

insights2017



SA

Kids Helpline Statistical Summary South Australia

Insights into young people in Australia



Introduction

What is Kids Helpline?

Kids Helpline has been operating for 27 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, private and confidential support via telephone, web chat and email. Telephone and email counselling is offered 24/7 and web counselling is available from 8am to midnight (AEST) seven days a week.

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 enables Kids Helpline to deliver an early intervention and prevention program in primary schools called *Kids Helpline @ School* through their Digital Thumbprint Program.

Kids Helpline is a service of **yourtown** and is 72% funded by the community through **yourtown** Art Union ticket sales, donations and corporate support. The remaining 28% is funded through State and Commonwealth Government grants.

What this report is about and who it is for

This report is an appendix to *Kids Helpline Insights 2017: National Statistical Overview*. It provides summary data on Kids Helpline service demand and client concerns and characteristics for South Australia in relation to the 2017 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 2017: National Statistical Overview* and other related reports can be accessed at 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 relatively small size of the South Australian 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.

Where to get more information

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Service demand

Attempted and answered contacts

- In 2017, 21,481 of the 339,724 attempts made to contact Kids Helpline counselling service (or 6.3%) came from South Australia (SA).
- Most of these attempts were made by phone (15,359) but also by web chat (5,348) and email (775).
- 9,681 of these attempts were answered by counsellors, corresponding to a response rate of 45%. This compares with a response rate of 46% across Australia.
- Note that when phone attempts are adjusted to exclude callers who dropped out before the 21 second mandatory wait message, the response rate for SA phone contacts in 2017 was 57%.

Trends over time

- From 2015 to 2017 there was an overall decrease of 10% in attempted contacts from SA across all media. Phone attempts decreased by 22% and email by 52%, while web chat attempts increased by 102%.
- Across all media, response rates for SA have decreased from 64% in 2014 to 45% in 2017.

Table 1. SA attempted and answered contacts – by medium and year of contact, with comparison to all states¹

Medium of contact	2015			2016			2017			% change in attempts 2015-2017
	Attempts	Answered	Response rate	Attempts	Answered	Response rate	Attempts	Answered	Response rate	
Phone										
SA	19,607	12,133	62%	18,106	9,054	50%	15,359	6,494	42%	-22%
All States	290,767	169,802	58%	276,960	135,719	49%	248,008	109,793	44%	-15%
Web										
SA	2,646	1,515	57%	4,268	2,180	51%	5,348	2,413	45%	102%
All States	43,464	24,115	55%	65,954	31,765	48%	79,054	35,201	45%	82%
Email										
SA	1,620	1,620	100%	739	739	100%	775	775	100%	-52%
All States	15,886²	15,886	100%	13,681³	13,681	100%	12,662⁴	12,662	100%	-20%
All media										
SA	23,873	15,268	64%	23,113	11,973	52%	21,481	9,681	45%	-10%
All States	350,117	209,803	60%	356,595	181,165	51%	339,724	157,656	46%	-3%

1. The data presented in this table are sourced from KHL phone, web chat and email systems databases.

2. In addition to 15,886 emails received and responded to in 2015, 535 outreach emails were sent.

3. In addition to 13,681 emails received and responded to in 2016, 413 outreach emails were sent.

4. In addition to 12,662 emails received and responded to in 2017, 418 outreach emails were sent.

Who contacted the service

Demographic characteristics

- Kids Helpline counsellors recorded data in relation to 154,868 contacts from children and young people across Australia who were aged 5-25 years. State or territory information was available for 140,007 of these contacts, and of this subset 8,569 (or 6%) were known to be from SA.
- Table 2 shows the demographic characteristics of these contacts from SA and compares them with the characteristics of contacts from the rest of Australia where the contact's state or territory was known.
- As with contacts from the rest of Australia, just over half (52%) of SA contacts were aged 13-18 years and three in 10 (31%) were aged 19-25 years.
- Compared with contacts from the rest of Australia, SA contacts were:
 - more likely to be male and less likely to be female
 - less likely to be from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds and more likely to be from a Caucasian Australian background, and

- less likely to be living in Inner Regional localities and more likely to be living in Outer Regional/Remote areas.
- Other characteristics of Kids Helpline contacts in SA are similar to those of contacts from the rest of Australia.

