

# in 20 sights 20

Insights into young people  
in Australia



30TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE EDITION



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## Additional insights

Data presented in Kids Helpline Insights 2020 was sourced from Kids Helpline Insights 2020 – National Statistical Overview, which provides extensive data about the issues affecting children and young people.

Knowing someone  
believed in me, and  
had hope for my life  
enabled me to have  
hope for myself...

Name withheld for privacy

# Message from Minister for Health, the Hon Greg Hunt MP



## **The Hon Greg Hunt MP Minister for Health and Aged Care**

### **Kids Helpline**

#### **Special Edition of the Annual Overview of Kids Helpline**

Caring for the mental health and wellbeing of Australians, including children and young people, remains one of the Australian Government's highest priorities.

Our Government is committed to helping every Australian access mental health support when they need it. It is for this reason that the Government has been a long-standing supporter and proud partner of Kids Helpline.

Since 1991, young Australians have turned to Kids Helpline for support. For some it has provided lifesaving care in times of crisis, while for others a source of practical advice or place to turn to so they know that they are not alone.

With over 8 million contacts over the course of its history, there is no doubt that Kids Helpline has played a vital role in our efforts to protect and nurture the emotional wellbeing and lives of children and young people across Australia.

Never has this support been more important than in the last 18 months, with the effects of Black Summer Bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic putting significant pressure on the mental health and wellbeing of many. The impacts of these events on Australia and the world are difficult to understate.

But while our situations and the challenges we face may have changed, the care and dedication of the staff and counsellors of Kids Helpline has remained undiminished. Their incredible work has made all the difference in the lives of children and families across Australia during this difficult time.

I am profoundly grateful to all those involved in Kids Helpline for their invaluable contributions to the health and wellbeing of children and young adults in Australia.

I extend my deepest congratulations to Kids Helpline on celebrating its 30<sup>th</sup> year anniversary, and wish you well for a long and prosperous future.

January 2021

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# Keeping our children safe

The purpose of Kids Helpline is to enhance the social, emotional and psychological wellbeing of children and young people in communities across Australia.

Kids Helpline is a crucial part of the mental health system. We work to help normalise the concept of help-seeking for children and young people.

We know that poor mental health can be complex and multilayered. This is why we operate as a free, 24/7 service, offering wrap-around care in collaboration with local agencies and services, to ensure we are always there when needed.

Kids Helpline took its first call in Brisbane on 25 March 1991, from children and young people aged five to 18 years. Within two-and-half years, Kids Helpline was operating in every Australian state and territory. In its second full year of operation, the service responded to close to half a million calls from children and young people across Australia. In 2003, Kids Helpline expanded eligibility to young adults aged up to 25 years.

Kids Helpline has become an integral part of Australia's social support system for children and young people, playing a unique and critical role in various specific support systems including the child protection, mental health, homelessness and e-safety systems.

In 2018, Kids Helpline surpassed 8 million responses, equal to one response every 90 seconds, since 1991.

Many of the calls we receive are from children and young people who simply want to talk about their day. Counsellors commonly respond to concerns about important relationships that are necessary for sustained health and wellbeing – relationships with family, friends, peers, and intimate partners. Other contacts are from those in crisis or at risk of harm, who are dealing with multiple, complex issues.

Responding to concerns children and young people have about their mental health is a pillar of our work, along with responding to the concerns about identity and self-concept, school and education, and health and development issues.

Many children reach out to Kids Helpline because they are experiencing abuse or violence, including bullying and cyberbullying, while some have concerns about managing addictive behaviours. Whatever the issue, our dedicated counsellors continue to be there for them, anytime, any reason.

Kids Helpline is staffed by a professional workforce of 210 counsellors (as at the end of 2020), each holding relevant tertiary qualifications.

“We believe in ‘no wrong door’ for young people looking for our support and services. That means our system is open to whatever entry point a person uses. Young people may come direct to us via phone or WebChat, but they may also be automatically referred by another service provider’s website or an after-hours message. We try to make it as easy as possible for young people to find the help they need.”

Tracy Adams – CEO **yourtown**



# The year at a glance

# Kids Helpline 2020

Kids' mental health takes a hit during 2020.

## COVID-19 quickly became a priority concern in the community

Contacts to Kids Helpline rose by more than 20% in 2020, largely related to counselling contacts regarding mental health and emotional wellbeing.

**176,012** of ALL contacts answered were from children and young people aged 5–25, an increase of 21% on 2019:

- **90,077** 51% were counselling sessions with children and young people seeking help about issues and concerns (direct help-seeking) – an increase of 24% on 2019
- **85,935** 49% were other conversations and contacts with our telephone and online services (indirect help-seeking) – an increase of 19% on 2019

**2,147,759** unique visitors to the Kids Helpline website collectively participated in **2,745,655** web sessions



**Every 69 seconds  
a young person  
contacts Kids Helpline**

## Duty of Care

**2,783** Duty of Care\* interventions  
= **53** Duty of Care interventions a week

Of these:

**37%** were related to a suicide attempt

**35%** were related to child abuse

## Charting Duty of Care interventions

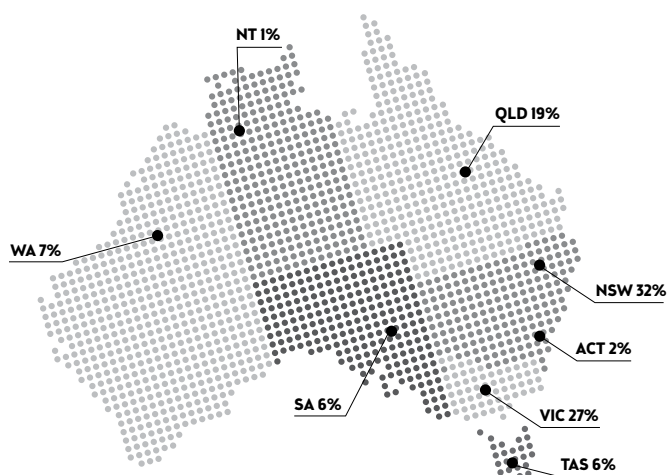
Our counsellors triggered **48% more** duty of care interventions in 2020 than in 2019.

While the main trigger for interventions in 2020 involved suicide attempts, there was a noticeable increase in child abuse concerns. In 2020, duty of care interventions related to child abuse **increased by 62%.**

\*A Duty of Care intervention involves contacting emergency services or another agency to protect a young person who is experiencing, or is at imminent risk of significant harm.

## Concerns of those who received counselling

- 1 in 4** contacts were about mental health
- 1 in 4** contacts were about emotional wellbeing
- 1 in 5** contacts were about family relationships
- 1 in 7** contacts were about suicide-related issues
- 1 in 12** concerned about dating/partner or friend/peer relationships
- 1 in 13** contacts were about child abuse
- 1 in 14** contacts focused on self-injury concerns
- 1 in 21** contacts were about identity, self-image and self-esteem



## Kids Helpline @ School

**29,351** primary school and **4,729** high school students participated in video link-up class sessions with a counsellor

## We respond to children and young people in a number of ways:

### DIRECT CONTACTS

- Phone • WebChat • Email • My Circle

### INDIRECT CONTACTS

- Unique visitors to the Kids Helpline Website and Niggle app
- Interactions through social channels

## Type of Support

**35%** were from young people contacting the service for the first time

**34%** were from those receiving occasional support

**31%** were from those receiving ongoing support

# Who contacted us?

## Age

Whilst 5–9 year olds are a smaller cohort of users of the Kids Helpline service, responses to that age group have increased by more than 80% over the past 12 months compared with the same period last year. Responses across all age cohorts have increased as a direct result of additional resourcing of the service.

5–12 years	17%
13–18 years	56%
19–25 years	27%

## Gender

Female contacts	75%
Male contacts	22%
Trans and gender diverse	3%

## Cultural Background

(N = 63,944 where culture is known)

Aboriginal &/or Torres Strait Islander	5%
Other culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD)	34%
Neither of the above	61%

## Locality

Where locality is known

Major Cities	71%
Inner Regional	23%
Outer Regional Remote	6%



## Key statistics 30 years Kids Helpline 1991-2020

8.4 MILLION responses

- **507,887 counselling sessions** for mental or emotional health (includes self-injury)
- **443,075 counselling sessions** for family relationships

- **298,887 counselling sessions** for peer relationships
- **226,241 counselling sessions** for partner relationships (includes partner violence)

- **187,374 counselling sessions** for child abuse and family violence
- **133,062 counselling sessions** for suicide
- **119,520 counselling sessions** for bullying



# Behind the statistics – stories of fear, stress and isolation

Contacts to Kids Helpline from children and young people were up 20% in the year of COVID-19 and the Black Summer bushfires. One in four sought help about mental health or emotional wellbeing.

But it was the jump in first-time contacts about mental health from younger children (5-12 year olds); an increase in our Duty of Care emergency interventions; and a slight drop in contacts about face-to-face bullying, that may indicate the true impact of those two catastrophic events.

## First-time mental health contacts up 38%

In 2020, Kids Helpline received 38% more first-time mental health contacts from children and young people across all age groups than in 2019. For younger children – aged 5-12 years – the number of first-time contacts almost doubled year-on-year.

