



BoysTown

Fresh start.
New hope.



Kids Helpline @ School

Year 1

Evaluation Report

'It reassured me that I always have someone to talk to'

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Kids Helpline @ School - What is it?

Kids Helpline @ School is an innovative partnership between Optus and Kids Helpline, designed to bring professional counsellors into primary school classrooms via video technology with the aim of increasing students' mental health literacy and help-seeking behaviours.

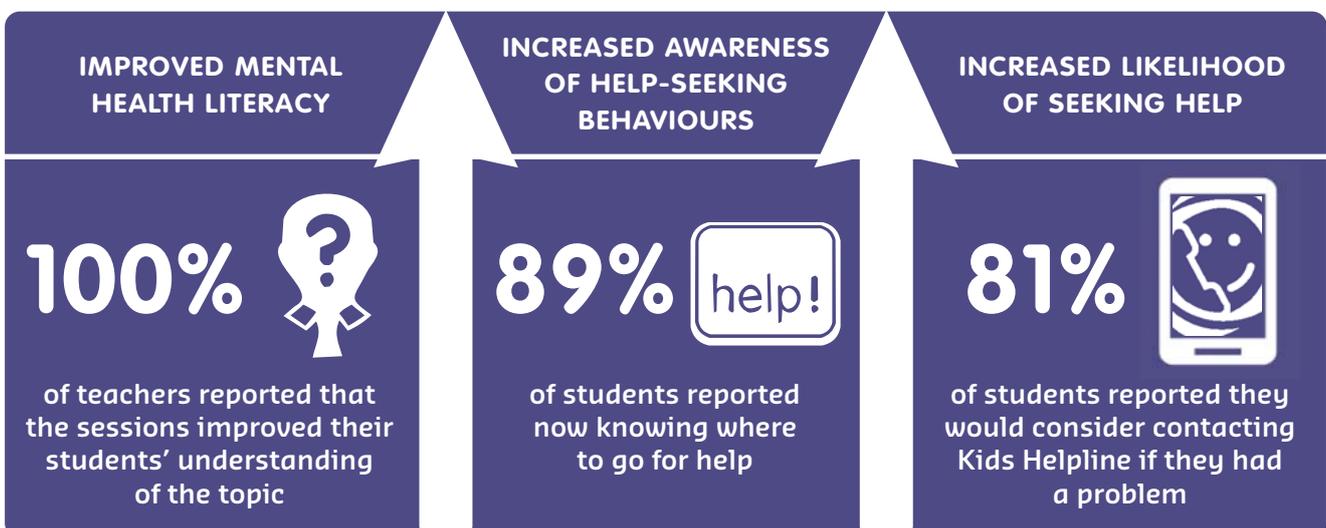
Who we've helped



How we've helped



What difference did it make?



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report details the findings of an evaluation study of the early intervention and prevention program Kids Helpline @ School (KHL @ School). This program, funded by Optus, offers primary schools a professional counsellor facilitated classroom session to discuss topics impacting on the lives of students. Sessions have been developed around the most common issues primary school students seek information or help for through the Kids Helpline counselling service, including bullying, difficulty making and maintaining friendships and emotional wellbeing. These are issues which can have a significant impact on a child's long-term mental health when ignored or when no active interventions are offered.

The Kids Helpline@School program gives students the opportunity to participate in an interactive information session with the aim of increasing their mental health and well-being related knowledge, explore their coping strategies, build their resilience and develop their help-seeking knowledge and behaviours.

The program commenced in May 2013 and the subsequent 15 months have seen its ongoing development including:

- negotiations with State Education Departments and the private education sector to align organisational technology systems,
- a continuous review of and modifications to the Kids Helpline @ School microsites and session booking system,
- continuous additions and improvements to the range and quality of topics and resource support materials offered.

In its first year of operation 63 schools and 4,055 primary school children completed 140 classroom sessions on issues as diverse as bullying, making friends, managing worry and coping with transitions to high school. Further information outlining how this model of universal mental health promotion, early intervention and prevention aligns with the evidence of what works best with young children and how it complements the Australian government's preferred prevention and early intervention strategy is provided in Part 1.

An evaluative study designed to measure the Kids Helpline @ School program quality and its impact on teachers and students commenced during October 2013 and continued through till May 2014. Data was collected from teachers and student participants using a mix of qualitative and quantitative survey methods and contextual information was gathered from Kids Helpline clinical and operational support staff. Additional data was also collected using the KHL @ School web micro-site database reporting tools and Google Analytics reports.

This evaluation study found the KHL @ School program to have been highly successful in achieving its objectives and would recommend the continuation of funding to support this innovative model of delivering mental health promotion and early intervention services to young Australians.

In particular, the evaluation found that the program:

1. Increased awareness among teachers about mental health and well-being related issues affecting primary school students, with 95% of teachers reporting a consolidation or increase in their mental health literacy,
2. Increased awareness among students about mental health and well-being related issues, with 75% of Grades 4-7 students able to recall information about the topic discussed,
3. Increased student awareness of help-seeking behaviours, with 89% of Grade 4-7 students reporting they knew where to go for help following their session,
4. Increased student awareness of the existence of Kids Helpline, with 67% of Grades 1-3 and 36% of Grades 4-7 students reporting no prior knowledge of the service,
5. Improved student awareness of how to contact Kids Helpline, with 80% of Grades 4-7 able to recall the phone number and 70% able to recall the website address post session,
6. Increased the likelihood of students engaging in help-seeking behaviours, with 98% of Grade 1-3 able to identify at least one source of help available to them and 81% of Grades 4-7 reporting they would or might contact Kids Helpline if they had a problem. In addition, 96% of Grades 4-7 students would consider recommending a friend contact the service,
7. Led to behavioural and emotional changes in students, with teachers reporting observations of children incorporating new well-being skills into daily behaviours and children self-reporting improved emotional well-being.

PART 1

Purpose of the Study

Kids Helpline delivers telephone and online counselling services to children and young people up to the age of 25 years. The service aims, among other objectives, to address the gap between prevalence rates of mental and emotional health disorders and young people's engagement with mental health treatment programs. Significant factors in achieving this goal are the service's use of child friendly technology, child centred values and empowering approaches. Twenty five years of monitoring Kids Helpline service access and referrals, population wide studies of rates of mental health disorders in Australian children and parallel rates of mental health treatment levels has led to a profound understanding within BoysTown of the need to lift rates of mental health literacy and help-seeking among children, particularly young males.

Kids Helpline @ School was conceived as a way to contribute to these goals. The program offers primary school classroom sessions with a counsellor and is designed to:

- raise awareness of and encourage discussions about mental health and well-being related issues; and
- deliver information to students about help-seeking behaviours and sources of help such as Kids Helpline.

While the 2013-2014 Kids Helpline @ School Annual Report offers comprehensive coverage of the KHL @ School program outputs for the past financial year, this evaluation report seeks to offer an understanding of the short-term impact of classroom sessions.

Literature that Informed the Project

In 2009 The Hon Jeff Kennet AC, Chairman of *Beyondblue: the national depression initiative* wrote in his foreword to the KidsMatter Evaluation Report

'Children who feel good about themselves and who have good mental health are in a better position to enjoy and benefit from friendships, family relationships and learning opportunities'ⁱ.

The Chairman also noted that

'(C)hildren who do not feel good about themselves can have a hard time at school in both the playground and the classroom, (and) if their problems aren't addressed early and the problems persists, (it) could lead to them having ongoing difficulties and fewer opportunities as they mature'ⁱ.

If children are left feeling unsupported through common childhood experiences such as bullying or an inability to make or maintain friendships then symptoms of mental health problems such as eating disordersⁱⁱ, self-harm, violent behaviours and psychotic symptoms may be more likely to emergeⁱⁱⁱ.

Children and adolescents with emotional and behavioural problems have lower self-esteem and are less likely to achieve in school and engage productively with their peers than children with fewer problems^{viii}. Without intervention, mental health issues in younger children can continue into adulthood. This life trajectory can lead to problems

not only for the individual but also society. There is much evidence indicating that poor mental health and well-being are closely linked to socially and economically destructive experiences for both individuals and the wider community, including homelessness^{iv}, drug and alcohol abuse^v, unemployment^{vi}, domestic violence^{vii} and increased contact with the criminal justice system^{vi}.

These connections are particularly significant for the future of Australia given the following three considerations:

1. Data from the first Australian National Survey of Mental Health and Well-Being with a child-specific component conducted in 1998 showed 14% of primary school aged children experienced mental health difficulties^{viii*}
2. There is little research to indicate accurate rates of access to all forms of mental health and well-being related support services for primary school aged children, however the most commonly accepted measure is rates of access to Medicare funded primary mental health care services. For primary school aged children this was estimated at only 3.6% in 2011-2012^{ix}.
3. Low rates of access to a range of services including counselling, medication and information is thought to be linked to a lack of recognition by the person or family that a mental illness or disorder exists and a lack of awareness that effective interventions are available^{ix}.

**Results from the second child and adolescent component of the National Survey of Mental Health and Well-Being carried out in 2013 have yet to be released*

There are good reasons for concern in relation to the future of mental health in Australian individuals and its associated impact on society. With a growing population and estimated prevalence rates of one in five Australians aged 16-85 experiencing a mental health disorder^x, a strong focus needs to be placed on offering population-wide mental health promotion strategies. The research tells us that experiences such as bullying or lack of friendships can contribute to the development of disorders including anxiety and depression^{xi, xiv}, therefore strategies should start with encouraging young children to talk about experiences such as bullying, not coping with change or an inability to make and maintain friendships with the aim of normalising the concept of seeking help if problems are identified. The importance of responding to the gap between the numbers of children with emotional and mental health difficulties and the levels of timely support and treatment interventions cannot be overestimated, with AIHW estimating in 2003 that mental health disorders constitute the leading cause of disability burden in Australia, accounting for an estimated 24% of the total years lost due to disability^{xii}.

As noted above, accepted research tells us that in order to seek help for emotional and mental health problems, people need to become aware that they have a problem (mental health literacy)^{xiii}. A 2007 review of the literature on mental health promotion and early interventions specifically offered in early childhood and primary school settings found that universal approaches for all young children, regardless of risk, can increase awareness of risk factors, foster the development of their personal skills and a sense of agency and, by influencing their environment, increase resilience factors and offset the effect of risk factors for mental health disorders^{xiv}.

