

# TEXT 4 TEENS



A PROGRAM OF  
MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION IN ORANGE COUNTY, INC.

If you are dealing with cyber bullying, drugs/alcohol, gangs, sexting, sexual assault, eating disorders, problems at home, school, the bus, or if you just need someone to talk with, **reach out to us!**

text anonymously @  
**Text 4 Teens**  
**845-391-1000**  
Mon/Tue/Wed/Thu 5pm - 9pm  
Fri/Sat/Sun 5pm - 12am

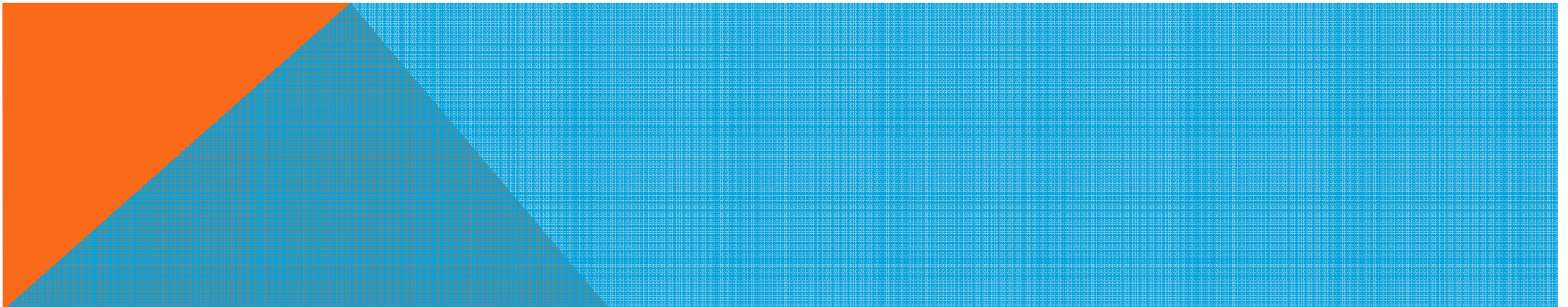
## **Text 4 Teens**

is sponsored by  
Orange County Youth Bureau  
and Orange County United Way



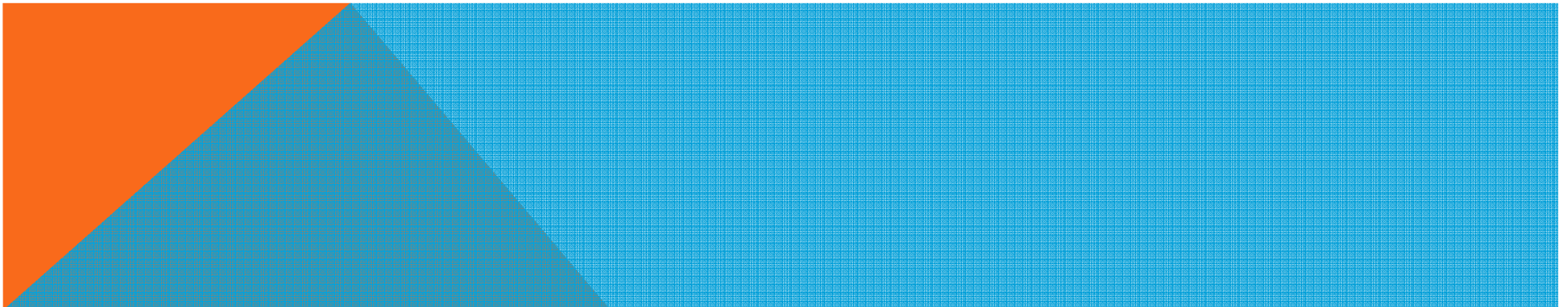
# TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES

- Take a walk through the mall, a restaurant or school and you will be amazed at how many teenagers are utilizing their phones.
- Research indicates that 1 out of every 3 teenagers has a cell phone.
- According to CTIA (International Association for the Wireless Telecommunication Industry) approximately 79% of all teens (17 million) have a mobile device – a 36% increase since 2005.
- Text messaging - primary means of communication for youth today.



# TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES CONTINUED...

- Teens are much more likely to text someone than call
- This information, coupled with the technological changes our society has experienced over the last decade, was the launching board for the Text 4 Teens initiative.
- MHA believed that if presented with a texting support line, such as T4T, teenagers would consider reaching out to a trained professional.

