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# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Access to Kids Helpline @ School soars during 2021

Latest figures reveal that the [Kids Helpline @ School](#) program, delivered by Kids Helpline in partnership with the Bupa Foundation, doubled its reach to 55,000 primary school students across 325 schools over 2021.

Through the Bupa Foundation's support, Kids Helpline @ School was able to bring qualified Kids Helpline counsellors into more primary school classrooms and homes via video link to promote wellbeing and normalise help-seeking.

Tracy Adams, CEO of **yourtown**, which runs Kids Helpline, said the program helps children with practical ways to manage their mental health and wellbeing.

"Children in Australia are bearing the brunt of a global environment characterised by change, crisis, and uncertainty. It's our responsibility to equip as many of them as possible with the tools they need to stay mentally healthy, resilient and to keep themselves safe," Ms Adams said.

"The Kids Helpline @ School program has proved to be a fantastic way to connect with more children in addition to the delivery of Kids Helpline's current suite of virtual counselling options – telephone, WebChat and email counselling, and to show students where to find help when they need it.

Surveys conducted following the sessions showed an encouraging level of impact for both students and teachers. The surveys indicated that, after the sessions, around 90% of students could identify ways to find help and 80% would recommend Kids Helpline to a friend if they were experiencing distress. Of the eighteen sessions on offer, the most popular across all grade levels addressed key topics such as emotional management, developing resilience and help-seeking.

Hisham El-Ansary, Bupa Asia Pacific CEO, said "investing in innovative prevention and early intervention mental health programs is vital for ensuring children can thrive and live up to their full potential. It teaches them that it's completely OK to ask for help when you need it" Mr El-Ansary said.

"We are really pleased that through the Bupa Foundation, we're able to make a tangible contribution to improving the wellbeing of young Australians."

Kids Helpline @ School is aiming to reach a further 55,000 young people in 2022 by continuing to use the new modes of delivery developed in 2021. The early intervention program is available free to all primary schools across the country, providing evidence-informed lessons that are fun and educational and promote mental health and resilience strategies for children who are growing up in an ever-changing world.

To date, the Bupa Foundation has committed more than \$1.45 million to the Kids Helpline partnership and is continuing its support in 2022.

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## **About Bupa**

Bupa is an international healthcare group which has been committed to a purpose of longer, healthier, happier lives and making a better world for more than 70 years.

In Asia Pacific, Bupa supports more than 6.5 million customers in Australia, New Zealand and Hong Kong SAR through a broad range of health and care services including health insurance, aged care, dental, optical, medical, hearing and medical visa services.

Employing almost 20,000 people, we believe that we can make a real difference to the lives of people across Asia Pacific through our values, purpose and the way that we deliver personalised care.

Since 2005, the Bupa Foundation has invested more than \$35 million to support more than 130 health and care projects in Australia and New Zealand.