

## Tasmania 2006

### Highlights from 2006

- During 2006 Kids Help Line received 15,229\* telephone and online contacts from Tasmania. Counsellors responded to 8,383\* of these contacts.
- While telephone counselling remains the core service, web and email now account for 13% contacts from Tasmania.
- Kids Help Line counsellors answered **7,260\*** telephone calls from Tasmania. Sixty-four percent of these calls were from regional and remote areas of the state.
- Counsellors responded to **1,123\*** online contacts (222\* from web counselling and 901\* email sessions). Twenty-two percent of these contacts were from regional and remote areas of Tasmania.
- Counsellors engaged in **1,455 telephone and online counselling sessions** with Tasmanian children and young people aged between 5 and 25 years.
- The majority of contacts were about mental health issues, relationships with family and friends and from young people concerned about managing emotions or their behaviours.
- Compared with national rates, young people from Tasmania made a greater proportion of contacts in relation to eating and weight issues, mental health issues and self-image issues, but were proportionally less likely to contact about bullying and relationships with family, friends, and partners. It is important to note that these figures may be influenced by individual young people calling on multiple occasions about a specific issue.
- In line with Australian trends, the proportion of Tasmanian contacts about mental health issues and concerns about emotional/behavioural management increased in 2006 while the proportion of counselling sessions about partner relationships and bullying decreased.
- Tasmanian young people also contacted proportionally more during 2006 about eating and weight issues and less about family relationships than in recent years.

- Current thoughts of suicide were reported in 57 Tasmanian contacts while reports of deliberate self-injury (as distinct from suicidality) were received 188 times. These figures may be influenced by individual young people engaged in ongoing counselling with Kids Help Line counsellors.
- Nine percent of young people were referred to other support services in their local area.
- Responses required to protect children, such as contacting an emergency service or child protection agency, were actioned during or after 12 counselling sessions with Tasmanians during 2006.

\* State location data was available for 99% of telephone calls and 45% of online contacts. Total figures presented are an extrapolation based on available data.

### Location of Clients

Comprehensive regional information is available for 99% of telephone calls from Tasmania. This data demonstrates that approximately 36% of Tasmanian callers were from regional and remote areas of the state and 64% from the metropolitan regions. The breakdown across the state was as follows:

Region	% of Calls (N=7,213)
Southern TAS	36%
TAS Mobiles	28%
North East	22%
North West	14%

### Providing Counselling, Support and Connection

Children and young people contact Kids Help Line for a diverse range of reasons. Counsellors are trained to respond to each client according to their needs: support, encouragement, counselling, assistance, information and connection are provided.

Some interactions are with children and young people who do not report any immediate problems, but have heard of Kids Help Line through schools or advertising and want to 'check out' the service to find out what

counsellors actually do. Kids Help Line has confidence that if young people test the service in this manner and are responded to in a positive and respectful way then they are likely to connect with a counsellor if more serious concerns arise.

More than half (51%) of all Tasmanian interactions were with children and young people seeking counselling or support. Some were in crisis and had heard of Kids Help Line's reputation for assisting in these situations. These young people often know what they want and are able to ask for what they need. Others may be facing less critical concerns and are seeking help to consider their options or simply want to talk things through.

The remainder of this Tasmania 2006 Report is based on the 1,455 telephone and online counselling sessions known to have been with Tasmanian children and young people aged between 5 and 25 years.

## Age, Gender and Background of Clients

Males made 16% and females 84% of contacts. This gender breakdown is consistent with help-seeking trends for other counselling services.

Twenty-six percent of contacts were from children younger than 15 years of age (see table below).

