



kidshelpline
Anytime Any Reason

NSW



insights2018

**Kids Helpline Statistical Summary
New South Wales**

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

Where to get more information

This report was compiled by **yourtown** Strategy and Research.

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Where to get more information

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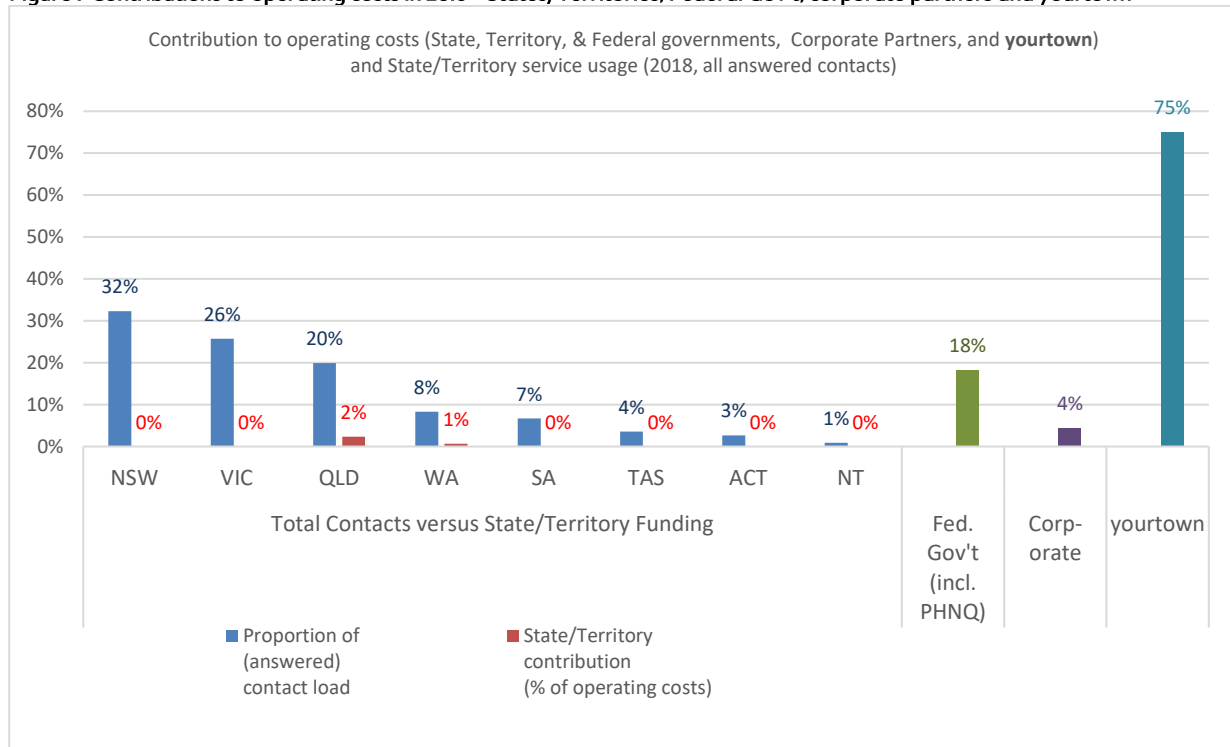
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How is the service funded?

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

- In 2018, Kids Helpline counsellors recorded data in relation to 143,481 contacts from children and young people across Australia, aged 5-25 years. State or territory information was available for 128,164 of these contacts, and of this subset 41,423 (or 32%) were known to be from NSW.
- Table I shows the demographic characteristics of these contacts from NSW and compares them with the characteristics of contacts from the rest of Australia where the contact's state or territory was known.
- Almost eight out of 10 (76%) contacts from NSW were female and four in seven (56%) were aged 13-18 years. Four in ten (40%) were known to be from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.
- Compared with contacts from the rest of Australia, NSW contacts were:
 - slightly more likely to be aged 13-18 years,
 - more likely to come from major cities, and
 - more likely to be from CALD backgrounds, less likely to be from a Caucasian Australian background.
- Other characteristics of Kids Helpline contacts in NSW are similar to those of contacts from the rest of Australia.