Kids Helpline's Project Manager Leo Hede says anxiety and depression remain the most common mental health issues presented by children and young people across Australia.

"Young children presented with worries, fear, sadness loss and grief," he says.

"Some contacted us for support around their fears for the future – either their own or for their family or parents. And younger children were concerned things may not go back to normal."

The fate of the world post-pandemic played heavily on teenagers and younger adults' minds.

"They were worried about what their futures would look like. They had concerns about education, employment, travel opportunities and the long-term impacts of social isolation," says counsellor and supervisor Matt Middleton.

In Melbourne, the second lockdown created another atmosphere of stress.

"The second lockdown was a lot longer," Leo says. "There was no novelty as there was in the first lockdown, so this compounded stress, isolation and loneliness. Children and young people also felt the impact of rolling media and news coverage – the high illness rates, the death tolls and their 'doom scrolling' through their social media feeds."

## Face-to-face bullying

Down 4% on 2019's numbers with fewer contacts (year-on-year) in the months that coincide with school closures – that's what the 2020 figures said about young people's help-seeking for face-to-face bullying issues.

Although generally seen as a school playground problem, the lower numbers may not be all they seem, Leo says.

"Face-to-face bullying contacts are often lower during school holidays, so it's reasonable to say that home schooling may have had a similar effect."

Leo says the year-on-year decrease may also relate to a shift in the primary issue that children and young people are presenting with. "Their primary reason for their contact may be mental health or emotional wellbeing, and bullying may only emerge as a factor when the counsellor is unpacking and exploring the client's story."

## What we learned from lockdown

Despite the increased numbers of contacts answered during 2020, the opportunity for the future is to create more options for children and young people to contact Kids Helpline – whatever their preferred method of communicating.

Helen Vahdat, **yourtown** Chief Information Officer, says "new platforms, systems and approaches will help make that even easier." The demands of COVID-19 only reinforced that Kids Helpline is on the right track with our digital plans – to add to our phone, online and email counselling, and introduce more entry points for children and young people to access our support services and self-help resources."

"We'll continue to work with young people to understand their experiences and offer different types of technology stacks that they can access in a private manner – wherever they are."

# Why 2020 brought out the best in Kids Helpline

From the worst bushfires in Australia's history, to the uncertainty of a global pandemic, 2020 delivered challenges unlike any before. But Kids Helpline responded.

It was a Sunday afternoon in mid-March when **yourtown** CEO Tracy Adams saw the Australian Prime Minister, live on TV, talking about COVID-19. Scott Morrison spoke of extended border closures, self-isolation for travellers and the potential for more restrictions, still to be clarified. It was a sobering day for Australians.

At that point, Kids Helpline had already worked through a particularly demanding start to the year, with a 40% spike in demand for counselling during the second quarter of 2020.

"Obviously there were children who were directly in the fire zones and they had been contacting us about their fears," says Tracy Adams, **yourtown** CEO.

"Our priority was making sure schools in those regions knew we were here and were a contact point for children and young people in distress. But also, there was genuine anxiety from young people about the environment, about climate change and its impact."

"We didn't really get to see that develop though, because COVID-19 came over the top of it. Despite the incredible devastation, and the human toll, and cost of the bushfires, COVID-19 became all consuming. That was sad for the children and young people who had anxiety about the bushfires and the environment then, and I think it's still real now."

## Considering the threats

But, on that Sunday in March, Tracy Adams knew Kids Helpline needed to act quickly in the face of the growing concern about the pandemic. She immediately phoned key staff, and soon they were in the Brisbane office, mapping out plans for an uncertain future.

"Our obvious priority was: how do we make sure, whatever happens, we keep Kids Helpline going?"

Tracy's team methodically considered the threats. The 'pivot to digital' was not overly concerning, because Kids Helpline had long been a leader in digital counselling and e-mental health. So, the first step was more practical – how to prevent staff getting the virus.

"We'd just started trialling remote work from home with our long-term, experienced counsellors and it had proven to be very viable," she says. "So, we had that security blanket." Soon, 60 counsellors were safely working from home.

The next step was to create a COVID-safe workplace for those counsellors who couldn't work from home. Counsellors were split into two groups and, because the Brisbane headquarters has two adjacent buildings, each group was confined to its own building.

"If we'd had a counsellor leave here at 4pm and then test positive for COVID-19," says Tony FitzGerald, **yourtown** Virtual Services Manager, "then 50 counsellors would have had to self-isolate for 14 days. That was a great threat to our ability to keep running."

The "quarantined buildings" approach extended to other essential staff too, says Tracy.

"I would walk over there, stay outside, chat to the person I needed to speak to and never even enter the building. We deliberately set ourselves up so we could reassure the community we would be here, no matter what."

## Need for more counsellors

Not surprisingly, demand for Kids Helpline services stayed extraordinarily high in the early months of the pandemic and again during Melbourne's extended lockdown.

"We saw a lot of contacts from children and young people that we classify as higher risk, with more immediate threats of self-harm and an increase in child abuse presentations," says Matt Middleton, a long-term counsellor and counselling team supervisor.

"Families were forced into close quarters and couldn't go out. So, particularly for those with a history of trauma, conflict and violence, there were fewer options to deal with those issues. But children and young people know Kids Helpline and they trust us, so they contacted us."

With this increased demand, more counsellors were needed. For this, government funding and a healthy year of art union ticket sales helped.

"Incredibly, from a timing perspective, we were in the final stages of completing the new counselling centre in Sydney, which came online two weeks after COVID-19 started," says Tracy.

"The New South Wales Government had already provided funding for staffing, and we'd already done the recruitment and the training. Then, we were able to secure additional funding from the Federal Government, so we immediately went into more



“A counsellor contracting the virus would have been a great threat to our ability to keep running.”

recruitment. We put more staff on in Sydney and more staff in Queensland. We were able to bring about 85 new counsellors in and we're still recruiting now. We ended 2020 with 210 counsellors.”

### Supporting schools

Demand was higher for more than one-on-one counselling though. Website self-help visits increased, as did social media engagement. The Kids Helpline @ School and Kids Helpline @ High School services, where a counsellor hosts a virtual session with students, was needed more than ever – even though schools were empty.

A quick rethink and counsellors were soon connecting in from their own base through the schools and to students' homes, using whichever platform that state's education department was operating with.

“We also built online resources specifically for managing COVID-19, and I think that was reassuring for the children and the teachers,” says Tracy.

“From a teacher's perspective, they were in a very tough space, having to pivot quickly to remote teaching. To be able to rely on something like Kids Helpline @ School as part of their model was very helpful for them, I think.”

### Giving credit where it's due

Despite the challenges COVID-19 and 2020 presented, Kids Helpline remained functional every day of 2020, answering more than 176,000 contacts from Australian children and young people.

Ms Adams makes particular mention of the “capacity of children and young people to recognise their needs and reach out for support, and the proactiveness of many of the families who have supported their children to do so.”

Tony FitzGerald, **yourtown's** Virtual Services Manager, wants to highlight the commitment and resilience of our counsellors who, he believes, made COVID-19 “Kids Helpline's finest moment”.

“It was tough for them too because they've all got families,” he says.

“They were worried. They were concerned. But they kept going, which was absolutely amazing.”

## Rise of on-demand website content

**2,147,759** Unique visitors  
**2,745,655** Visitor sessions  
**7,500** Accessed website per day

This signifies a **50% increase** for website use and a **52% increase** in unique visitors since 2019



The Kids Helpline website continued to evolve in 2020.

Personalised navigation, illustrations and content were developed for specific age groups to equip children and young people with resources, tips and information about the main issues affecting them.

In 2020, we saw an average of more than 7,500 daily sessions from 5,900 unique daily users accessing information on the website.

Sessions were up 50% on 2019 visitation data with unique users growing by 52% year-on-year.

Kids Helpline empowers young people to help themselves through the website, with on-demand content freely available. These website resources seek to improve mental health literacy, reduce stigma, and support the desire of young people for self-reliance.

The Teens section of the website still has the most visitation at 38% of all page views, with children making up 14%, parents 11% and young adults 4%.

We added more self-help resources for a variety of important, timely issues throughout 2020.

Our dedicated COVID-19 resource page received more than 48,000 page views, with activity on this page peaking in April 2020 and increasing in July 2020 when the risk of a second wave gained media exposure.

The increase in Kids Helpline website page views in 2020 indicates the importance of providing content which is relevant, engaging and also creates pathways to help-seeking and professional supports.

This trend for help-seeking behaviours illustrates young people are comfortable and confident in sourcing quality information from the Kids Helpline website.

## 24/7 Accessibility



Phone



WebChat



Email Counselling



My Circle



Website



Niggle App





## Empowering young people to help themselves and others through our website

"Our website plays a major role in early intervention, giving many children and young people enough information online to help them sort through an issue. The website also helps normalise the idea of help-seeking, and lets young people know they're not alone."

Tracy Adams – CEO **yourn town**

### Kids (5-12 years)

Top five topics:

1. Being safe on the internet	23,418
2. Fights with friends	17,126
3. Bullying is not ok	16,909
4. Feeling lonely	15,599
5. Everybody makes mistakes	14,104

Cumulatively, the topic about online safety (eSafety) reached 44,725 or 21% of all page views.

