

Kids Helpline Insights 2015



Insights
Into Young
People in
Australia

PROTECTING AUSSIE KIDS

KHL plays a critical role in protecting children and young people across Australia. We:

- > Give children and young people choices, support and someone to listen any time and for any reason
- > Partner with protection agencies, the corporate sector and educators to ensure the most vulnerable can access help
- > Respond to the changing needs of children and young people by finding new ways of being there 24/7

About Kids Helpline

Kids Helpline (KHL) celebrates its 25th Birthday in 2016. In that time, we have responded to more than 7.5 million contacts.

KHL is Australia's only free, private and confidential 24/7 phone and online counselling service for young people aged 5 to 25.

We're here to help young people in Australia to express themselves, build confidence and live safely. Kids chat with tertiary qualified counsellors.

CONNECTING WITH KIDS

We respond to kids in a number of ways:

Direct Contacts

4,035

counsellor contacts every week via:

- > PHONE
- > WEBCHAT¹
- > EMAIL

Indirect Contacts

1,385

unique visitors to the Kids Helpline website every day

Virtual Contacts

17,211

primary school students participated in video linkup class sessions in 2015.

¹ WebChat Counselling is open between 8:00am and 12:00pm (EST) seven days a week.

KHL is a service of yourtown (formally BoysTown) and is 72% funded by the community through yourtown Art Union ticket sales, donations and corporate support. Governments fund 28%.

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What young people say about Kids Helpline

KHL asks children and young people about what they think about KHL via an annual survey. A total of 285 children and young people responded to the 2015 survey. Feedback included:

I THOUGHT I WAS UGLY AND FAT EVEN WHEN PEOPLE SAID I WAS BEAUTIFUL...

"I looked at myself in the mirror everyday looking at my weight and how I did my hair and how I looked. I was late for school every day cause I was too focused on getting myself perfect and everyone thought I was beautiful and skinny but I didn't see it. Kids Helpline have helped me by teaching me how to like the way I look and they also said no one is perfect. Thank you Kids Helpline." 14 YEAR OLD GIRL

3 out of 4 (75%) of the 261 who had accessed counselling had more ideas for dealing with their problems after speaking with KHL

2 out of 3 (69%) felt more capable of dealing with their problems after speaking with KHL

93% would recommend KHL to a friend

3 out of 5 (59%) had more ideas for dealing with their problems after reading 'Tips & Info' on the KHL website

Introduction Celebrating 25 years of Kids Helpline

yourtown is proud to present Kids Helpline Insights 2015. We believe it provides invaluable insights into the key issues affecting young people in Australia. This year, we are also immensely proud to be celebrating 25 years of the service.

KHL was created to give children and young people somewhere to turn when they needed help—particularly in relation to concerns such as abuse and neglect. Opening on 25 March 1991, more than 3,200 young people called us on our first day. The issues at that time included relationships, child abuse and family violence, and teen pregnancy.

Over the years we have made remarkable achievements and seen changes in why kids contact us but also in how they do this. In 1991, the Internet did not exist the way we think of it today. In 2000, we were world leaders establishing the first real-time web counselling service. Today, we respond to thousands of contacts via chat and email and our website provides a wealth of information to children, young people and adults about key issues affecting young people. We also talk to classrooms across Australia via video conferencing. At the same time, cybersafety and online bullying has become a new issue of concern for young people internationally. Mental health and emotional wellbeing is now the number one reason why children and young people contact us for counselling.

It's important that the voice of young people: their needs, concerns and aspirations, are heard by the Australian community. Since day one, we have had a very strong advocacy agenda. Our ability to capture the demographics and other non-identifying data about many of those who contact us has been an important part of this.

This information has enabled us to pinpoint key issues affecting children and young people nationally, and inform social policy and our own research strategies and initiatives aimed at strengthening our future community.

Our services are ever evolving to meet the contemporary needs of children and young people in response to what we know both from what they tell us and research done in partnership with universities and others dedicated to the wellbeing of young people. Along with data about our 2015 year, **Kids Helpline Insights 2015** talks about some of our current research initiatives and innovations. It also includes a brief snapshot of contacts to KHL over the decades, presenting unsurpassed access to information about the counselling and support needs of children and young people.

Kids Helpline Insights 2015 is supported by the **Kids Helpline Insights 2015—National Statistical Overview**, which provides extensive data about the issues affecting children and young people in 2015, as well as regional based **State and Territory Reports**. These reports and information about the collection, analysis and interpretation of data used can be accessed at www.kidshelpline.com.au/reports

Despite changes to KHL over the years we have maintained our promise to children and young people to be there for them 24/7 for any reason. KHL is 72% funded by the community—the generosity of our Art Union ticket buyers, donors and corporate supporters. With this support, we will continue to be there to care and listen 24/7.

TRACY ADAMS
CEO
yourtown

Tracy Adams



Kids Helpline

Key Insights 2015

We give children and young people choices, support and someone to listen any time and for any reason.

Counsellors respond to over 4,000 contacts each week from children and young people seeking information, support or counselling.

HOW MANY CONTACTS DID WE RECEIVE?

-  **350,117** ATTEMPTS TO CONTACT THE COUNSELLING SERVICE WITH **209,803** ANSWERED¹
-  **720,007** UNIQUE VISITORS TO THE KIDS HELPLINE WEBSITE WITH **2,714,829** PAGE VIEWS

WHY DID THEY CONTACT US?

Kids talk to us about everything and anything. They call us when they are lonely or to chat about their school day through to issues like relationship breakdowns, cybersafety, bullying, sexual abuse, homelessness, suicidal thoughts, and drug and alcohol use.

Out of the **205,286** contacts we answered from children and young people aged 5–25 years in 2015:

- 135,076** (66%) were seeking information, referral or other support, while
- 70,210** (34%) were seeking help with a particular issue (i.e. counselling support)

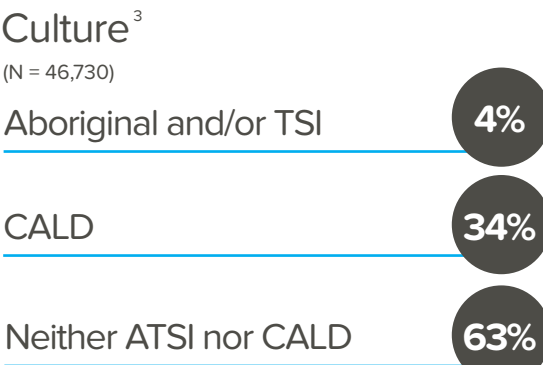
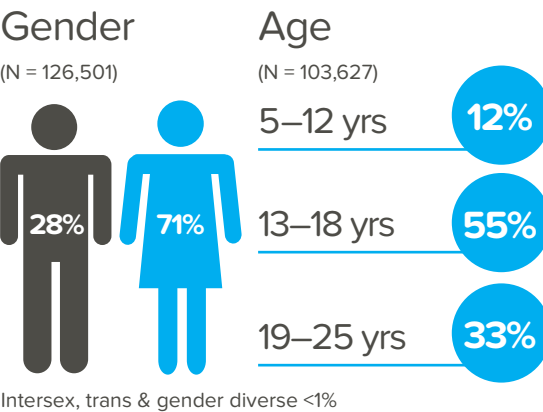
WHAT DID THEY WANT HELP WITH?

Children and young people contact KHL for counselling about a very wide range of issues in their lives. Sometimes they contact us about a number of issues in a single session.

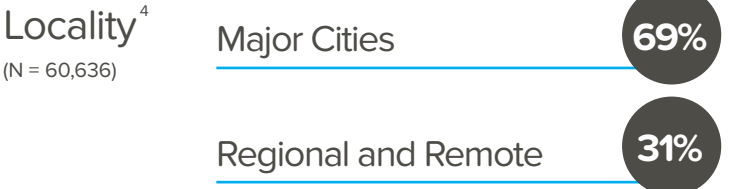
5 MOST COMMON REASONS KIDS SEEK COUNSELLING²

1. MENTAL HEALTH **22%**
2. FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS **19%**
3. EMOTIONAL WELLBEING **18%**
4. SUICIDE-RELATED **11%**
5. DATING AND PARTNER RELATIONSHIPS **11%**

WHO CONTACTED US?²



WHERE DID THEY COME FROM?