	Females	Males	Total (N=9,232)
5-9	1.2%	0.5%	1.7%
10-14	18.5%	5.6%	24.1%
15-18	55.7%	7.6%	63.2%
19-25	9.6%	1.3%	10.9%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>85.0%</b>	<b>15.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

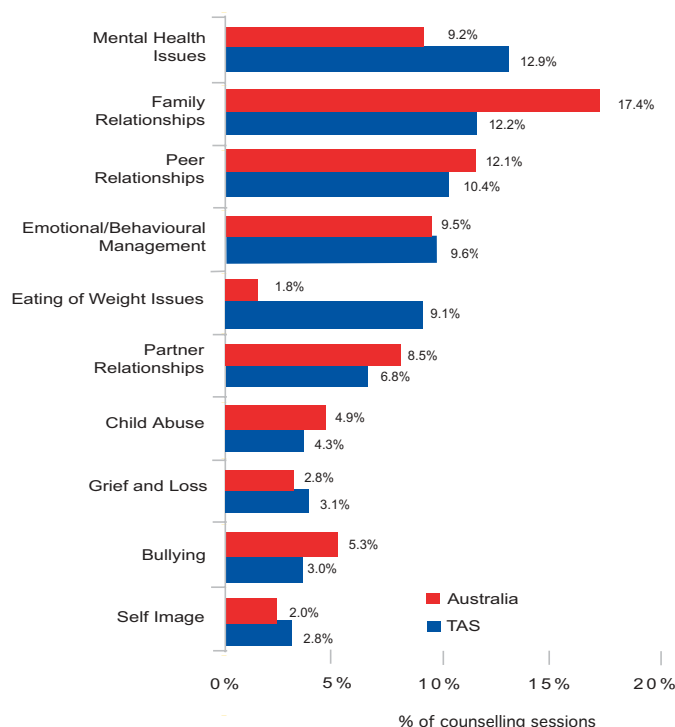
Table columns/rows may not total due to rounding.

Counsellors recorded cultural and linguistic background of the young person in 20% (284) of counselling sessions. Of these, 2% were with young people who identified as Indigenous. A further 3% identified as being from a non-English speaking background. The remainder of young people did not identify as being from either of these backgrounds.

## Concerns of Tasmanian Children and Young People

The following data is based on 'main problem' classifications that may not represent the complexity of issues for which young people seek counselling. Counsellors classify the main problem as the issue where the majority of counselling work took place in the session.

The 10 most frequent concerns about which Tasmanian young people contacted Kids Help Line are shown in the graph below along with national data for comparison.



## *Nature and Severity of Main Concerns*

### 1. Mental Health Issues

The proportion of contacts relating to mental health has continued to increase over the past three years. Of the **187** contacts about mental health issues in 2006:

- 66% had a clinically diagnosed mental health issue
- 18% were experiencing mild or occasional symptoms or concerns
- 13% were severely distressed with a mental health concern having a major impact on their life
- 2% were concerned about or caring for a significant other; and
- 1% of young people were seeking information.

It is important to note that these figures may be influenced by individual young people calling on multiple occasions about a specific issue.

### 2. Relationships with Family

Of the 177 contacts about family relationships:

- 43% were related to frequent or major family conflict or disruption
- 10% were related to family breakdown, separation or divorce
- 35% reported occasional family conflict or disruption; and
- 12% of young people contacted because they were worried about a family member.

### 3. Relationships with Friends and Peers

The proportion of contacts regarding peer relationships has been decreasing since 2001. Of the **151** contacts regarding relationships with friends and peers in 2006:

- 33% were concerned for a friend's well being
- 33% reported occasional or one-off friendship problems
- 13% concerned significant relationship problems; and
- 21% disclosed having difficulty making or maintaining friendships.

### 4. Emotional and/or Behavioural Management

The proportion of contacts relating to emotional and/or behavioural management continued an upward trend in 2006. Of the **140** contacts about emotional and/or behaviour management in 2006:

- 53% needed to talk through emotions or behaviour
- 34% were experiencing difficulty managing emotions or behaviours
- 9% were seeking management strategies
- 3% were extremely distressed at the time of their call; and
- 1% of young people were concerned about another person.