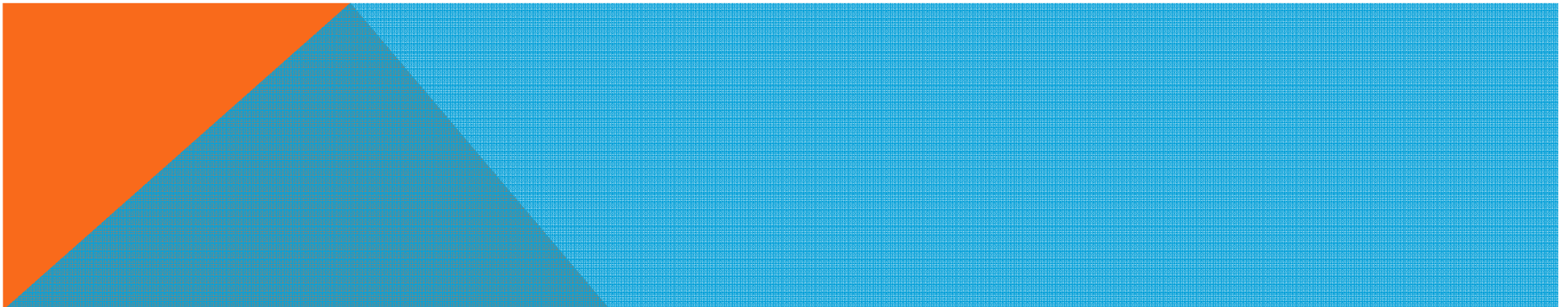


# PURPOSE

*The goal of MHA's TEXT 4 TEENS program is to provide acceptance, support and appropriate resources to youth who are experiencing any form of emotional turmoil or could be dealing with embarrassing situations.*

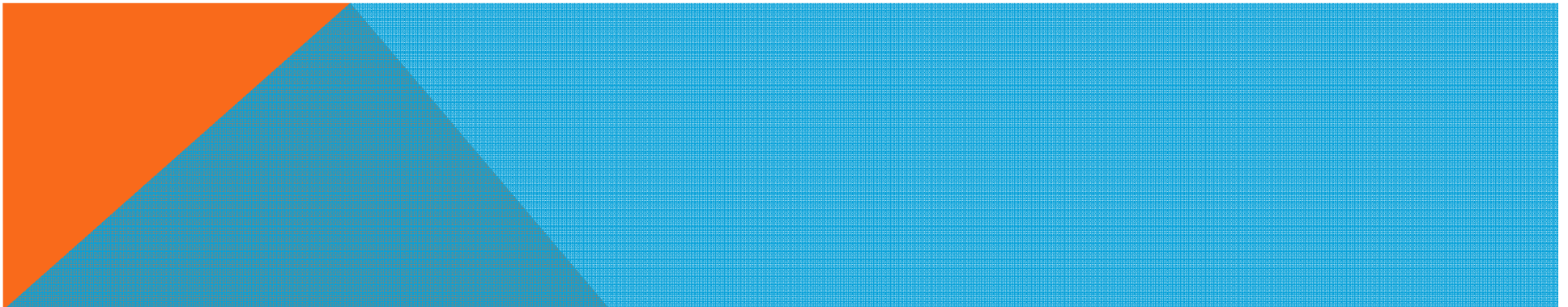
Issues discussed include but are not limited to:

- Bullying
- Sexting
- Drugs/alcohol
- Sexual assault
- Problems at home
- Issues on the bus
- Disordered eating
- Other mental health related issues



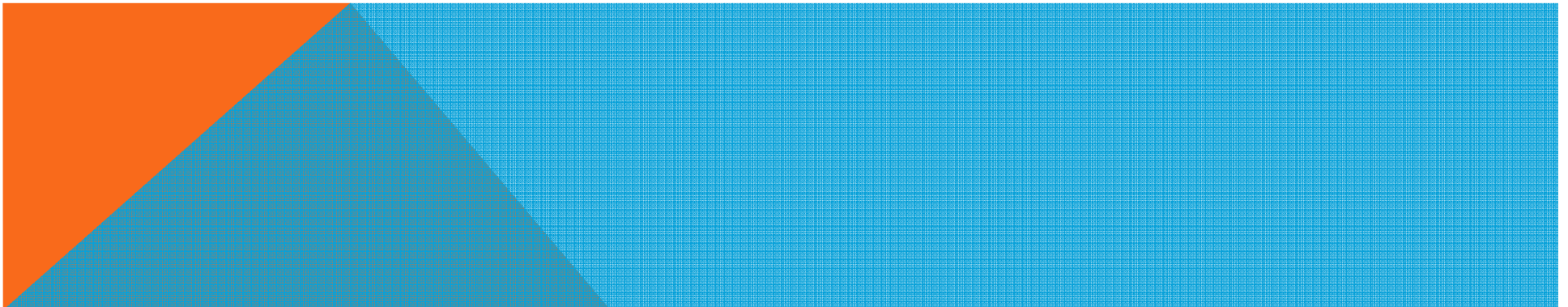
# TEXT 4 TEENS

- By providing options, we are in essence empowering teens to make informed decisions by equipping them with sensible, safe options.
- MHA uses a vast array of mental health resources- (ex. Teen Directory)
- MHA is assisting callers to make important decisions about their life. Making informed, educated choices will enable teens to become well functioning adults in our community.