### Teens (13-18 years)

Top five topics:

1. Bullying	314,037
2. All about respect	218,368
3. Sexting	110,017
4. Cyberbullying	73,368
5. Gender Identity	51,495

### Young adults (19-25 years)

Top five topics:

1. Respect in relationships	11,552
2. Family relationships	4,784
3. Impacts of pornography	4,570
4. Risk-taking	4,189
5. Gender identity	3,811

### Parents/carers

Top five topics:

1. Helping to identify and express feelings	102,031
2. Understanding child emotional abuse	89,799
3. Mood swings and puberty	51,826
4. Supporting a child who is thinking about suicide	44,798
5. Understanding child sexual abuse	35,919

# Website insights

The impact of 2020 demonstrated the need to build on our direct care methodology. With Kids Helpline handling record numbers of presentations to the counselling service, the need for indirect care and support that empowers individuals to self-help is evident. Children and young people have unlimited self-serve access to evidence-informed and age-appropriate resources through the website, which helps to improve mental health literacy, reduce stigma, and support self-reliance.

The trend for greater dependency on self-help and peer-to-peer help-seeking behaviours illustrates young people are comfortable sourcing and relying on quality information and coping mechanisms through the Kids Helpline website, our nigggle app and My Circle platform provide.

In 2020, we also saw a 52% increase in new users accessing the Kids Helpline website, compared with 2019.

Kids Helpline website user and page views in 2020 showed continued growth in key topics. During 2020, 2.2 million users accessed the Kids Helpline website; of these, 1.3 million users accessed the Kids Helpline teens informational resources.

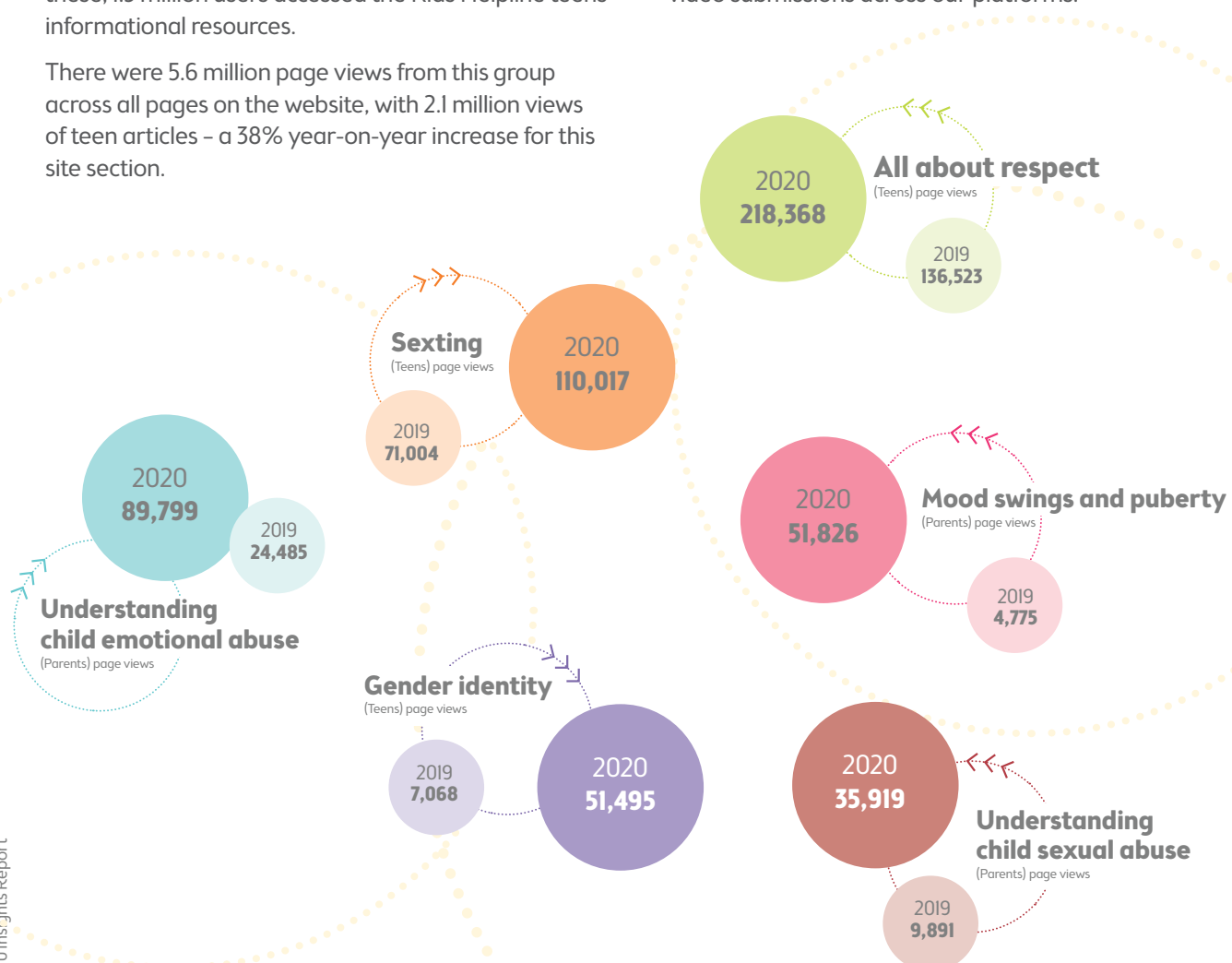
There were 5.6 million page views from this group across all pages on the website, with 2.1 million views of teen articles – a 38% year-on-year increase for this site section.

Frequently visited teen articles in 2020 related to bullying and cyberbullying, better peer relationships, consideration of others, and privacy needs. These were covered in the “All About Respect” and “Sexting” articles. Each of which showed page view increases of more than 50%, compared with 2019.

Working with Our Pride Youth Advisory Group (YAG) updated our gender and sexual identity articles across the site in 2019 and 2020. This resulted in a dramatic increase in page views and new-user engagement with this content compared with previous years, due to increased search engine traffic.

The increase in search traffic shows Kids Helpline is meeting content topic needs in the market and providing young people with engaging, informative and thoughtful content they connect with.

As part of our digital content strategy to help direct our content, **yourtown** and Kids Helpline engages with young people through polls, surveys, competitions, social media and our Youth Advisory Groups. This includes promoting user-generated content such as our National Video Competition, where we encourage video submissions across our platforms.



# More children and young people are seeking online support

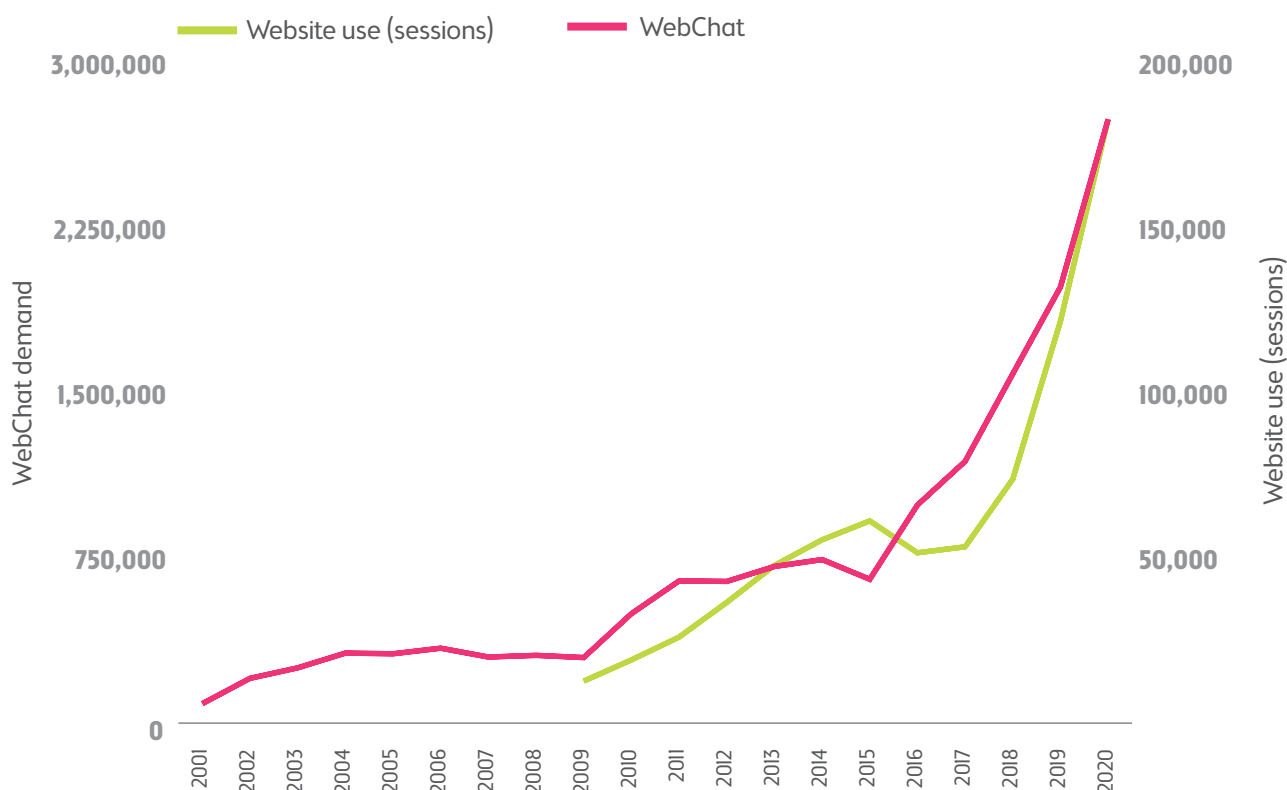
Given current shifts, WebChat could take over as the preferred contact type by 2023. The service is more likely to be used by female aged 13-18 years, with this group in 2020 accounting for 49% of all contacts made via WebChat this way a young person using WebChat will more likely do so for serious issues like mental health and suicide-related concerns, as it makes them feel safe. We often receive feedback from young people saying WebChat allowed them the freedom to cry and express themselves without any perceived

