

# Media release



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## Thousands turning to Kids Helpline for Christmas coping

"Tis the season to be jolly, but often stress and unresolved family issues come to an unhappy head over the pressure of the festive season," stated **yourtown** Chief Executive Officer Tracy Adams.

"While the Christmas festive season usually brings joy and family camaraderie, for many people the festive season can also be a time of increased stress, overwhelming pressure, or loneliness. The Christmas ideal simply doesn't stack up for everyone," Ms Adams said.

Ms Adams is encouraging children and young people who feel overwhelmed this festive season to pick up the phone or use webchat to connect to Kids Helpline.

"This can be such a hard time of year for many young people who may be struggling with a range of issues in their lives," stated Ms Adams.

"The most frequently raised issue for Kids Helpline counsellors is mental health concerns, and not far behind that is emotional wellbeing," said Ms Adams.

"As with any anniversary, memories of distressing or sad events can also flood back over this time. For example, if someone close has passed away or parents are no longer together the holiday season tends to magnify the absence of the person," she said.

"Many people build up to this time of year with great hopes only to feel disappointed if their hopes aren't fulfilled," stated Ms Adams.

**yourtown** is reminding children and young people that Kids Helpline will be available for all those who need the service. Professional counsellors will be available 24 hours a day across the festive season for those aged 5 to 25 years of age on **1800 55 1800**.

"It's important to think realistically about the holidays, **yourtown** encourages parents to look for the signs and symptoms of depression in those around them. No one should feel like they have to keep silent about depression or anxiety," Ms Adams said.

"While we continue to strive to expand our services even further to continue to protect children and young people, we were unable to respond to 138,986 of the 290,144 contacts due to funding shortfalls," she said.

"Rising demand and a lack of funding are leaving children's needs unmet. We continue to call for change to government funding to substantially increase Kids Helpline funding levels to match the current community-generated revenue," stated Ms Adams.

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