



KIDS
HELPLINE

INSIGHTS 2016

STATISTICAL SUMMARY
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Insights into young people in Australia

Introduction

What is Kids Helpline?

Kids Helpline has been operating for 26 years and is Australia's only 24/7 counselling and support service for children and young people aged between 5 and 25 years.

Tertiary qualified counsellors provide free, private and confidential support via telephone, web chat and email. Telephone and email counselling is offered 24/7 and web counselling is available from 8am to midnight (AEST) seven days a week.

The service operates a substantial website with a diverse range of resources for self-directed help-seeking by children, young people and adults. In addition, support from Optus enables Kids Helpline to deliver an early intervention and prevention program in primary schools called *Kids Helpline @ School*.

Kids Helpline is a service of **yourtown** and is 70% funded by the community through **yourtown** Art Union ticket sales, donations and corporate support. The remaining 30% is funded through State and Commonwealth Government grants.

What this report is about and who it is for

This report is an appendix to *Kids Helpline Insights 2016: National Statistical Overview*. It provides summary data on Kids Helpline service demand and client concerns and characteristics for South Australia in relation to the 2016 calendar year. It will be of value to people working in social policy and research roles, journalists and others in the community who need to understand the current and changing help-seeking needs of children and young people in Australia today.

The *Kids Helpline Insights 2016: National Statistical Overview* and other related reports can be accessed at www.kidshelpline.com.au/reports.

Notes on data collection, analysis and interpretation

Substantial missing data in relation to a number of data collection fields, most notably remoteness and cultural background, undermine the reliability of data presented in a number of tables and figures in this report. This is compounded by the relatively small size of the South Australian subpopulation and the greater distorting influence of repeat contacts on frequency data in this context.

Please consult the Appendix of the *National Statistical Overview* for more detailed information on data collection, analysis and interpretation.

Where to get more information

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Service demand

Attempted and answered contacts

- In 2016, 23,113 of the 356,595 attempts made to contact Kids Helpline counselling service (or 6.5%) came from South Australia (SA).
- Most of these attempts were made by phone (18,106) but also by web chat (4,268) and email (739).
- 11,973 of these attempts were answered by counsellors, corresponding to a response rate of 52%. This compares with a response rate of 51% across Australia.
- Note that when phone attempts are adjusted to exclude callers who dropped out before the 21 second mandatory wait message, the response rate for SA phone contacts in 2016 was 66%.

Trends over time

- From 2014 to 2016 there was an overall decrease of 11% in attempted contacts from SA across all media. Phone attempts decreased by 15% and email by 61%, while web chat attempts increased by 46%.
- Across all media, response rates for SA have decreased from 61% in 2014 to 52% in 2016.

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

Medium of contact	2014			2015			2016			% change in attempts 2014-2016
	Attempts	Answered	Response rate	Attempts	Answered	Response rate	Attempts	Answered	Response rate	
Phone										
SA	21,211	12,657	60%	19,607	12,133	62%	18,106	9,054	50%	-15%
All States	300,200	173,752	58%	290,767	169,802	58%	276,960	135,719	49%	-8%
Web chat										
SA	2,924	1,232	42%	2,646	1,515	57%	4,268	2,180	51%	46%
All States	49,429	21,082	43%	43,464	24,115	55%	65,954	31,765	48%	33%
Email										
SA	1,897	1,897	100%	1,620	1,620	100%	739	739	100%	-61%
All States	18,832	18,832 ²	100%	15,886 ³	15,886	100%	13,681 ⁴	13,681	100%	-27%
All media										
SA	26,032	15,786	61%	23,873	15,268	64%	23,113	11,973	52%	-11%
All States	368,461	213,666	58%	350,117	209,803	60%	356,595	181,165	51%	-3%

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

2. In addition to 18,832 emails received and responded to in 2014, 544 outreach emails were sent.

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

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

Who contacted the service

Demographic characteristics

- Kids Helpline counsellors recorded data in relation to 177,591 contacts from children and young people across Australia who were aged 5-25 years. State or territory information was available for 163,323 of these contacts, and of this subset 10,975 (or 7%) were known to be from SA.
- Table 2 shows the demographic characteristics of these contacts from SA and compares them with the characteristics of contacts from the rest of Australia where the contact's state or territory was known.
- As with contacts from the rest of Australia, just over half (52%) of SA contacts were aged 13-18 years and three in 10 (31%) were aged 19-25 years.

