



KIDS
HELPLINE

INSIGHTS 2016

STATISTICAL SUMMARY
WESTERN 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 Western 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. 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, 31,591 of the 356,595 attempts made to contact Kids Helpline counselling service (or 9%) came from Western Australia (WA).
- Most of these attempts were made by phone (24,507) but also by web chat (5,614) and email (1,470).
- 15,074 of these attempts were answered by counsellors, corresponding to a response rate of 48%. 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 WA phone contacts in 2016 was 59%.

Trends over time

- From 2014 to 2016 there was an overall increase of 11% in attempted contacts from WA across all media. Phone attempts increased by 4% and web chat by 74%; however, email attempts reduced by 12% over the period.
- Across all media, response rates for WA have decreased from 57% in 2014 to 48% in 2016.

Table 1. WA 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										
WA	23,577	13,294	56%	24,335	13,863	57%	24,507	11,079	45%	4%
All States	300,200	173,752	58%	290,767	169,802	58%	276,960	135,719	49%	-8%
Web chat										
WA	3,229	1,293	40%	3,215	1,757	55%	5,614	2,524	45%	74%
All States	49,429	21,082	43%	43,464	24,115	55%	65,954	31,765	48%	33%
Email										
WA	1,664	1,664	100%	1,406	1,406	100%	1,470	1,470	100%	-12%
All States	18,832	18,832 ²	100%	15,886 ³	15,886	100%	13,681 ⁴	13,681	100%	-27%
All media										
WA	28,470	16,251	57%	28,956	17,026	59%	31,591	15,074	48%	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 13,576 (or 8%) were known to be from WA.
- Table 2 shows the demographic characteristics of these contacts from WA 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 (51%) of WA contacts were aged 13-18 years and over seven out of 10 (74%) were female.

- Compared with contacts from the rest of Australia, WA contacts were:
 - more likely to be aged under 13 years
 - 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 Major Cities.

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

Contact characteristics		WA (N= 13,576)		Rest of Australia (N= 149,747)	
		n	%	n	%
Gender					
	Female	6,432	74%	68,339	72%
	Male	2,162	25%	25,971	27%
	Intersex, Trans & Gender Diverse	75	1%	989	1%
	Total	8,669	100%	95,299	100%
	<i>Unknown</i>	<i>4,907</i>		<i>54,448</i>	
Age group					
	5-12 years	1,461	19%	10,711	13%
	13-18 years	3,909	51%	46,275	55%
	19-25 years	2,271	30%	26,814	32%
	Total	7,641	100%	83,800	100%
	<i><26 but age unknown</i>	<i>5,935</i>		<i>65,947</i>	
Cultural background²					
	Aboriginal &/or TSI	88	3%	1,528	4%
	CALD	841	27%	12,723	35%
	Neither ATSI nor CALD	2,227	71%	21,926	61%
	Total	3,156	100%	36,177	100%
	<i>Unknown</i>	<i>10,420</i>		<i>113,570</i>	
Remoteness³					
	Major Cities	4,220	81%	39,821	71%
	Inner Regional	399	8%	11,527	21%
	Outer Regional/Remote	564	11%	4,500	8%
	Total	5,183	100%	55,848	100%
	<i>Unknown</i>	<i>8,393</i>		<i>93,899</i>	
Medium					
	Phone	10,815	80%	119,550	80%
	Web chat	2,219	16%	25,684	17%
	Email	542	4%	4,513	3%
	Total	13,576	100%	149,747	100%
Type of help-seeking					
	Counselling contact	5,237	39%	53,428	36%
	Information/Referral/Other contact	8,339	61%	96,319	64%
	Total	13,576	100%	149,747	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, 39% of contacts from WA in 2016 were seeking counselling support while 61% were seeking information/referral or other forms of non-counselling support.