### 5. Eating and Weight Issues

Compared to national rates, young people from Tasmania made a greater proportion of contacts in relation to eating and weight issues. However, these figures are likely influenced by individual young people calling on multiple occasions about a specific issue. Of the **132** contacts about eating and weight issues:

- 4% had issues about diet or weight
- 6% reported occasional disordered eating patterns
- 88% had continued disordered eating patterns
- 1% were experiencing severe health problems; and
- 1% of young people were seeking information.

### 6. Relationships with Partners

Of the **99** Tasmanian young people who contacted about relationships with partners:

- 43% were seeking help with negotiating a relationship
- 40% were experiencing significant relationship difficulties or relationship breakdown
- 10% involved wanting to establish a relationship; and
- 7% had concerns for their partner's well-being.

## 7. Child Abuse

During 2006 Kids Help Line counsellors responded to 64 contacts about child abuse accounting for 4% of Tasmanian counselling contacts. Of these counselling sessions:

- 50% had concerns about sexual abuse
- 44% related to physical abuse; and
- The remainder of young people had concerns about emotional abuse or neglect.

Counsellors implement their statutory duty of care obligations if they assess that a child is at risk of injury or harm at the time of the counselling session.

## 8. Grief and Loss

Of the 45 counselling sessions about grief and loss:

- 53% needed to talk through an experience of loss
- 33% had experienced a recent loss and were in acute distress
- 9% were seeking information; and
- 4% were experiencing extreme long term distress or unable to resume usual lifestyle.

## 9. Bullying

Of the 44 counselling sessions with young people about bullying:

- 11% were about isolated incidents
- 46% were related to episodic incidents
- 27% were about frequent or continuous harassment; and
- 16% were seeking information or concerned for a friend.

## 10. Self Image

Of the 41 contacts from Tasmanian young people about self-image:

- 19% were about occasional dissatisfaction with self
- 71% were with young people reporting persistent low self-value; and
- 10% were experiencing severe feelings of worthlessness.

## *Deliberate Self Injury and Suicidality*

During 2006 counsellors recorded whether children and young people contacting Kids Help Line had recently engaged in deliberate self-injury (as distinct from suicidality). In 13% (188) of Tasmanian counselling sessions, young people reported deliberately injuring themselves through actions such as cutting, burning or tattooing skin, pulling out hair or taking overdoses of substances they believed to be non-lethal. This is more than double the number and proportion received in 2005, however, these figures may be influenced by one or more individual young people engaged in ongoing counselling with Kids Help Line counsellors.

Current thoughts of suicide were reported in 57 counselling sessions with Tasmanian youth during 2006, accounting for 4% of all counselling contacts. This includes most of the 33 contacts specifically regarding suicide with the balance coming from young people who reported current suicidal thoughts while discussing other concerns. This is a 40% proportional increase on 2005 data

## *Referral to Other Support*

Counsellors were able to assist 79% of young people directly without referring them to another agency. Nine percent of contacts required referral to another service for ongoing support (including crisis response and three-way linkups). A further 8% were referred to their doctor, school/guidance counsellor, mental health worker or other non-specific referrals. In 4% of contacts, counsellors were unable to provide a referral because either no appropriate service was available or the young person finished the call.

## *Protective Actions*

Responses required to protect children, such as contacting an emergency service or child protection agency, were actioned during or after 12 counselling sessions with Tasmanians during 2006.

## Ongoing Counselling and Intensive Support

Young people with severe, complex and long-standing issues require the continuity provided by speaking with the same counsellor each time they contact a helping service (i.e. ongoing counselling). Case management is a model of care that is sometimes used in these instances to ensure numerous different needs can each be considered and planned for. Sometimes this might mean linking the young person with other more specialised face-to-face services and developing joint or 'wrap-around' management plans.

Thirty-seven percent of Tasmanian children and young people received either ongoing counselling (35%) or intensive support with a case management plan (2%).