- Compared with contacts from the rest of Australia, SA contacts were:
 - more likely to be male and less likely to be female
 - less likely to be from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds and more likely to be from a Caucasian Australian background, and
 - less likely to be living in Inner Regional localities and more likely to be living in Outer Regional/Remote areas.
- Other characteristics of Kids Helpline contacts in SA are similar to those of contacts from the rest of Australia.

Table 2. Characteristics of Kids Helpline contacts 2016 aged 5-25 years – SA and rest of Australia¹

Contact characteristics	SA (N = 10,975)		Rest of Australia (N = 152,348)	
	n	%	n	%
Gender				
Female	4,701	66%	70,070	72%
Male	2,411	34%	25,722	27%
Intersex, Trans & Gender Diverse	62	1%	1,002	1%
Total	7,174	100%	96,794	100%
<i>Unknown</i>	<i>3,801</i>		<i>55,554</i>	
Age group				
5-12 years	1,041	16%	11,131	13%
13-18 years	3,346	52%	46,838	55%
19-25 years	2,004	31%	27,081	32%
Total	6,391	100%	85,050	100%
<i><26 but age unknown</i>	<i>4,584</i>		<i>67,298</i>	
Cultural background²				
Aboriginal &/or TSI	61	2%	1,555	4%
CALD	601	22%	12,963	35%
Neither ATSI nor CALD	2,125	76%	22,028	60%
Total	2,787	100%	36,546	100%
<i>Unknown</i>	<i>8,188</i>		<i>115,802</i>	
Remoteness³				
Major Cities	2,645	74%	41,396	72%
Inner Regional	391	11%	11,535	20%
Outer Regional/Remote	544	15%	4,520	8%
Total	3,580	100%	57,451	100%
<i>Unknown</i>	<i>7,395</i>		<i>94,897</i>	
Medium				
Phone	8,767	80%	121,598	80%
Web chat	1,933	18%	25,970	17%
Email	275	3%	4,780	3%
Total	10,975	100%	152,348	100%
Type of help-seeking				
Counselling contact	3,616	33%	55,049	36%
Information/Referral/Other contact	7,359	67%	97,299	64%
Total	10,975	100%	152,348	100%

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

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

3. Remoteness classifications are adapted from the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. See *Kids Helpline Insights 2016: National Statistical Overview* for more information.

Types of help-seeking

The Kids Helpline counselling and support service responds to two broad categories of help-seeking: those children and young people seeking counsellor assistance for a particular concern or problem (*counselling contacts*), and those seeking information, referral to other services, or some other form of non-counselling support, like general conversation or playful engagement (*non-counselling contacts*, also called *information, referral and other contacts*).

As shown in Table 2, 33% of contacts from SA in 2016 were seeking counselling support while 67% were seeking information/referral or other forms of non-counselling support.

Demographic trends over time

Table 3 presents the characteristics of SA contacts over the last three years to consider whether there have been noteworthy variations in the client group over the short term. Key observations from the data in Table 3 include the following:

- There would appear to be moderate variation in the characteristics of SA contacts over the last three years, including:
 - a slight increase in the proportion of male contacts from SA relative to female contacts
 - an increase in the proportion of SA contacts aged 13-18 years and a decrease in contacts aged 19-25 years
 - a substantial increase in the proportion of contacts known to be living in Major Cities and a corresponding decrease in the proportion living in Outer Regional/Remote localities
 - an increase in the proportion who engaged by web chat, and
 - an increase in the proportion who were seeking counselling support relative to non-counselling support.
- It is important to note that substantial missing data, a relatively small subpopulation, and the greater likely influence of repeat contacts on percentage frequencies in this context, undermine the reliability of these observed differences. Accordingly, observed differences may not correspond to actual differences in the characteristics of children and young people from the SA contacting Kids Helpline over this period.

