

## LifeLine reaches out online

With World Mental Health Day being recognised on 10 October, LifeLine Johannesburg has timeously expanded its counselling services to include online counselling.



Mxit is generously sponsoring internet counselling for the whole of LifeLine. "This is exciting news for our non-profit counselling organisation as it opens up a whole new world for our callers - especially those who cannot afford a telephone call," said Janet King, Acting Director, LifeLine Johannesburg.

The mobile chat counselling service is expected to target and reach the ages of 12 to 29 years - an age group which is very familiar with Mxit. LifeLine Johannesburg currently uses Mxit to maintain communication with the youngsters who have participated in its "Girls and Boys on the Move" project which teaches youth make the right decisions in their life around sexuality, HIV and learning.

"Training has been provided by Mxit in partnership with RLabs for our trainer Niren Uithairaj, and he is training counsellors who are interested in online counselling. LifeLine Johannesburg is going to pilot the counselling service through all Gauteng centres and maybe then Southern Africa. We are rolling-out the online counselling in October 2012," continued King.

Marlon Parker of sponsor, Mxit said, "At Mxit Reach we've always believed that creating the opportunity for non-profits and social organisations to leverage mobile technology to empower communities is crucial in uplifting of society. The opportunity to collaborate with LifeLine Johannesburg to engage with their audience via Mxit is definitely a partnership we are excited about and hope that this will set a trend by non-profits to leverage technology more for social change".

### **About LifeLine Johannesburg**

LifeLine Johannesburg was established in 1969 as a non-profit organisation, existing to provide counselling on mental health issues and to facilitate emotional wellness of individuals and communities. Some 250 highly trained volunteer counsellors work in the LifeLine Johannesburg: Norwood, Soweto and Alexandra offices. These counsellors presently provide a vital 24-hour telephone counselling service, as well as trauma debriefing, face-to-face counselling and rape counselling to those people who traditionally have no access to psychosocial support.