VIRTUAL LINKUP

17,211 PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS PARTICIPATED IN VIDEO LINKUP CLASS SESSIONS WITH A COUNSELLOR⁵

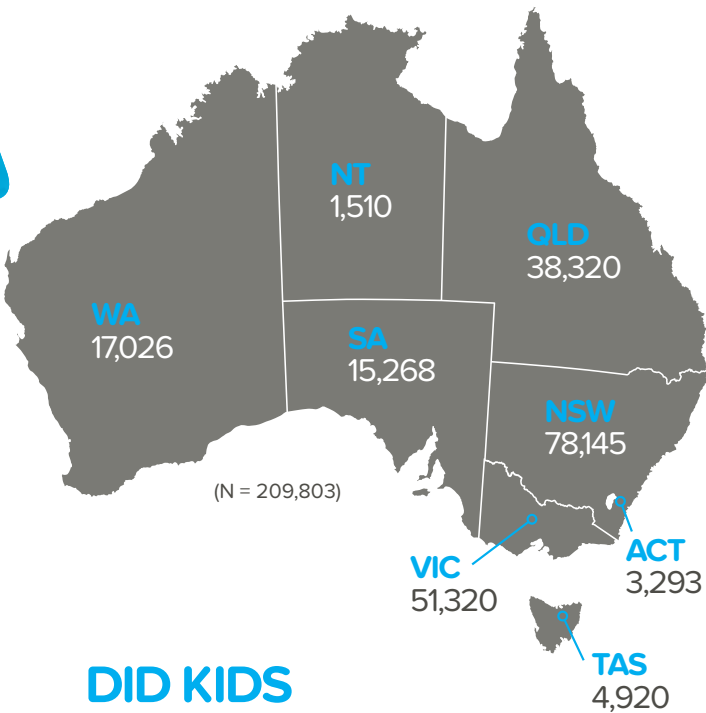
DUTY OF CARE INTERVENTIONS⁶

1,720 ACTIONS WERE INITIATED BY KIDS HELPLINE TO PROTECT YOUNG PEOPLE FROM SIGNIFICANT HARM

- > 39% were about **child abuse**
- > 33% related to a **suicide attempt**
Other issues included drug overdose, mental illness escalation, self injury and sexual assault
- > 12% **increase** in the number of Duty of Care interventions from 2013–2015

JUST OVER **1 IN 5** COUNSELLING CONTACTS WERE ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

JUST LESS THAN **1 IN 5** COUNSELLING CONTACTS WERE ABOUT FAMILY RELATIONSHIP ISSUES OR EMOTIONAL WELLBEING CONCERNS



DID KIDS HELPLINE HELP?

2 OUT OF 3 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SURVEYED FELT MORE CAPABLE OF DEALING WITH THEIR PROBLEMS AFTER SPEAKING WITH A KHL COUNSELLOR

93% OF THOSE SURVEYED WOULD RECOMMEND KHL TO A FRIEND

¹ Contextual data was recorded for 208,027 of answered contacts. Of these, 205,286 were aged 5–25 years with 70,210 requiring counselling. 135,076 contacts were seeking information, referral or other support.
² Where information was known. Refers to counselling contacts aged 5–25 years. Percentages have been rounded.
³ TSI = Torres Strait Islander. CALD = culturally and linguistically diverse. ATSI = Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.
⁴ Remoteness categories are adapted from the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). See the 'Kids Helpline Insights 2015: Statistical Overview' for more information.
⁵ Supported by Optus.
⁶ Where Kids Helpline contacted other agencies to protect children and young people. Multiple reasons can be recorded for each Duty of Care action.

Looking at the big issues—advocating for young people in Australia

Kids Helpline believes it is important that the voice of young people—their needs, concerns and aspirations—is heard by the Australian community.

What we learn through KHL and other **yourtown** services helps us advocate with governments and the community for change that bolsters the quality of life for children and young people.

Suicide and domestic and family violence are serious issues that affect many children and young people in Australia today. Often these social problems are not understood well from the perspective of children and young people, and policy responses are developed without taking into account these important insights.

Over the last year, KHL has been working to give voice to children and young people's experiences of these issues and improve policy responses.

IMPROVING RESPONSES TO YOUTH SUICIDE

KHL has initiated a consultation to focus a spotlight on the unique experiences of young people encountering suicidal behaviours and aid the development of a systematic and effective response to this issue.

The pathways to suicide for children and young people are not the same as for adults and as a result their specific needs are different. Children and teens are not just small adults. The predisposing risks for children and young people in relation to suicide—like the quality of school life, the importance of peer

relationships and their experiences of bullying—are often very different to those experienced by adults. Different experiences means different approaches are needed to reduce suicidal behaviour amongst young people.

In 2015, KHL published a Discussion Paper that draws together findings from contemporary research in relation to preventing youth suicide. It also initiated a national consultation with children and young people experiencing suicidal thoughts and engaging in suicidal behaviours via an online survey. The survey provided a unique opportunity for children and young people to voice their views and preferences about how they want to be engaged with and assisted in relation to suicide.

The outcome of this work will identify key strategies based on contemporary research and the voice of young people to reduce the incidence of youth suicide in Australia. KHL will then advocate with Government and the general community for the implementation of these strategies.

IMPACT OF DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN

The National Children's Commissioner asked KHL to contribute to her inquiry into the impact of domestic and family violence on children.

The resulting analysis of contacts to KHL revealed that children and young people living with DFV often experienced fears about their own personal safety, their siblings' safety, and for the safety of the victim of abuse. They also experienced isolation and loneliness, and confused feelings about the perpetrator (e.g. experiencing both anger and love for a violent parent). KHL highlighted the need for greater access to therapeutic programs for children and young people impacted by family and domestic violence.

The KHL analysis informed the Commissioner's final recommendations for actions needed to respond to domestic and family violence.

Partnering to protect

We partner with protection agencies, the corporate sector and educators to ensure the most vulnerable can access help.

We work closely with child protection authorities in every state and territory to inform social policy and ensure that our interventions will continue to keep children and young people safe.

CRISIS RESPONSES

We work with emergency services and specialist mental health and child protection services to protect children and young people experiencing or at imminent risk of significant harm.

- > **1,720** emergency care actions (Duty of Care) were initiated by KHL to protect children and young people from immediate harm e.g. contacting the Police, Ambulance or other agency
- > Child abuse was the number one reason for initiating a Duty of Care action in 2015

Queensland Police and Homeless Persons partnership

We work with the Queensland Police Service to provide outreach support to children and young people referred for support or counselling by the service.

We also have an active partnership with Homeless Persons Information QLD to enable children and young people experiencing homelessness to receive priority access to telephone counselling.