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

Contact characteristics	2014 (N= 14,372)		2015 (N= 13,855)		2016 (N= 10,975)	
	n	%	n	%	%	n
Gender²						
Female	6,645	71%	5,982	67%	4,701	66%
Male	2,660	29%	2,912	33%	2,411	34%
Intersex, Trans & Gender Diverse	-	-	31	0%	62	1%
Total	9,305	100%	8,925	100%	7,174	100%
Unknown	5,067		4,930		3,801	
Age group						
5-12 years	1,501	19%	1,102	14%	1,041	16%
13-18 years	3,680	46%	3,676	48%	3,346	52%
19-25 years	2,892	36%	2,833	37%	2,004	31%
Total	8,073	100%	7,611	100%	6,391	100%
<26 but age unknown	6,299		6,244		4,584	
Cultural background³						
Aboriginal &/or TSI	39	1%	51	1%	61	2%
CALD	813	18%	598	17%	601	22%
Neither ATSI nor CALD	3,761	82%	2,974	82%	2,125	76%
Total	4,613	100%	3,623	100%	2,787	100%
Unknown	9,759		10,232		8,188	
Remoteness⁴						
Major Cities	2,164	51%	2,696	63%	2,645	74%
Inner Regional	406	10%	341	8%	391	11%
Outer Regional/Remote	1,690	40%	1,235	29%	544	15%

Contact characteristics	2014 (N = 14,372)		2015 (N = 13,855)		2016 (N = 10,975)	
	n	n	n	%	%	n
Total	4,260	100%	4,272	100%	3,580	100%
Unknown	10,112		9,583		7,395	
Medium						
Phone	12,429	86%	11,933	86%	8,767	80%
Web chat	1,088	8%	1,387	10%	1,933	18%
Email	855	6%	535	4%	275	3%
Total	14,372	100%	13,855	100%	10,975	100%
Type of help-seeking						
Counselling contact	4,086	28%	4,279	31%	3,616	33%
Information/Referral/Other contact	10,286	72%	9,576	69%	7,359	67%
Total	14,372	100%	13,855	100%	10,975	100%

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

2. A new gender category was introduced into Kids Helpline data collection from January 2015.

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

4. Remoteness classifications are adapted from the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. See *Kids Helpline Insights 2016: National Statistical Overview* for more information.

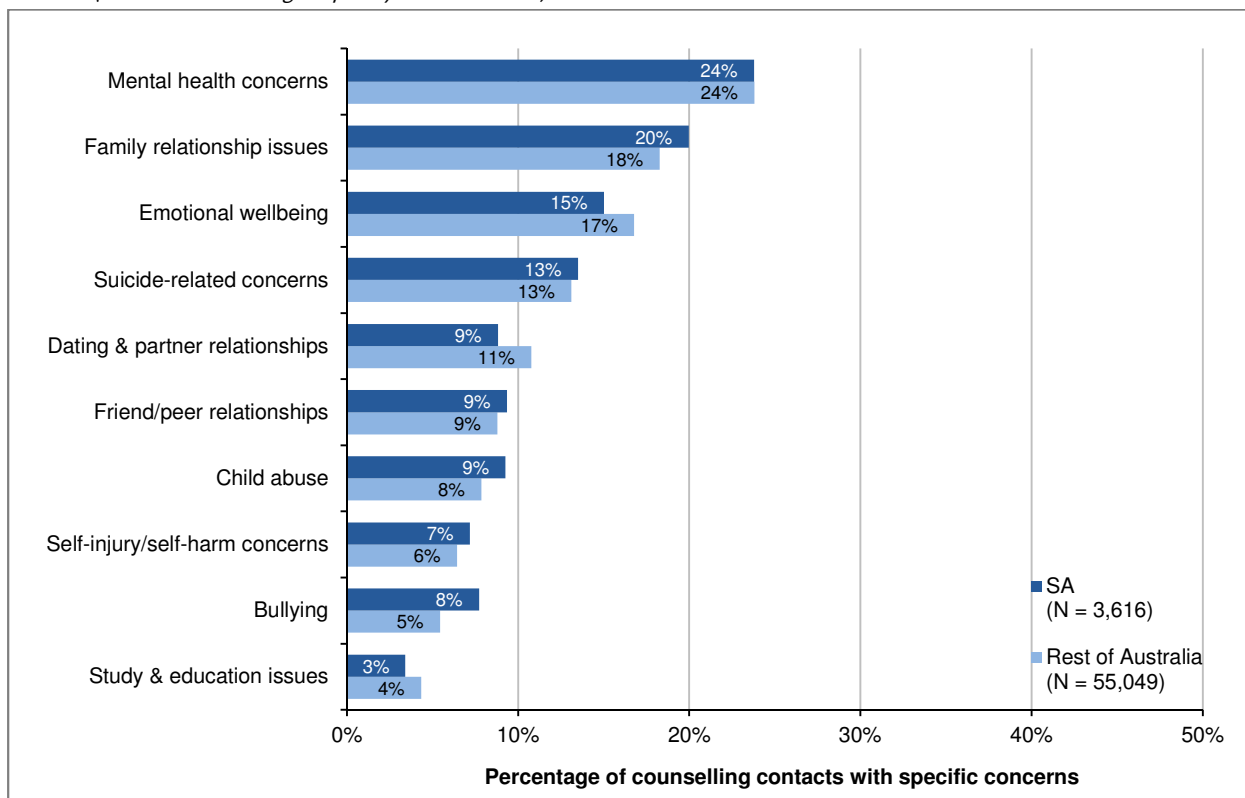
Most common concerns of children and young people who received counselling