judgement. However, WebChat sessions take almost twice as long to complete, when compared with phone-based sessions. In 2020, the average WebChat Session required 51 minutes to complete. The extra time associated with the WebChat counselling service is due, in part, to the extra time needed to physically type an interaction, and reflects the complex nature of the reasons behind the contact.

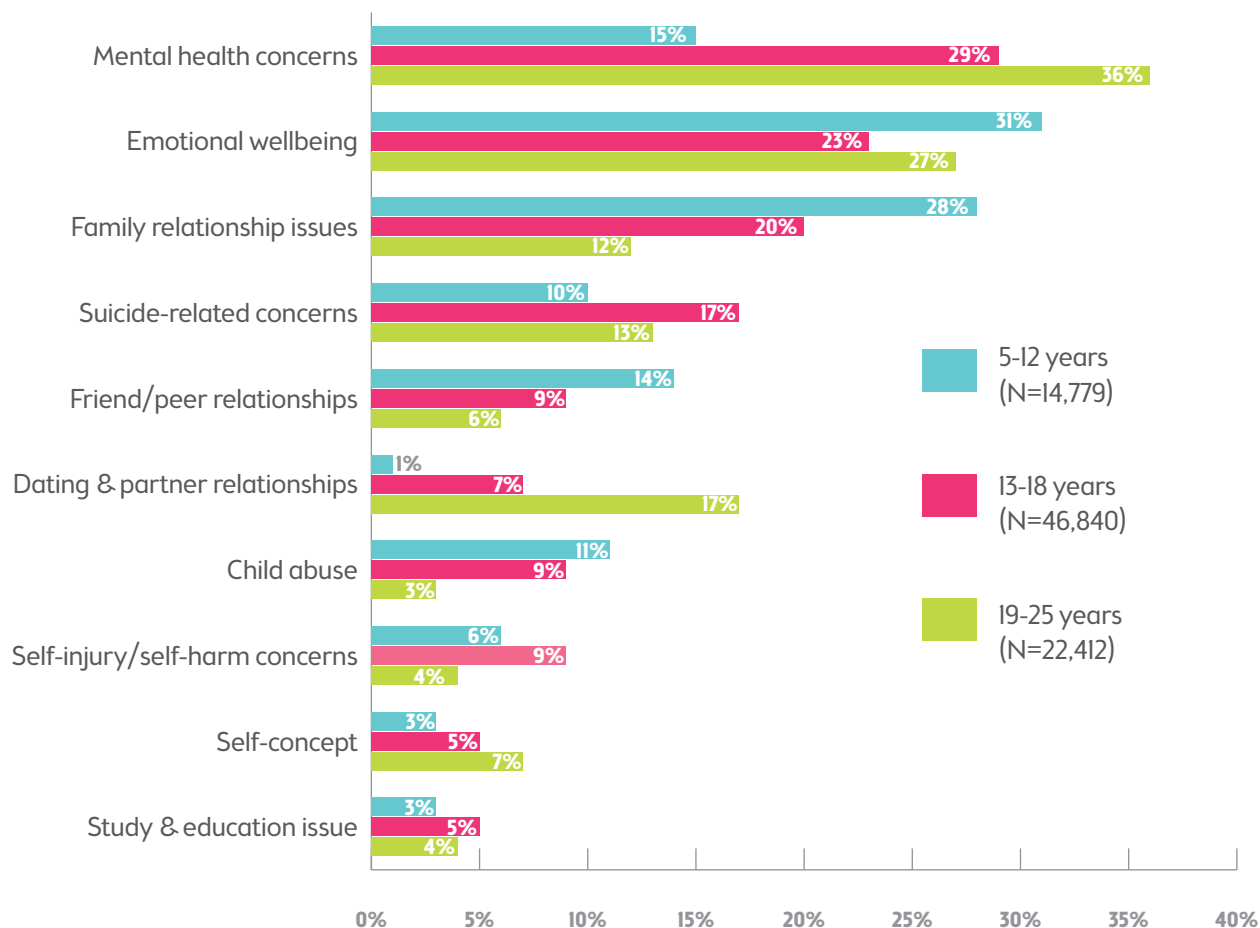
“There is a risk we will face a higher rate of mental health challenges in children and young people into the future.”

Kids Helpline Counsellor

Kids Helpline WebChat demand and website use by year (2000-2020)



# Mental health and emotional wellbeing remain key issues representing 50% of all counselling support in 2020



“We know that mental health challenges are much easier to overcome if children and young people find the support they need.”

Kids Helpline counsellor

2020 has been a difficult year. Never before have we seen so many children and young people make contact and seek support for their mental health.

There has been a significant increase in children under 12 seeking mental health and emotional wellbeing support. The proportion of counselling contacts raising mental health concerns increased 4% (to 15% from 11% in 2019) and those raising emotional wellbeing issues increased (to 31% from 25% in 2019).

Online and phone counselling can reduce stress or

anxiety and can be an effective way to empower children and young people to support their safety and wellbeing.

It's never too early, or too late, to seek support. Just one phone or WebChat contact with a Kids Helpline counsellor can assist children and young people find the support they need.

For further information, refer to 1991 – 2021 statistics through **Insights 2020 – National Statistical Overview** which is available at [kidshelpline.com.au](https://www.kidshelpline.com.au) later in the year.

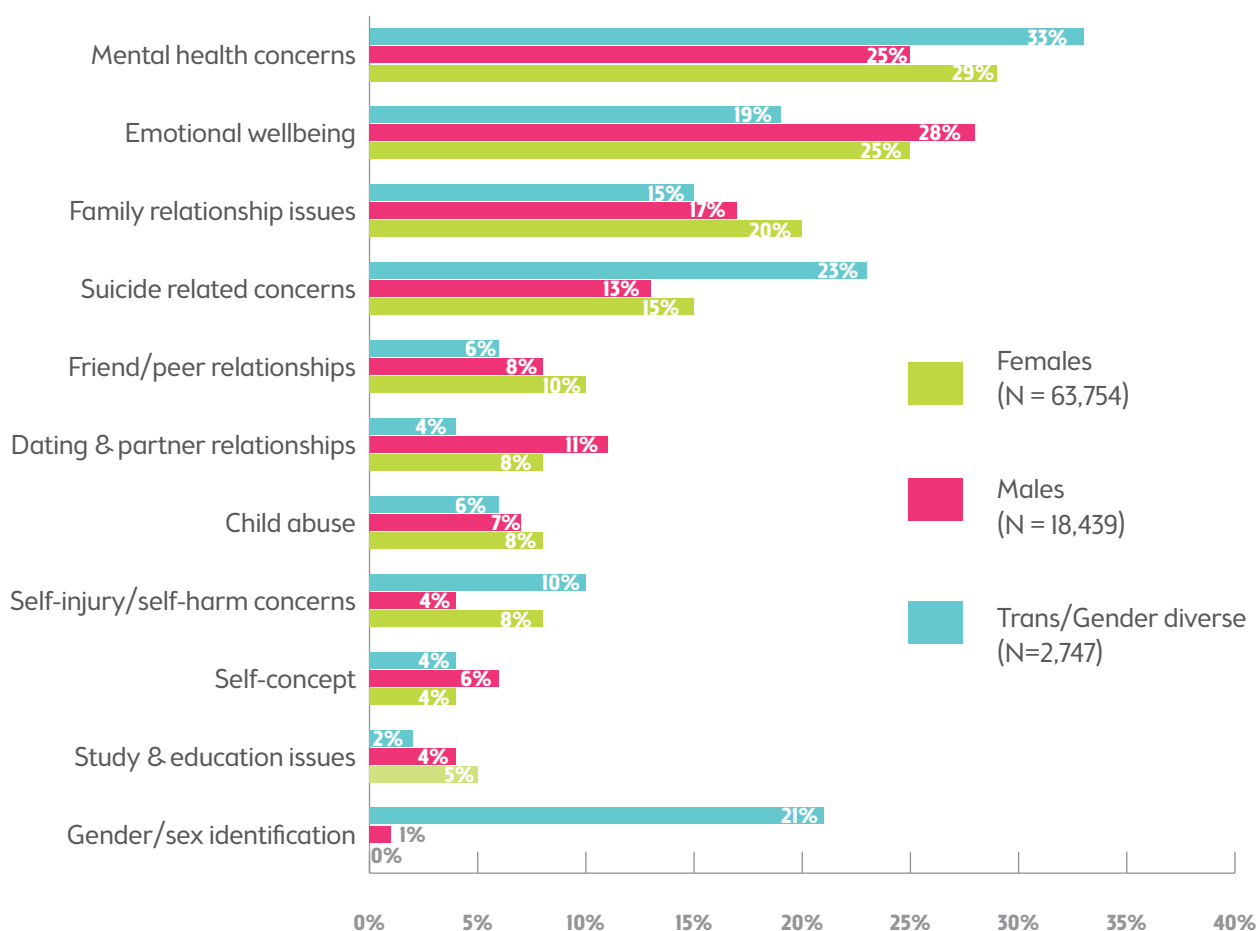


# Mental health and emotional wellbeing remain key issues for all contacts, particularly for trans or gender diverse young people