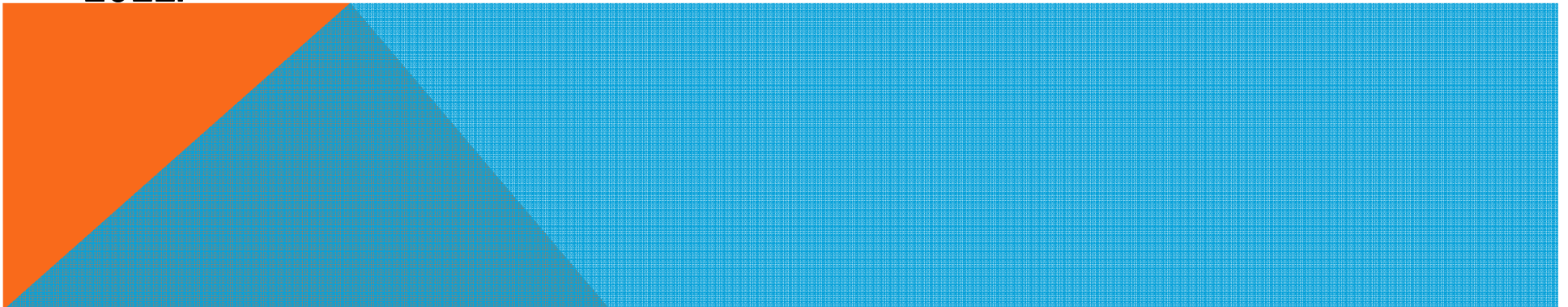
# TEXT 4 TEENS BEGINNING

- The Text 4 Teens program began as a creative proposal introduced by MHA staff Anna Lemmerman in 2007.
- Initial funding was obtained from the United Way Targeted Grant Proposal in 2010 in which the program received \$5,000.
- The program launched a soft opening roll out at the end of October 2010 targeting a limited audience.
- A Press Release, Promotional brochures and emails were distributed to the public to promote the official roll out of the program in January 2011.



## TEXT 4 TEENS BEGINNING CONTINUED...

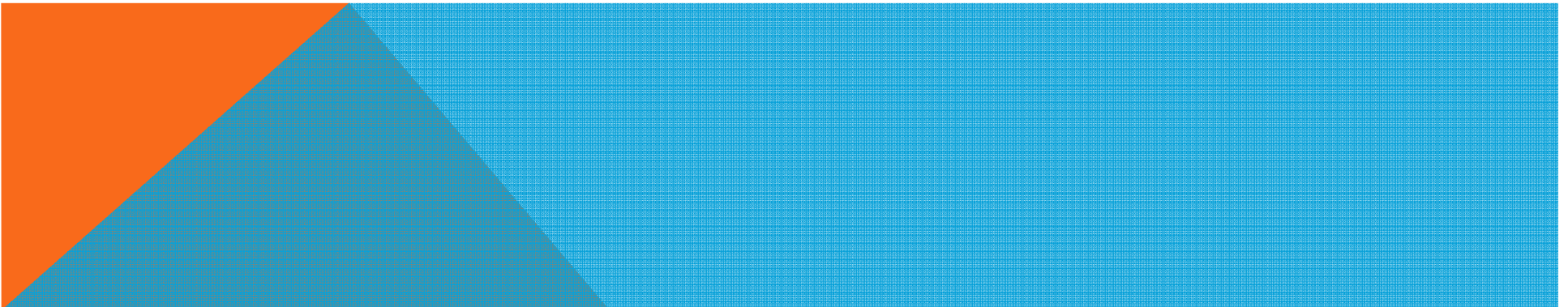
- Hours of operations began with Monday, Wednesday, Friday 5pm-9pm.
- In 2011, the program applied for and received approx. \$4,000 in Solutions Funding through the Local Orange County Youth Bureau and \$11,000 from the United Way of Orange and Dutchess Counties.
- In March 2011, the hours changed to Friday-Sunday 5pm-12 midnight based on need and staff input.
- Due to the increase in program funds through the United Way grant , Text 4 Teens was able to expand the program hours to 7 days a week beginning on October 17, 2011.





