Introduction

Text, Talk, Ready Set Go is a free activity to help address the increasing mental health challenges of our youth and to better prepare first-year college students for the transition year. First-year college students can prepare to get Ready Set Go with our innovative activity, delivered to their small group through a series of pre-programmed text messages.

Text, Talk, Ready Set Go can be used during college orientation (virtual or in-person) and can be deployed throughout the first semester (ex: during University 101 classes, residence hall/floor activities, etc.) as students face the everyday challenges the transition can bring.

The Jed Foundation (JED) is a nonprofit that protects emotional health and prevents suicide for our nation’s teens and young adults. Set to Go, a program of The Jed Foundation, helps students prepare emotionally for the transition out of high school.

Here’s how Text, Talk, Ready Set Go works:

During college orientation or throughout the semester, divide students into groups of 3-4, with one cell phone per group (this can also be done virtually through online technologies such as Zoom or Google Classrooms). Group’s text Ready to 833-440-2220 to receive a series of text messages that guide them through a 45-minute conversation about how they can prepare for the transition year.

The text messages include polling questions, discussion questions and information and resources to help set them up for success. To learn more, please watch the informational video on Text, Talk, Set to Go: http://bit.ly/TTRSGVideo.

Text, Talk, Ready Set Go is available on a phone near you from the months of June – November 2021.

This toolkit provides everything you need to organize Text, Talk, Ready Set Go through in your college. If you have questions or need help, please feel free to reach out to Raquel Goodrich at raquel@texttalkact.com.
Getting Organized

You can play an important role in bringing this conversation to first-year students. The following options outline how you might go about organizing Text, Talk, Ready Set Go.

**OPTION 1: ORGANIZE TEXT, TALK, READY SET GO DURING ORIENTATION**

Work with orientation staff to include the 45-minutes Text, Talk, Ready Set Go activity during student orientation. Check the Appendices section for an Activity Plan and Instructions for Virtual Breakout Rooms (if needed).

**OPTION 2: ORGANIZE TEXT, TALK, SET TO GO IN CLASSES THROUGHOUT THE SEMESTER**

Work with professors to organize Text, Talk, Ready Set Go in classes with first-year students. Check the Appendices section for an Activity Plan and Instructions for Virtual Breakout Rooms (if needed).

**OPTION 3: ORGANIZE TEXT, TALK, READY SET GO DURING RESIDENCE HALL/FLOOR ACTIVITIES**

Work with Residence Advisors or Campus Life staff to organize Text, Talk, Ready Set Go as part of residence hall/floor activities. Check the Appendices section for an Activity Plan.
## APPENDICES

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Attention First-Year Students!
Get prepared for the first year of college by joining this interactive session. We'll use a text messaging platform to discuss how to prepare for the everyday challenges that come with the transition to college. Join us!

When:

Where:

For more info: www.settogo.org/text-talk-ready
WHAT IS IT?
Text, Talk, Ready Set Go combines text messaging with face to face and virtual dialogue. Gather 3-4 first year college students and text READY to 833-440-2220 for a fun and engaging conversation on getting emotionally prepared for the transition year.

WHY DO THIS?
Because 60% of college students wish they had gotten more help with emotional preparation for college.

Because 90% of participants report an increased knowledge about how to stay emotionally and mentally healthy in the transition.

LEARN MORE
Visit settogo.org
On social: #JEDsettogo

GET STARTED
1. Text READY to 833-440-2220
   Participants gather with friends or peers in groups of 3-4 with one cell phone. They text READY to 833-440-2220 to begin.

2. Follow the text prompts
   Each group moves through the pre-programmed text messages at their own pace. Groups will talk about how to get emotionally prepared for their first year of college, with special emphasis on navigating college life during the pandemic.

3. Be a part of the change
   Let the program guide you through a series of discussion questions, social media interactions, and polling questions. As a group, you'll discover new ideas and perspectives - and develop a plan to help you succeed.

Powered by: JEDfoundation.org
In partnership with: active minds NASP National Association of School Psychologists
            YOUTH MOVE NATIONAL School Social Work Association of America
            American School Counselor Association
Activity Plan

This guide is designed to help first-year college students get the most from their Text, Talk, Ready Set Go experience. This activity plan outlines how to lead the Text, Talk, Ready Set Go activity in an in-person or virtual setting.