Table 2. Characteristics of Kids Helpline contacts 2017 aged 5-25 years – SA and rest of Australia¹

Contact characteristics		SA (N = 8,569)		Rest of Australia (N = 131,438)	
		n	%	n	%
Gender					
	Female	4,348	70%	68,584	74%
	Male	1,775	29%	22,501	24%
	Intersex, Trans & Gender Diverse	90	1%	1,887	2%
	Total	6,213	100%	92,972	100%
	Unknown	2,356		38,466	
Age group					
	5-12 years	939	16%	10,711	13%
	13-18 years	2,995	52%	43,969	52%
	19-25 years	1,782	31%	30,011	35%
	Total	5,716	100%	84,691	100%
	<26 but age unknown	2,853		46,747	
Cultural background²					
	Aboriginal &/or TSI	51	3%	1,099	3%
	CALD	499	24%	12,679	37%
	Neither ATSI nor CALD	1,488	73%	20,793	60%
	Total	2,038	100%	34,571	100%
	Unknown	6,531		96,867	
Remoteness³					
	Major Cities	2,303	70%	41,665	73%
	Inner Regional	295	9%	11,339	20%
	Outer Regional/Remote	699	21%	4,399	8%
	Total	3,297	100%	57,403	100%
	Unknown	5,272		74,035	
Medium					
	Phone	6,311	74%	99,699	76%
	Web chat	1,979	23%	27,412	21%
	Email	279	3%	4,327	3%
	Total	8,569	100%	131,438	100%
Type of help-seeking					
	Counselling contact	3,551	41%	54,353	41%
	Information/Referral/Other contact	5,018	59%	77,085	59%
	Total	8,569	100%	131,438	100%

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

2. TSI = Torres Strait Islander. CALD = Culturally and linguistically diverse. ATSI = Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

3. Remoteness classifications are adapted from the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. See *Kids Helpline Insights 2017: 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 2, 41% of contacts from SA in 2017 were seeking counselling support while 59% were seeking information/referral or other forms of non-counselling support.

Demographic trends over time

Table 3 presents the characteristics of SA 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 3 include the following:

- There would appear to be moderate variation in the characteristics of SA contacts over the last three years, including:
 - a slight decrease in the proportion of male contacts from SA relative to female contacts
 - an increase in the proportion of SA contacts aged 13-18 years and a decrease in contacts aged 19-25 years
 - a substantial increase in the proportion of contacts classified as Culturally and Linguistically diverse (CALD)
 - an increase in the proportion of contacts known to be living in Major Cities and a corresponding decrease in the proportion living in Outer Regional/Remote localities
 - an increase in the proportion who engaged by web chat, with a commensurate decrease in the proportion who engaged by phone, and
 - an increase in the proportion who were seeking counselling support relative to non-counselling support.
- It is important to note that substantial missing data, a relatively small subpopulation, and the greater likely influence of repeat contacts on percentage frequencies in this context, 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 SA contacting Kids Helpline over this period.

Table 3. Characteristics of SA Kids Helpline contacts aged 5-25 years – by year¹

Contact characteristics		2015 (N= 13,855)		2016 (N= 10,975)		2017 (N= 8,569)	
		n	n	n	%	%	n
Gender²							
	Female	5,982	67%	4,701	66%	4,348	70%
	Male	2,912	33%	2,411	34%	1,775	29%
	Intersex, Trans & Gender Diverse	31	0%	62	1%	90	1%
	Total	8,925	100%	7,174	100%	6,213	100%
	Unknown	4,930		3,801		2,356	
Age group							
	5-12 years	1,102	14%	1,041	16%	939	16%
	13-18 years	3,676	48%	3,346	52%	2,995	52%
	19-25 years	2,833	37%	2,004	31%	1,782	31%
	Total	7,611	100%	6,391	100%	5,716	100%
	<26 but age unknown	6,244		4,584		2,853	
Cultural background³							
	Aboriginal &/or TSI	51	1%	61	2%	51	3%
	CALD	598	17%	601	22%	499	24%
	Neither ATSI nor CALD	2,974	82%	2,125	76%	1,488	73%
	Total	3,623	100%	2,787	100%	2,038	100%
	Unknown	10,232		8,188		6,531	
Remoteness⁴							
	Major Cities	2,696	63%	2,645	74%	2,303	70%
	Inner Regional	341	8%	391	11%	295	9%
	Outer Regional/Remote	1,235	29%	544	15%	699	21%
	Total	4,272	100%	3,580	100%	3,297	100%
	Unknown	9,583		7,395		5,272	
Medium							
	Phone	11,933	86%	8,767	80%	6,311	74%
	Web chat	1,387	10%	1,933	18%	1,979	23%
	Email	535	4%	275	3%	279	3%

Contact characteristics	2015 (N= 13,855)		2016 (N= 10,975)		2017 (N= 8,569)	
	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>	%	%	<i>n</i>
Total	13,855	100%	10,975	100%	8,569	100%
Type of help-seeking						
Counselling contact	4,279	31%	3,616	33%	3,551	41%
Information/Referral/Other contact	9,576	69%	7,359	67%	5,018	59%
Total	13,855	100%	10,975	100%	8,569	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. TSI = Torres Strait Islander. CALD = Culturally and linguistically diverse. ATSI = Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

4. Remoteness classifications are adapted from the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. *See Kids Helpline Insights 2017: National Statistical Overview* for more information.