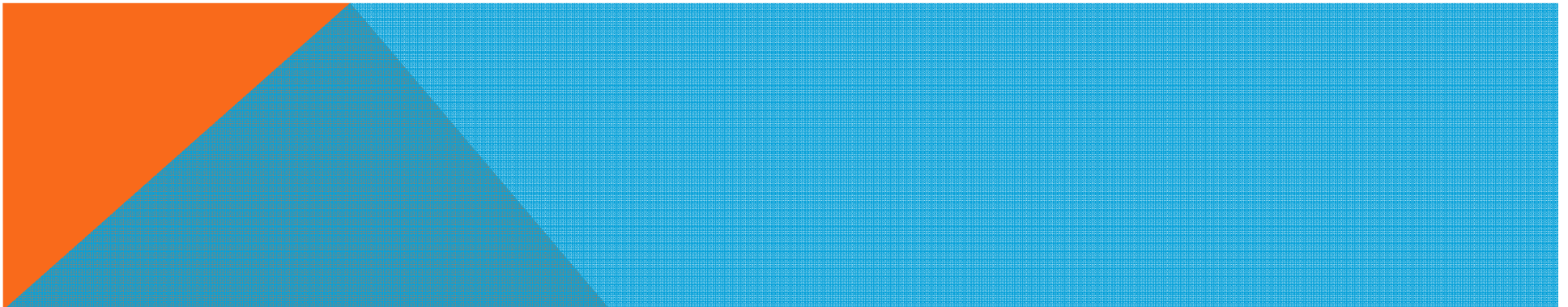
# TEXT 4 TEENS OPERATIONS

- T4T new hours : Monday-Thursday from 5pm to 9pm and Friday, Saturday, Sunday from 5pm to 12 midnight.
- The program operates through one phone in which staff rotate accordingly.
- The program has 2 part time staff.



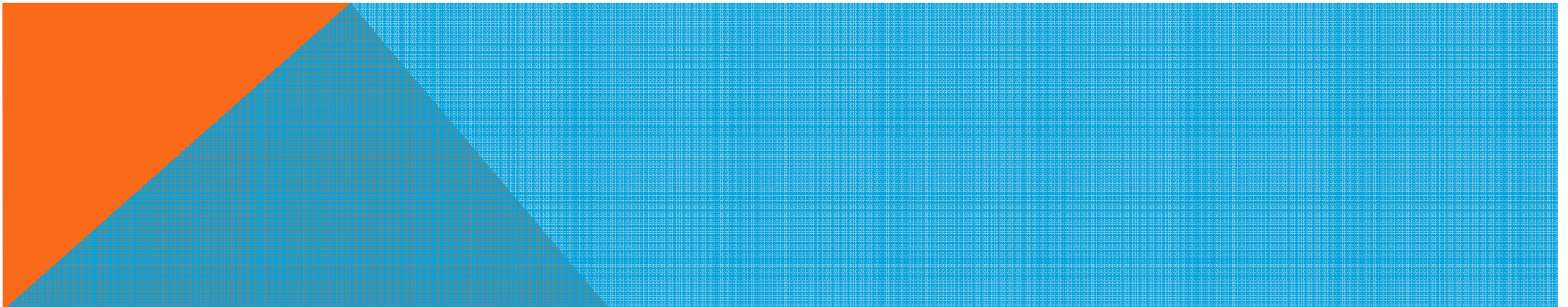
# TEXT 4 TEENS PRESENT DAY

- Staff are trained to have the appropriate resources and information based communication via text with inquiring teens
- T4T is an anonymous/confidential text messaging line
- Staff are trained in all aspects of crisis intervention
- If a teen texts the line during off hours, a text message will be sent with MHA's 24 hour crisis helpline phone #.