The reasons for contacting Kids Helpline are broad and can differ considerably between gender:

- **Trans and gender-diverse.** Contacts from trans and gender-diverse clients were more likely than either males or females to be about suicide (13% males and 15% females), mental health issues (33% males and 29% females) and self-harm (3% females and 4% males).
- **Females.** Contacts from females are more likely to be about family relationship issues (17% males and 15% trans/gender diverse), and more likely than males to be about mental health concerns (29%) and self-harm (8%).
- **Males** were more likely to contact about emotional wellbeing (25% females and 19% trans/gender diverse), dating and partner relationships (8% females and 4% trans/gender diverse), and self-concept (4% for females, trans, or gender diverse).

Frequency of the top 10 recorded concerns of 2020 counselling contacts by gender.  
(sorted in descending order of frequency)





## Protecting children and young people

Kids Helpline's response to protecting children is multi-faceted and comprehensive. We provide support and information to reduce vulnerability to harm, crisis intervention and long-term support to help young people navigate significant issues impacting their wellbeing.

We provide a national voice for young people through our advocacy undertakings. Kids Helpline plays a critical role in protecting children and young people across Australia.

### Dealing with the big issues

#### Child abuse, online safety, suicide, mental health and wellbeing

Children and young people contact us when they're feeling unsafe, when they're being abused, or when they feel like hurting themselves or others.

#### Suicide

13,212 counselling contacts (14.7% of all counselling contacts)

253 contacts a week, or 36 a day

1,150 contacts (9%) involved immediate intention of suicide or a current attempt

37% of all Duty of Care interventions initiated by Kids Helpline counsellors involved suicide attempt

#### Child abuse and family/ domestic violence

6,886 counselling contacts (7.6% of all counselling contacts)

132 contacts a week or 19 a day

35% of all Duty of Care interventions related to child abuse

18% received ongoing counselling support

#### Mental Health & Wellbeing

45,035 counselling contacts (50% of all counselling contacts)

861 contacts a week or 123 a day

\*A Duty of Care intervention involves Kids Helpline counsellors contacting emergency services and/or other agencies. Kids Helpline initiates Duty of Care concerns for significant harm or imminent risk of significant harm.

# My Circle is another world-first for Kids Helpline

Online group counselling is the new frontier for mental health because it responds to the changing habits of teens – digital natives who are increasingly using social media to connect.



My Circle creates a free, safe and private social networking space to support groups of young people aged 13–25 years who are experiencing similar problems, under the guidance of a qualified Kids Helpline counsellor.

It can be very empowering for young people to support one another and know they're not the only ones having these challenges.

The service offers 26 My Circle sessions a year up to 300 people recruited per circle, and 100 active members per group. Topics such as depression and anxiety, family relationships and conflict and wellbeing, are some of the current My Circle topics where participants can share their own experiences with others who understand.

"Research shows young people like social networking because it makes them feel like they are not alone with their problems," says Kids Helpline Queensland Service Manager Peter Henderson. "While the internet poses inherent dangers, safe and secure online group counselling is the way forward to help young people deal with issues such as anxiety or depression.

It also gives a means of reaching more young people than we can with one-on-one services. You may have up to 100 young people in one circle."

New topics in 2021 will include anxiety and depression, drugs and alcohol use, and general wellbeing.

My Circle will also expand its range of discussion topics and its reach, thanks to a \$1 million Bupa Health Foundation grant.



## Future Generation has supported Kids Helpline since 2014

Kids Helpline has been a proud recipient of funding from Future Generation (FG), which focuses on investing in charities that either support children and youth at risk, or charities that support youth mental health.

FG created a unique opportunity by seed funding and investing in an innovative pilot project that enabled Kids Helpline to trial and develop another world-first for Kids Helpline – Kids Helpline Circles.

This funding and partnership with Sydney University enabled Kids Helpline to develop and trial the concept, make refinements along the way, based on the participation of young people, and build an evidence base which included measurement of change achieved for young people.

The ability of Kids Helpline Circles to evidence impact, as well as the adaptability of the model for future use by other organisations, were all key to funding success in 2020. Bupa Health Foundation awarded a \$1 million grant over two years to continue to develop the program and take it to scale.

Renamed My Circle, the funding by Bupa Health Foundation would not have been possible without the investment made through the support of Future Generation.

**3,549 young people participated in 2020**



**Health Foundation**



## yourtown's Lived Experience Advisors

In 2019, **yourtown** embarked on an exciting project to build a network of young people with lived experience of suicide, and empower them to contribute their expertise to enhancing the development of the services, systems and policies that affect them. Since then, we've broadened our horizons from suicide to all aspects of mental health and vulnerability. By the end of 2020, our small but passionate group of three Lived Experience Advocates had grown to a truly inclusive Youth Participation Network of 29 young people.

All members of the Network are invited to participate in activities as they arise and choose when and how to give their time. Nine members wanting to have a regular commitment have created a Lived Experience

Advocacy Group that presents a 'Let's Talk' forum for **yourtown** staff every month to discuss and answer questions about difficult topics, from gender identity to managing chronic pain and disability. Despite the barriers presented by COVID-19, the group held four forums, with members who could not attend in person contributing via video link and a combination of in- person and remote audience participation.

Young advocates have been involved with opportunities to share publicly their lived experience to enrich the audience's understanding of the topic. Sharing their insights both within **yourtown** and to an external audience has helped reduce stigma and encouraged others to seek support if they are facing similar issues, or know someone who is.

### Tianna's story

I got into the University of Technology in Sydney and was put in a dorm all by myself. I had just turned 18. My high school experience had been intense – bullying, my parents getting a divorce, dealing with coming out. I couldn't keep it all together anymore.

I didn't have any family in New South Wales. I didn't have anyone I could contact. I'd been gifted some alcohol for my 18th and I also had a whole heap of painkillers. I'd been Googling 'how to kill myself' for a week and every time I did, the first thing that popped up on Google was [an ad saying] "if you need help, just call someone".

I had this little voice in the back of my head saying: "what if your mum finds out that you've killed yourself while she was overseas? What is your mum going to have to live with for the rest of her life?" I was like: "OK, I'll call Kids Helpline and see if they can tell me what to do."

At the end of the phone call the counsellor says: "Do you think you're still going to kill yourself? Are you going to make it through the night." And I said: "no, if you hang up on me, I'm going to die". And I knew I was going to die – without any doubt.

That counsellor stayed on the phone with me the entire time until the police came and found me in my dorm. Literally, the Kids Helpline counsellor saved my life. I wish I remembered his name. I wish I knew him.

So, at 18, I was going to die. Now, I'm 22 and I'm graduating at the end of the year. I study a Bachelor of

Arts at the University of Queensland. I major in ancient history/ modern history, as well as digital and media cultures. Digital and media cultures is the love of my life. I have never loved or enjoyed something more and I'm obsessed with it. So, it makes me very happy.

I don't have that plan to not be here anymore by a certain age. But I'm nervous about adult things and it's freaking me out a little bit. But it's also very exciting and a privilege for someone like me to just be scared of things like taxes. Adulthood is kind of manageable compared to what I went through when I was a teenager.

I called Kids Helpline last year in lockdown a couple of times because I really struggled with it. And I still like calling Kids Helpline. It's warmer – a softer landing pad than adult services.

Tianna, 22, is now a youth advisor in the Kids Helpline Lived Experience Network. She is juggling university studies with part-time work and an internship in the **yourtown** digital media department.

Young people are the experts on their own lives.



## Jeyden's story

To be a lived experience advocate means that I can share my experiences with others in a way that will help people, which is extremely important not only for me but for everyone who has gone through or will go through similar experiences. Knowing my lived experiences, whether good or bad, can help people, is one of the most amazing thoughts. Being someone who can speak up for change is so extremely important so that the bad things I've experienced don't happen to others. Taking feedback from people who have lived experience means firsthand insight into how things are actually working, if at all. Even if the difference I make is small, it's a step in the right direction; the more people who advocate, the more things will change for the better, so I definitely believe I have an impact, and so can everyone. It's been so incredible having the opportunity to help people; being a part of change has been fantastic.