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

Contact characteristics	NSW (N = 41,423)		Rest of Australia (N = 86,741)	
	n	%	n	%
Gender				
Female	22,177	76%	48,359	76%
Male	6,273	21%	14,094	22%
Intersex, Trans & Gender Diverse	794	3%	1,401	2%
Total	29,244	100%	63,854	100%
Unknown	12,179		22,887	
Age group				
5-12 years	3,256	12%	7,554	13%
13-18 years	15,430	56%	32,410	54%
19-25 years	9,101	33%	20,416	34%
Total	27,787	100%	60,380	100%
<26 but age unknown	13,636		26,361	
Cultural background²				
Aboriginal &/or Torres Strait Islander	409	4%	938	4%
CALD	4,443	40%	8,007	35%
Neither Aboriginal &/or Torres Strait Islander nor CALD	6,150	56%	13,992	61%
Total	11,002	100%	22,937	100%
Unknown	30,421		63,804	
Remoteness³				
Major Cities	16,026	80%	30,647	74%
Inner Regional	3,294	16%	7,098	17%
Outer Regional/Remote	766	4%	3,926	9%
Total	20,086	100%	41,671	100%
Unknown	21,337		45,070	
Medium				
Phone	28,158	68%	60,525	70%
WebChat	11,733	28%	23,589	27%
Email	1,532	4%	2,627	3%
Total	41,423	100%	86,741	100%
Type of help-seeking				
Counselling contact	18,681	45%	39,690	46%
Information/Referral/Other contact	22,742	55%	47,051	54%
Total	41,423	100%	86,741	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, 45% of contacts from NSW in 2018 were seeking counselling support while 55% were seeking information/referral or other forms of non-counselling support. NSW rates for these kinds of help-seeking were similar to the rest of Australia (46% and 54% respectively).

Demographic trends over time

Table 2 presents the characteristics of NSW 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 little systematic change in the demographic profile of NSW contacts over the last three years, though some minor exceptions include:
 - an increase in the proportion of contacts from gender diverse young people and a corresponding decrease in the proportion of contacts from males;
 - an increasing proportion of contacts from young people aged 19-25;
 - a decrease in the proportion of contacts from outer regional/remote locations, along with a corresponding increase in contacts from major city locations;
 - an increase in the proportion of contacts engaging with the service by WebChat and a corresponding decrease in those engaging by phone, and
 - an increase in the proportion of counselling contacts and a corresponding decrease in the proportion of information/referral contacts.

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

Contact characteristics		2016 (N = 56,905)		2017 (N = 45,187)		2018 (N=41,423)	
		n	%	n	%	%	n
Gender²							
	Female	23,646	69%	22,687	73%	22,177	76%
	Male	10,461	30%	7,761	25%	6,273	21%
	Intersex, Trans & Gender Diverse	346	1%	689	2%	794	3%
	Total	34,453	100%	31,137	100%	29,244	100%
	Unknown	22,452		14,050		12,179	
Age group							
	5-12 years	3,543	12%	3,550	13%	3,256	12%
	13-18 years	17,465	59%	15,855	56%	15,430	56%
	19-25 years	8,539	29%	8,801	31%	9,101	33%
	Total	29,547	100%	28,206	100%	27,787	100%
	<26 but age unknown	27,358		16,981		13,636	
Cultural background³							
	Aboriginal &/or Torres Strait Islander	651	5%	439	4%	409	4%
	CALD	5,179	39%	5,022	44%	4,443	40%
	Neither Aboriginal &/or Torres Strait Islander nor CALD	7,595	57%	6,077	53%	6,150	56%
	Total	13,425	100%	11,538	100%	11,002	100%
	Unknown	43,480		33,649		30,421	
Remoteness⁴							
	Major Cities	14,645	75%	14,937	78%	16,026	80%
	Inner Regional	3,841	20%	3,136	16%	3,294	16%
	Outer Regional/Remote	1,167	6%	1,004	5%	766	4%
	Total	19,653	100%	19,077	100%	20,086	100%
	Unknown	37,252		26,110		21,337	
Medium							
	Phone	46,476	82%	34,181	76%	28,158	68%
	WebChat	9,083	16%	9,678	21%	11,733	28%