Thirty (30%) of contacts to counsellors were referred to other agencies for additional support or crisis responses

REFERRAL TO OTHER SUPPORT

10% were to a specific service for further support

14% were to a generalist service or practitioner e.g. doctor, school/guidance counsellor

A further **6%** needing additional assistance could not be referred because either no appropriate service was available or the client finished the session before the referral could occur

Child abuse

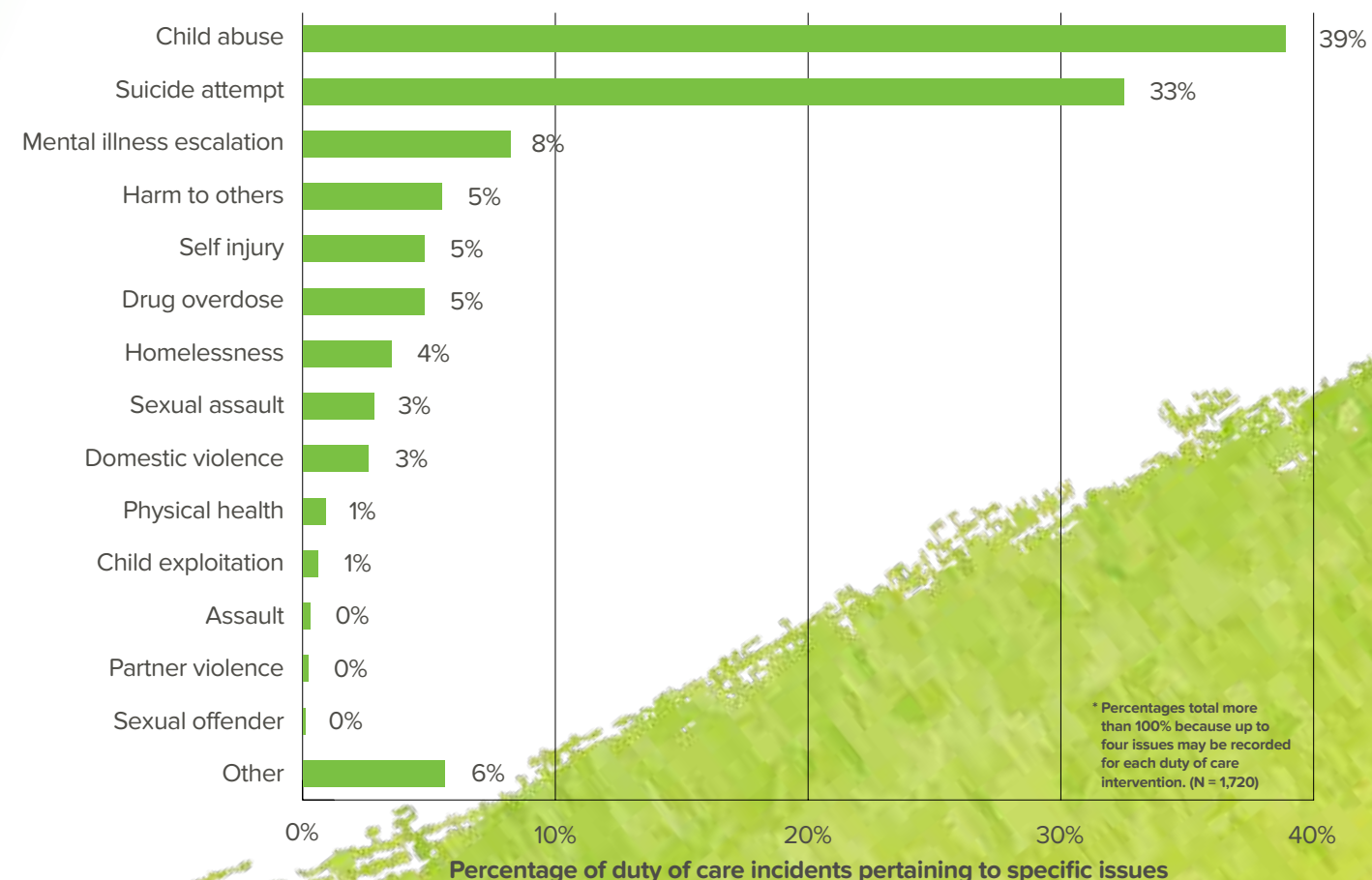
In 2015, KHL responded to around 100 contacts per week (5,147 over the year) from children and young people with concerns about child abuse, including family and domestic violence. Of these:

66% WERE EITHER EXPERIENCING CURRENT ABUSE OR WERE AT RISK OF ABUSE

11% WERE CONCERNED ABOUT ABUSE OF ANOTHER PERSON

THERE HAS BEEN A 12% INCREASE IN THE PROPORTION OF DUTY OF CARE INTERVENTIONS ABOUT CHILD ABUSE SINCE 2013

REASONS WHY KIDS HELPLINE COUNSELLORS INITIATED EMERGENCY CARE (DUTY OF CARE) INTERVENTIONS 2015



ABUSE IS HARD TO LIVE WITH, NOW I THINK ABOUT IT, I BLOCKED IT OUT...

"I thought that it was normal but I grew to realise that it wasn't ok. At the age of 15 my family was falling apart and I tried sharing it with my two closest friends and instead of being there for me they decided to tell the rest of the school. I shut down, I didn't go to school unless I was forced to. I started self harming and stealing alcohol from my mother's cupboard and at the age of 16, I started smoking pot.

Then I met a girl who was a little older and she made me realise that I didn't need it to be happy. I didn't need to see my past as a negative. I needed to heal and move on. I needed to show that I was stronger. She showed me she cared about what I had to say.

And I think that is why Kids Helpline is so important. It shows that someone cares. If I had a chance earlier to talk to someone I would have, because all you need is for someone to listen. I wanna help kids and if just writing this helps, so be it." **16 YEAR OLD BOY**

Partnering to protect cont'd...

“IT WAS HELPFUL BECAUSE I CAN BE REALLY SHY AT TIMES AND YOU GUYS (HELPED ME) SORT OF COME OUT OF MY SHELL AND TO BE MORE CONFIDENT.” STUDENT

KIDS HELPLINE @ SCHOOL

Kids Helpline @ School (KAS) aims to build children's resilience, coping strategies, mental health literacy and knowledge about where to go for help.

KAS is an innovative partnership between Optus and KHL that brings professional counsellors into primary school classrooms via video technology nationally. It is part of KHL's commitment to protect children by providing intervention and education about key issues affecting them.

Our counsellors talk with classes in real time about issues that commonly cause problems for children. These include bullying, staying safe online, cyberbullying, transitioning to high school, friendships and feeling sad.

All topics discussed with students contain elements relating to the digital world and online safety, aligned with the Federal e-Safety Commission's messages to children.

Since the program commenced in 2013, KHL has seen an increase in contacts from primary school aged children (from 8% in 2013 to 12% in 2015) suggesting that more children have knowledge of KHL and have the confidence and trust to contact the service when they need help.



Kids Helpline @ School winner in national child protection awards

Kids Helpline @ School (KAS) was recognised by the National Association for Prevention of Child Protection Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN) 'Play Your Part' awards 2015.

The awards recognise organisations that have played their part to prevent child abuse and neglect through promoting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in Australia.

KAS received the award as an inspiring example of collaboration between the private (Optus), NGO (Kids Helpline) and public sector (schools) to not only promote the safety and wellbeing of children through prevention and early intervention, but also provide support to children that was inclusive and engaging.



TOP 5 KIDS HELPLINE @ SCHOOL SESSION TOPICS 2015

1. DEVELOPING RESILIENCE 20%
2. INTRODUCTION TO KIDS HELPLINE 14%
3. FRIENDSHIP 14%
4. TRANSITION TO HIGH SCHOOL 12%
5. ONLINE SAFETY 11%

“STUDENTS ARE MORE AWARE OF THE EFFECTS OF BULLYING AND THE PSYCHOLOGICAL UNDERLYING ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH SOCIAL PRESSURES AND ATTACKS. THEY FEEL MORE RESPONSIBILITY TO REPORT AND DISCUSS ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS THEMSELVES AND OTHERS.” TEACHER



Teachers made substantial use of educational material uploaded to the KAS micro-website, with 10,201 views of the KAS landing page.

Who we helped in 2015

175 schools throughout Australia



17,211 primary school students



What teachers and students said about Kids Helpline @ School

- > 89% of students said they had more ideas about how to deal with the issue discussed
- > 87% of students said they would consider contacting KHL if they had a problem
- > 91% of teachers said the sessions improved their students' understanding of the topic discussed
- > 96% of teachers said they would recommend the program to other teachers and schools

Partnering to protect cont'd...

e-Safety partnership

Cybersafety is one of the fastest growing concerns of children and young people. KHL is working with the National Children's e-Safety Commissioner to help children and young people stay safe online.