This 2007 study identified evidence which suggests that Kids Helpline @ School educational strategies are in line with the typology of activities which positively influence mental health and wellbeing, encourage help-seeking behaviours and prevent mental

health disorders in young children. Identified best practice universal mental health and well-being promotional approaches include activities which create supportive environments (such as encouraging positive interactions with peers and adults, focusing on strengths, reinforcing “brave” behaviours, increasing awareness and monitoring of risk factors and managing school transition), and teach personal skills that protect against adversity and stress in young people’s lives (e.g.: creating an awareness of self and others, encouraging positive attitudes and values, and teaching responsible decision-making, social skills and coping skills)^{xiv}. With an increased sense of agency and a language with which to articulate their problems, children become more willing and able to speak up when things go wrong and successful pathways to positive adult mental health and well-being become more likely.

The 2013 National Mental Health Report, developed for the Department of Health and Ageing, identified school based programs as the best way to promote mental health literacy and help-seeking behaviours. The Report specifically identified the national mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention (PPEI) initiative KidsMatter as providing an effective overarching mental health and well-being framework through which schools should be delivering mental health literacy programs. The report also identified that only 37% of primary schools were implementing such a framework^{ix}.

Kids Helpline @ School, seeing the alignment between KidsMatter’s school and community focus and its own direct child focus, was active early on in developing a collaborative “Working Together” partnership with the national PPEI initiative to encourage schools to teach mental health literacy directly to children as part of a broader commitment to their students’ mental health. Kids Helpline @ School and KidsMatter now actively work together to increase each other’s program referrals, thus increasing the rate at which schools are adopting the Australian government’s preferred model of embedding mental health literacy programs inside an overarching school and community mental health framework^{ix}.

The consequence of this positioning is that the KHL @ School program, oriented towards risk factor reduction and mental health promoting factors, is not only aligned with best practice as identified in the accepted research, but through its partnership with KidsMatter embodies the Australian Government’s preferred model of prevention and early intervention. Through these two orientations Kids Helpline @ School believes it will contribute to increased help-seeking and consequential improved mental health and well-being in individual students in the short term and have a positive influence on critical socio-economic issues impacted in the long-term by poor mental health.

PART 2

Evaluation Methodology

A thorough analysis of the outputs of this program over the 2013-2014 financial year is provided in the KHL @ School Annual Report. This Evaluation Report complements the Annual Report by providing the results of feedback from students and teachers collected over the course of the program's first year along with contextual material and information provided by program staff.

Although no objectives were outlined for the program in the Optus/BoysTown Sponsorship Agreement dated 1 May 2013, two objectives were identified in the Scope section of the 2013 Kids Helpline @ School/Optus Business Project Plan. These were to:

1. Increase awareness amongst teachers regarding mental health and well-being issues affecting primary school students
2. Increase awareness and increase likelihood of engaging in help-seeking behaviours and thereby help address current gaps in mental health service provision to young people.

These two goals suggested the following three questions as appropriate to investigate through the current evaluative study:

1. Did the program achieve an increased awareness amongst teachers regarding mental health and well-being issues affecting primary school students?
2. Did the program achieve an increased awareness of help-seeking behaviours in young people?
3. Did the program lead to an increased likelihood of primary school students engaging in help-seeking behaviours?

The Kids Helpline @ School Deliverables documented in the Business Project Plan also outlined four areas for evaluative study:

1. Were the Communication Strategies used with students and teachers effective?
2. How well did the program connect with students?
3. How relevant was the information discussed?
4. How effective was the overall program?

Study Design

Both data and method-triangulation approaches were used to strengthen the quality, rigour and dependability of the study findings. The variety of data sources included:

- Student participants
- Teacher participants
- The Clinical Practice Supervisor responsible for developing the counsellor resource material and training and debriefing counsellors
- KHL @ School Project Officer

A combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods was used. Specifically, this included:

- Data collected continuously from the KHL @ School booking database since June 2013
- Google Analytics reports on the KHL @ School micro-website page views
- Structured student questionnaires distributed by mail to all teachers facilitating classroom sessions during the two month period October-November 2013 for distribution to students following their session (32 sessions)
- An online structured questionnaire available continuously to all participating teachers from October 2013 to May 15 2014 via an emailed link following their classroom session
- Open ended interview questions with the Project Officer and Clinical Supervisor throughout the year.

Measures

Two student surveys were developed to account for differing ages and developmental stages:

1. A two page sheet was developed for Grades 1-3 using colourful symbols of "Yes" and "No" to denote the child's response to three questions. Colourful graphics were also included for children to nominate their choice of people they might talk to if they had a problem. Keeping with the idea of engaging children through fun-based activities, a picture outline of the Kids Helpline website mascot dog was included for the children to colour in and name (see Appendix 2).
2. For Grades 4-7, the survey contained two pages including both colourful "Yes"/"No"/"Unsure" or "Yes"/"No"/"Maybe" answer options to questions with an additional three spaces for students to give qualitative information about why the session was or was not helpful and what they had learned about the topic and about Kids Helpline. A further two questions sought to clarify the level of information retention relating to the Kids Helpline contact details. Again, colourful graphics and a maze game were included to enhance engagement (see Appendix 3).

A third survey was developed for teachers and gathered both qualitative and quantitative information through free text and scaling responses to a range of statements describing program process quality and effectiveness (see Appendix 4).

Survey Respondents

A total of 461 students and teachers from schools with grades ranging from 1-7, and from all states and regional locations responded to the invitation to complete a survey.

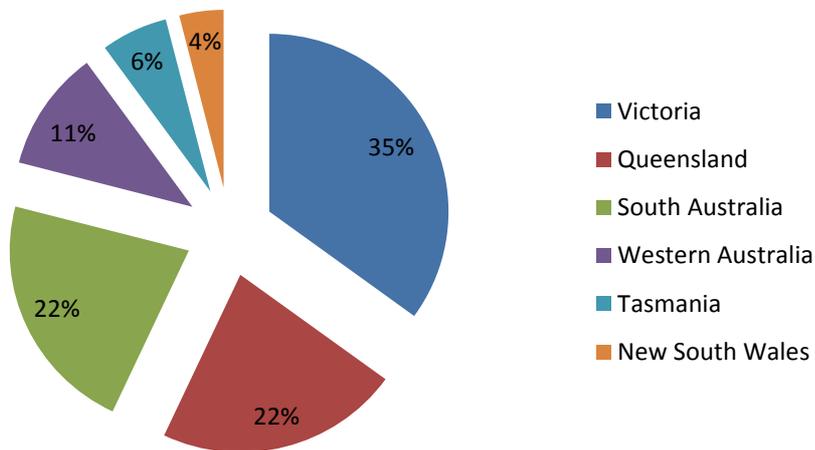
Specifically, 43 students in Grades 1-3 from two schools located in two states responded. Three hundred and seventy nine students from Grades 4-7 in 14 schools located in six states also responded. Student respondent locations are outlined in the Table below.

Table 1 - Student Respondents by School and State

Grade	State	Schools	Number of Respondents	% of Total Student Respondents (n=422)
1-3	South Australia	*1	26	6%
	Victoria	1	17	4%
4-7	Victoria	3	131	31%
	Queensland	4	92	22%
	South Australia	*3	69	16%
	Western Australia	2	46	11%
	Tasmania	1	24	6%
	New South Wales	1	17	4%
Total	~	*15	422	100%

* One school was represented in both Grades 1-3 and 4-7 survey returns

Graph 1: Student Respondents by State (n=422)



Regional Location

As classified by *ARIA+ Accessibility Remoteness Index:

- 9 schools were located in Major Cities
- 2 were classified as located in Inner Regional areas
- 3 were classified as located in Outer Regional areas
- 1 was classified as Remote

*This classification system is used by the ABS to define geographical locations:

Session Topics

Respondents from Grade 1-3 covering two sessions on "Introduction to Kids Helpline" and "Worry" were represented in the sample. Grades 4-7 respondents participated in 18 sessions covering seven topics. Students learning about "Transition to High School" returned the most responses:

- Transition to High School (7 sessions)
- Coping Strategies and Resilience (4 sessions)
- Bullying (3 sessions)
- Feeling Sad (1 session)
- Cyber Safety (1 session)
- Worry (2 session)
- Introduction to Kids Helpline (2 session)

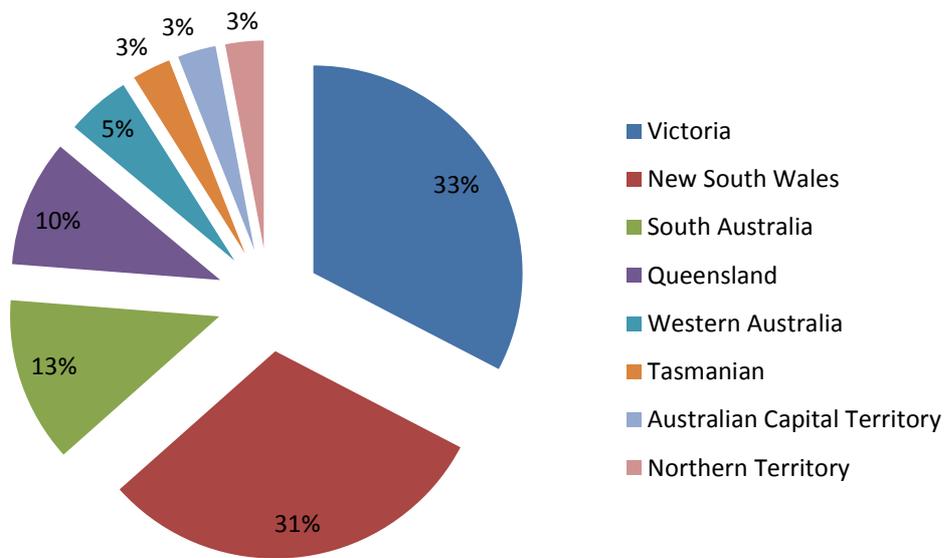
Thirty nine teachers from 33 schools in all states and territories were represented in the teacher sample.