Contact characteristics	2016 (N = 56,905)		2017 (N = 45,187)		2018 (N=41,423)	
	n	%	n	%	%	n
Email	1,346	2%	1,328	3%	1,532	4%
Total	56,905	100%	45,187	100%	41,423	100%
Type of help-seeking						
Counselling contact	18,407	32%	18,180	40%	18,681	45%
Information/Referral/Other contact	38,498	68%	27,007	60%	22,742	55%
Total	56,905	100%	45,187	100%	41,423	100%

I. 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.

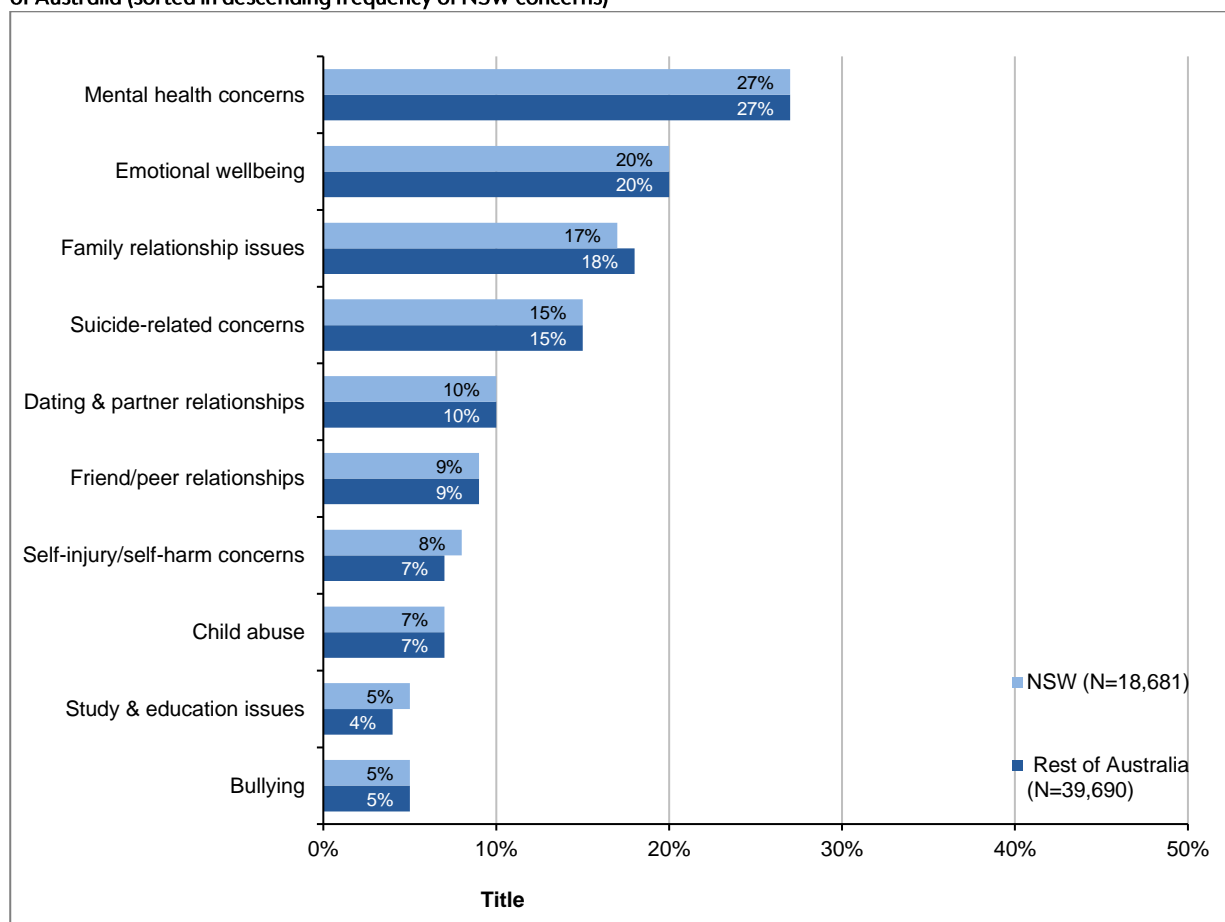
Most common concerns of children and young people who received counselling

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 help-seeking concerns of young Australians today.

