Before he made headlines for coming out as bisexual in 2014, Conner Mertens faced anxiety and depression. He made a call to the Trevor Project hotline, a suicide prevention organization for LGBTQ+ youth, and realized the power of hearing someone else’s voice on the other line.

After 8 years of advocating and developing, [HearMeWA](https://hearmewa.org/) is a line exclusively for youth that grew out of Mertens’ desire to help others. HearMeWA is a free statewide program that is responsible for receiving and responding to tips regarding risks/potential risks to the safety and well-being of youth. This program serves youth up to the age of 25 and operates 24/7/365. The program also provides various ways of contact via mobile app, email, phone, text and chat. The goal of HearMeWA is to provide a place for youth to report safety and well-being concerns to help prevent tragedies and violence. It is an alternative to 911 and is especially crucial in rural communities where emergency services are often the first and only resource for youth in crisis.

When youth or a concerned adult submits a concern to [HearMeWA](https://hearmewa.org/), a highly trained crisis counselor with the [Sandy Hook Promise National Crisis Center](https://www.sandyhookpromise.org/?_ga=2.19652792.140591909.1723223369-502363236.1720713746) receives it immediately. The counselor contacts the individual, talks through the details of the incident and sends the information over to a service provider- such a regional crisis line, educational services, and other community resources.

Youth can remain anonymous when submitting a tip as there are only 4 required questions in the online [tip form](https://www.p3campus.com/TipForm.aspx?ID=5007&TemplateID=166&Override=1). They can also request follow up after they submit a tip and can always reengage with HearMeWA at any time.