Table 2: Teacher Respondents by State

State	Number of respondents	% of Total Teacher Respondents
Victoria	13	33%
New South Wales	12	31%
South Australia	5	13%
Queensland	4	10%
Western Australia	2	5%
Tasmanian	1	3%
Australian Capital Territory	1	3%
Northern Territory	1	3%
Total	39	*100%

* Percentages may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding

Graph 2: Teacher Respondents by State (n=39)



Feedback was given by these 39 teachers in relation to sessions on eight topics:

- Friendship (9 sessions)
- Transition to High School (8 sessions)
- Bullying (7 sessions)
- Introduction to Kids Helpline (6 sessions)
- Feeling Sad (3 sessions)
- Cyber Safety (3 sessions)
- Coping With Change (2 sessions)
- Worry (1 session)

PART 3

Evaluation Results

Four hundred and sixty one survey responses were received. Not all questions were completed by all respondents, and so the relevant sample size (n) is reported for each question. The results have been reported under three main headings:

1. Quality of Program Processes

- a. Access
- b. Preparation and communication strategies
- c. Appropriateness of support material
- d. Topic relevance
- e. Student engagement and connection
- f. Content delivery platforms

2. Loyalty Measures (Satisfaction)

- a. Likelihood of rebooking a session
- b. Likelihood of recommending the program to other teachers

3. Program Impact

- a. Increase in teacher awareness of mental health and well-being issues
- b. Increase in student awareness of mental health and well-being issues
- c. Behavioural and emotional change
- d. Increase in student awareness of help-seeking behaviours
- e. Increase in awareness of Kids Helpline
- f. Likelihood of students engaging in help-seeking behaviours

Information relating to confidence intervals for determining the reliability of the data analysis is attached in Appendix 1.

Quality of Program Processes

Program Access, Session Preparation, Communication Strategies and Appropriateness of Support Material

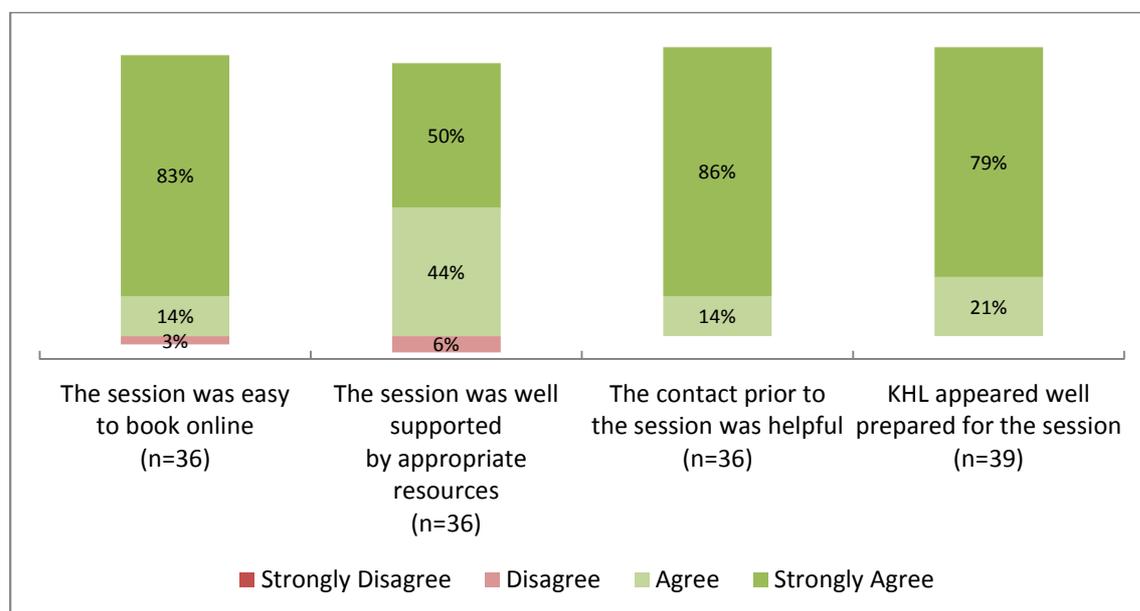
Feedback from teachers on the booking system, resources and support provided as part of the KHL @ School program was almost unanimously positive. All but one teacher (97%) either agreed or strongly agreed that their session was easy to book online and all but two teachers (94%) agreed or strongly agreed that their sessions were well supported by appropriate resources. Comments provided by teachers not agreeing indicated that they found it difficult to book multiple sessions with overlapping times, and that they expected, but did not receive, paper based student activities to be mailed to them prior to the session.

All teachers agreed or strongly agreed that contact prior to their session was helpful, and that Kids Helpline counsellors appeared well prepared for the session.

'The session was well prepared, relevant and fun!'

'Trish (KHL@School counsellor) was well prepared and involved the children in discussion'

Graph 3
Teachers: Ease of Booking, Resource Support, Prior Contact and KHL Preparation



Relevance of Topic Content, Student Engagement and Connection

One hundred per cent of teachers surveyed felt their KHL @ School session featured content that was appropriate and interesting and provided an opportunity for their students to ask questions of the counsellor.

Qualitative feedback from teachers in particular showed high levels of satisfaction with counsellors' skills at engaging with students, with 51% of teacher comments relating to their counsellor's ability to be flexible and adjust their approach to meet the emerging needs of students during sessions.

'Trish was interested in kids and managed the interaction very well. She was sensitive to needs in classroom and did very well managing (student) speakers who are difficult to understand'

'The session was fantastic, Todd (KHL@School counsellor) did a terrific job of engaging all the students'

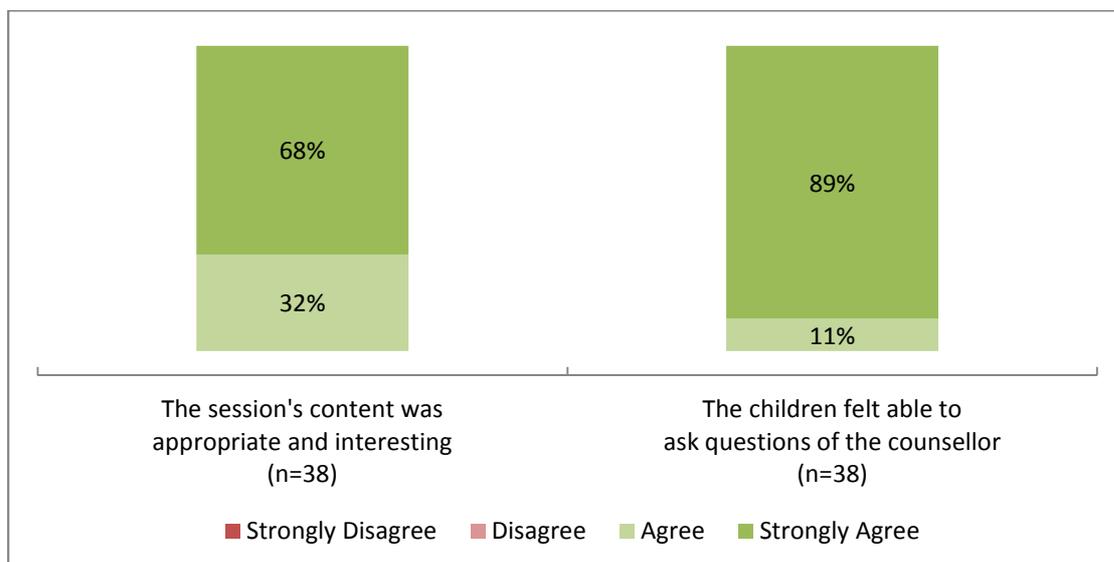
'Prue (KHL@School counsellor) managed to keep the children engaged throughout'

'The counsellor was lovely and responsive'

'The presenter Trish (KHL@School counsellor) was excellent. She had a good rapport with the students and answered their questions well'

'Content was age appropriate'

Graph 4
Teachers: Topic Relevance, Student Connection and Engagement



Eighteen per cent of teachers' comments were specifically in relation to how valuable they believed the interactive nature of the sessions were.

'Children loved the interaction and (afterwards) were able to verbalise messages they got from the discussion'

'It was interactive which the students enjoyed and got the most benefit out of it. They asked a lot of questions and got consistent answers to all of them'

'Students were able to ask questions and listen to a trained professional in the particular area'

'It is a brilliant way to inform a larger number of students about a topic, and in an interesting manner'

'An opportunity to connect with someone who they can talk to, and who is keen to listen to them about anything'

'The kids were very interested and engaged by the lesson content'

Negative feedback given by teachers about the quality of the program's ability to engage and connect with primary school students was predominantly in relation to the length of the sessions. As the previous evaluation of the KHL @ School pilot found in 2012, students even at Grade 5 levels found it difficult to listen and concentrate for 45-60 minutes and 18% (n=7) of teachers who gave qualitative feedback suggested shortening the sessions.

'The kids (especially some of the kids with additional behavioural needs) struggle to focus for the whole hour'

'Our session went for 50 minutes. Some of the students started to get a bit restless, so perhaps keep the timing to around 35 - 50 minutes'

'It was slightly long. There was some restlessness in the class'

'The session started great, and the class were excited, intrigued and engaged. Unfortunately the longer the session went, the more restless the students became. Possibly something to do with last lesson on a Friday afternoon'

'The little kids did switch off a little'

Were the sessions helpful?

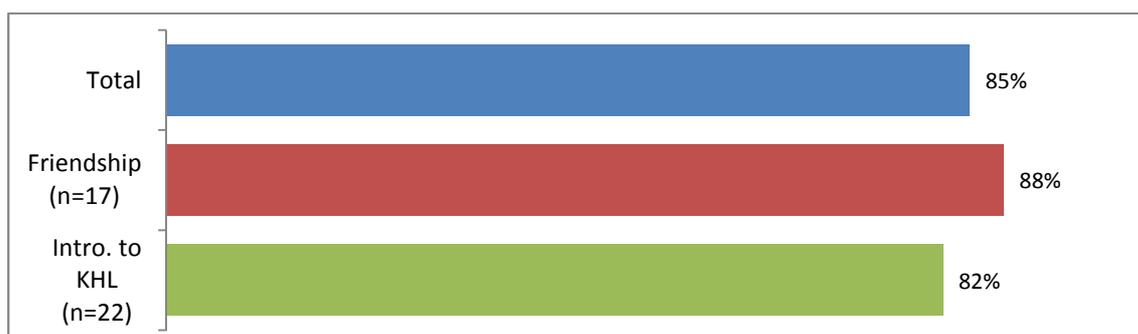
In consideration of the difficulty for young children to understand concepts of "Relevance of Topic Content, Engagement and Connection", Grade 1-3 students were asked if they had found their counsellor "helpful" as a proxy measure. Grades 4-7 students were asked if they found their session helpful.

Overall, students reported finding the sessions helpful with 85% of Grade 1-3 students indicating that their counsellor was helpful and 69% of Grade 4-7 students indicating that their session was helpful.

