

# DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **DMH OFFERS 'TALK ABOUT IT' FOR YOUNG ADULTS IN MISSISSIPPI**

**January 15, 2010 (Jackson, MS)** – It's no secret that the top choices of communication for young adults is text messaging and e-mail. That's why the Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH) has added a new feature to its' statewide Helpline services which offer individuals the option of sending a text or online message to a member of the Helpline staff. Staff are available to provide help with mental health issues and suicide intervention around the clock.

DMH is partnering with AnComm's 'Talk About It' program which is an anonymous online messaging and emergency notification service to provide this new feature. Because of the stigma associated with mental health, many young adults are afraid or embarrassed to seek help. 'Talk About It' offers young adults a more comfortable and easy way to initiate contact with the Helpline while remaining anonymous.

"We believe young adults will gravitate toward this program because it is less intimidating than calling a Helpline and speaking directly with a staff member," said Shannon Rushton, DMH Director of Constituency Services. "The program will allow our Helpline staff to provide a service to the many teenagers in Mississippi who need to discuss mental health issues

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but may be ashamed to talk to someone. Our goal is to continue to shatter the silence surrounding mental health and create a new avenue of communication that will reach out to young adults.”

Mental health issues are on the rise among young adults in Mississippi. In 2007, more than 50 young adults died by suicide. Many young adults are in need of someone to talk to who can provide support and resources. Individuals who access the ‘Talk About It’ program can discuss a variety of topics including depression, bullying, suicide, stress, grief, death of a loved one, relationship issues, self-esteem, physical/emotional/verbal abuse, cutting/self-injury, drugs, alcohol, and peer pressure among other topics.

Individuals can access the program by visiting [www.dmh.ms.gov](http://www.dmh.ms.gov) and clicking on the ‘Talk About It’ button on the home page. After creating an account, individuals can anonymously e-mail a Helpline staff or communicate via text messaging. The DMH Helpline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 1-877-210-8513.

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*DMH is supporting a better tomorrow by making a difference in the lives of Mississippians with mental illness, substance abuse problems and intellectual or developmental disabilities one person at a time.*