Jeyden, age 18, has been a youth advisor in the Kids Helpline Lived Experience Network for 12 months.

## Mikaela's story

My decision to become a youth advocate for **yourtown** stemmed from a place of gratitude. As an adolescent and young adult, I was a regular user of Kids Helpline as I was struggling with some really challenging mental health issues and was having thoughts of suicide. I owe my life to Kids Helpline, and that is not something I say lightly.

I genuinely wanted to give back to Kids Helpline and **yourtown**, as they helped me so much. I know what it feels like to be treated with respect, empathy and compassion. I also know what it feels like when I am

not treated with respect, or when I feel like I am not being listened to and am not being understood.

It's great for me to be in a position where I can share my lived experiences and perspective, especially with the counsellors at the end of their training. My hope is that I positively impact and influence the way they practise as a counsellor, and that they become the absolute best counsellors they can be.

I also really wanted the counsellors to understand the impact that they will have on the children and young people who use the service, especially their regular clients, and to never underestimate the power of connection and being there to listen – it doesn't matter that it's a virtual service.

Being a lived experience advocate is not an easy thing to do. I become vulnerable and I expose myself by being so open and honest discussing times of my life that were very dark, challenging and traumatic. It can be physically and emotionally draining at times, but the support and training that **yourtown** provides to me as a youth advocate is critical and is so beneficial.

I continue to be a youth advocate for **yourtown** because I feel that I am making a difference. I feel empowered to share my story as I know that it's having an impact and that it is contributing to helping **yourtown** and Kids Helpline continue to be the best organisation it can be. But most of all, it is my way of giving back to an organisation that I owe my life to and that I am so grateful exists, because without it, I wouldn't be here today.

Mikaela, age 29, is a youth advocate for Kids Helpline Lived Experience Network.

She shares her lived experience and knowledge of mental health and Kids Helpline with our counsellors, the **yourtown** board and other young people at risk.





## The survey says: body image is a primary concern

Body image was the number one concern – regardless of gender – for Australian children and young people who answered Kids Helpline surveys in 2020.

Kids Helpline Pulse surveys were conducted through our social media channels and website in February and October/November last year and received more than 3000 responses from children and young people aged between 8 and 25.

Overwhelmingly, the most-cited issue of concern was body image. Other issues that were troubling children and young people were:

- Tricky emotions
- Stress or burnout
- School or university
- Friendship issues

While the hierarchy of results doesn't strictly represent the issues raised with Kids Helpline counsellors, it helps us understand the concerns of the wider youth community, says Kathryn Mandla, **yourtown** Head of Advocacy and Research.

"Almost 60% of the respondents in the first survey had never contacted Kids Helpline counsellors before," says Kathryn, "so, we are hearing from a very different group of children and young people."

"I don't know how to find myself, how to accept the person I am becoming and how I should express this."

"Many children will feel negatively about their body purely because they compare themselves with what's on their Instagram feed. Others are subjected to shameful abuse and that can be terribly damaging for the young person."

The finding that body image was the most troubling issue for most children and young people also aligns with information provided to us by the Office of the eSafety Commissioner, which noted an increase in young people's website queries about online body-shaming abuse during the pandemic.

These are issues Kids Helpline monitors closely so we can continue to support children and young people in the ways that help them best.

# Online safety and wellbeing

Kids Helpline's partnership with the Australian Government's eSafety Commissioner (eSafety) was particularly crucial in 2020. Visits to the eSafety website spiked, and children and young people distressed about their online experiences turned to Kids Helpline for support.

"The explosion we've seen in social media has exposed young people to a whole range of risks – cyberbullying, image-based abuse, online harassment, online grooming – and the range of devices and touchpoints that children and young people have now means there's a greater risk of being exposed to harmful material," says Tony FitzGerald, Kids Helpline's Virtual Services Manager.

"Because of COVID-19, young people were spending a lot more time online, and those issues became more widespread."

Since the partnership between Kids Helpline and the eSafety Commission began in 2015, our mutual aim has been to keep young people safe online, and to offer professional support in relation to online concerns. It's the same goal we pursued throughout our six-year partnership with eSafety's predecessor, the ground-breaking Cybersmart initiative.

That partnership began in 2009, at a time when Facebook was in its infancy and platforms such as Tik Tok and Snapchat were yet to appear.

"With eSafety, there are referral protocols in place where a young person may go to the eSafety commissioner to make a complaint about cyber

bullying," Tony says. "If eSafety recognises that young person needs additional support, they will refer them to us. Also, anyone who visits the eSafety website can click directly through to Kids Helpline and be given priority access to our counsellors."

Kids Helpline counsellors have always been on the cyber-security frontline, often the first to hear from our callers about growing threats such as sexting and image-based abuse.

Over the years, we've assisted with the development of eSafety initiatives such as Young and eSafe – a series of short videos and web content to help school students be respectful and responsible online – and participated in the eSafety and Mental Health Steering Group. In turn, eSafety has run training sessions for Kids Helpline counsellors to keep them up to date on the latest platforms and shifts.

"It's a strong relationship," says Tony. "Both eSafety (and previously Cybersmart.gov.au) have been funded by the Commonwealth Government. In 2019, we marked the 10th anniversary of this partnership and, together, we've worked tirelessly to continue to support and protect young people online."





## Our new counselling centre opens in New South Wales

Kids Helpline opened a second bricks-and-mortar counselling centre in 2020 in response to the rising support needs of children and young people, particularly in New South Wales (NSW).

The Kids Helpline Counselling Centre in Blacktown, western Sydney, officially began taking calls in April 2020. It's the first time Kids Helpline has had a physical presence outside Queensland.

An initial team of 15 professional counsellors, supervisors and support staff in Sydney were joined by another 29 by the end of the year. Counselling and support staff have been funded via a \$5.5 million investment from the NSW Government.

"New South Wales represents almost a third of contacts to Kids Helpline," says Tracy Adams, CEO of **yourtown**.

"With more counsellors, we can give New South Wales young people greater access to counselling support, free up our Queensland counsellors to reach more young people in other states, and potentially prevent more serious mental health issues."

Calls and contacts originating from NSW are prioritised and directed to the Sydney centre. Any contacts not answered are redirected to the

Queensland counselling team. Similarly, if NSW has capacity, it takes up any overflow of national contacts redirected from the Queensland centre.

Funding for the NSW centre is part of a larger state government investment into mental health crisis support, which in turn fulfills recommendations made after the government's 2017 Senate Inquiry into the Prevention of Youth Suicide.

Tracy Adams gave evidence at the hearing and presented a business model for the centre to the NSW Minister for Mental Health.

"This is a direct example of how we've been able to use policy reform to increase our capacity to respond to the needs of children," says Ms Adams.

"Our aim is to support thousands more children and young people and provide help when they need it most."





The timing of our new counselling centre's opening was both fortuitous and a little stressful – coming in the wake of the Australia-wide bushfires and as panic and uncertainty about COVID-19 was reaching its peak.

Contacts to Kids Helpline in the first quarter of 2020 were up 10% while in the second quarter we experienced an increase of 40% on the previous year. NSW Service Manager Sarah Van Bentum says it was a challenging time on many fronts.

"We were launching our services and dealing with the pandemic and all that entailed – the sanitising and social distancing; and hiring and training new staff throughout," she says.

"We had a new office, geographically distanced from head office. Since we started, we've been getting 9,000 contacts a week – the staff don't know what a quiet day looks like! But we have an awesome team who are very motivated to do the work."

That team comes from a range of social support backgrounds – including psychology, social work, migrant support services, health, benevolent societies, church charities and NGOs.

Indy is one of the youngest counsellors at the NSW centre – a 23-year-old social work graduate drawn to the work because of the mental health concerns she had seen in some of her close relationships.

"So often, the voices of young people are ignored or diminished because they are not yet adults,"

she says. "However, I believe that young people often have creative and positive ways of working through tough times."

Her colleague Effie, 21, who holds a Bachelor of Science in Psychology, is already seeing the effect Kids Helpline counsellors have on young people's lives.

"There have been a few instances where young people call back after weeks or months just to share a positive change or success in their life relating to something from our last session," Effie says.

"This is a hugely rewarding experience. We hear about that impact of that empowering partnership formed between our clients and the Kids Helpline counsellors."



# Kids Helpline @ School

Early intervention and prevention assists children and young people with decision making and problem solving skills to effectively deal with challenges over the course of their lives. In addition to our core counselling service, Kids Helpline's school's program and self-help resources aim to help prevent and protect.

Kids Helpline @ School (KAS) is a free early intervention and prevention program available to all primary schools across Australia.