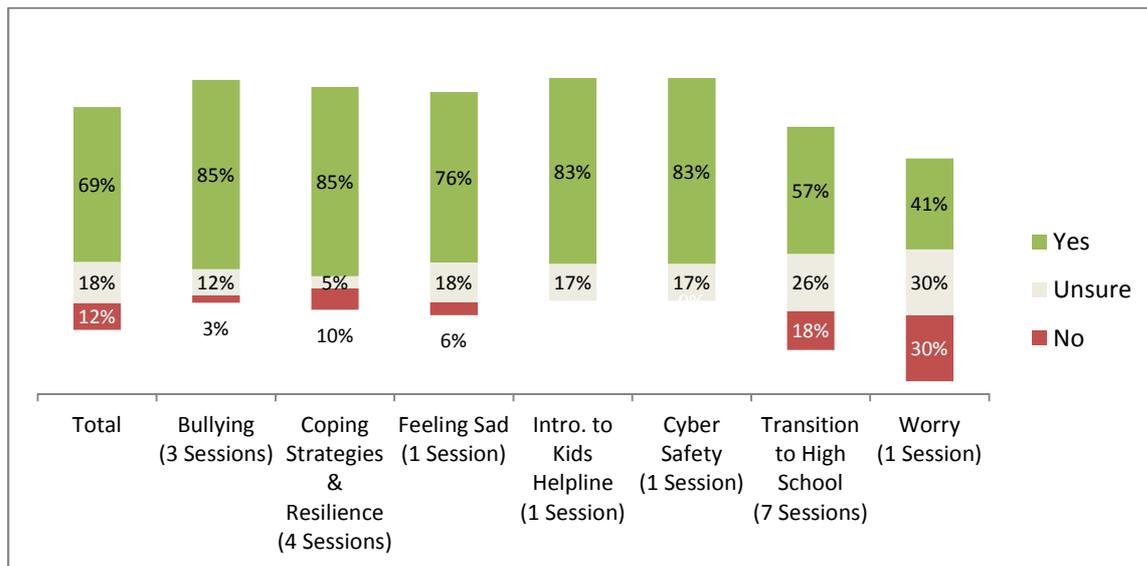
Graph 5

Grades 1-3: Was your counsellor helpful? By Total/Session Topic – Yes

n = 39



Graph 6
Grades 4-7: Was Session Helpful? By Session Topic
n = 379



Although 31% of Grades 4-7 respondents reported the session was either not helpful or they were unsure whether it had been helpful, analysis of the related qualitative comments reveal a mix of satisfaction levels indicating that perhaps some students struggled to understand the survey question.

Many comments associated with “Unsure” responses were in fact quite positive. However there were also very clear indications that for some students the material was redundant, irrelevant or unwelcome.

Thirteen per cent (n=49) of comments related to already knowing about the topic.

'Well I have talked to my grandma about this, so pretty much it's been repeated'

'It was most helpful for people that didn't know stuff'

'He just said normal situations that we already talked about in school'

'I wasn't very concerned with high school and I've already talked about it'

'It was about the same stuff my mum told me about'

Two percent (n=6) commented that the session was either not helpful or they felt unsure because they currently had no problems. Importantly however, several noted the value of the information if a problem did arise in the future.

'At the moment it isn't (helpful) because I don't have any problems but if I did it would be helpful'

'It wasn't a topic I was concerned about'

'Because I have no problems'

'I don't know because I haven't been onto Kids Helpline (yet)'

'I wasn't worried about anything. But if I was worried, it would be helpful'

Five per cent (n=19) of "Unhelpful/Unsure" comments related to not feeling engaged by the counsellor or the way in which the information was delivered.

'He didn't explain very well when someone asked a question'

'I'm unsure because I am not very open with group conversations'

'You could involve the kids more, it was a bit boring'

'I was unsure because I kind of didn't understand some bits of it'

Students who received 'Transition to High School' and 'Worry' sessions were the most likely to indicate that it was not helpful, predominantly due to the students already being familiar with the material. In the case of 'Transition to High School' anecdotal evidence from project management staff suggests that a number of teachers had previously engaged this resource as part of a series of lessons relating to this topic; meaning that students had already covered similar content multiple times.

Why were the sessions helpful?

The major themes arising from Grade 4-7 students about why they found their session helpful related to feeling like they now had increased information about the topic, increased understanding of help-seeking and helping resources - particularly Kids Helpline - and of feeling engaged by the counsellor and the interactive process.

Grade 4-7 participants in 'Bullying' and 'Coping Strategies' sessions were the most likely to indicate their session was helpful.

Two percent (n=6) of those students who commented on finding the session helpful specifically referred to their engagement with the session and the interactive nature of the discussion.

'He got us all involved... we started to get ideas from other class mates and sometimes shared his opinion and got us to really think'

'Because it answered all my questions'

'It was fun'

'Because of the interaction with all of us'

'They gave us good and useful information and let us contribute to some of it'

'I was able to ask about my concerns and get a reliable answer'

'(H)e asked us lots of questions and answered ours. He also gave us lots of advice'

Forty five percent (n=172) of comments referred to learning more about the topic.

'Before if something was happening to me I wouldn't know what to do'

'He gave us helpful tips'

'It told me different things that I can do to help myself'

'He made us aware about the internet and stuff'

Twenty one percent (n=79) referred to feeling more able to seek help if a problem arose in the future.

'He told us that if we have a problem we can call them'

'I can talk to someone when I have a problem and have no one else to talk to'

'I know now that there is an option on who to talk to'

'I found it helpful a lot because it gave me options if I was in a hard situation'

Further findings from the study relating to an increase in student awareness of mental health and well-being issues and an increase in understanding of help-seeking and helping resources are documented in the section on 'Program Impact'.

Content Delivery Platforms

Teachers were asked in their survey which communication method had been used to support the class session and whether the method had been effective. Thirty eight of the 39 sessions were delivered by webcam. One teacher requested telephone be used for her students who had a range of disabilities. **One hundred per cent of teachers surveyed reported the communication method used was effective.**

Qualitative feedback relating to the technology used in the program was also consistently positive.

'The children really loved the novelty of Skyping with someone ... who was in another state!'

'Our kids were engaged in the discussion, and it felt special to have a Skype session'

'Brought our classroom learning into the 21st century'

'We could see and hear the speaker and he could interact with the students easily'

'Great reception (audio + visual)'

'It was just like having a guest speaker come into the classroom'

'It was helpful because we talked to a real person not a computer'

Loyalty Measures (Teacher satisfaction)

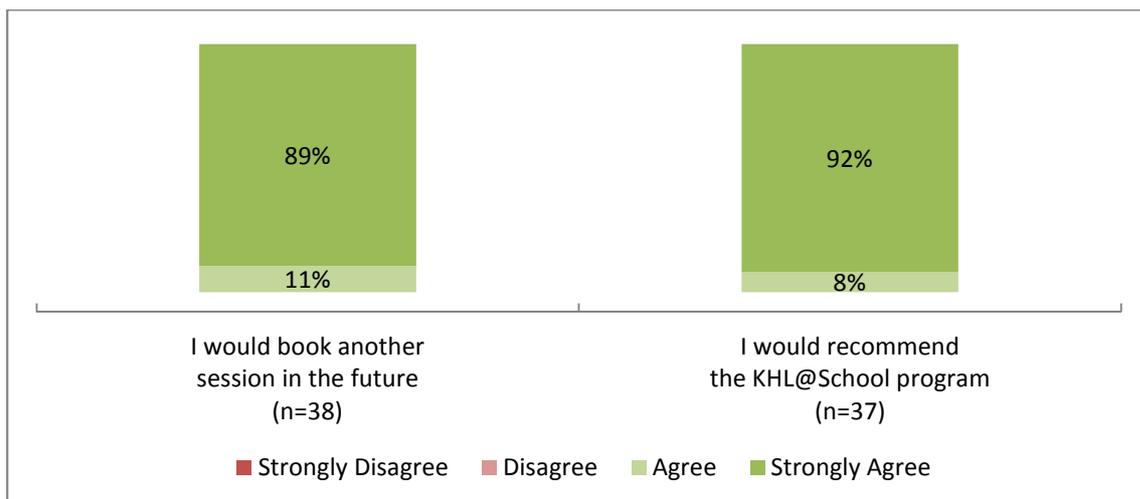
A subjective indication of teachers' satisfaction with the program was elicited through measuring their behavioural loyalty. Teachers were asked about their intention to book another session and their willingness to recommend the program to other teachers and schools.

Rebooking & Recommendations

All teachers who provided feedback indicated that they would book another session with KHL @ School in the future and that they would recommend the program to other teachers and schools. This sentiment was particularly enthusiastic with 89% of teachers strongly agreeing that they would book another session and 92% strongly agreeing that they would recommend the program.

'If all the interactive session were like the one we received, then you are going to become a valuable resource for schools to deal with issues that are important to students'

Graph 7
Teachers: Intention to Rebook and Willingness to Recommend



Program Impact

This section highlights the results of the study suggesting the Kids Helpline @ School program achieved significant impact in the target areas of increased mental health literacy, increased awareness of help-seeking and an increased likelihood of students implementing help-seeking behaviours.

Increase in teacher awareness of the topic (Improved Mental Health Literacy)

Ninety five per cent of teachers either strongly agreed or agreed that their session had increased or consolidated their own awareness of the topic discussed in their classroom session.

