). You are welcome to send any questions, no later than **Wednesday, April 22, 2020 by 5:00 p.m. MST**, to Jodi Hall who will in turn make the questions and responses available to all the teams. Responses to all questions will be posted on the Childhelp website at [www.childhelphotline.org](http://www.childhelphotline.org) no later than **Friday, April 24, 2020 by 5:00 p.m. MST**.

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Respondents and their agents are strictly prohibited from lobbying employees or board members of Childhelp, Inc. or anyone connected to this RFP at any time in the application and selection process. Failure to comply with this clause shall be grounds for rejection of their RFP as non-responsive.