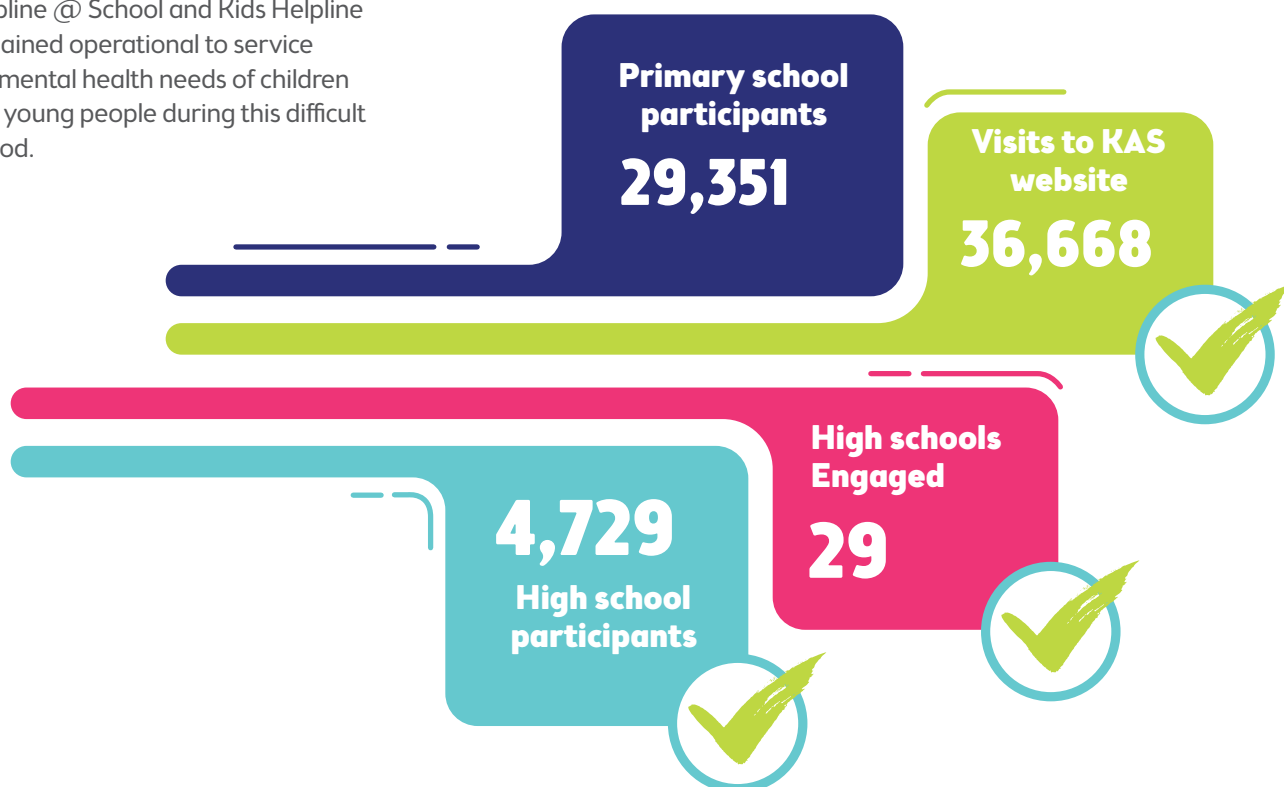
In 2020, schools participated from every state and territory, and more than a quarter (29%) of participating schools were located in regional or remote localities.

Teachers made extensive use of online educational resources developed by Kids Helpline to support schools' participation in the program, with 36,668 visits to the Kids Helpline @ School website home page.

Kids Helpline @ School has also helped increase awareness of the services provided by Kids Helpline among primary schools across Australia, particularly during COVID-19 outbreaks.

In 2020, there was a 60% increase in first-time contacts about mental health from the 5-12-year-old cohort.

While some services closed their doors during COVID-19 lockdowns, Kids Helpline @ School and Kids Helpline remained operational to service the mental health needs of children and young people during this difficult period.



Kids Helpline @ High School North QLD is funded by the Northern Queensland Primary Health Network (NQPHN). This program aims to increase the knowledge of mental wellness and help-seeking of high school students in the NQPHN region with topics covering School Transitions, Emotional Intelligence, Respectful Relationships and Developing Resilience.

“We cannot advocate strongly enough for the fantastic service the Kids Helpline @ School counsellors offer to our students, staff and wider school community. The counsellors are extremely knowledgeable, and their presentations are always delivered in a child-friendly and sensitive manner.”

Jill Scott, Head of Special Education Services, Beachmere State School



Bupa Health Foundation is a principal partner of Kids Helpline and enables Kids Helpline @ School to be delivered as a free early intervention program to all Australian primary schools. Bupa funded the Kids Helpline @ School Wellbeing program from 1 January to 30 June. This then became Kids Helpline @ School effective from 1 July 2020.

The program uses tertiary qualified **yourtown** counsellors and video conferencing technology to promote student emotional literacy, resilience building, digital safety and citizenship, coping strategies, and help-seeking behaviours.

Despite the incursion of COVID-19, Kids Helpline @ School was able to exceed its target of engaging children across metropolitan, regional and rural Australia.

This achievement was largely due to the virtual nature of technology as a platform for program delivery, and the ability of the program to rapidly adapt to changes in student locations from classroom to home.

A new topic addressing the anxieties of children in relation to COVID-19 was developed in May 2020 and became the second most frequently held session for the year (122 sessions), particularly requested by teachers of Grades 3-6. Managing Emotions was the most frequently held topic throughout the year with 152 sessions while Developing Resilience was the third most frequently run topic with 114 sessions.

An evaluative study carried out with 1,588 participating teachers and students found high levels of program impact and strong satisfaction with its processes.

In particular:

- 100% of teachers found the program was likely to have increased student understanding of the topic discussed
- 100% of teachers found the program would have increased students' understanding of help-seeking options
- 100% of teachers reported the session was likely to have positively influenced students' future choices and decision-making
- 97% of grades 1-3 students reported after the session at least one source of help available to them
- 91% of grades 4-6 students would consider recommending Kids Helpline to a friend
- 81% of students said they would consider contacting Kids Helpline if they had a concern or worry
- 73% of students reported gaining new helpful ideas on how to deal with the issue discussed
- 70% of students reported an intention to try something new learned from their session

## OPTUS

For more than 20 years, Kids Helpline enjoyed a strong partnership with Optus.

Optus funded Digital Thumbprint with Kids Helpline from July 2017 to June 2020.

We are proud of what this partnership achieved over the past 20 years – supporting children and young people to live safe, happy lives.



# Achieving great awareness with kids & community

Achieving awareness for the Kids Helpline service for kids and young people, parents, carers and other family members involves an intensive and integrated messaging strategy, across multiple platforms throughout the year. The key message is always: “we are here for kids and young people, any time and for any reason”.

Here's a summary of what the marketing team undertook in 2020:

## Channel 10 Partnership

Engaged with Network 10 across their kids programming and adult news programs to deliver relevant and authentic in-program segment content to attract, engage and inform Network 10's audiences. An investment of \$153,000 resulted in a significant return – total value of close to \$2M.

## Pedestrian TV (PTV) and Series 2 of HRU?

This eight-part national video series talked specifically to 16-25 year olds with episodes discussing the various challenges and emotions experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. The campaign resulted in a total audience reach of 3.6M.

## School Bus Advertising with GoTransit Media

1,900 interior bus panels were placed in market. Creative messaging targeting school children across QLD, NSW, NT and TAS reached 1.8M in 2020.

## Social Campaigns

YouTube Kids social campaigns targeting 5-12 year olds during the COVID-19 Pandemic were delivered both

nationally and across multiple states during COVID-19 lockdowns. These campaigns achieved nearly 1.9M total impressions and 0.36M total completed video views.

Snapchat, Facebook and Instagram campaigns during the Easter School holidays were targeted to young teens aged 13-17, and delivered an enormous 10.5M impressions, reaching 1.37M, and resulting in 0.54M post engagements across social platforms.

Targeted Snapchat campaigns aimed at reaching young teens used creative messaging resulting in a cumulative 9.1M impressions.

Twitch and YouTube campaign using an animated gaming video to engage teenagers, in particular males, resulted in 0.25M Twitch impressions and nearly 1M YouTube impressions.

These marketing activations achieved some exceptional brand-building and awareness outcomes for Kids Helpline across 2020 – a year when the marketing calendar and usual marketing activations were significantly disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.







## Kids Helpline in the news

Kids Helpline was mentioned in a total of 20,110 news reports between 1 January and 31 December 2020.

This coverage had a potential cumulative audience/circulation of more than 122,619,442.

Kids Helpline remained the second most mentioned organisation in media reports about the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.



# Digital transformation ahead for Kids Helpline

The vision is to put young people firmly in control of how they use and access Kids Helpline services and content in the future.

**yourtown** Chief Information Officer Helen Vahdat says digital transformation will also allow them to monitor and keep a record of their interactions with Kids Helpline. It will direct users quickly and intuitively to the service or content that meets their need to help cut down waiting times for counsellors.

“We aren’t talking about creating something for specific technology because Instagram, Facebook, Whatsapp, TikTok – these are the current social media platforms, but we have to be able to adapt to what comes next. We’re a digital service and we have to stay at the forefront,” Helen says.

“We’re building this future for the generation today, and the children who are in their infancy right now. They’re all digital natives, so we have to have a service model that’s native to the way they think and operate. This generation and the next – they know what they want and where they want to find it.”