NSW compared with rest of Australia

- State or territory information was available for 58,371 of these 67,264 counselling contacts and of this subset 18,681 (or 28%) were known to be from NSW.
- Figure 2 shows the 10 most common concerns of NSW counselling contacts in 2018 and compares these 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 children and young people in NSW sought help from Kids Helpline for all of these issues 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 – NSW compared with the rest of Australia (sorted in descending frequency of NSW concerns)¹



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

Sub-categories of main concerns

When counsellors record the concerns of children and young people during their conversations, they can record up to four different issues. For each of those issues there is a sub-category that counsellors can choose to represent, in more granular detail, the substance of the conversation or concern.

For each of the top 4 concerns (mental health, emotional wellbeing, family relationships and suicide-related concerns) the most frequently occurring sub-categories are the same in NSW as they are nationally; the sub-categories are:

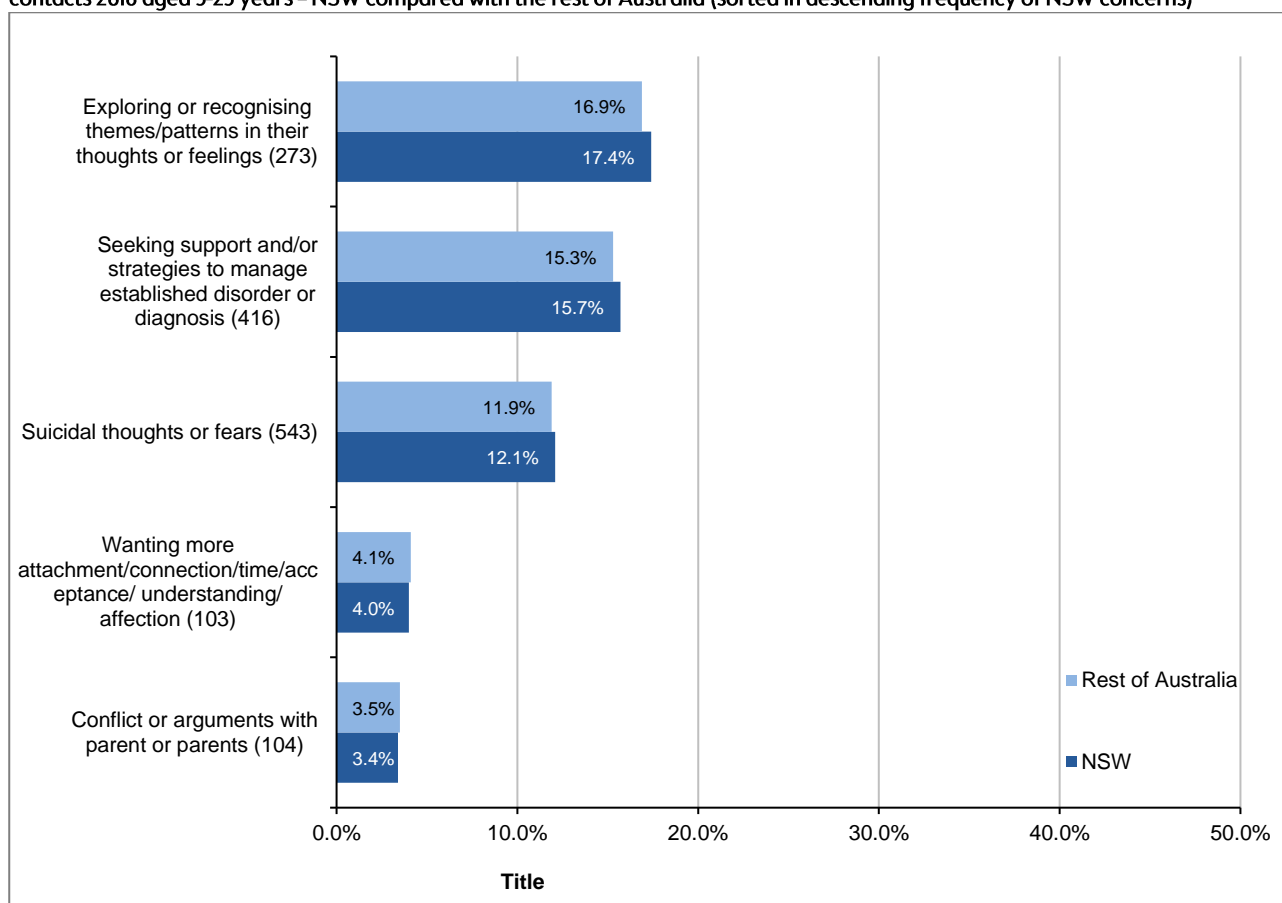
Mental health	Seeking support and/or strategies to manage established disorder or diagnosis (416) ¹
Emotional wellbeing	Exploring or recognising themes/patterns in their thoughts or feelings (273)
Family	Wanting more attachment/connection/time/acceptance/understanding/ affection (103)
Relationships ²	Conflict or arguments with parent or parents (104)
Suicide	Suicidal thoughts or fears (543)