During 2016, Kids Helpline counsellors responded to 66,963 contacts from children and young people who were seeking help about specific problems or concerns (i.e. counselling contacts). Analysis of the types of issues and concerns raised by children and young people in these sessions provide a valuable insight into the help-seeking concerns of young Australians today.

SA compared with rest of Australia

- State or territory information was available for 58,665 of these 66,963 counselling contacts and of this subset 3,616 (or 6%) were known to be from SA.
- Figure I shows the 10 most common concerns of SA counselling contacts in 2016 and compares this with the frequency with which these concerns were raised by counselling contacts from the rest of Australia where state or territory information was known.
- The key observation to be noted from the data is that the frequency with which children and young people in SA sought help from Kids Helpline for all of these issues is consistent with the frequency with which children and young people elsewhere in Australia sought help for these issues.

Figure 1. Most frequently recorded concerns of Kids Helpline counselling contacts 2016 aged 5-25 years – SA compared with the rest of Australia (sorted in descending frequency of SA concerns)¹



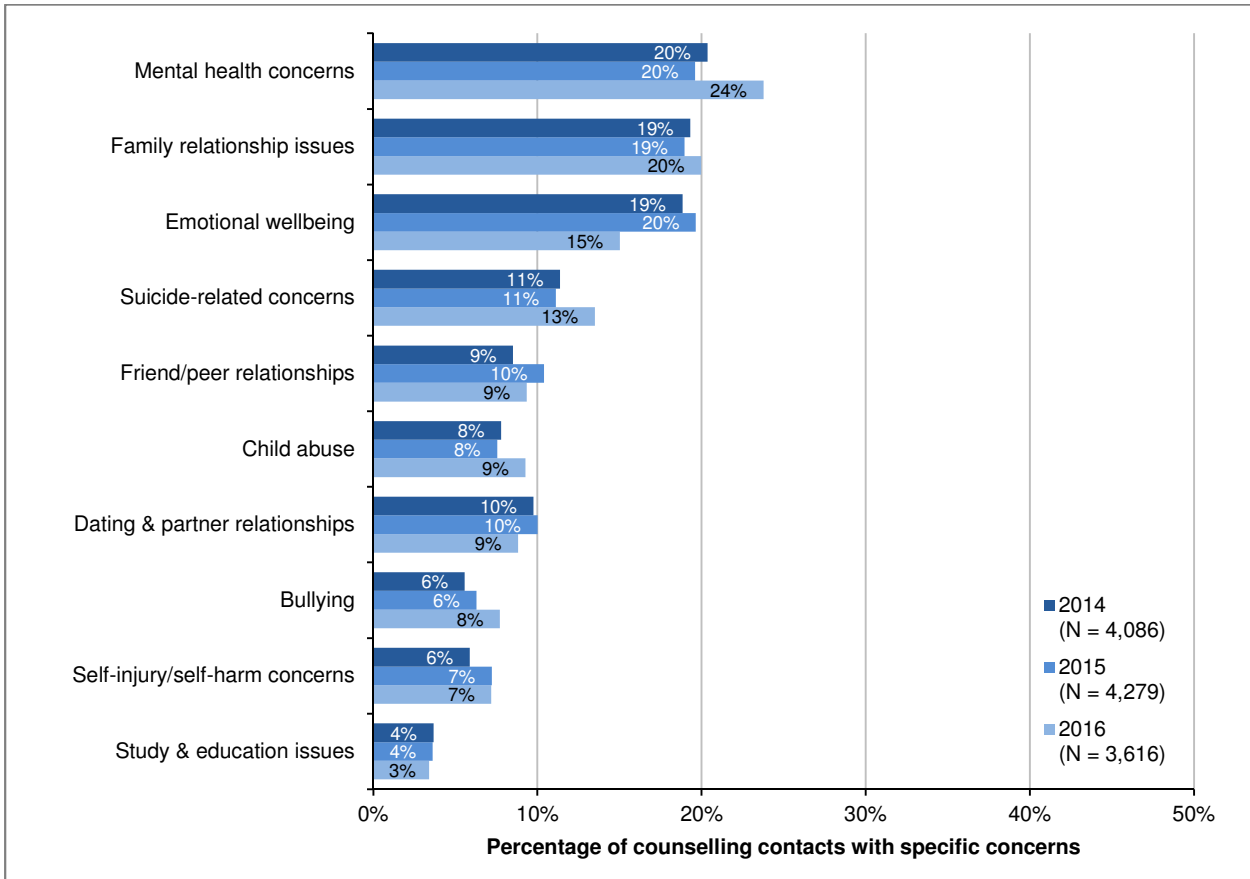
1. Up to four concerns per contact may be recorded. Accordingly, percentages may sum to more than 100%.