'I wasn't aware of how valuable the Kids Helpline was and learned a lot more for myself'

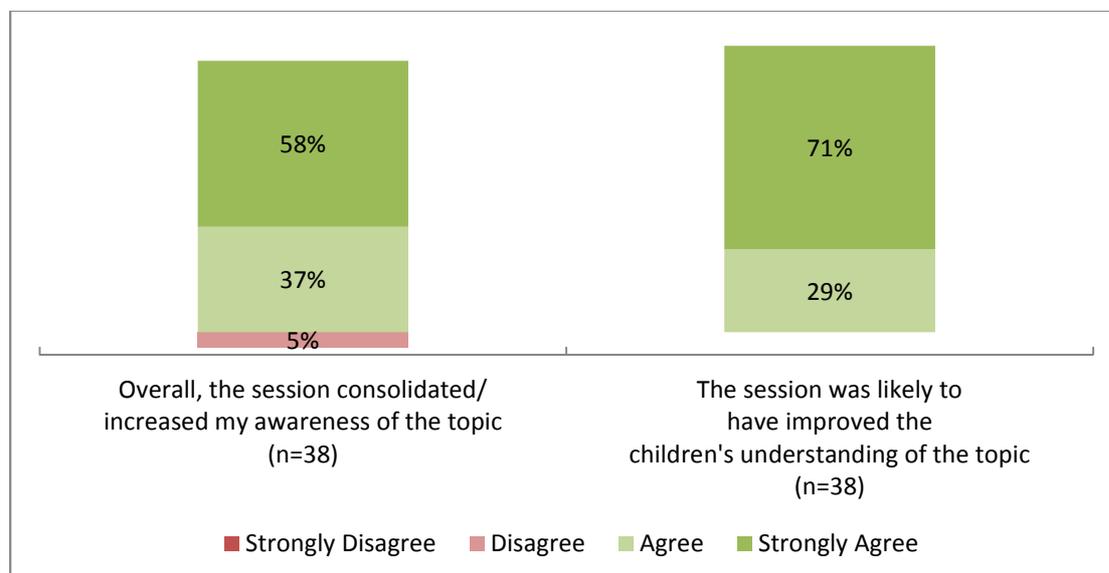
Only two teachers disagreed that their session increased or consolidated their awareness of the topic. These teachers had both booked sessions on 'Transition to High School', a topic which they were likely to already have a strong grasp on.

Increase in student awareness of mental health and well-being issues (Improved Mental Health Literacy)

One hundred percent of teachers reported either agreeing or strongly agreeing that the sessions were likely to have improved their students' understanding of the topic.

'I know (the students) all learnt a lot and enjoyed the session'

Graph 8: Increased Awareness of the Topic (Teachers and Students)



In addition to the above subjective evidence of positive impact on teacher and student mental health literacy levels, **100% (n=39) of teachers also responded that the session met their expectations.** When asked for clarifying information about how their expectations had been met, teachers predominantly reported that the children benefited from being encouraged to discuss matters they might not otherwise talk about

and from being able to have their own questions answered. This further underscored the evidence of the program's impact on processes that lead to improved mental health literacy.

'The students had an opportunity to talk about their worries and concerns and receive valuable feedback and strategies to deal with these issues'

'It was extremely helpful for the students who were transitioning to high school and it gave them an opportunity to air and discuss any issues or anxieties they were having for next year'

'I believe the children got quite useful information out of the session'

'Children got lots of "thinking material" from the counsellor'

'This is an excellent way of helping the children with issues that are very relevant to them right now'

'(The program) was exactly what my group of students needed'

Students also offered qualitative evidence of increased learning about mental health and well-being related material. When asked specifically what they had learnt about their topic, 284 students (75% of Grade 4-7 total respondents) offered examples, including learning to articulate concepts such as emotions, planning ahead, problem solving, developing strategies for dealing with bullying and cyber-safety and building and maintaining friendships.

'It was helpful because you got to learn (about) feelings'

'He told us what to do if we are getting bullied or someone else is getting bullied'

'He told me about high school and what to do'

'I learnt about friends and worries'

'It gave me a few ideas on what to do'

'It gave us ideas of how we can solve the issue, and not just sit there day (after) day getting hurt'

'I learnt a lot because I didn't know a lot of what she said before'

'I learnt stuff about bullying and how many people get bullied'

'It gave me a sense of needing to be more organised and prepared (for high school)'

'I learnt a lot about bullying and how it affects people and their lives'

'It was helpful because I used to get bullied and it gave me tips on how to stop it'

'It was helpful because Todd (KHL@School counsellor) explained...not to put too much of my personal stuff online'

'It was helpful for me to understand how to help people if they are getting bullied, also I learnt if I'm getting bullied to just ignore them, I also learnt that

bystanders can just make things worse by standing there and laughing at the person'

Significantly, 13% (n=49) of qualitative responses to this question referred to now feeling more encouraged to ask for help if they had a specific problem.

'We learnt that we should never be afraid to tell someone'

'If you are watching people being bullied, tell a teacher'

'I learnt that if you're being bullied or feel angry or sad you could call Kids Helpline'

Only 16 respondents (4%) felt they had not learned anything from their session. These were predominantly the students referred to earlier in the report who commented that the session information was not new to them.

Behavioural and emotional change

In addition to teachers' perceptions and students' self-reports of increased knowledge about mental health and well-being related topics, qualitative evidence was collected on the program's behavioural and emotional impact. Teachers described observing student behavioural change within hours and days of the session that indicated children had incorporated the counsellors' mental health literacy information and mental health and well-being messages into their attitudes and skillsets.

'Well received by students – especially the suggestion of using 'I' statements rather than 'You' statements, eg I feel sad rather than you upset me. Have already seen this put in practice by a couple of the children'

'Children were overheard in the yard reminding each other about "what Gwen (KHL@School counsellor) said" in relation to getting along'

'During discussion after the session (it was clear) children had taken away a lot of valuable information'

Students themselves reported feeling a range of positive emotional reactions to their session including feeling less anxious and more confident about the future.

'I found it helpful because it made me feel less worried'

'I learnt some new things and listening to Kids Helpline has made me more confident'

'It put some positive thoughts in my head'

'It reassured me that I always have someone to talk to'

'It helped me to realise that other kids get nervous (too)'

'It helped ... me not to worry about high school and (know) it's normal to be scared'

'It was helpful because now others and I can feel safe'

'It was good getting the subject off my chest and feel a bit of relief'

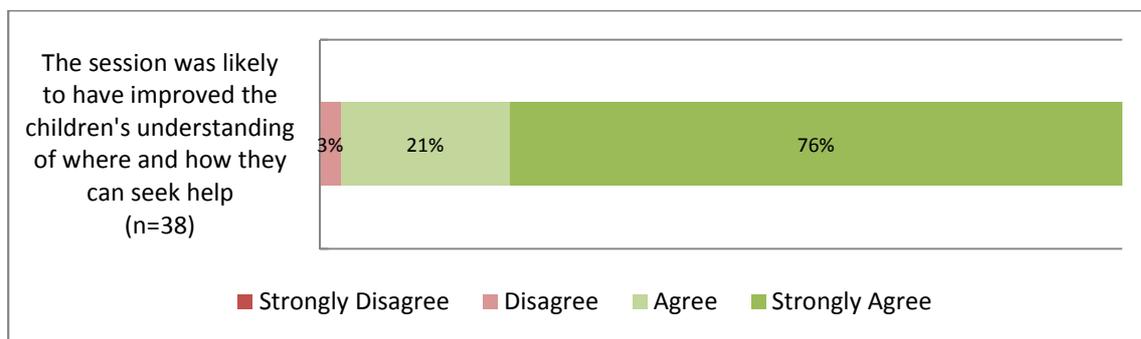
'It made me feel not so scared about high school'

Increases in student awareness of help-seeking behaviours

The study also aimed to measure the program’s impact on students’ awareness of help-seeking behaviours and sources of help.

The majority of teachers (97%) strongly agreed or agreed that their Kids Helpline @ School session was likely to have improved their students’ understanding of where and how to seek help. Only one teacher surveyed disagreed, unfortunately with no indication in their qualitative comments as to why they held this opinion.

Graph 9
Teachers: Likely to improve Students’ understanding of help-seeking (n=38)

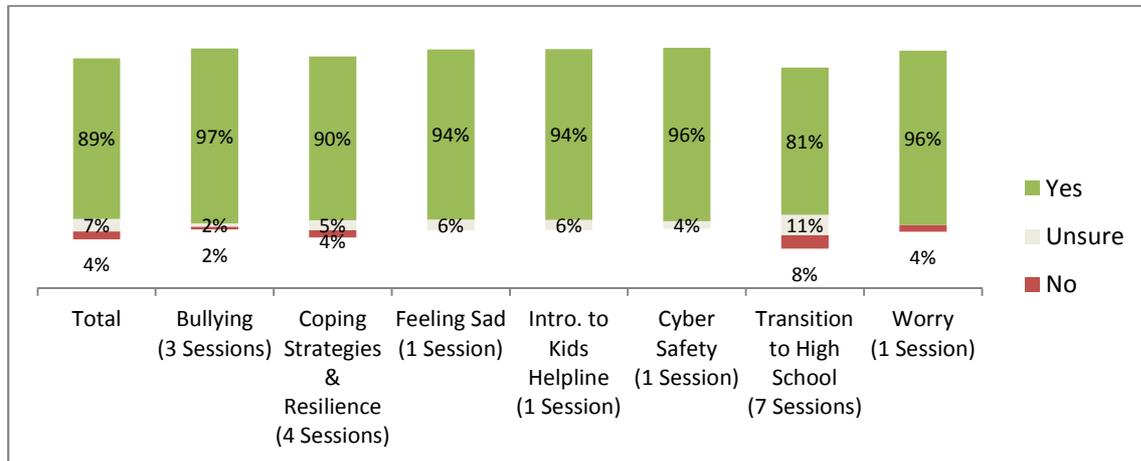


'They learnt a lot about how to access Kids Helpline and what would happen if they did call'

'Was good to have students understand what Kids Helpline offers'

Feedback from Grades 4-7 students found 89% of respondents agreed they had learnt about where to go for help. Amongst the older students, sessions on Bullying appeared to have been the most effective in improving help-seeking awareness with 97% of students agreeing; whereas Transition to High School, whilst still a strong result, appears the least effective, with 81% agreeing they had learnt where to go for help.

Graph 10
Grades 4-7: Did you learn about where to go for help? By Session Topic (n=379*)



*Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Qualitative data was also gathered from Grades 4-7 students relating to their awareness of help-seeking behaviours following their session. Students commented on issues ranging from identifying situations they could find themselves in where help might be useful, to learning that it was okay to ask for help if they felt they needed support and identifying the places they could get help from.