Activity Plan

1. Introduce Text, Talk, Ready Set Go  
5 minutes

› The Jed Foundation (JED), a nonprofit that protects emotional health and prevents suicide for our nation's teens and young adults, created Text, Talk, Ready Set Go to help prepare students for their first year of college.

› In a few minutes, we’ll divide into small groups of 3-4 with one cell phone per group. I’ll place your group in a breakout groups (or a breakout room, if virtual) so you can talk with each other. Your group will text Ready to the number 833-440-2220 to receive a series of text messages to get you talking together about the upcoming year of school and how you can prepare for the everyday challenges that might come with it. The person with the cell phone will need to read each text message to the group and then let the group discuss it before moving to the next text message.

2. Text, Talk, Ready Set Go  
30 minutes

Provide instructions & assistance to students

› Instructions

› Small Groups Matter. Invite students to divide into groups of 3-4 people. In a virtual setting, you will need to assign groups into different breakout rooms so they can talk with each other (see “How to Create Virtual Breakout Rooms” below). Each group should have one cell phone.

› Make Sure Everyone Understands the KEYWORDS. Let students know that they will receive a series of text messages to help them talk about getting ready for the upcoming year. The script advances to the next question when you send a text that begins with the keyword. Keywords are indicated in CAPS at the end of each message. It works most smoothly if participants type the keyword and then any message they want to add all in one text. Most problems people report with the script are actually due to missing or incorrect keywords.

› Talk First, then Text. For questions that ask groups to text in their responses, it works best if participants discuss each question as a group and then one person types a short summary.

› Getting Started. When everyone is ready, invite them to text “Ready” to 833-440-2220, just as if 833-440-2220 were their friend’s number and “Ready” was where you would type, “what’s up?”

› Timekeeping

› You may also want to text “Ready” to 833-440-2220 and follow the prompts, letting the group know when it is time to move from one question to the next.
3. Closing Activity

**Lead a debrief of Text, Talk, Ready Set Go**

› Once everyone is done with Text, Talk, Ready Set Go, bring students back together and invite the group to discuss a few closing questions.
› What was it like to participate in Text, Talk, Ready Set Go?
› Did you hear anything surprising?
› Did you learn something new?
› In the coming days, is there anything you would like to do to follow up on this conversation?
› Are there any actions you want to take as a group to follow up on this conversation?

**Troubleshooting**

› The keywords are NOT case sensitive.
› It sometimes takes a few seconds for a text to come through, just as it does when texting a friend.
› If students don’t get the next question, have them type the keyword again and be sure it is spelled correctly and is the first word in the text.
› If students get a message that isn’t about the first year of college, they typed the wrong keyword at the beginning of your message. Have them go back to the last text that was on topic and type the keyword given there again.
› Most of Text, Talk, Ready Set Go works fine on any phone, but there are a few links that work only on smart phones.
› There is no limit to how long a message you can send. A phone may only show 160 characters, but Text, Talk, Ready Set Go will see your whole message.
› Rest assured that we will not share or sell participants’ information and all comments provided by participants are kept anonymous.
› Standard text rates apply, so groups should use someone’s phone who has a high or unlimited text limit.

We’d love to hear your group’s experience with Text, Talk, Ready Set Go! Please send comments to Raquel at raquel@texttalkact.com.
How to Create Virtual Breakout Rooms

Text, Talk, Ready Set Go works best when students are divided into groups of 3-4. When doing this activity via virtual setting, this can be achieved by assigning small groups to breakout rooms. Below are instructions on how to do this using the most common technologies used by schools.

Zoom

Zoom has the capability to assign students to breakout rooms by using the Breakout Room tool. You can choose to assign participants to rooms automatically or manually (depending on your students and how well they interact with each other). It also allows you to specify how many students you want in each room (we recommend 3 or 4 students per room).

