

Text-A-Tip Questions and Answers

What is Text-A-Tip?

Text-A-Tip is a text address (847847 – which spells TIPTIP) where students, parents or others can anonymously send a text message to our school resource officers and school administrators about concerns they may have for their own safety or the safety of others. Tips may also be sent with a computer and online tip form. Links are available on each school's web page. Look for the Text-A-Tip link from the main page. **Text-A-Tip should not be used for emergencies – Call 911 if you need immediate help.** Text-A-Tip will be actively monitored during the school day.

Why are you doing the Text-A-Tip program?

First, we know that the primary way students communicate today is through texting so the Text-A-Tip program seemed the most effective way to connect with our students. We also believe that students are the best source of the information about what's going on at school. Students are the eyes and ears of a school, and it is everyone's responsibility to keep school safe. Unfortunately, sometimes students don't feel comfortable sharing information directly because they are afraid they may be identified. So our hope is that we can give our students, the eyes and ears of the school, an anonymous voice through Text-A-Tip.

What kind of information do you hope to get through TAT?

Our slogan is "If it's wrong, Text-A-Tip." This would include any concerns students may have for their own safety or the safety of others. Students can report any information they see or hear about, such as drug possession or use, weapons, bullying, cheating, inappropriate behavior, harassment, threats, intimidation or really anything they believe should be shared with adults.

If I send a text from my phone, how can it be confidential? Who will get the text when I send it?

When a student texts a message, the text goes to the Text-A-Tip company out-of-state, which then sends an email to the school resource officers and the administrators of your school. The company removes your phone number so it stays confidential.

If I send a text, can you text me back?

Yes. This is one of the big benefits of the program. Once the school receives an email, the administrators or school resource officers can reply with questions, share what actions they are taking or a simply thank the tipster. The reply email then goes back to the company, that then texts the school message to you.

What if I see something going on - like someone being mean or doing something that really isn't a crime? It's just wrong. Do I use Text-A-Tip for that information?

Yes. That is our slogan, "If it's wrong, Text-A-Tip." The only way our schools will be safe and have a culture of kindness and respect is for students to step up and not accept wrong-doing in their schools.

Do you think Text-A-Tip will help curb bullying in schools?

We hope so. One of the difficult issues in the battle against bullying is that students who are bullied do not typically come forward. Bystanders who see the bullying don't want to get involved even though they know it is wrong. We hope this will give victims another way to inform adults and give bystanders a chance to be "up-standers." By using Text-A-Tip, students can get information to administrators who can take the actions necessary to stop the bullying.

Who is sponsoring the Text-A-Tip program?

We are very grateful for the support of the Duke Energy Foundation that has generously funded the HSE School District Text-A-Tip program through the end of the 2012-2013 school year.