



# Connecting to Children

A compilation of Child Helpline Data

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## Disclaimers

CHI's work is firmly grounded in the principles and values enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN CRC), especially children's right to privacy and protection from harm. To this end, all identifying details and information about individual children cited in this report have been removed or altered to protect them and to ensure their privacy.

This report is based on the analysis of information received from child helplines in the CHI network, through CHI's data questionnaire. The conclusions and annual statements are based on this information only.

The percentages in the tables and graphs in this publication have been rounded to a maximum of two significant figures and do not make use of decimal notation. As a result, the percentages of the individual (sub-) categories do not always add up to one hundred percent. The exact figures are available upon request

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# Introduction

## Acknowledgements

*Connecting to Children* (2010 data) has been made possible thanks to the efforts of countless individuals, staff, volunteers and donors.

CHI would especially like to thank its member child helplines for their tireless efforts in assisting children, and for their commitment to the CHI network and the collection of the invaluable data presented here.

### *Child helplines in the following countries submitted data for this report:*

- › AFRICA » Botswana, Gambia, Guinée, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Swaziland, Uganda, Zimbabwe
- › AMERICAS AND CARIBBEAN » Argentina, Aruba, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Curaçao, Mexico, Peru, Saint Martin, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago, Uruguay, USA (7x)
- › ASIA PACIFIC » Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei, Peoples Republic of China, Hong Kong, S.A.R., India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, New Zealand (3x), Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, P.O.C., Thailand, Vietnam
- › EUROPE » Albania, Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece (2x), Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia (2x), Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland (2x), Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom (4x)
- › MENA » Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Palestine, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Yemen

Welcome to the ninth edition of *Connecting to Children*, Child Helpline International's annual publication of data from its member child helplines around the world. This edition contains data about contacts made in 2010 with member child helplines in Africa, the Americas and the Caribbean, Asia Pacific, Europe and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). For this edition of *Connecting to Children*, CHI received data from 101 member child helplines (out of a possible 112)\*. Detailed information on all of these child helplines and their specific data tables can be found on the accompanying CD-Rom at the end of this publication.

*Connecting to Children* provides a comprehensive overview of the voices of children in need of care, protection and assistance. It documents their concerns and the issues they face, and highlights regional, cross-regional and global trends. *Connecting to Children* also brings to the forefront the importance of child helplines in the lives of children, outlining the services child helplines offer, the different methods of communication used by children to contact child helplines, the profile of children contacting child helplines and, most importantly, the reasons why children (and adults on behalf of children) contact child helplines. In this edition of *Connecting to Children* the crucial role child helplines play during emergencies, both natural disasters and human-induced conflict, is showcased.

Children trust child helplines and voluntarily contact them. No other child protection entity has access to such direct, unadulterated information on the problems and concerns of children. The data collated by CHI in *Connecting to Children* allows the CHI network to influence key decision makers to take targeted action to improve the lives of children.

*This year some improvements have been made to Connecting to Children: The analysis of contacts on the regional and global levels has been enhanced by the inclusion of gender disaggregation. This additional information provides new insights into the differences between the lives of boys and girls and the exact reasons why they contact child helplines. In addition, to make Connecting to Children more accessible and increase the value of the publication for its various readers, the country profiles previously found in Section II of Connecting to Children have been moved to a CD-Rom that is included with this publication.*

With other child protection networks and agencies increasingly looking to CHI in general, and to our data specifically, for input into global processes, *Connecting to Children* is becoming an ever more important publication in the child protection arena. CHI aims to continually provide readers with insight into the daily work of child helplines and the issues faced by children today, as well as inspiration to continue working towards better, stronger national child protection systems worldwide.

\* 101 members out of 112 possible members were able to submit data for 2010. As not all questions are relevant to all child helplines the number of child helplines for which data is analysed may vary for different topics.

# Executive summary

*Connecting to Children is divided into two sections:*

**Section I consists of four chapters:**

**CHAPTER 1: CHILDREN'S VOICES**, outlines the reasons why children contact child helplines – the problems, concerns and issues they face worldwide and by region. It also presents a profile of the children who contact child helplines.