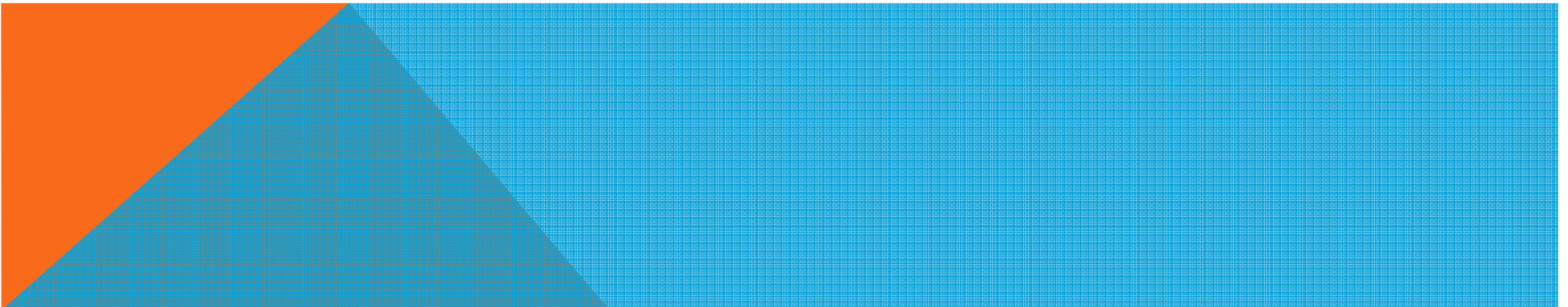
# ADVOCACY/OUTREACH

- MHA staff routinely promote T4T at community events/health fairs and schools.
- In July and August of 2012, the Text 4 Teens program ran a radio advertisement on a local radio station.
- Due to this advertisement, texts received doubled in the month of August
- September texts decreased which led us to believe that advertising on a local radio station in which teens listen to significantly correlated with an increase in texts received.



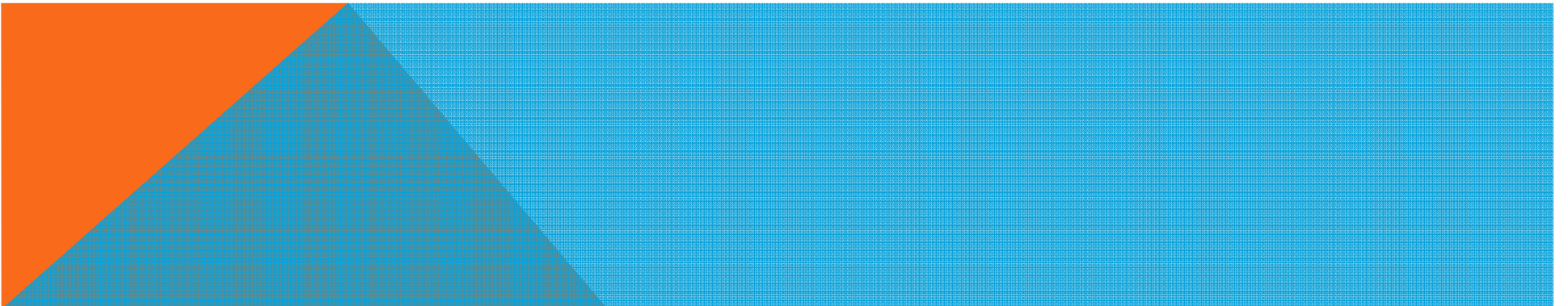
# TEXT 4 TEEN LANGUAGE

- It is important that staff are familiar with the appropriate texting language to use when answering a text.
- The act of texting often involves the use of an abbreviated form of language that creates a faster typing experience for short messages. While this form of text is useful for its intended purpose.
- Abbreviations



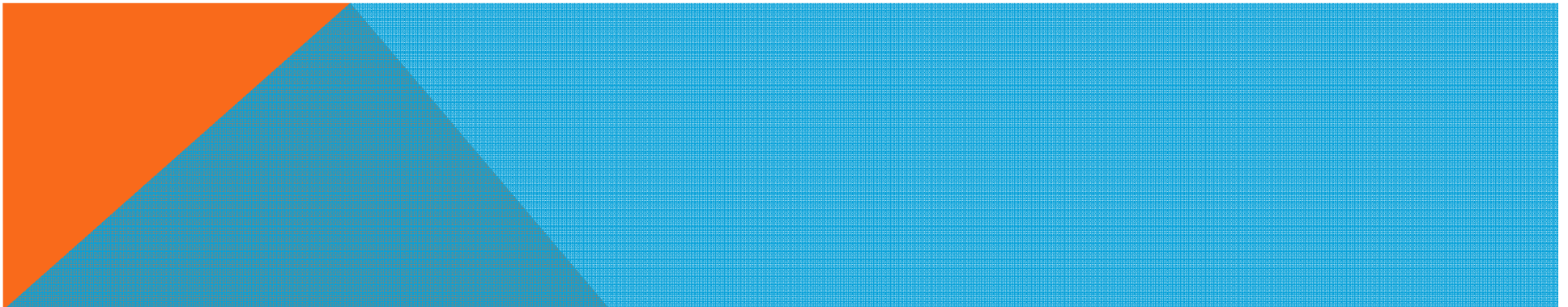
# COMMON TEXT ACRONYMS

- BRB- Be Right Back
- BTW- By the way
- DBEYR- Don't believe everything you read
- FWIW- For what it's worth
- GR8- Great
- LOL- Laugh out loud