Demographic trends over time

Table 3 presents the characteristics of WA 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 WA contacts over the last three years, including:
 - an increase in the proportion aged under 13 years and a corresponding decrease in the proportion aged 19-25 years
 - a slight increase in both the proportion of contacts identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) and of other culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, with a corresponding decrease in the proportion of those known to be Caucasian Australians
 - an increase in the proportion of contacts who engaged with the service by web chat and a decrease in the proportion who engaged by phone, and
 - an increase in the proportion seeking counselling support and a corresponding decrease in the proportion seeking non-counselling support.

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

Contact characteristics	2014 (N= 14,627)		2015 (N= 15,628)		2016 (N= 13,576)	
	n	%	n	%	%	n
Gender²						
Female	6,353	73%	6,372	71%	6,432	74%
Male	2,378	27%	2,528	28%	2,162	25%
Intersex, Trans & Gender Diverse	-	-	33	0%	75	1%
Total	8,731	100%	8,933	100%	8,669	100%
Unknown	5,896		6,695		4,907	
Age group						
5-12 years	873	12%	1,325	18%	1,461	19%
13-18 years	3,740	53%	3,762	50%	3,909	51%
19-25 years	2,491	35%	2,402	32%	2,271	30%
Total	7,104	100%	7,489	100%	7,641	100%
<26 but age unknown	7,523		8,139		5,935	
Cultural background³						
Aboriginal &/or TSI	45	1%	111	3%	88	3%
CALD	535	18%	822	25%	841	27%
Neither ATSI nor CALD	2,466	81%	2,345	72%	2,227	71%
Total	3,046	100%	3,278	100%	3,156	100%
Unknown	11,581		12,350		10,420	
Remoteness⁴						
Major Cities	3,083	77%	3,759	79%	4,220	81%
Inner Regional	249	6%	476	10%	399	8%
Outer Regional/Remote	648	16%	526	11%	564	11%
Total	3,980	100%	4,761	100%	5,183	100%
Unknown	10,647		10,867		8,393	

Contact characteristics	2014 (N = 14,627)		2015 (N = 15,628)		2016 (N = 13,576)	
	n	%	n	%	%	n
Medium						
Phone	12,796	87%	13,435	86%	10,815	80%
Web chat	1,082	7%	1,493	10%	2,219	16%
Email	749	5%	700	4%	542	4%
Total	14,627	100%	15,628	100%	13,576	100%
Type of help-seeking						
Counselling contact	4,678	32%	5,011	32%	5,237	39%
Information/Referral/Other contact	9,949	68%	10,617	68%	8,339	61%
Total	14,627	100%	15,628	100%	13,576	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.