Trends over time

Figure 2 shows the 10 most common concerns of SA counselling contacts in 2016 and compares this with the frequency with which these concerns were raised by SA contacts in 2014 and 2015.

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

Figure 2. Most frequently recorded concerns of SA Kids Helpline counselling contacts aged 5-25 years – by year
(sorted in descending frequency of 2016 concerns)[†]



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

All concerns of children and young people who received counselling

Children and young people contact Kids Helpline about a very wide range of concerns, and focusing on the 10 most common concerns can obscure that diversity and the emergence of trends in other areas of less common client concern.

To address this issue, Table 4 reports the frequency with which *every concern* in the Kids Helpline’s concern classification system was raised by counselling contacts from the ACT in 2016 and compares this with the frequency with which the concern was raised in 2014 and 2015. Table 4 groups individual concerns under eleven ‘concern classes’ which aggregate frequencies across conceptual clusters of client concern.

- Key observations to be noted from the data in Table 4 are:
 - the frequency with which children and young people in SA are contacting Kids Helpline about all these different concerns and classes of concern is largely consistent over the short-term; however
 - there would appear to be a slight decrease in the frequency with which children and young people are seeking help for identity and self-concept issues.

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

Concern and concern class	2014 (N = 4,086)		2015 (N = 4,279)		2016 (N = 3,616)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Mental health & emotional wellbeing	2,119	51.9%	2,234	52.2%	1,879	52.0%
Mental health concerns	832	20.4%	839	19.6%	860	23.8%
Emotional wellbeing	770	18.8%	841	19.7%	543	15.0%
Suicide-related concerns	465	11.4%	476	11.1%	488	13.5%
Self-injury/self-harm concerns	240	5.9%	309	7.2%	260	7.2%
Loss and grief	126	3.1%	171	4.0%	103	2.8%
Friends, peers, partners & dating	732	17.9%	853	19.9%	637	17.6%
Dating and partner relationships	399	9.8%	428	10.0%	319	8.8%
Friends/peer relationships	348	8.5%	445	10.4%	338	9.3%
Family relationships	789	19.3%	811	19.0%	722	20.0%
Child-parent relationships	517	12.7%	554	12.9%	473	13.1%
Other family relationships	166	4.1%	179	4.2%	166	4.6%
Changing family structures	141	3.5%	120	2.8%	125	3.5%
Parenting own children	13	0.3%	7	0.2%	10	0.3%
Identity & self-concept	387	9.5%	361	8.4%	209	5.8%
Self-concept (global)	147	3.6%	142	3.3%	98	2.7%
Body image	77	1.9%	66	1.5%	40	1.1%
Sexual orientation	45	1.1%	41	1.0%	34	0.9%
Gender/sex identification	20	0.5%	35	0.8%	25	0.7%
Disability-related concerns	101	2.5%	88	2.1%	14	0.4%
Cultural identity	8	0.2%	7	0.2%	4	0.1%