To learn more, watch this Zoom video: https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206476093-Getting-Started-with-Breakout-Rooms

Google Classrooms

Google doesn’t currently have a feature where teachers can create “breakout rooms” within the classroom. However, there is a workaround for this. Simply use your regular classroom to present students the information on the activity (or send students the written instructions provided below) and create separate Google Classrooms for each small group to join.

For more information: https://support.google.com/edu/classroom/thread/13047261?hl=en

Written instructions to send out to students before they join their small group’s Google Classroom

The Jed Foundation, a nonprofit that protects emotional health and prevents suicide for our nation’s teens and young adults, created Text, Talk, Ready Set Go to help prepare students for their first year of college. Here are the instructions for this activity:

› For this activity, you will join a Google Classroom with two or three other students. I will send your Google Classroom assignment to you. Once in your Google classroom, pick one person to use their phone.
› Have the person with the phone text Ready to the number 833-440-2220 (see graphic).
› The phone will receive text messages to get you talking together about the first year of college and how you can set yourself up for success.
› To receive the next text message, type the KEYWORD (the word that is all capitalized at the end of the text message) and hit send.
The person with the cell phone needs to read each text message to the group and then let the group discuss it before moving to the next text message.

Troubleshooting and things to know:

- The keywords are NOT case sensitive.
- It sometimes takes a few seconds for a text to come through.
- If you don’t receive the next text message, type the keyword again and be sure it is spelled correctly and is the first word in the text.
- If you receive a message that isn’t about the first year of college, you may have typed the wrong keyword at the beginning of your message. Go back to the last text that was on topic and type the keyword given there again.
- Standard text rates apply, so groups should use someone’s phone who has a high or unlimited text limit.
Email Template (to Orientation Staff, Professors, Residence Advisors, Campus Life staff, etc.)

Dear ________:

I recently heard about a free resource to help first-year college students prepare for the transition year. It is offered by The Jed Foundation for use during college orientation activities (in-person or virtual) or throughout the semester (ex: during University 101 classes, residence hall/floor activities, etc.).

Text, Talk, Ready Set Go helps address the increasing mental health problems of our youth and better prepares first-year college students for the transition year. Students gather in small groups and receive a series of pre-programmed text messages that guide them through a conversation.

Text, Talk, Ready Set Go is available from the months of June – November 2021.

Here’s how it works:

1. Divide first-year college students into groups of 3-4 (either in-person or virtually)
2. Have groups use one cell phone to text Ready to 833-440-2220 (try it out!)
3. Allow time for the group to have a 45-minute discussion using the text-enabled questions
4. Watch this how-to video to learn more: http://bit.ly/TTRSGVideo

I’d like to talk with you about bring Text, Talk, Ready Set Go to our college activities. When would be a good time to discuss this?

Sincerely ____________________
Social Media Messages

SAMPLE INSTAGRAM POSTS

Get prepared for the first year of college. Gather 3 friends and text Ready to 833-440-2220 now! Visit setto.go.org/text-talk-ready to learn more #JEDsettogo

Are you ready for the transition into college? Visit setto.go.org/text-talk-ready to get prepared! #JEDsettogo

Sample Tweets

60% of students don’t feel emotionally prepared for college. First-year college students can get ready to go with a fun, engaging activity: http://bit.ly/TTRSGVideo #JEDsettogo

Get ready to go to college with a text messaging activity! Visit setto.go.org/text-talk-ready to learn how. #JEDsettogo

When you don’t know which way to turn, who will you go to during your freshman year of college? Visit setto.go.org/text-talk-ready to work on your action plan. #JEDsettogo
**Sample Facebook Posts**

60% of students don’t feel emotionally prepared for college. First-year college students can get ready to go with a fun, engaging activity: [http://bit.ly/TTRSGVideo](http://bit.ly/TTRSGVideo) #JEDsettogo

Preparing for the transition out of high school is often neglected. Visit [settogo.org/text-talk-ready](http://settogo.org/text-talk-ready) to learn how first-year college students can prepare for lifelong success. #JEDsettogo

First-year college students can get ready to go with a text. Gather 3 other first-year students and text READY to 833-440-2220 today! Visit [settogo.org/text-talk-ready](http://settogo.org/text-talk-ready) to learn more! #JEDsettogo