**CHAPTER 2: A CLOSER LOOK AT CHILD HELPLINES**, explains what child helplines are and outlines the different services they offer. This chapter also takes a closer look at the communication methods children use to contact child helplines, the importance of toll-free statuses for child helplines, accessibility issues, staff compositions and years of existence of child helplines.

**CHAPTER 3: CHILD HELPLINES IN EMERGENCIES**, depicts the vital importance and crucial roles of child helplines in times of natural and human-induced disasters, from earthquakes, floods, draughts and fires to violence and war. This chapter delves into the effects of calamities and emergencies on children and on child helpline operations, and gives examples of how child helplines have remained resilient and persevered, providing children with much needed support and assistance during difficult times

**CHAPTER 4: PARTNERSHIPS FOR STRONGER CHILD PROTECTION – DUTCH ALLIANCES**, introduces CHI's new strategic partnerships, formed in the framework of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs five-year grant programme, and explains CHI's role and the importance of these partnerships to CHI's global network and data collection efforts.

**Section II is made up of the CHI Glossary and a CD-Rom:**

**THE CHI GLOSSARY** outlines basic concepts used by child helplines around the world. It also provides a platform for common understanding and use of terminology amongst child helplines. Finally, it acts as a tool in assisting child helplines to achieve uniformity in the data collection process so that data can be aggregated.

**THE CD-ROM** includes all of the individual country and child helpline profiles, which provide child helpline-specific information and data tables.

# Children's Voices

In 2010, CHI's global network of child helplines\* together received 13.4 million contacts\*\* from children seeking help and support. This chapter presents an analysis of these contacts. It provides insight into the demographics of the children who contact child helplines and, importantly, why these children contact child helplines – the reasons and matters about which children seek information, advice and help. The result is an unparalleled insight into the problems and issues children face, as conveyed by those children themselves. Taken together, as is done here, the data collected by CHI from across its network represents a powerful tool towards the preparation and implementation of concrete strategies to address the problems affecting children.

## CHILDREN'S VOICES - WORLDWIDE

Child helplines are in the unique position of being privy to children's voices. Because child helplines are easy for children to access and are perceived as safe and trustworthy, children all over the world contact child helplines to express their fears and worries and to share their thoughts and concerns. More than any other child protection service, child helplines have direct, unadulterated access to invaluable information and insight into the lives of children, and especially their needs and problems. (For information about the communication methods used by child helplines and their operating procedures, please see Chapter 2 – A Closer Look at Child Helplines.)

## PROFILE OF THE CHILDREN CONTACTING CHILD HELPLINES

As in previous years, the global data for contacts made with child helplines in 2010 suggests that slightly more girls tend to contact child helplines than boys.<sup>1,1</sup> There are, however, some variations across regions\*. Most significantly, in both the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and European regions many more girls contact child helplines than boys. These are also the regions in which the gender of the children contacting the child helplines is most often known. In Europe the difference between girls and boys contacting child helplines amounts to 15%, and in the MENA region to 26%. In Europe the bulk of contacts are from girls between 13-15 years old, and in the MENA region from girls of 18 years and older.<sup>1,2</sup>

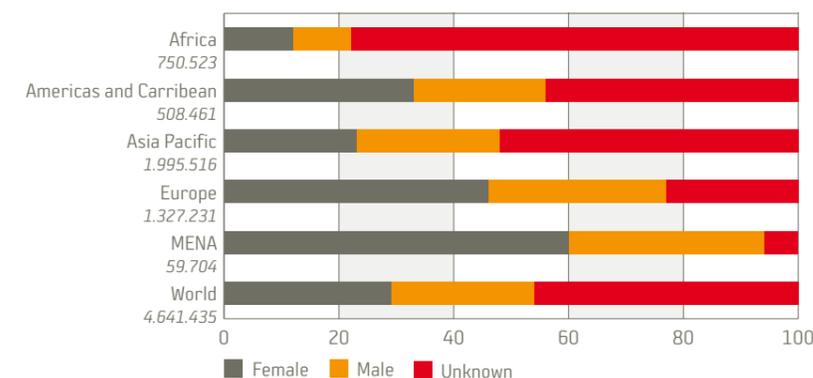
Analysing the data by Human Development Index (HDI) levels highlights significant differences between boys and girls contacting child helplines. In low HDI level countries the percentage of contacts for which the gender of the child is unknown is larger than in countries with higher HDI