'It was very useful to me but I wish I had known about it (before)'

'It told me to tell the teacher if someone is bullying you'

'It told us where to go for help and what to do'

'(My session was helpful) because I do have a couple of problems at home and sometimes need someone that isn't my mum'

'I found it helpful because I found out lots of ways to get help'

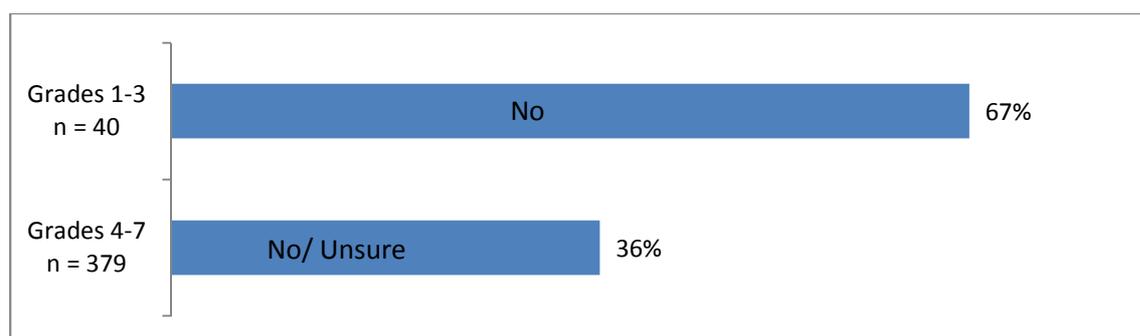
Increased awareness of Kids Helpline as a resource

Given that a major component of the Kids Helpline @ School program relates to increasing student awareness of Kids Helpline as a source of support, several survey questions targeted their pre versus post session knowledge of the service and their ability to recall the service's contact details.

Results demonstrated that the Kids Helpline @ School program is reaching many young people who were previously unaware of the Kids Helpline service. Prior awareness of Kids Helpline was lowest amongst students in Grades 1-3 with two thirds (n=27) of surveyed students not previously aware of the service's existence, while 36% (n=136) of surveyed Grade 4-7 students said they were either unsure or had not heard of the Kids Helpline service prior to their session.

Graph 11

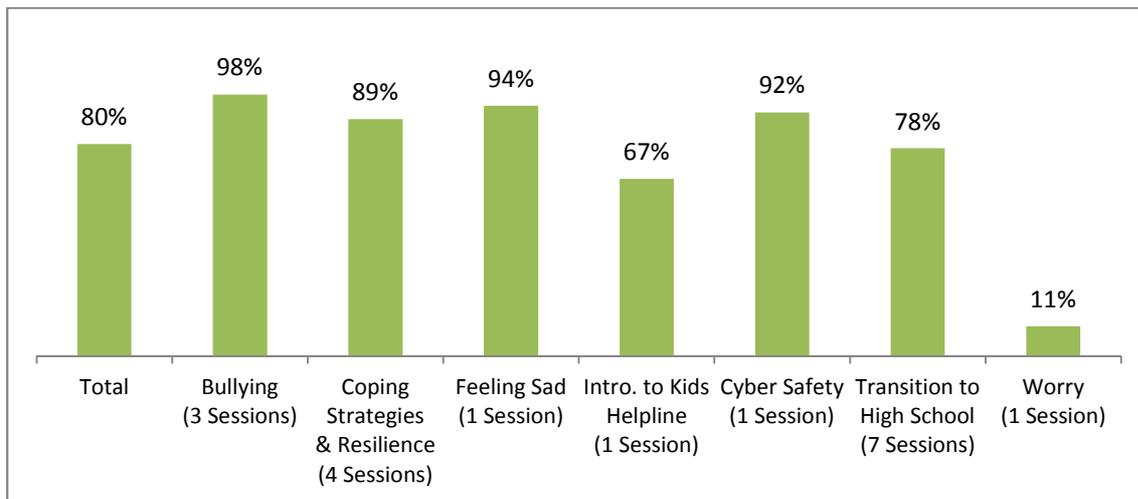
All Students: Heard of Kids Helpline before your teacher told you about it? - No/ Unsure



'I didn't know there was a help line'

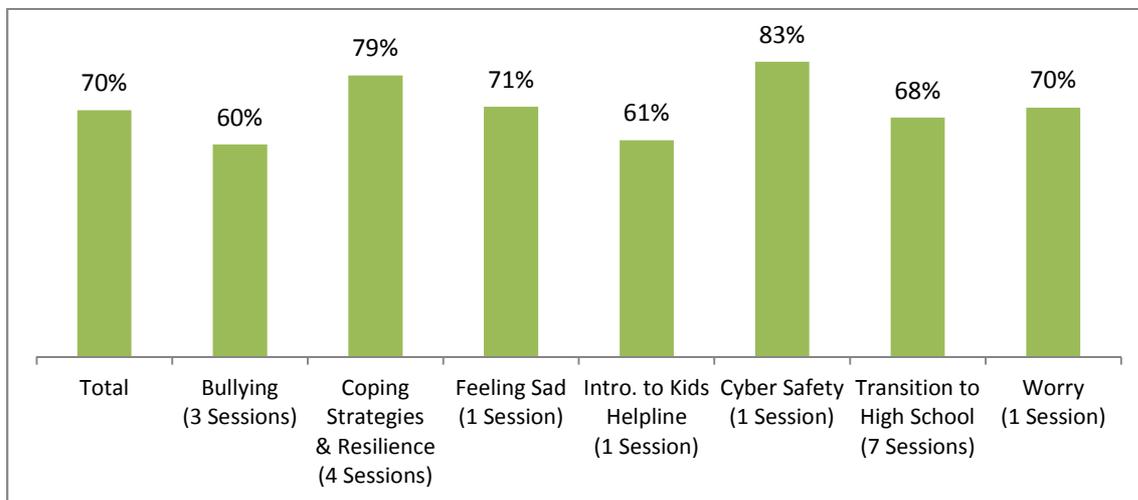
As a proxy measure of change in this lack of knowledge, Grades 4-7 students were asked to recall the phone number and website address following their session. Most (80%) correctly recalled the Kids Helpline phone number. While only 11% of those students who had received the session on Worry correctly recalled the phone number, only 15% of that group answered the question at all so it is possible that an error filling out the survey led to that low proportion.

Graph 12
Grades 4-7: Correctly recall phone number By Session Topic
n = 379



70% of respondents were able to correctly recall the Kids Helpline website address. Those students who had received a Cyber Safety session were the most likely to correctly recall the address with 83% doing so.

Graph 13
Grades 4-7: Correctly recall website address By Session Topic
n = 379



When asked what they remembered about Kids Helpline, 372 Grade 4-7 students offered a range of qualitative responses. Fifty nine per cent responded that they now knew the service could help them with any problem, 25% had discovered they could call any time of the day or night, 8% recalled that the service was free, 5% recalled that you could contact via either phone or online and 3% noted the service was confidential or trustworthy.

'I didn't know what Kids Helpline was for and I didn't know I can just call them up when I have a personal problem'

'The counsellor we had told us all about Kids Helpline, like how they can help and all talks are confidential'

'They do not ask for your identity/ You can tell them anything'

'You can call any time and ask for help if you're not sure who else to ask'

'I learnt that Kids Helpline isn't just about bullying and that it's also for problems in the house'

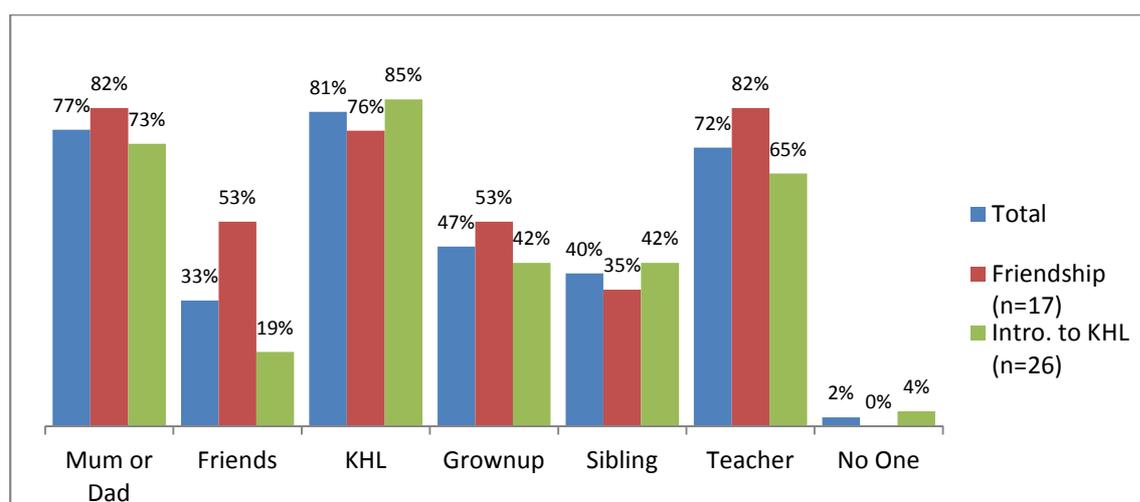
Likelihood of students engaging in help-seeking behaviours (Student intentions)

Most importantly, the study attempted to investigate the level of student intention to engage in help-seeking behaviours following their session with a Kids Helpline @ School counsellor. Confidentiality and ethical considerations prevented this study from asking students if they had an immediate need or intention to contact a source of help following their session, so questions were developed that attempted to suggest help-seeking behaviour as a possibility tied to a future problem rather than a definite and current intention. Due to the developmental stage of respondents, "possibility" thinking may have been beyond their cognitive skill level, leading to some students giving "concrete" responses perhaps more related to not having a problem at the time of the survey.

When younger students (Grades 1-3) were asked to identify who they might talk to if they had a problem, 98% identified at least one source of help available to them. Session topic appears to have some effect on the sources of help identified with students who had received a session on friendship significantly more likely to identify friends as a possible source of support. Overall, Kids Helpline was the most frequently identified source of help for the younger children at 81% (n=35) of responses.

Graph 14

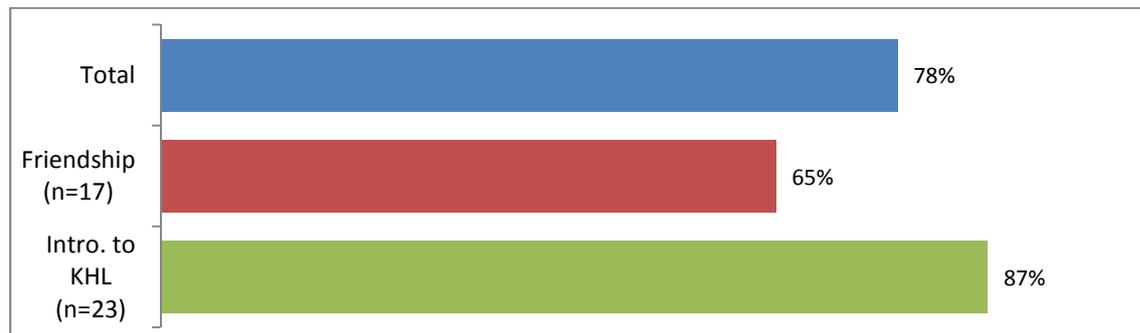
Grades 1-3: Who might you talk to if you had a problem? By Session Topic
n = 43



When specifically asked if they would seek help from Kids Helpline if they had a worry, the majority (78%) of Grade 1-3 students surveyed indicated they would. Those who had received a session on Introduction to Kids Helpline were more likely to indicate this (87%) than those who received a session on Friendship (65%).