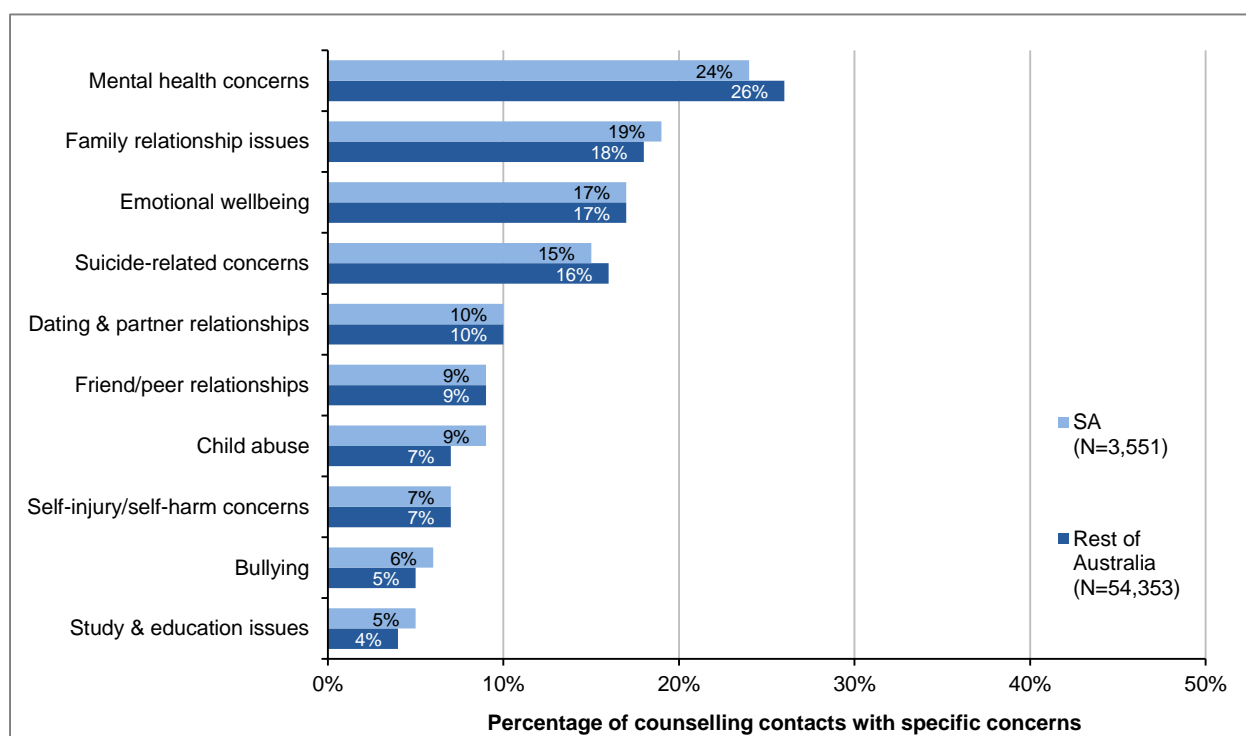
Most common concerns of children and young people who received counselling

During 2017, Kids Helpline counsellors responded to 66,386 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.

SA compared with rest of Australia

- State or territory information was available for 57,904 of these 66,386 counselling contacts and of this subset 3,551 (or 6%) were known to be from SA.
- Figure 1 shows the 10 most common concerns of SA counselling contacts in 2017 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 observation to be noted from the data is that the frequency with which children and young people in SA sought help from Kids Helpline for all of these issues is consistent with the frequency with which children and young people elsewhere in Australia sought help for these issues.

Figure 1. Most frequently recorded concerns of Kids Helpline counselling contacts 2017 aged 5-25 years – SA compared with the rest of Australia (sorted in descending frequency of SA concerns)¹



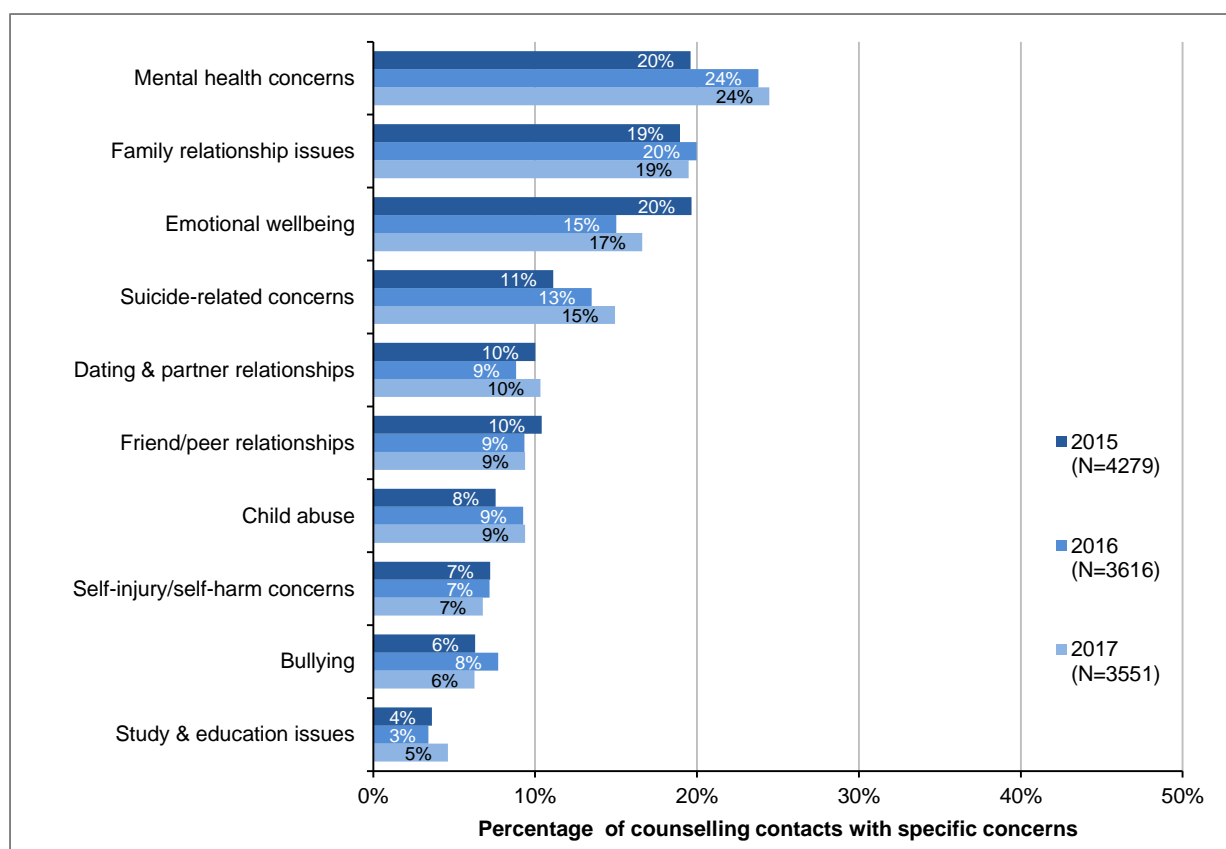
1. Up to four concerns per contact may be recorded. Accordingly, percentages may sum to more than 100%.

Trends over time

Figure 2 shows the 10 most common concerns of SA counselling contacts in 2017 and compares this with the frequency with which these concerns were raised by SA contacts in 2015 and 2016.

- The key observations to note from the data are that:
 - the frequency with which children and young people in SA are contacting Kids Helpline about these concerns has remained consistent over the short-term, although
 - there would appear to be a slight decrease in the proportion contacting about emotional wellbeing issues and a slight increase in those contacting about mental health issues.

Figure 2. Most frequently recorded concerns of SA Kids Helpline counselling contacts aged 5-25 years – by year
(sorted in descending frequency of 2017 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 4 reports the frequency with which *every concern* in the Kids Helpline's concern classification system was raised by counselling contacts from the ACT in 2017 and compares this with the frequency with which the concern was raised in 2015 and 2016. Table 4 groups individual concerns under eleven 'concern classes' which aggregate frequencies across conceptual clusters of client concern.

- Key observations to be noted from the data in Table 4 are:
 - the frequency with which children and young people in SA are contacting Kids Helpline about all these different concerns and classes of concern is largely consistent over the short-term; however
 - there would appear to have been a slight increase in the relative frequency of contact about suicide-related and mental health concerns 2015-17.