levels, and the concentration of contacts tends to concern children aged 18 and older. In medium HDI level countries less girls tend to contact child helplines than boys. The ages of children who contact child helplines in medium HDI level countries are concentrated around 13-15 years. In high HDI level countries the trend is the opposite: more girls tend to contact child helplines than boys. However, the majority of contacts still come from children aged 13-15.

## THE REASONS WHY CHILDREN CONTACT CHILD HELPLINES

There are many reasons for contacting child helplines. Every child and every child's exact situation is different. In order to get a clear overview of the reasons why children contact them, child helplines often classify the myriad of reasons into more general categories. This is not always straightforward however. Some contacts may span multiple, inter-related categories. How child helplines treat cases in which a particular contact can be assigned to multiple categories

### 1.1 Gender by region



### 1.2 Age by region

	Africa	Americas and Caribbean	Asia Pacific	Europe	MENA	Global total
Age	%	%	%	%	%	%
0-6	0%	2%	10%	3%	20%	6%
7-9	2%	1%	3%	6%	8%	4%
10-12	3%	4%	9%	18%	14%	10%
13-15	3%	12%	13%	31%	16%	17%
16-17	12%	7%	8%	12%	14%	10%
18+	1%	7%	15%	6%	14%	9%
Unknown	80%	67%	42%	24%	13%	45%
Total	750,523	508,461	1,995,516	1,327,231	59,704	4,641,435

\* For more information about child helplines and how they operate, please see Chapter 2 - A Closer Look at Child Helplines

\*\* This is excluding website hits, which are not analysed here. With website hits counted, the number of overall contacts with child helplines in CHI's network in 2010 was 27.7 million.

\* Child Helpline International maintains a working definition of regions according to the UNICEF classification ([www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)):

Africa, Americas and the Caribbean, Asia Pacific, Europe and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Where the data allows, a comparison according to the Human Development Index (HDI) level of the country the child helpline operates in is presented as well.

differs. Some child helplines limit their records to one, overarching reason per contact, while others check off more than one category for a single contact. An example would be a homeless child contacting a child helpline to discuss a psycho-social problem and also asking for legal advice in the same contact. While some child helplines might classify the case under 'Homelessness' in general, others may tick all three boxes - 'Homelessness', 'Psycho-Social Health' and 'Legal Matters'. As a result, the number of 'reasons for contact' does not always correspond to the total number of contacts received by a given child helpline. Aggregated to a global level however, the data provides a good indication of the reasons why children contact child helplines. Where data is available and relevant, a differentiation by gender is also provided.

Figure 1.3 shows the incidence rates for all of the known reasons for contact with child helplines worldwide.<sup>1,3</sup> This does not imply that the larger categories are more important in terms of potential intervention or legislation than other categories, but merely that more children contacted child helplines on these subjects in 2010. In just under one fourth of the recorded contacts for 2010, the exact reason why a child contacted the child helpline was not known, or the contact was very general in nature. This may be because the child was hesitant and never related the reason, or because the child was simply testing the waters by calling just to see who answered, without actually speaking, for example. (For more information on 'test' and 'silent' calls, as well as 'answered' and 'responded to' calls, please refer to Chapter 2 - A Closer Look at Child Helplines). Below we take a more detailed look at each of the main categories for known reasons for contact:

» TRENDS /// CYBER-ABUSE » "AN EMERGING TREND WE HAVE SEEN IS THAT THERE IS AN INCREASE IN THE REASONS FOR CONTACT RELATING TO SAFER INTERNET"- *Czech Republic* » "AN EMERGING TREND IN DENMARK HAS BEEN DIGITAL BULLYING"- *Denmark* » "VIOLENCE ON THE INTERNET IS AN EMERGING TREND"- *Latvia* » "AGAIN THIS YEAR THERE WAS AN INCREASE IN REPORTS ON GROOMING"- *Poland* » "THERE IS AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND MINORS WHO WERE VICTIMS OF CYBER-CRIMES"- *Philippines* » "AN EMERGING TREND, AMONG OTHERS, IS CYBER-BULLYING"- *USA*

» TRENDS /// SEXUAL ABUSE » "THERE HAVE BEEN CASES OF SEXUAL ABUSE PERPETRATED BY PEERS, AND AN INCREASE IN ABUSE BY STEPFATHERS"- *Kenya* » "AN EMERGING TREND HAS BEEN A HIGHER RATIO OF CALLS RECEIVED ON MORE SERIOUS CONCERNS, INCLUDING ALL KINDS OF (SEXUAL) ABUSE, NEGLECT AND ABANDONMENT"- *Trinidad and Tobago* » "THERE HAS BEEN AN INCREASE IN CALLS ON COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION"- *USA* » "SEXUAL ABUSE AND RELATIONSHIP ISSUES HAVE BEEN ON THE INCREASE"- *UK*

### Information requested (22%)

Of the total number of contacts for which the reason is known, requests for information have always been the most prevalent. This is true for 2010 contacts as well. While simple requests for information may seem inconsequential, the truth is that these ostensibly trivial queries can often conceal more serious issues. Often a child will test the waters with an information request, assessing how serious and trustworthy a child helpline is, before making contact a second or third time with the real issue that is troubling them. In addition, many of the contacts filed under 'information requested' are requests for information about topics such as sexuality, health care, psycho-social support or legal matters, and often lead to the provision of much needed social support.

### 1.3 Reasons children contact child helplines - all means of communication

	Total
no. of child helplines	102
General and other	22%
Known reasons	78%
Total all reasons	4,962,256

Information requested	22%
Abuse and Violence	15%
Psycho-social, mental health	13%
Peer Relationships	12%
Sexuality	11%
Family Relationships	9%
Homelessness/Runaway's/Basic needs	4%
School Related	4%
Physical Health	3%
Legal Matters	2%
Child substance use and abuse	1%
Commercial Exploitation	1%
Discrimination	1%
HIV/AIDS infected/affected children	1%
Differently-abled children	0%
Total	3,870,556

### Abuse and violence (15%)

During the past 10 years in which CHI has been collating data from its member child helplines, abuse and violence has consistently been the most prevalent reason why children contact a child helpline aside from the 'information requested' category explained earlier. This phenomenon is not isolated to certain regions or within specific HDI levels. Abuse and violence against children transcends cultures, ethnicities, income levels and nationalities.

Of those contacts for which the exact type of abuse and violence was known, physical abuse and bullying were the most commonly reported on in 2010.<sup>1,4</sup> While bullying has always been one of the more predominant forms of abuse about which children have contacted child helplines, it has never before been this prominent. Analysis of individual child helplines' data shows that cyber-bullying and SMS/mobile phone text message bullying is increasing, as is sexual violence and exploitation through the internet. Europe, Asia Pacific and the Americas and Caribbean regions have thus far seen the greatest increase in cyber-bullying and cyber-abuse cases involving children.

Sexual abuse was the third most commonly reported subcategory of abuse and violence in 2010. Both the data and accounts from individual child helplines suggest not only an increase in the number of sexual abuse cases reported to child helplines, but also in their severity. Child helplines cite the global economic crisis and resulting job-losses, stress and hardships on families as one possible explanation (similar to the increase in reports to child helplines on child

labour, also likely caused to some extent by difficult financial times for families).

Differentiated by gender the data shows that relatively more girls contact child helplines about sexual abuse than boys, across all regions. Boys tend to contact child helplines more on bullying.

While the numbers show the prevalence and nature of abuse and violence suffered by children, they do not always reflect the graveness of many of the cases child helpline counsellors deal with, nor the long-lasting impact on children's well-being. The case studies presented below do.