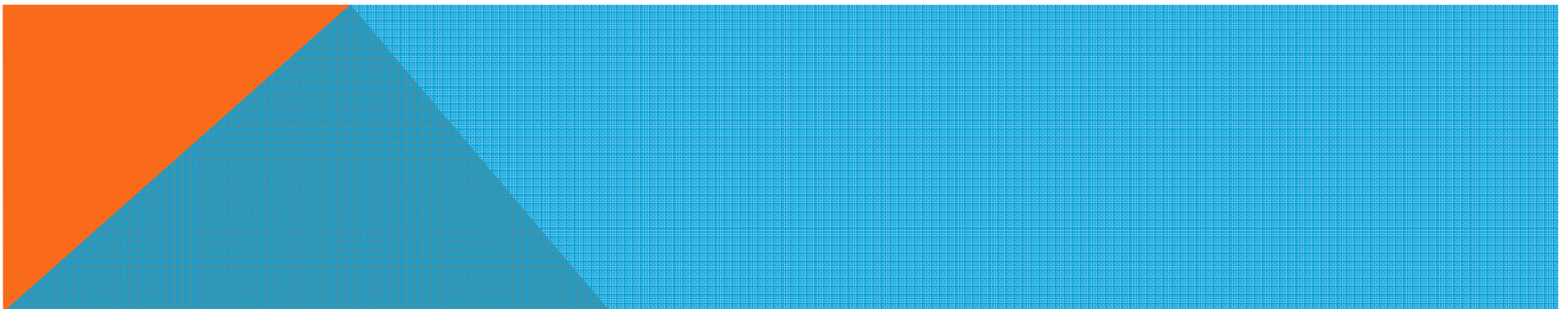
# COMMON TEXT ACRONYMS

- NP – No problem
- OMG- Oh my god
- RBTL- Read between the lines
- TYVM- Thank you very much
- TMI- Too much information
- YW- You're welcome



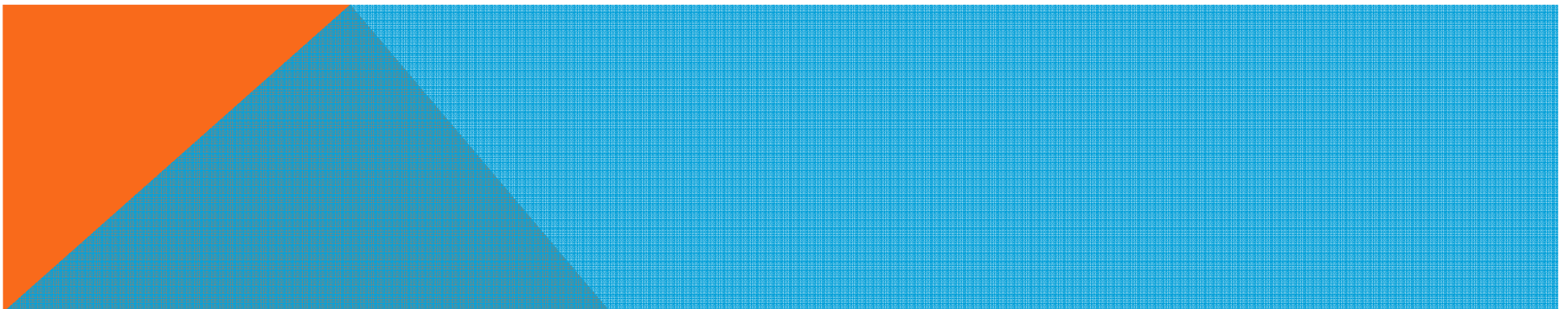
# EXAMPLES OF TEXTS/SCENARIOS

- Texter: “I think I might be pregnant”
- Texter: “The kids in school make fun of me and call me names”
- Texter: “I’m feeling depressed”
- Texter: “My boyfriend broke up with me, but I still want to be with him”
- Texter: “I think I’m gay, but how do I know for sure?”
- Texter: “I’ve been thinking that things would be better if I weren’t around anymore”



# How would you address the previous scenarios?

(Break into groups to discuss)