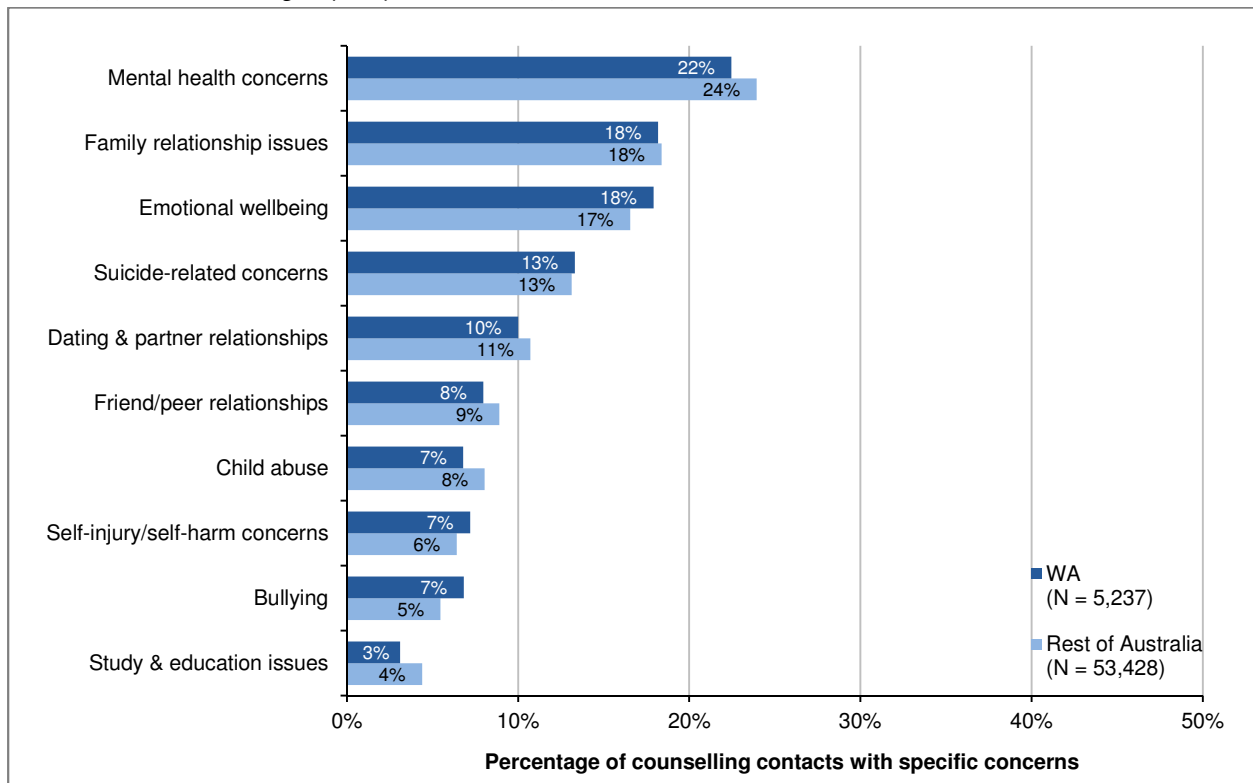
Most common concerns of children and young people who received counselling

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 concerns of young Australians today.

WA compared with rest of Australia

- State or territory information was available for 58,665 of these 66,963 counselling contacts and of this subset 5,237 (or 9%) were known to be from WA.
- Figure I shows the 10 most common concerns of WA 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 WA 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 – WA compared with the rest of Australia (sorted in descending frequency of WA concerns[†])



