



kids**helpline**
Anytime Any Reason

ACT



insights2018

**Kids Helpline Statistical Summary
Australian Capital Territory**

Insights into young people in Australia

Introduction

What is Kids Helpline?

Kids Helpline has been operating for 28 years and is Australia's only 24/7 counselling and support service for children and young people aged between 5 and 25 years.

Tertiary qualified counsellors provide free confidential support via telephone, WebChat and email, 24/7, 365 days a year.

The service operates a substantial website with a diverse range of resources for self-directed help-seeking by children, young people and adults. In addition, support from Optus and BUPA enables Kids Helpline to deliver an early intervention and prevention program in primary schools called 'Kids Helpline @ School' (OPTUS supports the Digital Thumbprint Program and BUPA supports the Wellbeing Program).

In 2018 Kids Helpline cost \$11.3 million to run. **yourtown** provided 75% of the funding thanks to the generosity of supporters of the Art Unions and donations, while the Australian, Queensland and Western Australian Governments, and corporate partners, contributed the remaining 25%.

What this report is about and who it is for

This report is an appendix to 'Kids Helpline Insights 2018: National Statistical Overview'. It provides summary data on Kids Helpline service demand and client concerns and characteristics for the Australian Capital Territory in relation to the 2018 calendar year. It will be of value to people working in social policy and research roles, journalists and others in the community who need to understand the current and changing help-seeking needs of children and young people in Australia today.

The 'Kids Helpline Insights 2018: National Statistical Overview' and other related reports can be accessed at <https://www.yourtown.com.au/insights/annual-overviews>.

Notes on data collection, analysis and interpretation

Substantial missing data in relation to a number of data collection fields, most notably remoteness and cultural background, undermine the reliability of data presented in a number of tables and figures in this report. This is compounded by the small size of the Australian Capital Territory subpopulation and the greater distorting influence of repeat contacts on frequency data in this context.

Please consult the Appendix of the 'National Statistical Overview' for more detailed information on data collection, analysis and interpretation.

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Where to get more information

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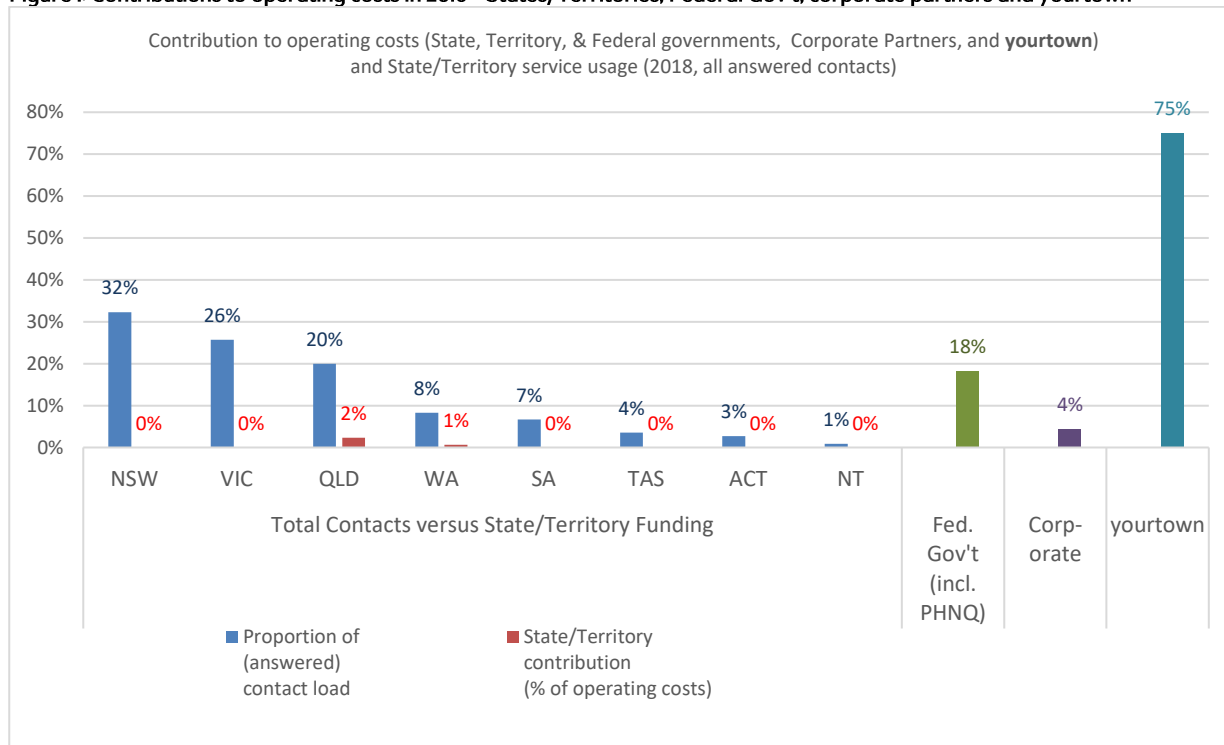
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How is the service funded