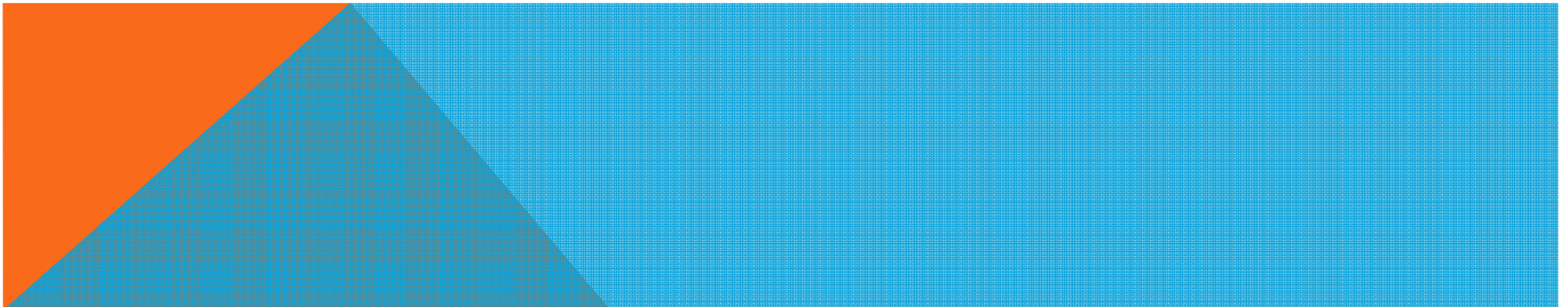


# DATA COLLECTION

- For statistical purposes, the T4T Program must collect certain data from texters.

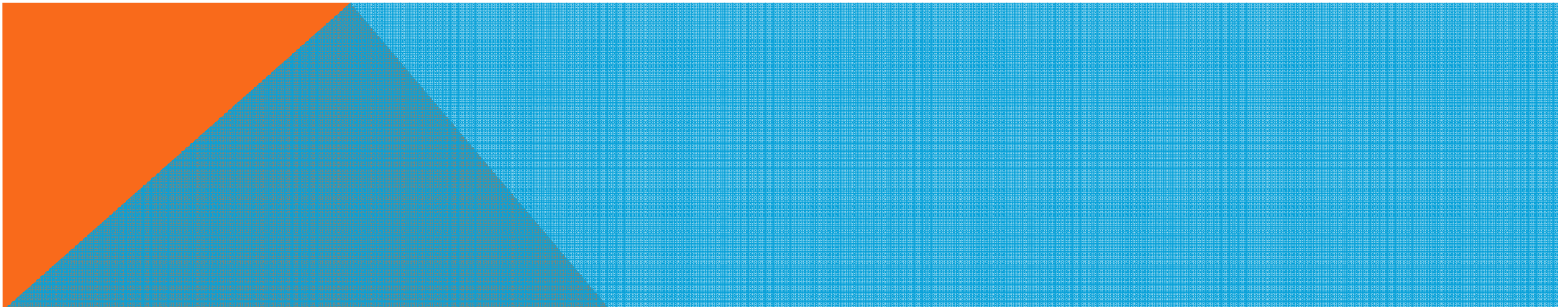
This data must include:

- Age
  - Gender
  - Race
  - Location
  - Would recommend the service to someone else?
- 
- Stats are completed monthly



# STATISTICS

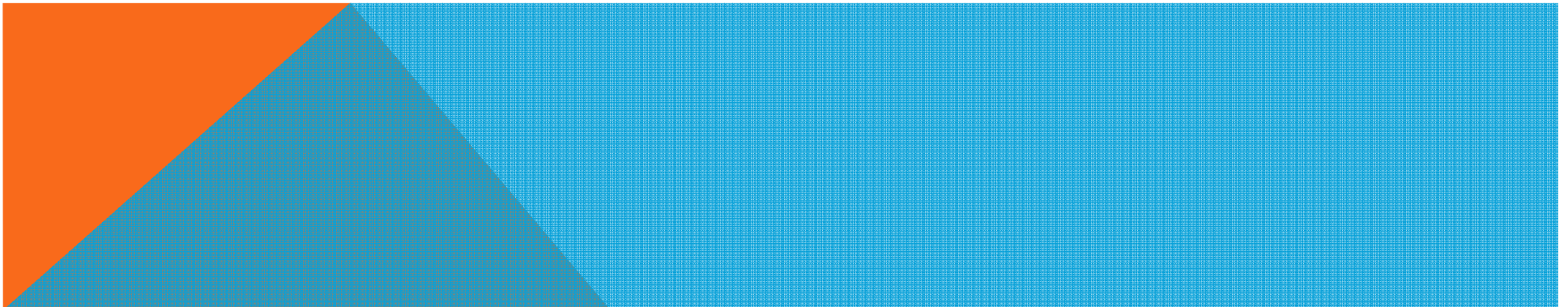
- Program yearly goal: 700 texts
  - Age range 12-20 years old
- Yearly goals: 200 male 500 female
  - Average 67 texts per month