Graph 15

Grades 1-3: If you had a worry, would you talk to KHL? By Session Topic – Yes (n=40)



Two hundred and ninety three (81%) Grade 4-7 students said that if they were sad or worried or had a problem they would or might contact Kids Helpline (36% 'yes', 45% 'maybe'). Although a small number of children indicated they had a current issue, the accompanying comments suggested that contacting the service would be dependent on having a problem first.

'It was helpful in case in the future I need help and I know that they will help me through anything'

'If I had some trouble with something I can just call Kids Helpline'

'If I'm lonely and sad I can call them'

'I know more about Kids Helpline and if I need to use them I know about them'

'Now if I am getting bullied and nobody cares, I can contact (Kids Helpline)'

'I know more about Kids Helpline and I now know who to call if I have a problem'

'It was helpful because I know where to go if I am feeling down'

'So we know where to go if we're in a situation'

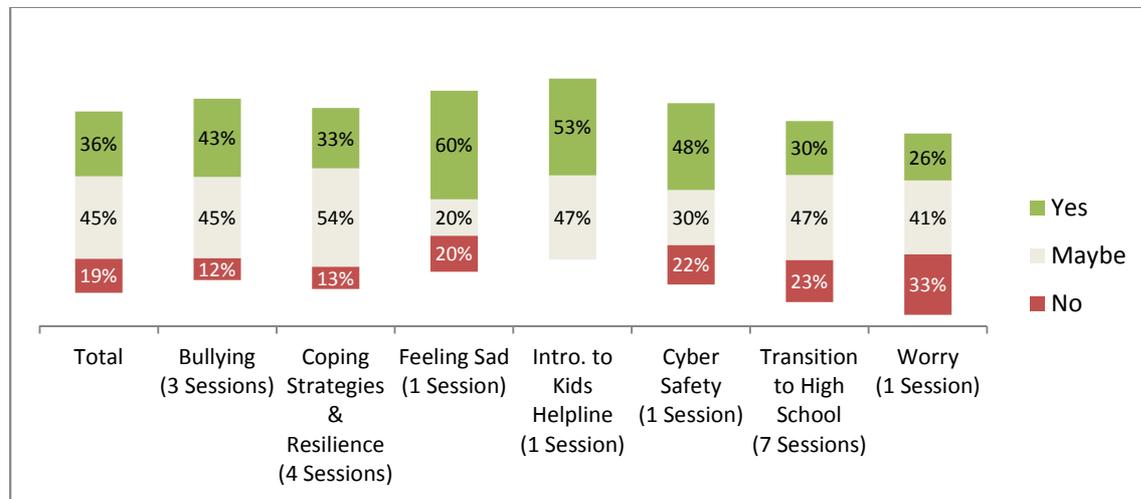
'The counsellor told me where to go if I did need help'

Those students who received a session on Transition to High School or Worry were significantly less likely to indicate that they would talk to Kids Helpline if they had a problem. As discussed earlier for students in all session topics, analysis of comments by students in Worry or Transition to High School sessions indicates that many felt they already knew a lot of the information covered and as such did not find the session engaging. This may have created an impression that the Kids Helpline counselling service would not offer anything beyond what the students already knew.

Graph 16

Grades 4-7: If you were sad or worried or had a problem would you talk to KHL? By Session Topic

n = 361

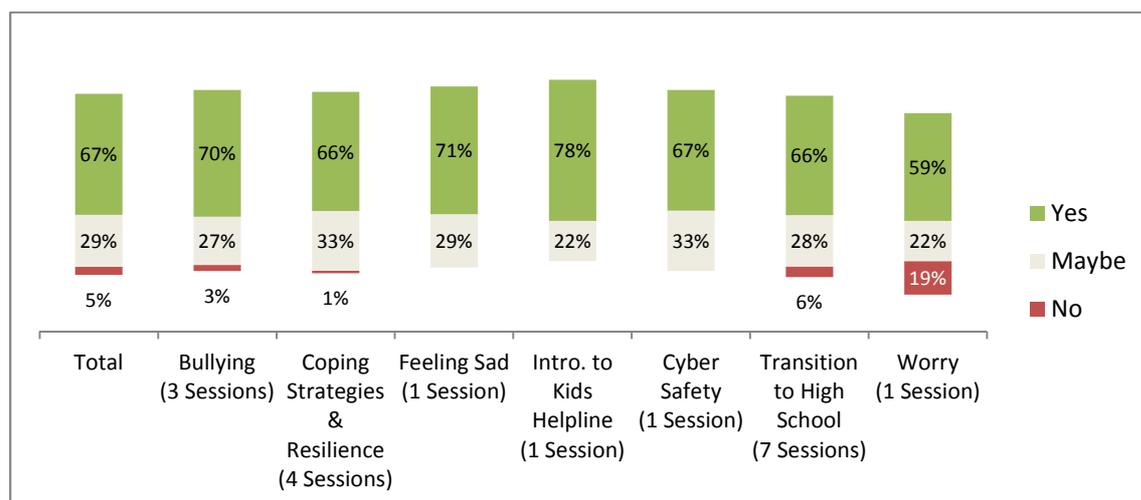


However, the majority (67%) of Grade 4-7 students (n=254) said they would tell a friend to contact Kids Helpline if they were “having a tough time” and a further 29% (n=110) said they “might”, indicating that they do see value in the service. This reinforces the hypothesis that those students reporting that they would not contact Kids Helpline may be indicating that they do not currently have a problem which they would contact about.

Graph 17

Grades 4-7: Would you tell a friend to contact KHL if they were having a tough time? By Session Topic

n = 377



'It helped because I can (now) tell a friend that if they were having a bad day or moment to ring Kids Helpline'

'It was helpful for kids who were depressed or didn't want to talk to their Mum and Dad'

'It wasn't helpful (for me) because I don't have any problems, but it was so if my friend had a problem I can tell them where to go'

'Just in case a friend or family needed it'

Several teachers also offered comments demonstrating students were increasing their help-seeking behaviours following their sessions.

'A child ... approached me in the yard asking how she could speak to Gwen. I told her she could talk to me if something was upsetting her and she spoke about her parents fighting, and was able to get some support from me....what better outcome could you ask for?'

'The session lead to two pupils approaching me (Wellbeing Officer) afterwards to speak about their own bullying experiences and seek help, which is invaluable!'

PART 4

Discussion

The Kids Helpline @ School program has been designed to positively impact on children's mental and emotional well-being on a number of levels:

- Knowledge about issues that contribute to poor mental health and well-being is communicated by professional counsellors to students in engaging and age appropriate ways,
- Knowledge about where children can seek help from is explored, and
- Young people are encouraged to perceive help-seeking as a desirable and appropriate behaviour.

A significant level of information was gathered during this study to indicate that students are now feeling more equipped to recognise experiences such as bullying, unsafe cyber behaviours, difficulty with friendships, worrying, coping with change and transitioning to high school as risks that can potentially impact negatively on their own or their friends' well-being. Teachers also reported consolidating and learning new information about these mental health and well-being related issues, indicating an increased capacity on their part to recognise risky situations that may impact on students' emotional states. By increasing a teacher's ability to intervene in these scenarios at an early stage, the program works to promote protective factors in children's lives and facilitate problem-solving before long-term damage occurs to a student's mental health.

Information about help-seeking behaviours is also required to address the gap between prevalence rates of mental health issues in young Australians and rates of treatment and intervention. Data gathered during this study demonstrates the program leads to more students now having knowledge about support resources available to them, with baseline measures showing only 33% of younger students and 64% of older students knowing that Kids Helpline existed before their session, shifting to the implicit understanding that 100% of all students are aware post-session. Eighty percent of older students were able to recall the phone number and 70% the website address in the hours and days following their session.

However, bridging the gap between the needs of young people for support and linking them with that support, requires more than knowledge. As noted in Part 1, attitudinal shifts towards help-seeking are often required before young people and/or their families will reach out for help. Thus Kids Helpline @ School's session content and activities, which focus on children's strengths, reinforce their "brave" behaviours and teach them responsible decision-making and coping skills, have led to a demonstrable increase in students' being more prepared to ask for help, if and when a problem arises in their lives.

Critical Success Factors

How did the program achieve these encouraging results?

The following factors were identified as being key drivers for the successful implementation of this technology driven mental health prevention and early intervention strategy:

- A dedicated full-time Project Officer willing to work with a dizzying array of state and private educational institutions' technology platforms and collaborate with an assortment of information technology stakeholders to "make it happen".
- The introduction in February 2014 by the Project Officer of a "technology practice session" in order to avoid the discovery of technological faults during sessions. These practice sessions are now also booked online during the process of booking the actual session delivery time. The positive response from teachers about the communication method effectiveness would indicate that these efforts to streamline the connections between Kids Helpline @ School and schools from every sector have been very successful.
- The use of experienced professional counsellors to deliver sessions incorporating their expertise in child development and psychology.
- A willingness on the part of Kids Helpline @ School to design the session content to match the requirements of the Australian National Curriculum.
- The evidence based development of the "Overview of Session" plan used by counsellors to effectively engage with students and convey their messages.
- The highly regarded functionality of the Classroom Activity preparation material provided to teachers.
- The willingness of teachers to work as co-facilitators throughout the session.
- An overall commitment by program staff to continuous improvement through daily review of teacher feedback post session with follow-up program amendments where appropriate and possible.

Some examples of the feedback loop in action relate to suggestions from teachers for keeping student interest levels high during sessions. These suggestions predominantly related to "mixing up the media methods" used to deliver the mental health and well-being promotional messages.