In 2018 Kids Helpline cost \$11.3 million to run. **yourtown** provided 75% of the funding thanks to the generosity of supporters of the Art Unions and donations, while the Australian, Queensland and Western Australian Governments, and corporate partners, contributed the remaining 25%.

Figure I shows the contributions to these operating costs from various sources including **yourtown**, State/Territory and Federal Governments, and corporate partners, as proportions of operating costs, in 2018. Figure I also shows State/Territory service usage as proportions of (answered) contacts, in 2018.

Figure I: Contributions to operating costs in 2018 – States/Territories, Federal Gov't, corporate partners and yourtown



Who contacted the service

Demographic characteristics

- Kids Helpline counsellors recorded data in relation to 143,481 contacts from children and young people across Australia who were aged 5-25 years. State or territory information was available for 128,164 of these contacts, and of this subset 3,408 (or 2%) were known to be from the ACT.
- Table I shows the demographic characteristics of these contacts from the ACT and compares them with the characteristics of contacts from the rest of Australia where the contact's state or territory was known.
- Consistent with contacts from the rest of Australia (where the proportion is 2%), approximately three percent (3%) of ACT contacts were transgender but a greater proportion of ACT contacts were from males (31%) than was the case for the rest of the nation (24% of contacts from males).
- Compared with the rest of Australia, contacts from the ACT were:
 - more likely to be from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds and less likely to be either Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander or from a Caucasian Australian background,
 - more likely to be from 19-25 year olds and less likely to be 13-18 year olds, and
 - more likely to be living in Major Cities.

Table I. Characteristics of Kids Helpline contacts 2018 aged 5-25 years – ACT and rest of Australia¹

Contact characteristics	ACT (N = 3,408)		Rest of Australia (N = 124,756)	
	n	%	n	%
Gender				
Female	1,818	66%	68,718	76%
Male	863	31%	19,504	22%
Intersex, Trans & Gender Diverse	77	3%	2,118	2%
Total	2,758	100%	90,340	100%
Unknown	650		34,416	
Age group				
5-12 years	297	11%	10,513	12%
13-18 years	1,153	44%	46,687	55%
19-25 years	1,143	44%	28,374	33%
Total	2,593	100%	85,574	100%
<26 but age unknown	815		39,182	
Cultural background²				
Aboriginal &/or Torres Strait Islander	14	1%	1,333	4%
CALD	415	42%	12,035	37%
Neither Aboriginal &/or Torres Strait Islander nor CALD	554	56%	19,588	59%
Total	983	100%	32,956	100%
Unknown	2,425		91,800	
Remoteness³				
Major Cities	1,375	99%	45,298	75%
Inner Regional	10	1%	10,382	17%
Outer Regional/Remote	4	0%	4,688	8%
Total	1,389	100%	60,368	100%
Unknown	2,019		64,388	
Medium				
Phone	2,358	69%	86,325	69%
WebChat	975	29%	34,347	28%
Email	75	2%	4,084	3%
Total	3,408	100%	124,756	100%
Type of help-seeking				
Counselling contact	1,658	49%	56,713	45%
Information/Referral/Other contact	1,750	51%	68,043	55%
Total	3,408	100%	124,756	100%

1. Where column percentages sum to more or less than 100%, this is due to rounding.

2. CALD = Culturally and linguistically diverse.

3. Remoteness classifications are adapted from the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. See 'Kids Helpline Insights 2018: National Statistical Overview' for more information.

Types of help-seeking

The Kids Helpline counselling and support service responds to two broad categories of help-seeking: those children and young people seeking counsellor assistance for a particular concern or problem (counselling contacts), and those seeking information, referral to other services, or some other form of non-counselling support, like general conversation or playful engagement (non-counselling contacts, also called information, referral and other contacts).

As shown in Table 1, 49% of contacts from the ACT in 2018 were seeking counselling support while 51% were seeking information/referral or other forms of support. ACT contacts were more likely to be seeking counselling support than contacts from the rest of Australia (49% c.f. 45%).

Demographic trends over time

Table 2 presents the characteristics of ACT contacts over the last three years to consider whether there have been noteworthy variations in the client group over the short term. Key observations from the data in Table 2 include the following:

- There would appear to be moderate variation in the characteristics of ACT contacts over the last three years, including:
 - a decrease in the proportion of female contacts and a corresponding increase in the proportion of male and intersex/trans/gender diverse contacts;
 - a decrease in the proportion of contacts aged 13-18 years and a corresponding increase in 19-25 year-olds;
 - a decrease in the proportion of contacts known to be from CALD backgrounds and a corresponding increase in contacts from a Caucasian Australian background;
 - a decrease in phone and email as contact medium, and an increase in WebChat; and
 - an increase in the proportion of contacts seeking counselling support with a corresponding decrease in those seeking information, referral or other forms of non-counselling support.
- Substantial missing data, a very small subpopulation, and the greater likely influence of repeat contacts on percentage frequencies in this context, significantly undermine the reliability of these observed differences. Accordingly, observed differences may not correspond to actual differences in the characteristics of children and young people from the ACT contacting Kids Helpline over this period.

Table 2. Characteristics of ACT Kids Helpline contacts aged 5-25 years – by year¹

Contact characteristics		2016 (N = 3,334)		2017 (N=3,105)		2018 (N=3,408)	
		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	%	<i>n</i>
Gender²							
	Female	1,617	72%	1,633	67%	1,818	66%
	Male	628	28%	757	31%	863	31%
	Intersex, Trans & Gender Diverse	12	1%	60	2%	77	3%
	Total	2,257	100%	2,450	100%	2,758	100%
	<i>Unknown</i>	1,077		655		650	
Age group							
	5-12 years	270	13%	298	13%	297	11%
	13-18 years	1,167	57%	1,021	46%	1,153	44%
	19-25 years	610	30%	905	41%	1,143	44%
	Total	2,047	100%	2,224	100%	2,593	100%
	<i><26 but age unknown</i>	1,287		881		815	
Cultural background³							
	Aboriginal &/or Torres Strait Islander	6	1%	7	1%	14	1%
	CALD	381	51%	427	53%	415	42%
	Neither Aboriginal &/or Torres Strait Islander nor CALD	358	48%	379	47%	554	56%
	Total	745	100%	813	100%	983	100%
	<i>Unknown</i>	2,589		2,292		2,425	
Remoteness⁴							
	Major Cities	1,268	98%	1,202	99%	1,375	99%
	Inner Regional	21	2%	11	1%	10	1%
	Outer Regional/Remote	4	0%	4	0%	4	0%
	Total	1,293	100%	1,217	100%	1,389	100%
	<i>Unknown</i>	2,041		1,888		2,019	
Medium							
	Phone	2,525	76%	2,350	76%	2,358	69%
	WebChat	614	18%	643	21%	975	29%
	Email	195	6%	112	4%	75	2%
	Total	3,334	100%	3,105	100%	3,408	100%
Type of help-seeking							
	Counselling contact	1,501	45%	1,532	49%	1,658	49%
	Information/Referral/Other contact	1,833	55%	1,573	51%	1,750	51%
	Total	3,334	100%	3,105	100%	3,408	100%