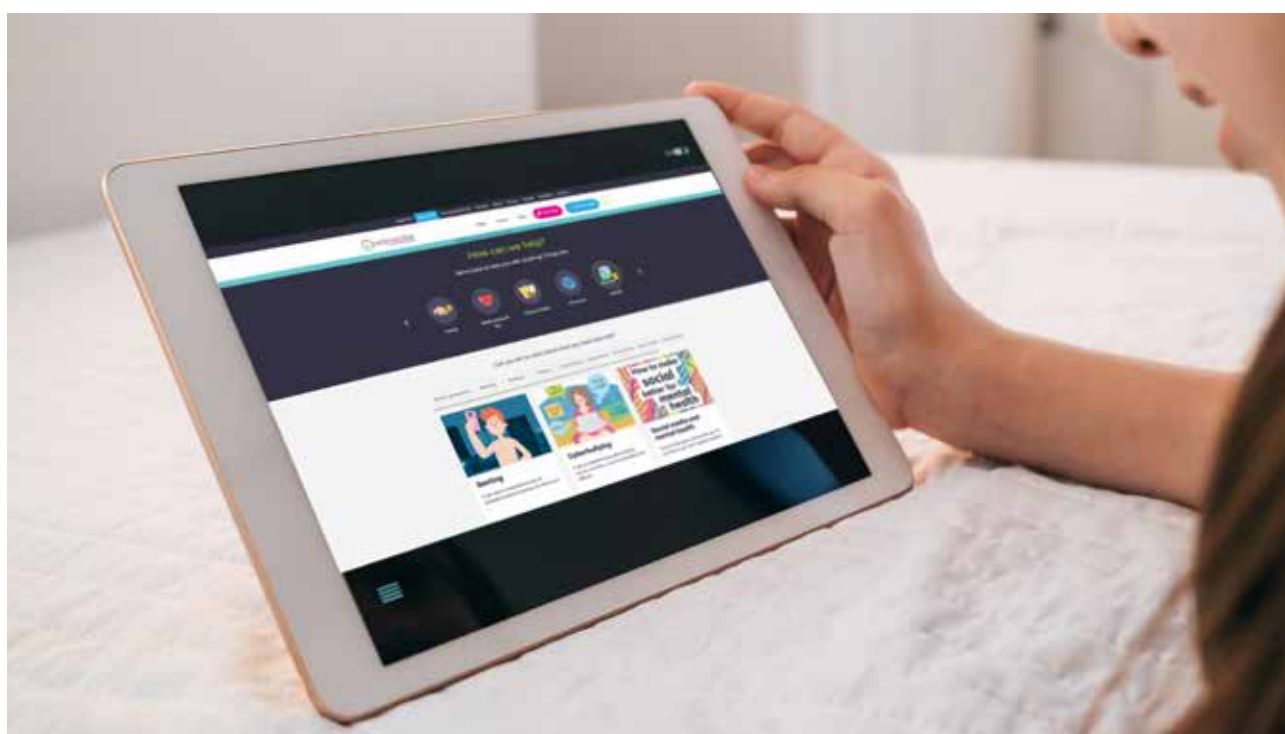
Dr Andrew Campbell, who is working with Kids Helpline developing the world-first, peer-to-peer online group program, My Circle says “This is a massive positive change that will revolutionise quality of care, work management for the counsellors and better data security for the Kids Helpline clients,”

“It is world leading and there’s going to be as much learned as what is achieved. So, we’re constantly evolving as we learn new ways that young people want to get help. The counsellors need to stay on that journey with them, and they will need to upskill to maintain relevance to deliver best mental health practice.”

Plans for 2021 include bringing in technology partners to help build the digital systems, and to continue talking to young people to ensure our methods stay fresh and relevant.

“We need to keep asking: what do they need to be self-sufficient from Kids Helpline and our **yourtown** services and how do we use technology to support that?” says Helen.

“Our aim isn’t to have young people as our clients. It’s about how we can support them in their journey and build themselves up to live safe, happy lives.”





# Cultural differences

At the individual level, Kids Helpline employs a therapeutic framework focused on empowering children and young people to deal with issues in their lives by identifying and developing their personal resources. It delivers confidential, non-judgemental counselling and support via a range of communication channels (phone, email, WebChat and My Circle) to support children's sense of trust and comfort in using the service and their ability to access it freely, from anywhere.

Cultural background has an influence on children and young people's concerns. The frequency with which the 10 most common concerns were discussed in counselling contacts in 2020 would appear to be related to the cultural background of the child or young person (where known).

## Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander counselling contacts

Contacts from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children and young people were more likely than contacts from children and young people of other cultural backgrounds (either CALD or Caucasian Australian) to focus on:

- mental health concerns (33%)
- suicide-related issues (21%)
- self-harm (11%).

## CALD counselling contacts

Contacts from CALD children and young people appeared slightly or moderately more likely to focus on:

- emotional wellbeing issues (27%)
- family relationship issues (21%)
- friend and peer relationships (10%)
- dating and partner relationships (10%)
- self-concept (8%)
- study and education issues (7%).





“I don’t think we’ve seen the full impact of the pandemic on mental health generally, and particularly children and young people yet.”

Leo Hede – Kids Helpline Project Manager

## Duty of Care interventions

In 2020, Kids Helpline played a critical role in protecting children and young people across Australia.

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.

There was a dramatic increase in the number of crisis contacts to Kids Helpline in 2020 that required a Duty of Care intervention. That is, when a counsellor assessed that a young person was at risk of harm – either self-harm or harm from another person.

Duty of Care interventions were up 48% from 2019. During the second Victorian lockdown – in the months of July, August and September – interventions in that state were up 46%, compared with three months earlier.

Duty of Care interventions require counsellors to call in emergency services or other protection agencies. “Stressed families meant we heard from young people at risk of abuse from family members,” says Leo Hede, Kids Helpline Project Manager.

“Kids Helpline counsellors understood that many households had become particularly tense during lockdown. Where schools and other community connections may have previously played a role supporting young people at risk of abuse, the extended lockdowns and home schooling may have led to an increase in young people seeking support from us.”



## Duty of Care – Cool heads reign in times of crisis

Kids Helpline has always been available anytime and for any reason children and young people want to connect for a chat when they're lonely or an ear when they need to get something off their chest.

Over the past five years the number of crisis contacts and complex mental health issues has increased.

On those occasions, police or ambulance may be called in. Counsellors are trained and prepared for the action they need to take.

"The counsellor will have the support of a supervisor and they'll work with the client to increase their safety," says **yourtown** Virtual Services Manager Tony FitzGerald.

"This could involve safety planning or having them commit to not act on self-harm or suicide plans, or perhaps to seek support from a trusted adult. When that's not possible, or the risk is significant and immediate, a Duty of Care intervention is triggered."

At all stages, the counsellor reassures the client, makes them aware of what is happening with the intervention, and will stay with them on the phone until emergency services or child protection officers arrive.

"One of the things that Kids Helpline does really well is that we respond and we're there 24/7, particularly during a time of crisis"

Tony FitzGerald – Virtual Services Manager



"I'd love to think in our future we'll be making more apps and solutions with young people. They're the ones who know what they want. How empowering to give young people the opportunity to bring us their ideas and for us to make them happen."

Tracy Adams – **yourtown** CEO

## Niggle

The Niggle by Kids Helpline app is the result of ongoing collaboration between **yourtown** and QUT researchers. This technology-driven initiative encourages users aged 13-25 years to use the app and track their wellbeing. The user receives personalised information, videos, podcasts, quizzes and tips to help tame their niggles. They can also connect with other users to share stories. In 2020, Niggle was downloaded 17,210 times with the highest demand recorded in May and August.



# Funding support

**yourtown** undertakes financial year reporting July to June. Audited financial statements apply all relevant financial standards and are available at **[report.yourtown.com.au](https://report.yourtown.com.au)**

Kids Helpline enjoys funding support from across the community including Art Union supporters, donors, corporate partners, governments, schools and bequests.

**Principal Partner**



**yourtown** proudly partners with the following companies



Government support





## Acknowledgements

Kids Helpline would like to pay tribute to Australia's emergency services and those on the front line for their work during an extraordinarily difficult year in 2020.

The number of Duty of Care interventions Kids Helpline enacted in 2020 was up 48% on 2019 numbers, requiring more emergency callouts to crisis situations such as self-harm, suicide attempts, and family and domestic violence.

It's reassuring for the community to know that each state and territory's emergency services continue to

support Kids Helpline as we help children and young people at risk.

We know our nation's first responders – the paramedics, police officers and professional and volunteer firefighters – are among the world's best.

**We thank you all wholeheartedly.**

## How you can support Kids Helpline

Despite the generosity of the community, Kids Helpline is unable to meet the current demand from children and young people for counselling and other support.

'We are here anytime and for any reason.' This is the promise Kids Helpline has made to the children and

young people of Australia. Please help us to keep this promise by supporting the **yourtown** Art Union or donating today: <https://kidshelpline.com.au/about/support-us>.





**We're here.  
Anytime. Any Reason.**

**kidshelpline.com.au  
1800 55 1800 Free Call**

**If you have any questions, please contact:**

Maree Reason-Cain  
Corporate Affairs & Media Advisor  
0423 843 786



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