¹ The numbers in brackets after each sub-category label uniquely identify each subcategory.

² Because for family relationships there are two almost equally frequently occurring sub-categories, but of these will be reported in the subsequent analyses.

Figure 3 shows that NSW contacts show the same relative frequency of occurrence of the most commonly occurring sub-categories within each of the four most commonly occurring main concerns.

Figure 3. Most frequently recorded sub-categories of the top four most frequently recorded concerns of Kids Helpline counselling contacts 2018 aged 5-25 years – NSW compared with the rest of Australia (sorted in descending frequency of NSW concerns)¹

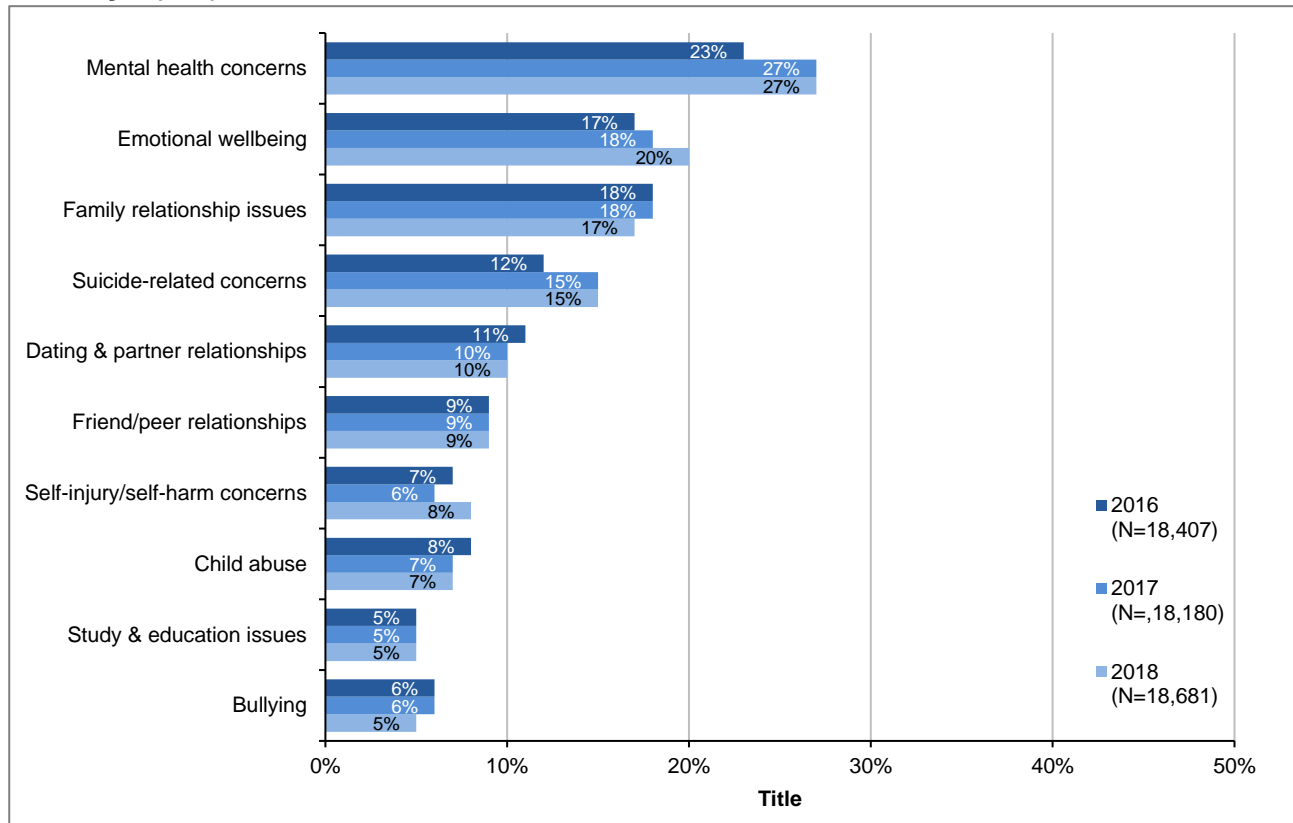


Trends over time

Figure 4 shows the 10 most common concerns of NSW counselling contacts in 2018 and compares this with the frequency with which these concerns were raised by NSW contacts in 2016 and 2017.

- The key observation to note from the data is that the frequency with which children and young people in NSW are contacting Kids Helpline about these various concerns has remained very consistent over the short-term, although mental-health-related contacts, emotional-wellbeing-related contacts, and suicide-related contacts appear in the short-term to be increasing.