# STATS CONTINUED....

## Customer Demographics for July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012

- Total Texts Received: 786
- Female: 450      Male: 86      Unknown: 250
- Ages 12-15: 234      Ages 16-20: 92      Unknown: 460



# CONTACT INFORMATION

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Division Director

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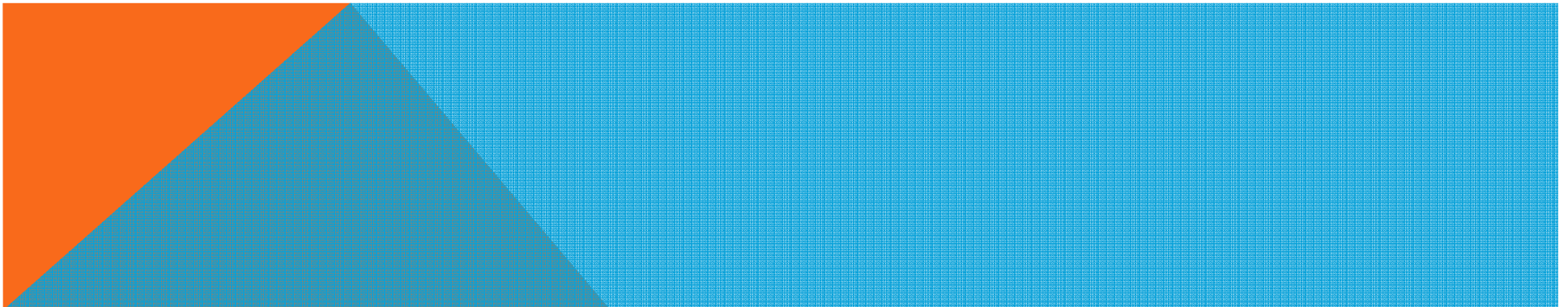
Email: [mmiller@mhaorangeny.com](mailto:mmiller@mhaorangeny.com)

Melanie Cardona

Community Relations Manager

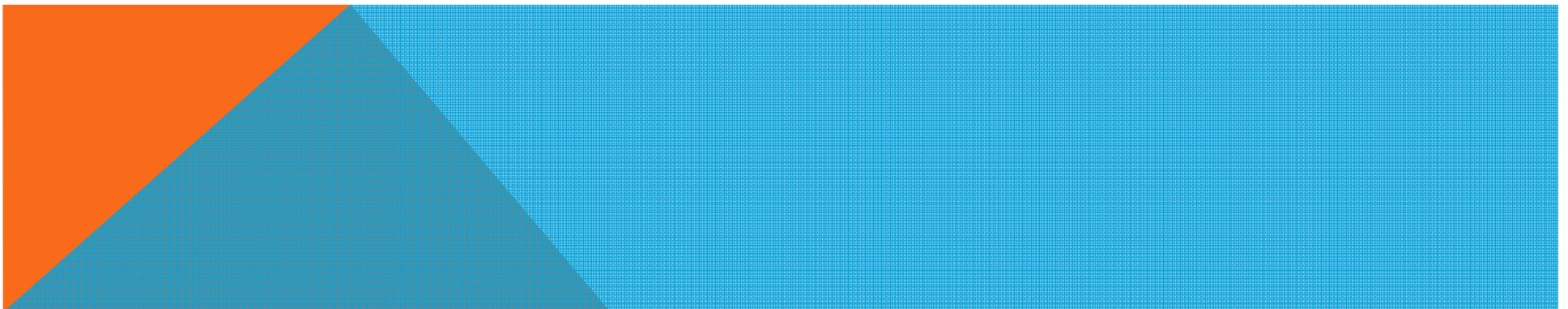
Phone: (845) 342-2400 x236

Email: [mcardona@mhaorangeny.com](mailto:mcardona@mhaorangeny.com)



Mental Health Association needs your help in spreading the word! Together we can make a difference. Take a moment to log onto our website at [www.mhaorangeny.com](http://www.mhaorangeny.com) to view the vast array of services we offer our residents. Text 4 Teens (T4T) is a wonderful initiative; however we have many other valuable services available. Walk-ins are welcome and our Crisis Helpline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The toll free number is: 1-800-832-1200.

Our office is located at 73 James P Kelly Way, Middletown, N.Y. Call our main number at (845) 342-2400 if you need directions. Our office hours are from 9-5, Monday-Friday.



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