The Office refers cyberbullying-related contacts to KHL for the provision of counselling and support for young people experiencing issues arising from their online interactions. KHL Counsellors can also support young people in making a complaint via the e-Safety website (esafety.gov.au).

The partnership includes funding for KHL to provide an online helpline service to young people who have experienced cybersafety issues, including bullying. e-Safety has also provided KHL counsellors with specialist training in cybersafety issues.

The e-Safety website was the top referring website to KHL in 2015 with over 8,300 referrals to the KHL site.



Office of the
Children's
eSafety
Commissioner

I WAS CYBERBULLIED BY A GIRL I USED TO CALL MY BEST FRIEND OR MY SISTER...

"She made me feel bad in any way possible. She turned everyone against me and everyone I used to be able to call my friends suddenly became my enemies! I went into depression and hated my life and wanted to kill myself. I didn't go to my counsellor at school because like most 13 year olds I didn't wanna be a p***y. When I finally did go to my counsellor she helped me and made me feel good. She also told me about Kids Helpline. At first I thought Kids Helpline was a waste of time but when I finally did make the call I felt so much better with myself and the situation!

Thanks to Kids Helpline and the support of my family and counsellor, I finally had the courage to stand up for myself, and now looking back I think I had made myself suffer when all I had to do was tell someone!!" 13 YEAR OLD GIRL



CLOSE TO 11,000 REFERRALS CAME FROM EXTERNAL CYBERSAFETY AND ANTI-BULLYING WEBSITES.

NRL State of Mind campaign

Mental health is the number one concern of children and young people contacting KHL with one in five counselling contacts needing help about this issue.

KHL has been a national partner of the National Rugby League (NRL) State of Mind Campaign, bringing together Australia's key mental health service providers to help break down mental health stereotypes and stigmas.

Other partners include Black Dog, headspace and Lifeline.



Working with parents

yourtown's Parentline service enhances the safety and wellbeing of children and young people by educating, guiding and supporting parents and carers to enrich their parenting strategies and skills.

Parentline operates in Queensland and the Northern Territory in partnership with the State and Territory governments.

In 2015, the service responded to **9,505** contacts from parents, carers and other adults who care for children and young people. Of these, **7,049** required counselling support.

- > 15% were about challenging behaviour/discipline issues
- > 10% were about their child's mental and emotional health
- > 4% had child abuse concerns
- > 3% were concerned about the drug or alcohol use of their child
- > 1% were calling to discuss concerns with domestic violence,
- > <1% were concerned about risk-taking/suicide of child

Parentline counsellors are also KHL counsellors with a wealth of exposure to the issues facing young people. Knowledge gained through these services provides counsellors with a unique understanding of the issues facing both parents and their children. A survey of Parentline callers in 2015 found that almost four out of five (78%) of those surveyed had increased parenting strategies and skills after talking to a counsellor.

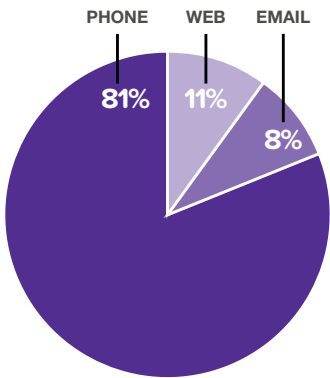
How We Were Contacted

We respond to children and young people’s communication preferences by providing a growing range of options for kids to engage with us.

These include phone, email, website (WebChat) counselling and optimising our website and WebChat for access via mobile devices. We also provide a wide range of content for independent help-seeking on our website.

MEDIUM OF CONTACT 2015

(N = 209,803)



DIRECT CONTACTS WITH THE KIDS HELPLINE COUNSELLING AND SUPPORT SERVICE 2015



EVERY **90 SECONDS** A YOUNG PERSON CONTACTS KHL



THERE WERE **350,117** ATTEMPTS TO CONTACT THE COUNSELLING AND SUPPORT SERVICE VIA PHONE, WEBCHAT AND EMAIL WITH **209,803** ANSWERED

INDIRECT CONTACTS WITH KIDS HELPLINE

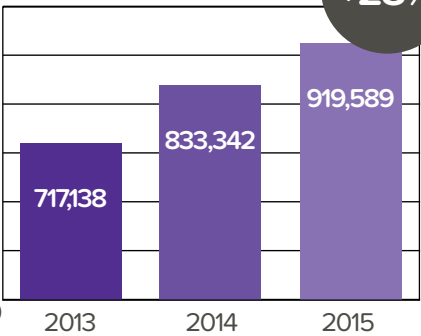
1,385
unique visitors to the KHL website every day

KIDS HELPLINE WEBSITE DEMAND 2013–15

● % CHANGE 2013–2015

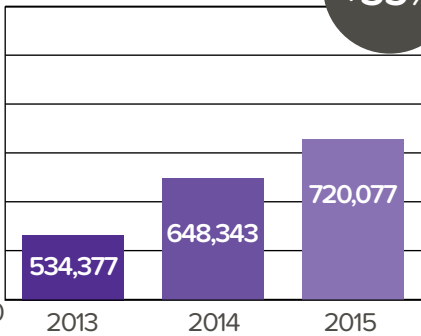
Visitor Sessions

+28%



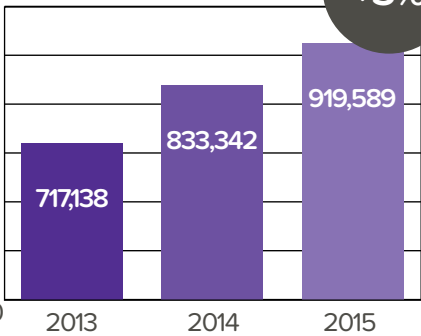
Unique (Individual) Visitors

+35%



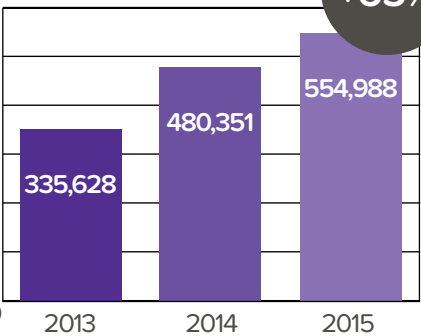
Page Views (All Pages)

+3%



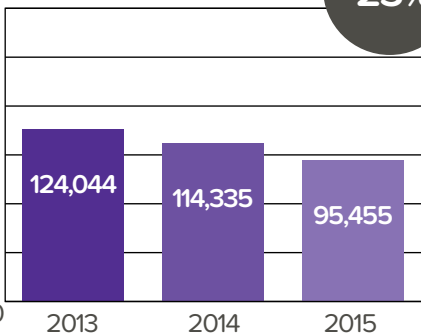
Page Views of 'Tips & Info'

+65%



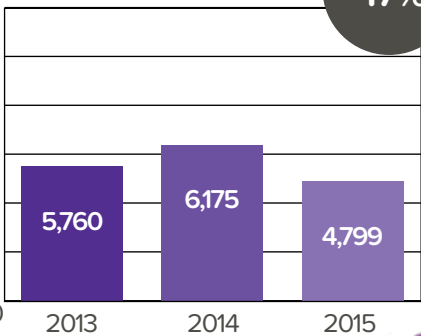
Page Views of 'Your Stories'

-23%



Uses of 'Search for a Service' Function

-17%



1. Data courtesy of Google Analytics.
2. In 2013, Google Analytics generated data on the basis of a sample of 91% of sessions in 2013.
3. Due to technical difficulties with Google Analytics, website activity was not recorded between 1–11 October 2015. Accordingly, all website activity measures for 2015 will be undercounts. This will also affect the % change from 2013 to 2015 calculated in the far right-hand side column.

WEBSITE SELF-HELP TOOLS

Tips & Info for 'kids', 'teens' and 'parents and carers' developed by clinical staff and researchers aim to provide age relevant information and strategies about topical issues affecting children and young people.

Staying Safe Online was the most popular Kids Tips & Info topic viewed in 2015.

- > **Kids:** 45 'Kids' topics were targeted at children aged under 13 years
- > **Teens:** 51 'Teens' topics were available
- > **Parents and carers:** 41 topics were targeted at parents, guardians, teachers and other significant adults in children's lives

Your Stories are experiences children and young people share about their contact with KHL.

The **Search for a Service** function enables website users to look for services dedicated to specific issues via KHL's referral database.

INCREASE IN WEBSITE CONTENT USE SINCE 2013, THERE HAS BEEN A :

35%

Increase in unique visitors to the KHL website

65%

Increase in Tips & Info page views

79%

Increase in Teen Tips & Info page views



Top 5 Reasons Kids and Young People Contacted us for Counselling

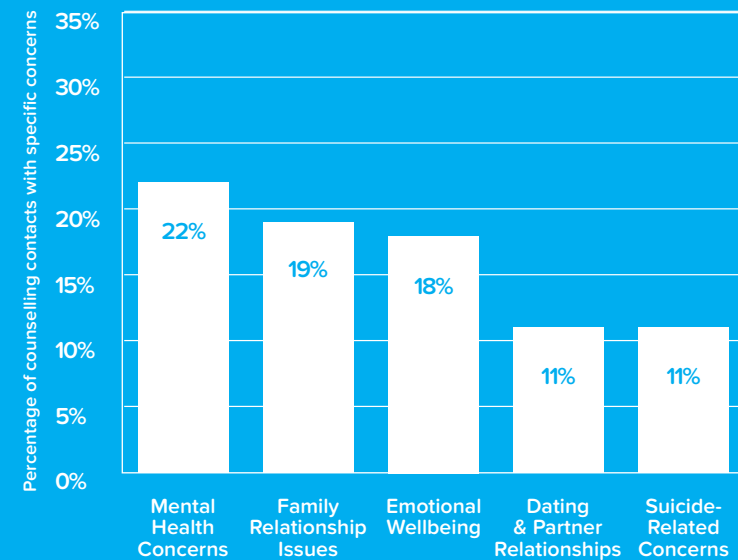
The reasons why we are contacted for counselling are diverse with over 50 different concern types recorded by our counsellors. The reasons kids contact us for help varies according to their age group. The most common concerns for which children and young people seek counselling are outlined below.

MENTAL HEALTH THE TOP CONCERN

MENTAL HEALTH WAS THE MOST COMMON CONCERN OF COUNSELLING CONTACTS IN 2015.

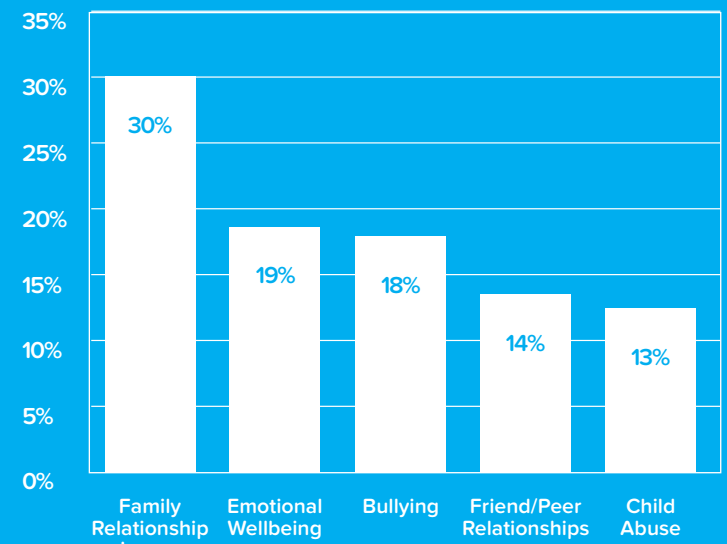
- > Half (50%) of contacts who received counselling for mental health issues asked for support or strategies to manage an established disorder
- > Almost two fifths (38%) presented with symptoms of an undiagnosed mental health condition
- > 7% were concerned about another person's mental health

▶ TOP 5 CONCERNS OF ALL KIDS HELPLINE COUNSELLING CONTACTS AGED 5–25 YEARS 2015



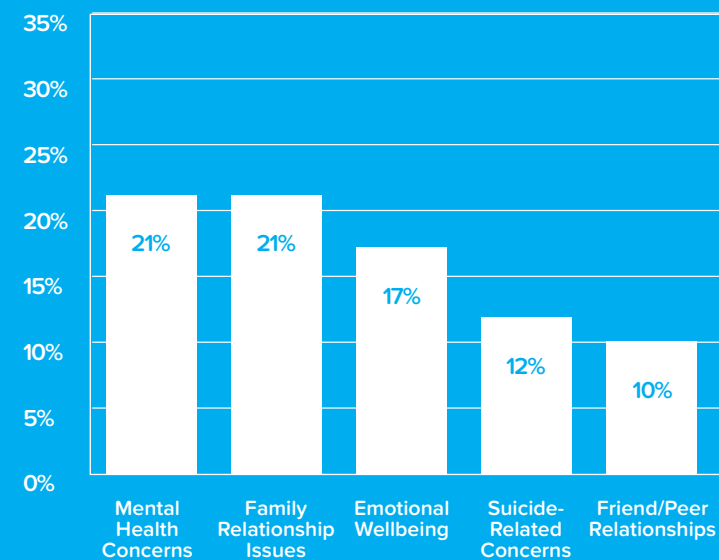
Percentages total more than 100% because up to four issues may be recorded for each contact. (N = 70,210)

▶ TOP 5 CONCERNS OF KIDS HELPLINE COUNSELLING CONTACTS AGED 5–12 YEARS 2015



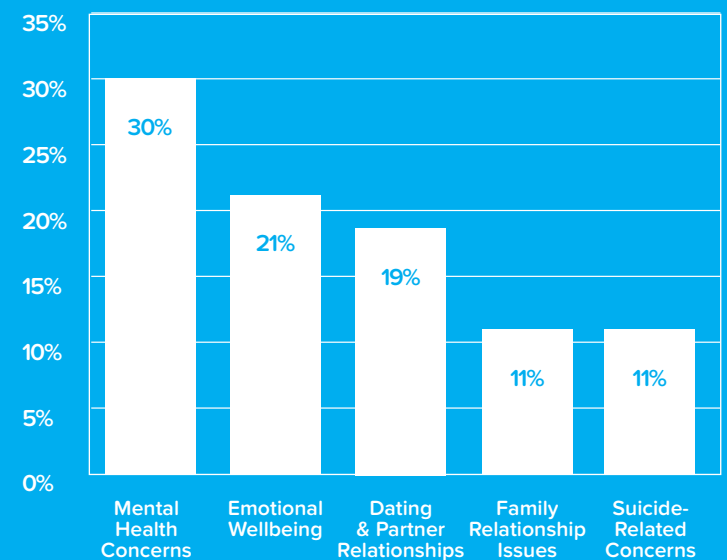
Percentages total more than 100% because up to four issues may be recorded for each contact. (N = 8,150)