### Case Studies - Abuse and violence

"A 15-year old girl called the child helpline because her adoptive father was violating her. The girl's adoptive mother did not believe her story. With the girl's permission, the child helpline reported the matter to the appropriate medical services and the police. They verified the story and the child was transferred to a safe place."- *Africa region*

"A 15-year old girl was being sexually abused by her father's friend. She was too fearful to tell her parents, but she saw the child helpline's phone number on TV and decided to call so that she could have someone to talk to about it. The child helpline was able to get the proper authorities involved and arrange counselling for the girl and for her parents who were suffering from guilt from not knowing what was going on."- *Americas and Caribbean*

### 1.4 Abuse and violence - Global

	Africa	Americas and Carribean	Asia Pacific	Europe	MENA	Global total
no. of child helplines	14	20	22	38	8	102
Abuse and violence						
Unspecified and other	8%	11%	5%	13%	0%	10%
Known reasons	92%	89%	95%	87%	100%	90%
Total all reasons	49,286	40,897	167,402	286,471	17,901	561,957

Subcategories	%	%	%	%	%	%
Emotional	19%	12%	4%	7%	10%	8%
Neglect	17%	11%	2%	9%	13%	8%
Bullying	4%	32%	10%	31%	10%	21%
Physical	24%	34%	45%	28%	31%	34%
Sexual	20%	8%	10%	20%	12%	16%
Domestic violence	6%	1%	26%	4%	20%	11%
Witness to violence	10%	0%	1%	1%	3%	2%
Total subcategories	45,133	36,536	158,780	249,199	17,817	507,465

## Psycho-social and mental health (13%)

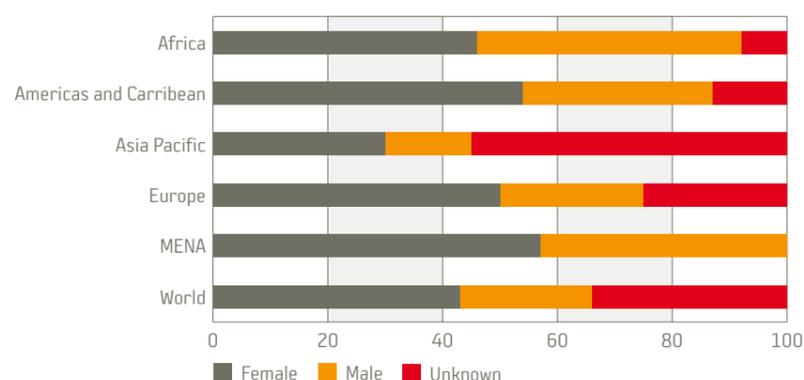
Children's psycho-social and mental health continue to be a significant reason for seeking contact with a child helpline: over a half million contacts recorded in 2010 were related to this topic. Globally, 'boredom', 'suicide' and 'fear and anxiety' were the main psycho-social and mental health matters about which children contacted child helplines in 2010.<sup>1,5</sup> While there is some fluctuation between the different regions, the reasons for contact within this category are rela-

tively stable. While many children get in touch with a child helpline to express boredom and loneliness, an equally large number of contacts in this category deal with potentially life-threatening psycho-social and mental health matters.

The case studies below reflect the severity of psycho-social and mental health cases reported to child helplines and indicate the urgent need for further research on these topics.

» TRENDS /// PSYCHO-SOCIAL AND MENTAL HEALTH » "WE HAVE SEEN AN INCREASE IN CONTACTS ON SUICIDE."- USA » "ANALYSIS OF GROWTH IN HELP-SEEKING TOPICS SHOWED AN INCREASE IN MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS, SUICIDE AND PRESENTATIONS THEREOF." Australia