Violence & abuse (non-family)	415	10.2%	374	8.7%	372	10.3%
Bullying - school related	203	5.0%	231	5.4%	238	6.6%
Bullying - other	32	0.8%	38	0.9%	44	1.2%
Sexual assault or abuse (non-family)	135	3.3%	45	1.1%	42	1.2%
Dating and partner violence	24	0.6%	30	0.7%	16	0.4%
Harassment and assault (non-sexual)	21	0.5%	23	0.5%	24	0.7%
Sexual harassment	13	0.3%	10	0.2%	13	0.4%
Child abuse & family violence	318	7.8%	323	7.5%	335	9.3%
Physical abuse	176	4.3%	170	4.0%	180	5.0%
Sexual abuse	60	1.5%	59	1.4%	65	1.8%
Emotional abuse	71	1.7%	63	1.5%	81	2.2%
Neglect of child	24	0.6%	30	0.7%	26	0.7%
Exploitation by family member	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Exposure to family violence	29	0.7%	31	0.7%	25	0.7%
Living-in-care issues	11	0.3%	14	0.3%	9	0.2%
School, education & work	193	4.7%	217	5.1%	176	4.9%
Study and education issues	150	3.7%	155	3.6%	123	3.4%
Employment issues	31	0.8%	39	0.9%	40	1.1%
School authority issues	14	0.3%	25	0.6%	15	0.4%
Physical or sexual health & development	276	6.8%	256	6.0%	210	5.8%
Physical health concerns	145	3.5%	131	3.1%	77	2.1%
Pregnancy-related concerns	52	1.3%	58	1.4%	57	1.6%
Sexual activity	67	1.6%	61	1.4%	58	1.6%
Physical/sexual development	8	0.2%	2	0.0%	13	0.4%
Contraception/safe sex	13	0.3%	7	0.2%	10	0.3%
Homelessness & basic needs assistance	125	3.1%	137	3.2%	114	3.2%
Homelessness	71	1.7%	91	2.1%	65	1.8%
Practical/material assistance	46	1.1%	41	1.0%	39	1.1%

Concern and concern class	2014 (N = 4,086)		2015 (N = 4,279)		2016 (N = 3,616)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Financial assistance/concerns	9	0.2%	10	0.2%	11	0.3%
Substance use, addictions & risk-taking	64	1.6%	72	1.7%	62	1.7%
Drug use	39	1.0%	45	1.1%	41	1.1%
Alcohol use	17	0.4%	18	0.4%	11	0.3%
Addictive behaviours (not drugs/alcohol)	7	0.2%	7	0.2%	9	0.2%
Physical risk-taking	2	0.0%	2	0.0%	2	0.1%
Gang/cult involvement	1	0.0%	1	0.0%	1	0.0%
Offending, abusive or violent actions	23	0.6%	32	0.7%	25	0.7%
Illegal/offending behaviour	13	0.3%	10	0.2%	10	0.3%
Abusive or violent actions	9	0.2%	16	0.4%	14	0.4%
Sexual violence/offending actions	2	0.0%	7	0.2%	1	0.0%

1. Up to four concerns per contact may be recorded. Totals provided for class of concern will be less than the sum of the individual concerns that make up that class due to the fact that multiple concerns within the class may have been identified in a single contact.



**24/7 HELP FOR CHILDREN AND
YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 5–25 YEARS**

**Kids Helpline
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kidshelpline.com.au**

This regional report is supported by the **Kids Helpline Insights 2016: National Statistical Overview**, which provides extensive data about the issues affecting children and young people across Australia, and the **Kids Helpline Insights 2016** summary report.

These can be accessed at
kidshelpline.com.au/reports

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