'Some visual change-ups would keep students' attention'

'Some more interactive parts eg. break-out groups (or) group activities to mix it up a bit would be good'

'For the age group of my students (8/9 yr olds) the session would have been even more successful if there was more than just seeing our counsellor on the screen eg. an actual audio of what we would hear when we first ring the helpline, some pictures to support why kids would ring etc, and how they can connect with Kids Helpline (visuals are an excellent support tool for this age group)'

'I felt the students just needed an interactive game or break half way through as they found it hard to stay focused for the whole hour. Even though students

were asked questions etc., not all students were fully participating and me knowing my students (the facilitator does not have this advantage!) knew they need smaller snippets of information and then an activity or re focus activity'

These suggestions have been quickly picked up by the Kids Helpline@School Project Officer and new material using animation and child friendly graphics are already being rolled-out in Year 2 as a result of a commitment to incorporating "live" feedback into immediate service delivery improvements.

Other suggestions relating to shortening the sessions have also been reviewed and adopted, with sessions for younger children (Prep, Grades 1 and 2) now running for 30 minutes rather than 45-60 minutes.

The program's commitment to continuous improvement is evident in these examples, and the Project Officer is to be commended for her creative, skilful and timely responses to emerging issues. The success of the program outlined in this report is in no small way due to her total commitment to and passion for the program's strategy of using technology to improve the mental health and well-being of young Australians.

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Appendix 1

Data Analysis Confidence Intervals

The table below outlines the 95% confidence intervals for the proportions observed in the analysis based on the population from which the sample is drawn. For example, if 75% of our Grade 4-7 sample is observed to report that their Kids Helpline@School session was helpful, then we have a 95% confidence that between 70.98% and 79.02% of the population of Grade 4-7 students found their session to be helpful.

Table 3
95% confidence intervals by sample and observed proportions

Observed Proportion	Sample		
	Grades 1-3	Grades 4-7	Teachers
10%	±8.74%	±2.78%	±4.22%
25%	±12.61%	±4.02%	±6.08%
50%	±14.56%	±4.64%	±7.03%
75%	±12.61%	±4.02%	±6.08%
90%	±8.74%	±2.78%	±4.22%

Appendix 2: Grades 1-3 Post Session Survey

Appendix 3: Grades 4-7 Post Session Survey

Appendix 4: Teachers Post Session Survey

Session No.

1. Was your counsellor helpful?



No



Yes

2. If you had a worry, would you talk to Kids Helpline?



No



Yes

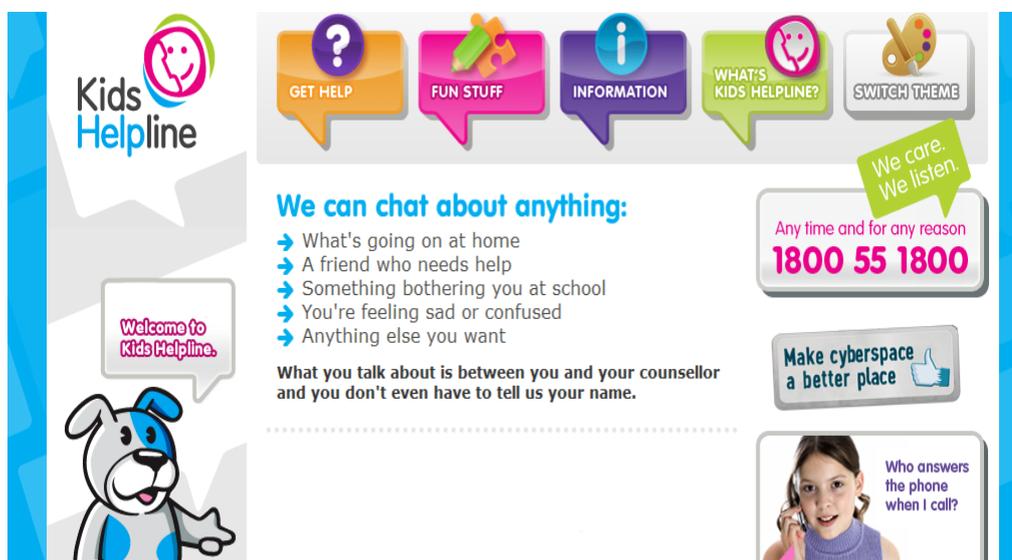
3. Did you know about Kids Helpline before your teacher told you about it?



No



Yes



Kids Helpline

GET HELP | FUN STUFF | INFORMATION | WHAT'S KIDS HELPLINE? | SWITCH THEME

We can chat about anything:

- What's going on at home
- A friend who needs help
- Something bothering you at school
- You're feeling sad or confused
- Anything else you want

What you talk about is between you and your counsellor and you don't even have to tell us your name.

We care. We listen.

Any time and for any reason
1800 55 1800

Make cyberspace a better place

Who answers the phone when I call?

Welcome to Kids Helpline.

Put a tick (☑) in the box next to each person you might talk to if you had a problem.



Mum or Dad



My Friends





A trusted grown-up



Brother or Sister



A Teacher

No-one

Colouring-in Activity

Colour in our Kids Helpline friend.

What is his name? _____





Appendix 3 Kids Helpline @ School Activity Sheet for Year 4-7



Session No.

1. Was your session with a Kids Helpline counsellor helpful?
(Please circle)

Yes No Unsure

2. Please tell us why it was or wasn't helpful?

.....
.....
.....

3. Did you learn about where you or your friends could go to for help?

Yes No Unsure

4. What did you learn about Kids Helpline?

.....
.....
.....

5. What did you learn about the topic in your session?

.....
.....
.....

6. Had you heard of Kids Helpline before your teacher told you about it?

Yes No Unsure

Now that you've met a Kids Helpline counsellor...

7. Would you tell a friend to contact Kids Helpline if they were having a tough time?

Yes No Maybe



Appendix 3 Kids Helpline @ School Activity Sheet for Year 4-7



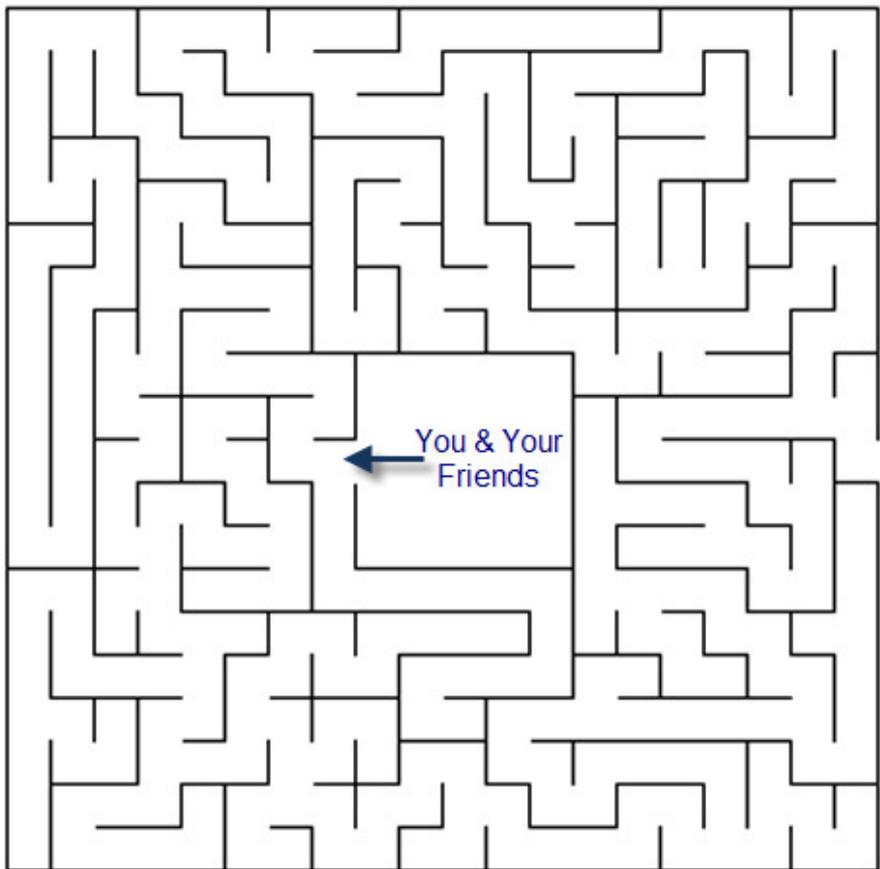
8. If you were sad or worried or had a problem, would you talk to Kids Helpline?

Yes No Maybe

9. What is the Kids Helpline phone number?

10. What is the Kids Helpline website address?

Maze: Find Your Way to Help Activity



Teachers



Mum or Dad



Did you know there are games on the Kids Helpline website?!

Check them out at:
<http://www.kidshelp.com.au/>



Appendix 4 Kids Helpline @ School: Teacher Survey



This survey is completed online through Survey Gizmo

Kids Helpline is seeking your feedback on the Kids Helpline @ School Program.

We would be grateful if you would complete this online survey.

Your responses will remain confidential and only de-identified information from this feedback would be used in any review of the project. No school will be identified in any reporting.

State:

Name of Teacher/s:

School Name:

Class Name:

Date of Session:

What was the Kids Helpline @ School session about?

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying | <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling Sad | <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction to Kids Helpline |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Staying Safe Online | <input type="checkbox"/> Family Arguments | <input type="checkbox"/> Coping with Change at School |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friendship | <input type="checkbox"/> Cyberbullying | <input type="checkbox"/> Developing Resilience |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Worry | <input type="checkbox"/> Transition to High School | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

What communication method did you use for the session?

- WebCam (e.g. WebEx TM, Skype, Google Chat)
 Phone (just voice)
 Other:

Was this communication method effective?

- Yes No

Did the session meet your expectations?

- Yes No

Please provide details as to why / why not:



Appendix 4 Kids Helpline @ School: Teacher Survey



This survey is completed online through Survey Gizmo

For each of the following, please tell us to what extent you agree with the statement....

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know
The Kids Helpline session was easy to book online	1	2	3	4	DK
The session was well supported by appropriate resources	1	2	3	4	DK
The contact prior to the session was helpful	1	2	3	4	DK
Kids Helpline appeared well prepared for the session	1	2	3	4	DK
The session's content was appropriate and interesting	1	2	3	4	DK
The children felt able to ask questions of the counsellor	1	2	3	4	DK
Overall, the session consolidated/increased my awareness of the topic	1	2	3	4	DK
Overall, the session was likely to have improved children's understanding of the topic	1	2	3	4	DK
Overall, the session was likely to have improved children's understanding of where and how they can seek help	1	2	3	4	DK
I would book another session in the future	1	2	3	4	DK
I would recommend the Kid Helpline @ School program to other teachers/schools	1	2	3	4	DK

Please provide any further comments, suggestions or feedback regarding the program, the session content and/or the reactions of the class:
