

Media release



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Pick up the phone and dial for help

As part of International Men's Health Week (10 – 16 June), data from Kids Helpline annual report shows that young men are less likely to seek help on their mental health and wellbeing.

As Australia's only national 24/7 counselling and support service specifically for children and young people aged 5 to 25, Kids Helpline is reminding children and young people to reach out with concerns that may include mental health and wellbeing, abuse, and suicidality.

yourtown identified that contacts from males to the free 24/7 Kids Helpline during 2018 sits at 21% or one in five of the contacts in 2018, compared to 77% from females over the same period.

"Data from this report provides useful insights identifying that young males in our major cities and regional remote areas are not seeking help. We need to encourage boys from an early age not to hide their emotions and for adults to let boys know it's OK to show their vulnerability and ask for help about anything, including their mental health and suicide concerns," said **yourtown** Chief Executive Officer Tracy Adams.

The gender imbalance with contacts to Kids Helpline between males and females is long-standing in nature, with males continuing to comprise a minority of Kids Helpline contacts.

"While the proportional breakdown of contact from males and females fluctuates from year to year, this is indicative of the much wider contemporary issue – that is the help-seeking behaviours for men," Ms Adams continued.

"Part of becoming a man has often been to hide their emotions and this is cementing patterns of not asking for help, which reflects outdated beliefs."

Mental health is the number one reason children and young people contacted Kids Helpline in 2018. Since 2007, the proportion of contacts from boys and young men has decreased from about one-third to one-fifth of all contacts to Kids Helpline.

"Young men should not feel like they have to keep silent about their mental health concerns. Free counselling is available for both males and females between 5 and 25 years. Whether they require one-off or ongoing support, boys or young men can seek help from Kids Helpline before things escalate and become much bigger issues," said Ms Adams.

We need young men to understand that help is only a phone call away, FREE CALL 1800 551800.

For more information about yourtown visit yourtown.com.au OR www.kidshelpline.com.au

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