▶ TOP 5 CONCERNS OF KIDS HELPLINE COUNSELLING CONTACTS AGED 13–18 YEARS 2015

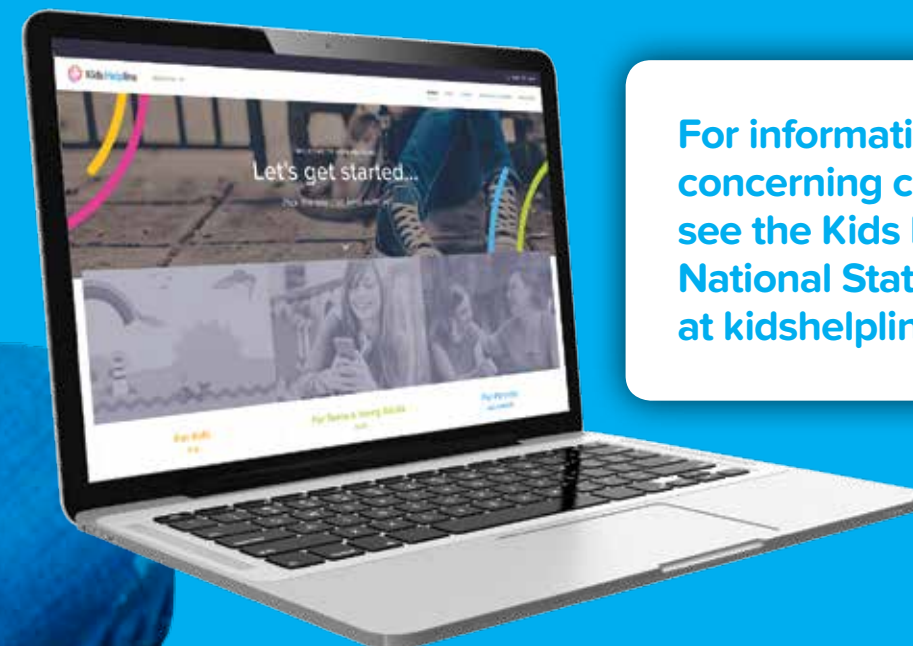


Percentages total more than 100% because up to four issues may be recorded for each contact. (N = 38,021)

▶ TOP 5 CONCERNS OF KIDS HELPLINE COUNSELLING CONTACTS AGED 19–25 YEARS 2015



Percentages total more than 100% because up to four issues may be recorded for each contact. (N = 17,693)



For information about other issues concerning children and young people, see the Kids Helpline Insights 2015: National Statistical Overview available at kidshelpline.com.au/reports

25 years of Kids Helpline

KHL celebrates its 25th birthday in 2016. Below is a snapshot of the counselling needs of children and young people over the last 25 years.

Key insights over 25 years

“DESPITE CHANGES TO KHL OVER THE YEARS WE HAVE MAINTAINED OUR PROMISE TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE THERE FOR THEM 24/7 AND FOR ANY REASON.”

TRACY ADAMS, CEO

For 25 years, every 1.7 minutes of every day, Kids Helpline has answered a call for help.

HOW MANY CONTACTS DID WE RECEIVE OVER 25 YEARS?¹



KHL RESPONDED TO MORE THAN **7.5 MILLION (7,533,821)** CONTACTS FROM CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE



28% (2,096,046) WERE SEEKING COUNSELLING SUPPORT



72% (5,437,775) WERE SEEKING INFORMATION, REFERRAL OR OTHER SUPPORT

CHANGES IN MOST COMMON CONCERNS OVER 20 YEARS^{1,2,3}

- > **626%** increase in contacts about **mental health &/or emotional health, including self-injury**
- > **246%** increase in contacts about **suicide**
- > **58%** increase in contacts about **study and/or education issues**



- > **89%** decrease in contacts about **contraception and safe sex**
- > **81%** decrease in contacts about **pregnancy**
- > **59%** decrease in contacts about **peer relationships**



Change in number of Kids Helpline counselling contacts aged 5–25 years—1996–2015 in 5 year intervals^{1,2,3}

Main concern of counselling contact	Number of contacts with this main concern by 5-year periods				% change from 1996–2000 to 2011–2015
	1996–2000	2001–2005	2006–2010	2011–2015	
Mental &/or emotional health/illness incl. self-injury	15,361	43,924	70,760	111,529	626%
Family relationships	71,950	67,587	45,985	48,432	-33%
Peer relationships	63,228	61,015	27,151	26,207	-59%
Partner relationships incl. partner violence	44,552	38,283	24,168	31,359	-30%
Child abuse &/or family/domestic violence	29,911	20,032	14,512	16,433	-45%
Bullying	24,614	27,713	12,066	13,780	-44%
Suicide	8,014	10,618	10,616	27,689	246%
Self-concept	15,458	12,802	8,227	14,585	-6%
Pregnancy	20,645	13,792	5,925	4,000	-81%
Grief &/or loss	11,329	11,372	7,456	8,322	-27%
Drug/alcohol use	16,057	11,273	4,921	3,981	-75%
Physical health issues	10,454	8,909	6,155	6,770	-35%
Study &/or education issues	5,983	6,661	5,441	9,424	58%
Contraception/safe sex	5,100	3,447	921	550	-89%

1. Counts of counselling contacts with these 14 continuous concern categories sum to 1,247,449 which comprises 85% of counselling contacts received from mid-1996 to 2015 N = 1,459,247.
2. Total counselling contacts per five-year period are as follows: N(1996–2000) = 433,481; N(2001–2005) = 400,612; N(2006–2010) = 276,808; N(2011–2015) = 348,346.
3. This data type was not collected from 1991–1995. More information about data collection can be found in the ‘Kids Helpline Insights 2015: National Statistical Overview’.

WHY DID MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE CONTACTS INCREASE?

It may seem logical to conclude from this data that there has been an explosion in mental health and suicide concerns over the last two decades. While there may be genuine increases in these needs, other factors have contributed to these results.

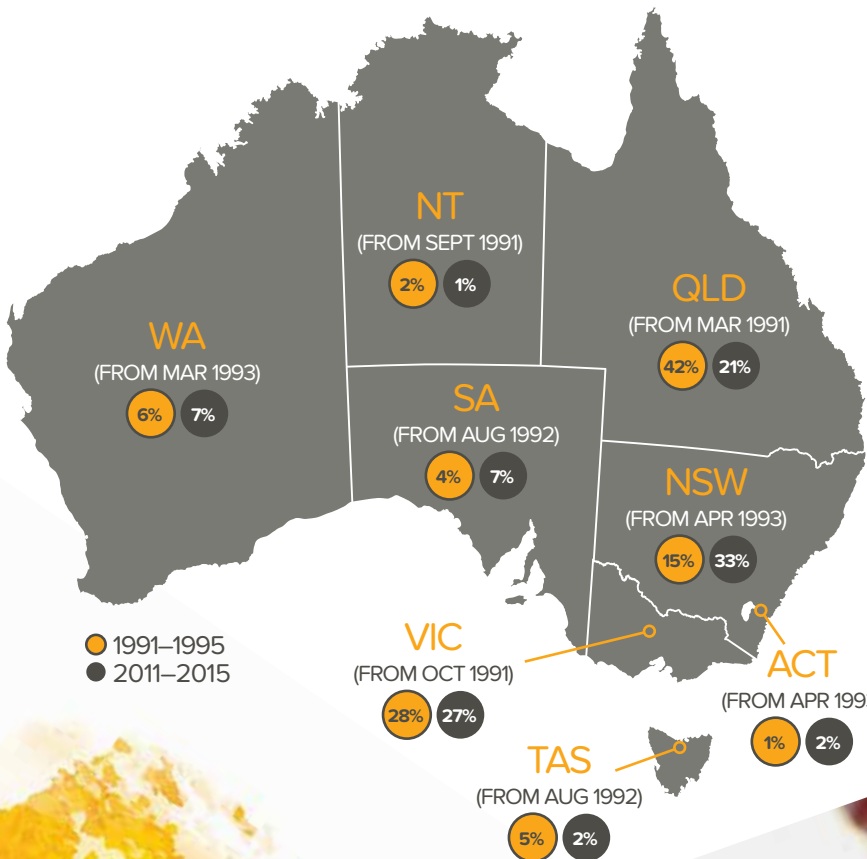
Over the last 20 years, and particularly over the last 10 years, there has been growing awareness and increasing acceptance of mental health issues in the community. This social and cultural change is likely to have increased children and young people’s recognition of these issues and their willingness to seek help.