1. Where column percentages sum to more or less than 100%, this is due to rounding. 2. A new gender category was introduced into Kids Helpline data collection from January 2015. 3. CALD = Culturally and linguistically diverse. 4. Remoteness classifications are adapted from the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. See 'Kids Helpline Insights 2018: National Statistical Overview' for more information.

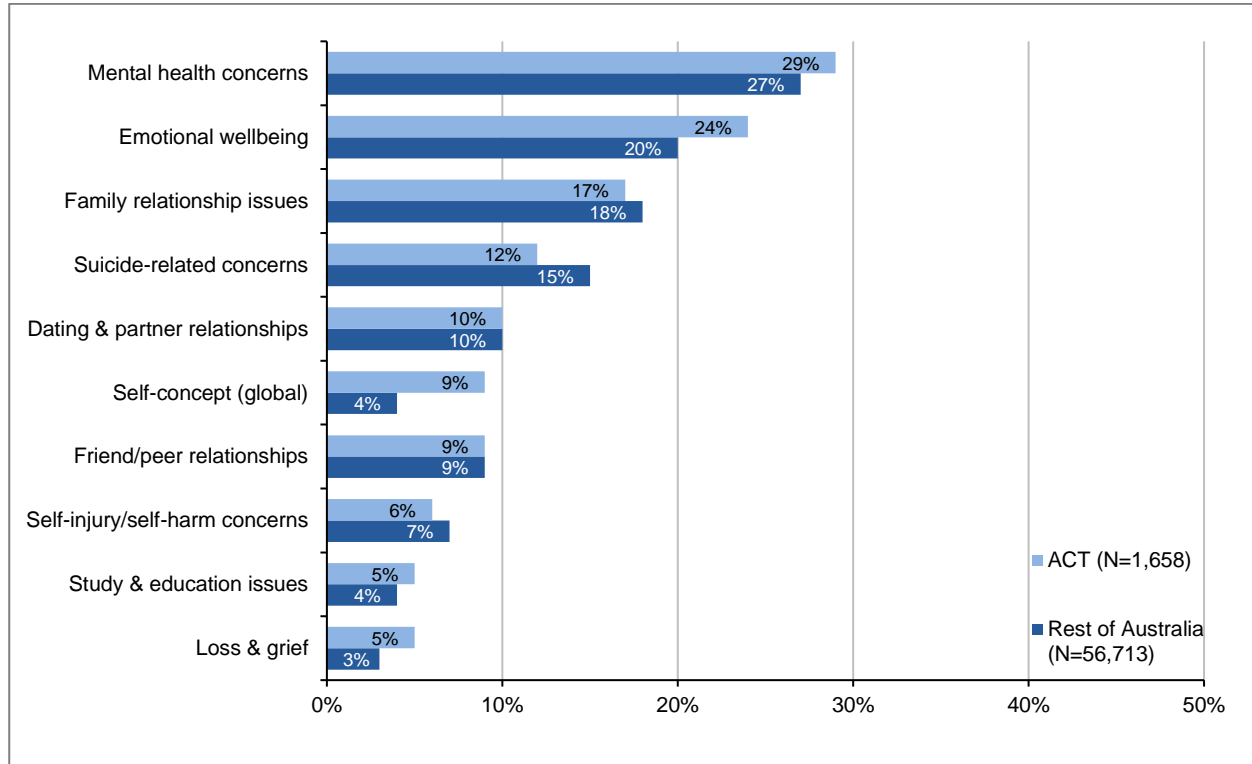
Most common concerns of children and young people who received counselling

During 2018, Kids Helpline counsellors responded to 67,264 contacts from children and young people who were seeking help about specific problems or concerns (i.e. counselling contacts). Analysis of the types of issues and concerns raised by children and young people in these sessions provide a valuable insight into the concerns of children and young people in Australia today.