Kids Help Line continued to provide significant one-off and occasional support with 37% of counselling sessions provided to children and young people who were contacting the service for the first time and a further 26% of sessions with young people who were an occasional client.

© This information may be re-used, copied or distributed on the condition it is sourced to Kids Help Line and is not used out of context. All stated data comparisons have been assessed against a 95% confidence interval. For up to date information, current events and what's on the drawing board, visit our website [www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au)

## Tasmania Yearly Trends Proportion of Telephone & Online Contacts by Year

PROBLEM	2003	2004	2005	2006
<b>INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS</b>	<b>36.3%</b>	<b>33.4%</b>	<b>35.8%</b>	<b>29.3%</b>
Family	17.1%	14.2%	13.4%	12.2%
Friends	10.5%	10.6%	13.0%	10.4%
Partners	8.7%	8.5%	9.4%	6.8%
<b>SEX RELATED</b>	<b>11.8%</b>	<b>8.7%</b>	<b>7.3%</b>	<b>3.5%</b>
Sexual Activity	4.6%	2.9%	1.6%	1.4%
Contraception	0.8%	0.7%	1.0%	0.5%
Pregnancy	5.9%	4.6%	3.9%	1.4%
STD	0.4%	0.5%	0.8%	0.1%
<b>ALCOHOL/DRUGS</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>2.1%</b>
Alcohol Use	0.7%	0.9%	0.3%	0.5%
Drug Use	0.0%	3.4%	2.1%	1.6%
<b>SELF CONCEPT</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>5.7%</b>	<b>6.5%</b>	<b>6.7%</b>
Developmental Issues	2.6%	3.1%	3.3%	2.8%
Self Image	1.6%	0.8%	1.0%	2.8%
Sexual Orientation	2.4%	1.8%	2.2%	1.1%
<b>CHILD ABUSE</b>	<b>6.8%</b>	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>4.4%</b>
Emotional Abuse	0.4%	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%
Neglect	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%
Physical Abuse	3.5%	3.5%	2.1%	1.9%
Sexual Abuse	2.5%	1.2%	0.7%	2.2%
<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>8.3%</b>	<b>8.2%</b>	<b>6.9%</b>	<b>5.2%</b>
Authority	1.1%	0.7%	0.7%	0.5%
Bullying	6.1%	6.1%	3.6%	3.0%
Study	1.1%	1.5%	2.6%	1.6%
<b>VIOLENCE</b>	<b>4.7%</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>4.4%</b>	<b>3.8%</b>
Assault or Harassment	1.1%	1.3%	1.1%	0.9%
Domestic	0.4%	0.6%	1.1%	0.2%
Sexual Harassment	0.5%	0.8%	0.6%	0.3%
Sexual Assault	2.7%	1.7%	1.6%	2.4%
<b>HEALTH</b>	<b>6.4%</b>	<b>12.2%</b>	<b>14.6%</b>	<b>24.2%</b>
Eating Behaviours	0.9%	1.5%	7.2%	9.1%
HIV/AIDS	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Physical Health	1.9%	1.7%	1.7%	2.3%
Mental Health Issues	3.6%	9.0%	5.7%	12.9%
<b>EMOTIONAL</b>	<b>10.2%</b>	<b>11.6%</b>	<b>14.9%</b>	<b>16.6%</b>
Emotional/Behavioural Management	5.0%	5.7%	8.2%	9.6%
Grief and Loss	2.2%	2.7%	2.6%	3.1%
Loneliness	0.7%	0.8%	0.6%	1.6%
Suicide-Related Issues	2.2%	2.4%	3.5%	2.3%
<b>PRACTICAL</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>3.5%</b>	<b>4.1%</b>
Employment/Financial	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%
Leaving Home/Homeless	4.0%	3.8%	2.2%	2.7%
Legal	0.8%	0.8%	0.5%	0.6%
Life Skills	0.8%	1.2%	0.5%	0.5%
<b>MINOR</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>