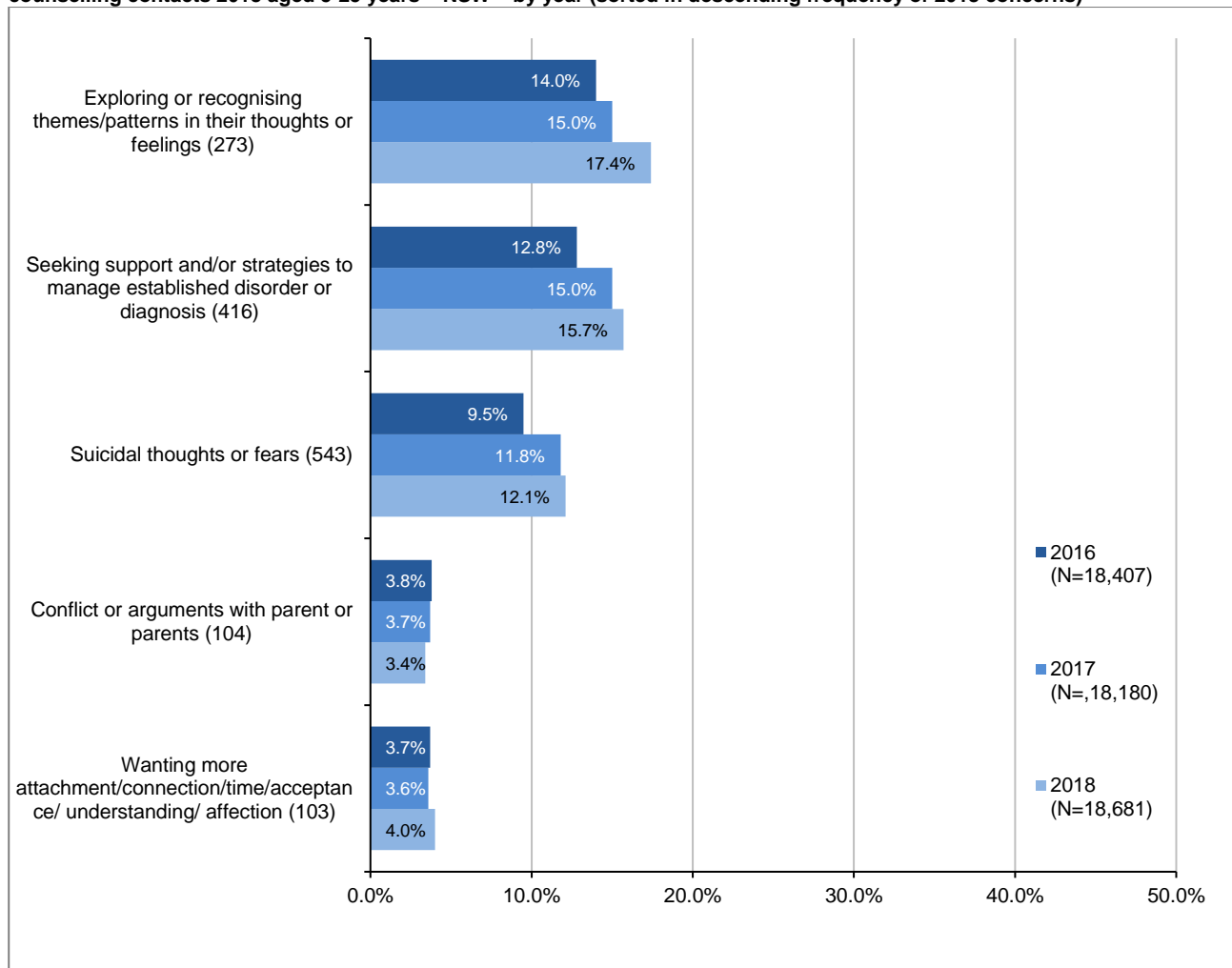
Figure 4. Most frequently recorded concerns of NSW Kids Helpline counselling contacts aged 5-25 years – by year (sorted in descending frequency of 2018 concerns)¹



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

For each of the sub-categories chosen for the more granular analysis of each of the top four most commonly occurring main concerns; analysis over time (Figure 5) shows that there is a degree of consistent growth in wellbeing (exploring patterns in thoughts or feelings), mental health (support for existing diagnoses) and suicidal thoughts and fears.

Figure 5. Most frequently recorded sub-categories of the top four most frequently recorded concerns of Kids Helpline counselling contacts 2018 aged 5-25 years – NSW – by year (sorted in descending frequency of 2018 concerns)¹



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 NSW 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 frequency with which children and young people in NSW are contacting Kids Helpline about all these different concerns and classes of concern is quite consistent over the short-term; and
- the one area that has experienced substantial change 2016-2018 is the mental health / emotional wellbeing class (increased 7.2 percentage points in that time - growth of 15% in raw N).