ACT compared with rest of Australia

- State or territory information was available for 58,371 of these 67,264 counselling contacts and of this subset 1,658 (or 2.5%) were known to be from the ACT.
- Figure 2 shows the 10 most common concerns of ACT counselling contacts in 2018 and compares this with the frequency with which these concerns were raised by counselling contacts from the rest of Australia where state or territory information was known.
- The key observations to be noted from the data are that:
 - the relative frequency with which contacts from children and young people in the ACT are about *emotional wellbeing* is higher than that for the rest of Australia;
 - the relative frequency with which contacts from children and young people in the ACT are about *self-concept* is higher than that for the rest of Australia;
 - the relative frequency with which contacts from children and young people in the ACT are about *suicide* is lower than that for the rest of Australia; and
 - the relative frequency with which children and young people in the ACT sought help from Kids Helpline for the other issues listed is consistent with the relative frequency with which children and young people elsewhere in Australia sought help for these issues.

Figure 2. Most frequently recorded concerns of Kids Helpline counselling contacts 2018 aged 5-25 years – ACT compared with the rest of Australia (sorted in descending frequency of ACT concerns)¹



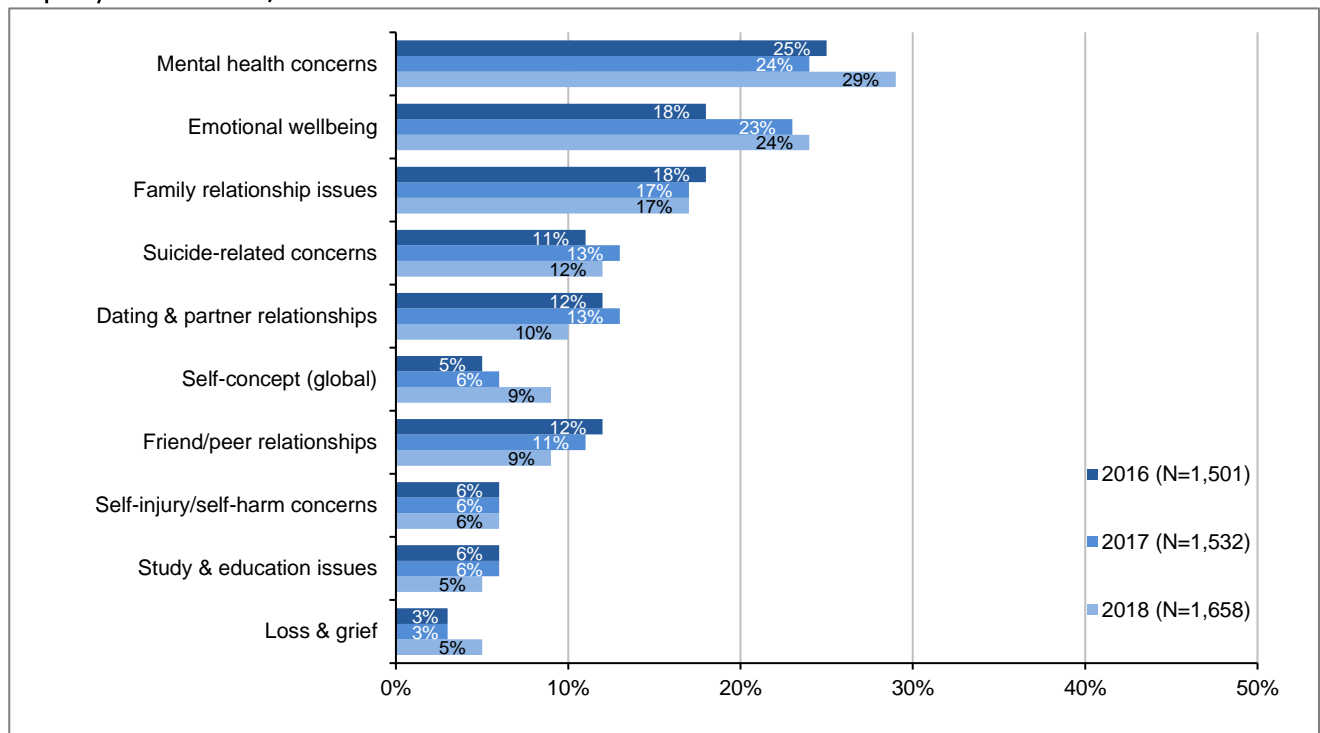
1. Up to four concerns per contact may be recorded. Accordingly, percentages may sum to more than 100%.