The data is also a direct result of KHL’s responsiveness to client need. We made numerous changes to our service over the last 20 years to more effectively support children and young people with mental health issues, including:

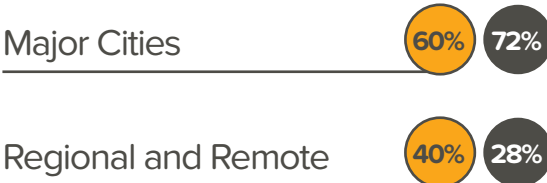
- > Increasing the professional qualifications of counsellors, including the provision of mandatory training in recognising and responding to mental health conditions
- > Increasing the age of eligibility for service from 5–18 to 5–25 years with mental health concerns increasing proportionately with age
- > Changing our model of service delivery to support children and young people with ongoing and complex issues by expanding the provision of case management services

¹ Relates to contacts from 25 March 1991 to 31 December 2015

25 years of Kids Helpline cont'd...



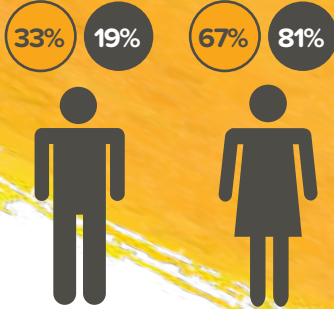
WHERE DID THEY COME FROM?



WHO CONTACTED US?

○ 1991-1995
● 2011-2015

Gender



Intersex, trans & gender diverse <1%

Age



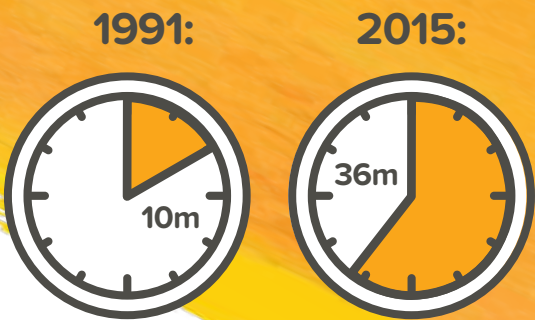
Cultural Background¹



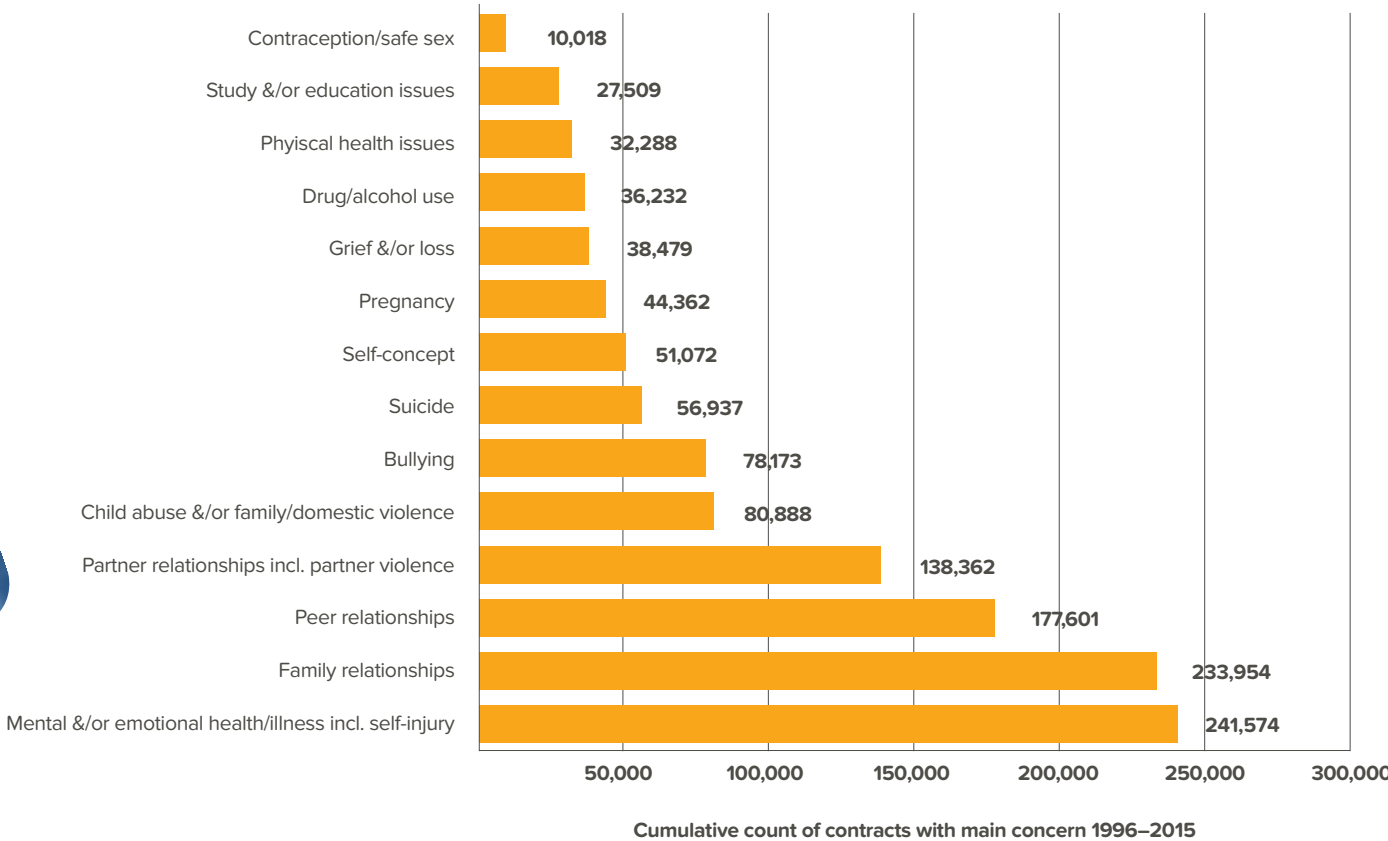
¹ TSI = Torres Strait Islander, CALD = culturally and linguistically diverse
ATSI = Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

DURATION OF COUNSELLING SESSIONS

This change is due to the increased complexity of issues presented by counselling contacts—including mental health concerns and responses to trauma, which result in longer counselling sessions.



MAIN CONCERN OF KIDS HELPLINE COUNSELLING CONTACTS AGED 5-25 YEARS—CUMULATIVE COUNTS OF CONTACTS 1996-2015¹



¹ Counts of counselling contacts with these 14 continuous concern categories sum to 1,247,449 which comprises 85% of counselling contacts received from May 1996 to December 2015 (N = 1,459,225).

More information can be accessed from the 'Kids Helpline Insights 2015: National Statistical Overview'.

Professional counselling—being there when kids need us most

Counselling interventions

Young people with severe, complex and long-standing issues are able to access regular or ongoing support (ongoing counselling) with KHL.

This usually includes ongoing contact with one or two key counsellors, who become familiar with their concerns. Case-managed intensive support can also mean linking the young person with external face-to-face services and developing joint or wrap-around case management plans.

In 2015, where the relationship of the contact with KHL was recorded (38% of all contacts):

- > One third (35%) were first time contacts to the service
- > Two thirds (65%) were occasional contacts or receiving support on an ongoing basis

The most common concern of ongoing support clients in 2015 was mental health (28%) followed by emotional wellbeing concerns (21%).

Seven per cent (7%) of ongoing support contacts called KHL to talk specifically about child abuse.



Kids Helpline counsellors have a strong foundation in theories and approaches related to trauma, abuse and the developmental issues faced by children and young people.

Counsellors come to KHL with a minimum of an undergraduate degree (social work, counselling, and psychology) and at least one year of counselling experience. Our internal training enables them to focus on providing services by phone or online.

This ensures that each young person who contacts KHL receives the very best of care.

I KNOW IT'S A PLACE WHERE KIDS AND YOUNG PEOPLE FEEL SAFE...

"Whenever I meet someone and talk gets around to what sort of work I do, they say how hard it must be to have to hear the depressing stories of pain, abuse or suicide that kids and young people contact Kids Helpline about.

While this description is at times true, it doesn't reflect the real picture of the uplifting and empowering work happening every day through strength-based counselling. Kids and young people contact us to talk about very challenging or traumatic life situations and to process distressed emotion, however, in most cases the focus of counselling is about the way forward.