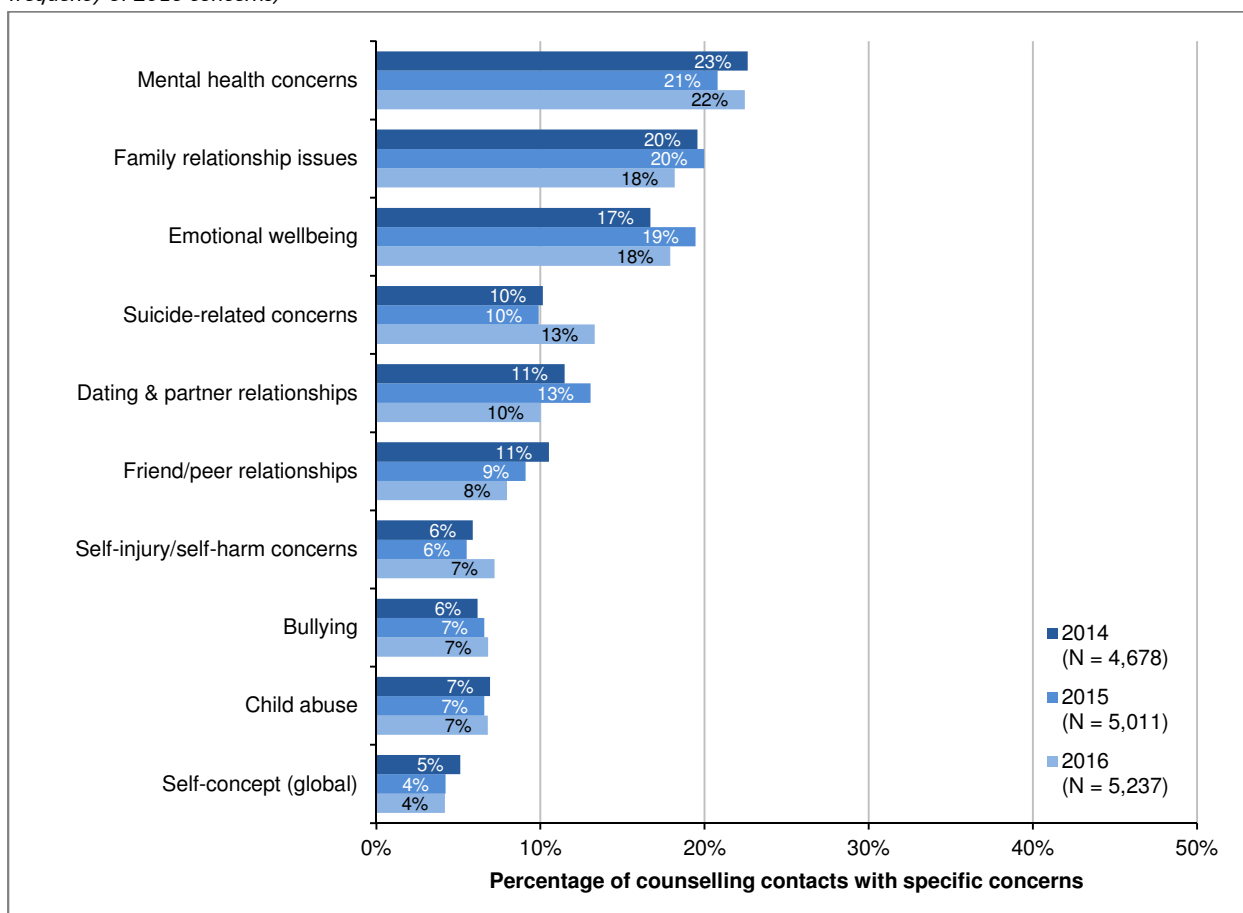
1. Up to four concerns per contact may be recorded. Accordingly, percentages may sum to more than 100%.

Trends over time

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

- The key observation to note from the data is that the frequency with which children and young people in WA are contacting Kids Helpline about these concerns has remained consistent over the short-term.

Figure 2. Most frequently recorded concerns of WA 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 WA in 2016 and compares this with the frequency with which the concern was raised in 2014 and 2015. Table 4 groups individual concerns together under eleven ‘concern classes’ which aggregate frequencies across conceptual clusters of client concern.

- Key observation to be noted from the data in Table 4 is that the frequency with which children and young people in WA are contacting Kids Helpline about all these different concerns and classes of concern is quite consistent over the short-term with two exceptions:
 - there would appear to be a slight decrease in the frequency with which children and young people are seeking help in relation to the class of concern ‘friends, peers, partners and dating’, and
 - there would appear to be a slight increase in the frequency with which children and young people are seeking help for the class of concern ‘mental health and emotional wellbeing’.