Trends over time

Figure 3 shows the 10 most common concerns of ACT counselling contacts in 2018 and compares this with the frequency with which these concerns were raised by ACT contacts in 2016 and 2017.

- The key observation to be noted from the data is that the frequency with which children and young people in the ACT sought help from Kids Helpline for all of these issues has remained relatively consistent over the short-term, although there appear to be increases in the proportions for contacts about:
 - Mental health concerns
 - Emotional well-being
 - Self-concept.

Figure 3. Most frequently recorded concerns of ACT Kids Helpline counselling contacts aged 5-25 years – by year (sorted in descending frequency of 2018 concerns)¹



1. Up to four concerns per contact may be recorded. Accordingly, percentages may sum to more than 100%.

All concerns of children and young people who received counselling

Children and young people contact Kids Helpline about a very wide range of concerns, and focusing on the 10 most common concerns can obscure that diversity and the emergence of trends in other areas of less common client concern.

To address this issue, Table 3 reports the frequency with which every concern in the Kids Helpline's concern classification system was raised by counselling contacts from the ACT in 2018 and compares this with the frequency with which the concern was raised in 2016 and 2017. Table 3 groups individual concerns under eleven 'concern classes' which aggregate frequencies across conceptual clusters of client concern.

The key observations to be noted from the data in Table 3 are that:

- the relative frequency with which children and young people in the ACT are contacting Kids Helpline about almost all these different concerns and classes of concern is relatively consistent over the short-term and
- the relative frequency with which mental health and emotional wellbeing related concerns (as an aggregated count across several related concerns) has increased from 2016-2018 as has that for self-concept and identity-related concerns.

Table 3. Number and proportion of Kids Helpline counselling contacts 5-25 years with particular concerns and classes of concern – ACT by year¹