As a Counsellor at Kids Helpline, I know it's a place that kids and young people feel safe to come to for both emotional support and for qualified help in working out where-to-from-here. At the end of the day (or night, for that matter), what everyone at Kids Helpline is about is working together with our clients towards positive outcomes.

People are sometimes surprised when I say I look forward to going to work. When they hear about the positive change focus that counselling at Kids Helpline is about though, they start to get the picture." **MATT MIDDLETON**, KIDS HELPLINE COUNSELLING SUPERVISOR



Growing complexity of need

There is a growing number and proportion of contact requiring more intensive counselling-type responses.

From 2007 to 2015, there has been an increase of 32% in the number of counselling contacts responded to. In 2007, counselling contacts made up 18% of all contacts, but by 2015 they reached 34%.

Not only is the demand for counselling-type support increasing, but the issues young people are seeking counselling support for are on average becoming more complex.

We are receiving more contacts about issues such as mental health concerns and managing responses to trauma. To meet these needs we are providing longer counselling sessions to give children and young people the time and space to discuss these issues. Counselling sessions have increased steadily in length from an average of 10 minutes in 1991 to 36 minutes in 2015.

We are constantly up-skilling our counsellors to respond more effectively to these issues. In 2015, this included specialist training in trauma, online safety, grief and loss, case management, homicidal presentations and bullying.

Changing preferences for information-based support

Children and young people's preferences for receiving information-based support are shifting away from in-person delivery to web-based.

13%

Over the last three years, there has been a 13% decrease in the number of contacts requiring information, referral and other non-counselling support (decrease of 20,000 contacts).

Changing demographics

We continue to evolve KHL to respond to the changing demographics of the children and young people who contact us.

- > 619 contacts in 2015 were from young people identifying as neither male nor female
- > Culturally and linguistically diverse contacts have increased from 24% in 2013 to 34% in 2015

In response, this year we have introduced a new gender category for data collection—intersex, trans and gender diverse.

We have also been conducting more cultural sensitivity training with our counsellors and have introduced specific training for counsellors about strategies for working sensitively and effectively with gender diverse and same-sex attracted young people.

Commitment to being there

KHL has steadily increased its response rate across all media from 41% in 2002 to 60% in 2015. This means a greater proportion of children and young people who attempt to contact us get through to a counsellor.

Average wait times to speak to a counsellor have also been reduced. The wait time for answered web contacts has more than halved from 2013 to 2015 going from 60 to 24 minutes. For phone contacts it has decreased by 30% going from just over two minutes to 1.5 minutes.

We are responding by continuing to develop a wide range of content for independent help-seeking on our new website and increasing the number of platforms for which this material is made available.

35%

During the same period, there has been a 35% increase in the number of unique visitors to the KHL website (increase of 185,000 unique visitors).

Staying real— listening to children and young people

We respond to the changing needs of children and young people by finding new ways of being there 24/7.

KHL is working with a number of research partners to develop specialised online learning and counselling tools for children and young people.

New KHL website

Already a leading source of self-help information, the KHL website has been re-developed to attract our young, tech savvy, social audience and provide more rapid access to our web and email counselling service. Informed by experts in the field and forums with key stakeholders, the new look site has increased functionality, significantly revised content, and optimises the use of mobile devices. The site was launched in early 2016.

KHL Circles

KHL is working with The University of Sydney and the Black Dog Institute and other partners to develop a mental health online social network that delivers safe 24/7 counselling support to young people.

This world-first project aims to create a mental health social network that is safe, free and private, and delivers counselling support for 13–25 year olds nationally. The result will be 24/7 access to qualified counsellors and peer support group via portable devices (e.g. smart phone) to tackle and reduce the long-term national burden of chronic mental health problems.



BREAK UP SHAKE UP APP

KHL, with the Queensland University of Technology and the Young and Well Collaborative Research Centre, is developing an App to help young people deal with 'breakups'.

In 2014, KHL conducted a national survey to understand the impacts on young people of breakups with romantic partners. Altogether, 649 young people aged 14–18 years participated in the survey. The research indicated a need for an online toolkit to help reduce the mental and psychological effects of breakups.

In partnership with the Queensland University of Technology and the Young and Well Collaborative research centre, an e-tool has been developed to address this need. Currently under trial, if the e-tool is found effective it will be made widely available from July 2016.

This is a good example of KHL listening to the needs of young people in Australia and responding by developing evidence based strategies.

YOUNGANDWELL
Cooperative Research Centre



Youth mobile help-seeking tool-kit

In partnership with the Queensland University of Technology, KHL is exploring a new mobile interactive tool-kit for self-directed help-seeking that works with existing traditional helpline services for young people.

An Australian Research Council (ARC) funded project, the research team will investigate mobile technology in youth counselling to develop new understandings of blended traditional and mobile mental health interventions.

The result will be an interactive tool-kit that provides credible health information via mobile devices that improves the quality of information available to young people.

Creating Awareness

Teens connect through Pandora

KHL has teamed up with the Future Generation Investment Company (FGX) to create a branded radio station with Pandora Internet Radio that's especially for teens, an Australia first initiative launched to let young people know help is available 24/7.

Pandora offers free personalised radio to listeners and has 500,000 registered 13–18 year olds in Australia, with 220,000 active users each month. From a curated playlist, 'KHL Good Vibes' played feel-good pop songs loved by teens interspersed with KHL advertising. Airing from December 2015 to January 2016, the aim of this campaign was to encourage teens to start interacting with KHL as a source of positivity. Music is known to improve mood, reduce stress and anxiety, and has been used to treat depression.

KHL is the first and only charity targeting teens in Australia via a branded station on Pandora.

More than ever before, advertising and entertainment are inextricably linked. While in the past advertising to children and young people consisted primarily of 30 second TV ads, it now includes product placements, immersive websites, advergames, viral marketing, mobile ads, social-media marketing, and precise behavioural and location targeting. We are responding to this change.

'Good Vibes' reached more than 330,000 listeners over the two month period, representing over 4,000 hours of listening time, averaging an unprecedented 26 minutes per listen and serving close to 3,300,000 impressions. There were also 875 clicks through to the KHL website.

We plan to spread 'Good Vibes' via several more targeted campaigns during 2016.

Kids Helpline 'You Are Not Alone' campaign

A 'You Are Not Alone' campaign to raise awareness about KHL services continues to reach out to kids.

The KHL national awareness campaign 'You Are Not Alone' seeks to increase the knowledge and interaction of children and young people in Australia with the service, encouraging early intervention and the normalisation of help seeking.

The 30 second television commercial aired nationally on free to air and subscription TV, age appropriate YouTube stations and channels as well as a range of other digital platforms. Targeted at young people aged 12 to 25 years, the aim is to let those needing help or support know they did not need to deal with problems in isolation. Qualified counsellors at KHL are here any time and for any reason to listen and offer support.

#KHLnotalone



FUTURE GENERATION
INVESTMENT COMPANY

Our Funding

KHL costs \$10.3 million a year to operate.

yourtown provides approximately 72% of the funding thanks to the generosity of supporters of the Art Union, donations and corporate support.

The Australian, Queensland and Western Australian Governments also provide funding support.



We care and we listen, any time and for any reason. This is the promise KHL has made to young people for 25 years.

We need your help to continue to meet this promise and enable us to invest in new programs and technologies.

Help children and young people nationally. Support Kids Helpline – www.kidshelpline.com.au/support



Kids Helpline
1800 55 1800
www.kidshelpline.com.au

**24/7 HELP FOR CHILDREN
& YOUNG PEOPLE AGED
5–25 YEARS**

Kids Helpline Insights 2015 provides invaluable insights into the key issues affecting young Australians.

It is supported by the
**Kids Helpline Insights 2015:
National Statistical Overview**
which provides extensive data about the issues affecting children and young people as well as regional based **State and Territory Reports**.

These can be accessed at
www.kidshelpline.com.au/reports

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