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

Concern and concern class	2016 (N = 18,407)		2017 (N = 18,180)		2018 (N=18,681)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Mental health & emotional wellbeing	9,703	52.7%	10,504	57.8%	11,189	59.9%
Mental health concerns	4,319	23.5%	4,880	26.8%	5,100	27.3%
Emotional wellbeing	3,092	16.8%	3,231	17.8%	3,722	19.9%
Suicide-related concerns	2,237	12.2%	2,690	14.8%	2,832	15.2%
Self-injury/self-harm concerns	1,215	6.6%	1,148	6.3%	1,411	7.6%
Loss and grief	574	3.1%	606	3.3%	572	3.1%
Friends, peers, partners & dating	3,580	19.4%	3,494	19.2%	3,473	18.6%
Dating and partner relationships	1,953	10.6%	1,899	10.4%	1,859	10.0%
Friends/peer relationships	1,708	9.3%	1,694	9.3%	1,693	9.1%
Family relationships	3,386	18.4%	3,237	17.8%	3,141	16.8%
Child-parent relationships	2,400	13.0%	2,276	12.0%	2,265	12.1%
Other family relationships	726	3.9%	757	4.2%	698	3.7%
Changing family structures	421	2.3%	376	2.1%	334	1.8%
Parenting own children	51	0.3%	38	0.2%	46	0.2%
Identity & self-concept	1,401	7.6%	1,374	7.6%	1,447	7.7%
Self-concept (global)	739	4.0%	731	4.0%	694	3.7%
Body image	182	1.0%	232	1.3%	241	1.3%
Sexual orientation	230	1.2%	164	0.9%	283	1.5%
Gender/sex identification	184	1.0%	163	0.9%	179	1.0%
Disability-related concerns	75	0.4%	78	0.4%	80	0.4%
Cultural identity	50	0.3%	47	0.3%	33	0.2%
Violence & abuse (non-family)	1,646	8.9%	1,573	8.7%	1,394	7.5%
Bullying - school related	882	4.8%	844	4.6%	810	4.3%
Bullying - other	162	0.9%	174	1.0%	130	0.7%
Sexual assault or abuse (non-family)	329	1.8%	307	1.7%	238	1.3%
Dating and partner violence	138	0.7%	126	0.7%	104	0.6%
Harassment and assault (non-sexual)	93	0.5%	94	0.5%	82	0.4%
Sexual harassment	72	0.4%	66	0.4%	67	0.4%
Child abuse & family violence	1,384	7.5%	1,354	7.4%	1,253	6.7%
Physical abuse	720	3.9%	645	3.5%	625	3.3%
Sexual abuse	243	1.3%	224	1.2%	206	1.1%
Emotional abuse	355	1.9%	414	2.3%	426	2.3%
Neglect of child	73	0.4%	68	0.4%	62	0.3%
Exploitation by family member	3	0.0%	8	0.0%	1	0.0%
Exposure to family violence	153	0.8%	163	0.9%	128	0.7%
Living-in-care issues	59	0.3%	82	0.5%	54	0.3%
School, education & work	1,283	7.0%	1,240	6.8%	1,281	6.9%
Study and education issues	897	4.9%	905	5.0%	891	4.8%
Employment issues	306	1.7%	279	1.5%	327	1.8%
School authority issues	105	0.6%	82	0.5%	91	0.5%
Physical or sexual health & development	914	5.0%	860	4.7%	797	4.3%
Physical health concerns	433	2.4%	436	2.4%	405	2.2%
Pregnancy-related concerns	228	1.2%	186	1.0%	171	0.9%
Sexual activity	213	1.2%	210	1.2%	191	1.0%
Physical/sexual development	28	0.2%	26	0.1%	25	0.1%
Contraception/safe sex	35	0.2%	22	0.1%	13	0.1%
Homelessness & basic needs assistance	530	2.9%	372	2.0%	350	1.9%
Homelessness	286	1.6%	188	1.0%	159	0.9%
Practical/material assistance	203	1.1%	140	0.8%	138	0.7%
Financial assistance/concerns	57	0.3%	52	0.3%	60	0.3%
Substance use, addictions & risk-taking	426	2.3%	333	1.8%	342	1.8%
Drug use	242	1.3%	190	1.0%	194	1.0%
Alcohol use	116	0.6%	105	0.6%	114	0.6%
Addictive behaviours (not drugs/alcohol)	65	0.4%	43	0.2%	39	0.2%
Physical risk-taking	5	0.0%	12	0.1%	10	0.1%
Gang/cult involvement	14	0.1%	4	0.0%	3	0.0%
Offending, abusive or violent actions	177	1.0%	159	0.9%	150	0.8%
Illegal/offending behaviour	93	0.5%	81	0.4%	95	0.5%
Abusive or violent actions	77	0.4%	65	0.4%	53	0.3%
Sexual violence/offending actions	12	0.1%	13	0.1%	6	0.0%

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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24/7

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