Table 4. Number and proportion of Kids Helpline counselling contacts 5-25 years with particular concerns and classes of concern – SA by year¹

Concern and concern class	2015 (N = 4,279)		2016 (N = 3,616)		2017 (N = 3,551)	
			n	%	n	%
Mental health & emotional wellbeing	2,234	52.2%	1,879	52.0%	1,917	54%
Mental health concerns	839	19.6%	860	23.8%	869	24.5%
Emotional wellbeing	841	19.7%	543	15.0%	590	16.6%
Suicide-related concerns	476	11.1%	488	13.5%	530	14.9%
Self-injury/self-harm concerns	309	7.2%	260	7.2%	240	6.8%
Loss and grief	171	4.0%	103	2.8%	95	2.7%
Friends, peers, partners & dating	853	19.9%	637	17.6%	690	19.4%
Dating and partner relationships	428	10.0%	319	8.8%	367	10.3%
Friends/peer relationships	445	10.4%	338	9.3%	333	9.4%
Family relationships	811	19.0%	722	20.0%	692	19.5%
Child-parent relationships	554	12.9%	473	13.1%	509	14.3%
Other family relationships	179	4.2%	166	4.6%	103	2.9%
Changing family structures	120	2.8%	125	3.5%	117	3.3%
Parenting own children	7	0.2%	10	0.3%	14	.4%
Identity & self-concept	361	8.4%	209	5.8%	237	6.7%
Self-concept (global)	142	3.3%	98	2.7%	129	3.6%
Body image	66	1.5%	40	1.1%	39	1.1%
Sexual orientation	41	1.0%	34	0.9%	35	1.0%
Gender/sex identification	35	0.8%	25	0.7%	27	.8%
Disability-related concerns	88	2.1%	14	0.4%	6	.2%
Cultural identity	7	0.2%	4	0.1%	11	.3%
Violence & abuse (non-family)	374	8.7%	372	10.3%	342	9.6%
Bullying - school related	231	5.4%	238	6.6%	190	5.4%
Bullying - other	38	0.9%	44	1.2%	36	1.0%
Sexual assault or abuse (non-family)	45	1.1%	42	1.2%	60	1.7%
Dating and partner violence	30	0.7%	16	0.4%	34	1.0%
Harassment and assault(non-sexual)	23	0.5%	24	0.7%	19	.5%
Sexual harassment	10	0.2%	13	0.4%	9	.3%
Child abuse & family violence	323	7.5%	335	9.3%	333	9.4%
Physical abuse	170	4.0%	180	5.0%	180	5.1%
Sexual abuse	59	1.4%	65	1.8%	54	1.5%
Emotional abuse	63	1.5%	81	2.2%	83	2.3%
Neglect of child	30	0.7%	26	0.7%	28	.8%
Exploitation by family member	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	.0%
Exposure to family violence	31	0.7%	25	0.7%	36	1.0%
Living-in-care issues	14	0.3%	9	0.2%	14	.4%
School, education & work	217	5.1%	176	4.9%	222	6.3%
Study and education issues	155	3.6%	123	3.4%	164	4.6%
Employment issues	39	0.9%	40	1.1%	34	1.0%
School authority issues	25	0.6%	15	0.4%	28	.8%
Physical or sexual health & development	256	6.0%	210	5.8%	221	6.2%
Physical health concerns	131	3.1%	77	2.1%	112	3.2%
Pregnancy-related concerns	58	1.4%	57	1.6%	44	1.2%
Sexual activity	61	1.4%	58	1.6%	43	1.2%
Physical/sexual development	2	0.0%	13	0.4%	10	.3%
Contraception/safe sex	7	0.2%	10	0.3%	18	.5%
Homelessness & basic needs assistance	137	3.2%	114	3.2%	81	2.3%
Homelessness	91	2.1%	65	1.8%	46	1.3%
Practical/material assistance	41	1.0%	39	1.1%	24	.7%

Concern and concern class	2015 (N= 4,279)		2016 (N= 3,616)		2017 (N= 3,551)	
			<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Financial assistance/concerns	10	0.2%	11	0.3%	14	.4%
Substance use, addictions & risk-taking	72	1.7%	62	1.7%	57	1.6%
Drug use	45	1.1%	41	1.1%	33	.9%
Alcohol use	18	0.4%	11	0.3%	21	.6%
Addictive behaviours (not drugs/alcohol)	7	0.2%	9	0.2%	6	.2%
Physical risk-taking	2	0.0%	2	0.1%	1	.0%
Gang/cult involvement	1	0.0%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%
Offending, abusive or violent actions	32	0.7%	25	0.7%	29	.8%
Illegal/offending behaviour	10	0.2%	10	0.3%	12	.3%
Abusive or violent actions	16	0.4%	14	0.4%	14	.4%
Sexual violence/offending actions	7	0.2%	1	0.0%	3	.1%

1. 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