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

Concern and concern class	2014 (N = 4,678)		2015 (N = 5,011)		2016 (N = 5,237)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Mental health & emotional wellbeing	2,354	50.3%	2,521	50.3%	2,846	54.3%
Mental health concerns	1,059	22.6%	1,042	20.8%	1,176	22.5%
Emotional wellbeing	781	16.7%	975	19.5%	938	17.9%
Suicide-related concerns	475	10.2%	496	9.9%	697	13.3%
Self-injury/self-harm concerns	275	5.9%	276	5.5%	377	7.2%
Loss and grief	159	3.4%	122	2.4%	172	3.3%
Friends, peers, partners & dating	1,010	21.6%	1,090	21.8%	928	17.7%
Dating and partner relationships	537	11.5%	654	13.1%	524	10.0%
Friends/peer relationships	492	10.5%	456	9.1%	417	8.0%
Family relationships	915	19.6%	1,001	20.0%	952	18.2%
Child-parent relationships	663	14.2%	679	13.6%	637	12.2%
Other family relationships	187	4.0%	237	4.7%	236	4.5%
Changing family structures	123	2.6%	154	3.1%	132	2.5%
Parenting own children	9	0.2%	10	0.2%	12	0.2%
Identity & self-concept	378	8.1%	385	7.7%	388	7.4%
Self-concept (global)	239	5.1%	211	4.2%	219	4.2%
Body image	64	1.4%	44	0.9%	69	1.3%
Sexual orientation	51	1.1%	70	1.4%	58	1.1%
Gender/sex identification	12	0.3%	36	0.7%	34	0.6%
Disability-related concerns	21	0.4%	27	0.5%	17	0.3%
Cultural identity	3	0.1%	10	0.2%	9	0.2%
Violence & abuse (non-family)	431	9.2%	500	10.0%	535	10.2%
Bullying - school related	242	5.2%	287	5.7%	305	5.8%
Bullying - other	50	1.1%	45	0.9%	53	1.0%
Sexual assault or abuse (non-family)	71	1.5%	54	1.1%	67	1.3%
Dating and partner violence	31	0.7%	62	1.2%	83	1.6%
Harassment and assault (non-sexual)	32	0.7%	31	0.6%	21	0.4%
Sexual harassment	11	0.2%	27	0.5%	18	0.3%
Child abuse & family violence	324	6.9%	330	6.6%	356	6.8%
Physical abuse	176	3.8%	169	3.4%	190	3.6%
Sexual abuse	54	1.2%	50	1.0%	48	0.9%
Emotional abuse	75	1.6%	98	2.0%	99	1.9%
Neglect of child	13	0.3%	19	0.4%	19	0.4%
Exploitation by family member	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	6	0.1%
Exposure to family violence	37	0.8%	37	0.7%	51	1.0%
Living-in-care issues	16	0.3%	10	0.2%	11	0.2%
School, education & work	296	6.3%	321	6.4%	254	4.9%
Study and education issues	216	4.6%	215	4.3%	163	3.1%
Employment issues	63	1.3%	72	1.4%	67	1.3%
School authority issues	20	0.4%	39	0.8%	26	0.5%
Physical or sexual health & development	219	4.7%	246	4.9%	282	5.4%
Physical health concerns	99	2.1%	113	2.3%	132	2.5%
Pregnancy-related concerns	58	1.2%	57	1.1%	86	1.6%
Sexual activity	54	1.2%	61	1.2%	57	1.1%
Physical/sexual development	5	0.1%	11	0.2%	7	0.1%
Contraception/safe sex	7	0.1%	4	0.1%	2	0.0%
Homelessness & basic needs assistance	152	3.2%	142	2.8%	127	2.4%
Homelessness	89	1.9%	67	1.3%	74	1.4%
Practical/material assistance	48	1.0%	54	1.1%	43	0.8%

Concern and concern class	2014 (N = 4,678)		2015 (N = 5,011)		2016 (N = 5,237)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Financial assistance/concerns	18	0.4%	24	0.5%	13	0.2%
Substance use, addictions & risk-taking	111	2.4%	110	2.2%	137	2.6%
Drug use	82	1.8%	78	1.6%	80	1.5%
Alcohol use	28	0.6%	31	0.6%	51	1.0%
Addictive behaviours (not drugs/alcohol)	8	0.2%	3	0.1%	7	0.1%
Physical risk-taking	2	0.0%	2	0.0%	0	0.0%
Gang/cult involvement	1	0.0%	2	0.0%	0	0.0%
Offending, abusive or violent actions	53	1.1%	41	0.8%	61	1.2%
Illegal/offending behaviour	28	0.6%	20	0.4%	27	0.5%
Abusive or violent actions	23	0.5%	18	0.4%	35	0.7%
Sexual violence/offending actions	3	0.1%	3	0.1%	0	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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