Concern and concern class	2016 (N = 1,501)		2017 (N = 1,532)		2018 (N = 1,658)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Mental health & emotional wellbeing	810	54.0%	911	59.5%	1,056	63.7%
Mental health concerns	377	25.1%	375	24.5%	487	29.4%
Emotional wellbeing	263	17.5%	356	23.2%	391	23.6%
Suicide-related concerns	168	11.2%	194	12.7%	201	12.1%
Self-injury/self-harm concerns	92	6.1%	99	6.5%	94	5.7%
Loss and grief	42	2.8%	53	3.5%	80	4.8%
Friends, peers, partners & dating	343	22.9%	343	22.4%	302	18.2%
Dating and partner relationships	179	11.9%	193	12.6%	166	10.0%
Friends/peer relationships	173	11.5%	161	10.5%	147	8.9%
Family relationships	271	18.1%	265	17.3%	279	16.8%
Child-parent relationships	192	12.8%	199	13.0%	206	12.4%
Other family relationships	61	4.1%	41	2.7%	60	3.6%
Changing family structures	40	2.7%	32	2.1%	27	1.6%
Parenting own children	0	0.0%	3	0.2%	2	0.1%
Identity & self-concept	122	8.1%	134	8.7%	179	10.8%
Self-concept (global)	77	5.1%	87	5.7%	143	8.6%
Body image	13	0.9%	16	1.0%	16	1.0%
Sexual orientation	13	0.9%	11	0.7%	14	0.8%
Gender/sex identification	10	0.7%	13	0.8%	6	0.4%
Disability-related concerns	8	0.5%	1	0.1%	3	0.2%
Cultural identity	3	0.2%	9	0.6%	15	0.9%
Violence & abuse (non-family)	102	6.8%	76	5.0%	103	6.2%
Bullying - school related	58	3.9%	39	2.5%	60	3.6%
Bullying - other	3	0.2%	10	0.7%	6	0.4%
Sexual assault or abuse (non-family)	22	1.5%	12	0.8%	17	1.0%
Dating and partner violence	13	0.9%	13	0.8%	4	0.2%
Harassment and assault (non-sexual)	5	0.3%	1	0.1%	7	0.4%
Sexual harassment	4	0.3%	2	0.1%	9	0.5%
Child abuse & family violence	111	7.4%	74	4.8%	58	3.5%
Physical abuse	58	3.9%	33	2.2%	33	2.0%
Sexual abuse	22	1.5%	12	0.8%	5	0.3%
Emotional abuse	30	2.0%	36	2.3%	25	1.5%
Neglect of child	5	0.3%	3	0.2%	3	0.2%
Exploitation by family member	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Exposure to family violence	10	0.7%	6	0.4%	6	0.4%
Living-in-care issues	0	0.0%	3	0.2%	1	0.1%
School, education & work	114	7.6%	128	8.4%	117	7.1%
Study and education issues	84	5.6%	98	6.4%	83	5.0%
Employment issues	26	1.7%	22	1.4%	30	1.8%
School authority issues	8	0.5%	10	0.7%	6	0.4%
Physical or sexual health & development	48	3.2%	47	3.1%	40	2.4%
Physical health concerns	27	1.8%	30	2.0%	16	1.0%
Pregnancy-related concerns	12	0.8%	6	0.4%	7	0.4%

Concern and concern class	2016 (N = 1,501)		2017 (N = 1,532)		2018 (N = 1,658)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Sexual activity	10	0.7%	10	0.7%	14	0.8%
Physical/sexual development	1	0.1%	1	0.1%	3	0.2%
Contraception/safe sex	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Homelessness & basic needs assistance	34	2.3%	16	1.0%	18	1.1%
Homelessness	16	1.1%	12	0.8%	12	0.7%
Practical/material assistance	14	0.9%	3	0.2%	5	0.3%
Financial assistance/concerns	5	0.3%	1	0.1%	1	0.1%
Substance use, addictions & risk-taking	18	1.2%	20	1.3%	22	1.3%
Drug use	2	0.1%	5	0.3%	10	0.6%
Alcohol use	15	1.0%	12	0.8%	10	0.6%
Addictive behaviours (not drugs/alcohol)	1	0.1%	3	0.2%	4	0.2%
Physical risk-taking	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Gang/cult involvement	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Offending, abusive or violent actions	16	1.1%	13	0.8%	13	0.8%
Illegal/offending behaviour	9	0.6%	2	0.1%	8	0.5%
Abusive or violent actions	7	0.5%	9	0.6%	3	0.2%
Sexual violence/offending actions	0	0.0%	2	0.1%	2	0.1%

I. Up to four concerns per contact may be recorded. Totals provided for class of concern will be less than the sum of the individual concerns that make up that class due to the fact that multiple concerns within the class may have been identified in a single contact.

Online harassment



Starting work



Respect in relationships



Dealing with peer pressure



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Kids Helpline is a service of **yourtown** for 5-25 year olds