### 1.5a Psycho - social and mental health - gender and region



## 1.5 Psycho- social and mental health - Global

Reasons children contact	Africa	Americas and Caribbean	Asia Pacific	Europe	MENA	Global total
no. of child helplines	14	20	22	38	8	102
<b>Psycho- social, mental health</b>						
Unspecified and other	2%	21%	30%	17%	58%	24%
Known reasons	98%	79%	70%	83%	42%	76%
<b>Total all reasons</b>	<b>7,393</b>	<b>70,675</b>	<b>198,476</b>	<b>229,112</b>	<b>11,529</b>	<b>517,185</b>

Subcategories	%	%	%	%	%	%
Boredom	12%	9%	15%	19%	13%	16%
Fear and anxiety	54%	17%	7%	15%	37%	14%
Suicide	2%	29%	19%	8%	7%	15%
Loneliness	4%	10%	11%	12%	8%	11%
Depression	6%	18%	9%	6%	12%	9%
Self harm	0%	5%	23%	7%	2%	12%
Lack of confidence	16%	6%	8%	8%	12%	8%
Body/physical appearance	3%	3%	3%	14%	3%	8%
Identity and purpose of life	2%	1%	3%	5%	2%	3%
Eating disorders	0%	2%	1%	4%	1%	3%
Phobias and obsessions	0%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%
<b>Total subcategories</b>	<b>7,244</b>	<b>55,665</b>	<b>138,082</b>	<b>189,152</b>	<b>4,852</b>	<b>394,995</b>

## Case Studies - Psycho-social and mental health

"A girl called the child helpline because she was worried about her 13-year-old sister, who was abused at a younger age by a tenant, but had only recently disclosed this. The girl noticed that her sister was still suffering a lot from the abuse and that she had begun to cut her arms. In the call to the child helpline, the girl was given information about places where she could take her sister for help. In the following days, the sister herself called the child helpline to talk about her problems. She shared her anxieties and agreed not to threaten her own life. The counsellor gave her alternatives for what to do if she felt badly. Later, the counsellor called the older girl back as well, to make sure that her sister was being attended to and gave her guidance on how to continue helping her sister."- Americas and Caribbean

"A 16-year-old girl phoned the child helpline with thoughts of suicide. She was very silent and sounded tired. It took a few minutes until she started speaking about her feelings and reasons for calling. She was very lonely. Her mother died when she was five years old and her father was drinking a lot, daily. She had to take care of the household and had to have a part-time job to get money. This meant that she had no time for school preparation and she failed in the years' examinations. She could not find a reason to live anymore. The counsellor of the helpline spoke with her for a long

time, focusing on her emotions. The counsellor validated her feelings and together with the girl tried to find some possibilities for how to solve her problems. During the course of the call it became apparent that the girl had swallowed some pills and with the agreement of the girl the emergency number was called by the head of the shift. The counsellor spoke with the girl until the emergency services arrived."- Europe

## Peer relationships (12%)

This category captures all types of contacts concerning friendships, whether school or community-related, and all types of relationships with peers. Though there are only two sub-categories, the range of peer relationship problems about which children contact child helplines is very wide, from innocent quarrels with friends to the reporting of potentially dangerous partner relations. CHI's member child helplines report that children who initially contact them with a concern about a friend or partner often later divulge other underlying issues. Across all regions, many more girls contacted child helplines about peer relationships than boys in 2010, with the exception of Africa, where the ratio of boys to girls seeking help with peer relationships was fairly equal.<sup>1,6a</sup> In Africa the proportion of contacts about partner relations was also relatively high compared to the other regions.<sup>1,6</sup>

## 1.6 Peer relationships - Global

Reasons children contact	Africa	Americas and Caribbean	Asia Pacific	Europe	MENA	Global total
no. of child helplines	14	20	22	38	8	102
<b>Peer relationships</b>						
Unspecified and other	12%	5%	48%	9%	35%	18%
Known reasons	88%	95%	52%	91%	65%	82%
<b>Total all reasons</b>	<b>5,613</b>	<b>43,818</b>	<b>97,384</b>	<b>293,989</b>	<b>4,121</b>	<b>444,925</b>

Subcategories	%	%	%	%	%	%
Partner relationships	82%	39%	41%	59%	44%	54%
Problems with friends	18%	61%	59%	41%	56%	46%
<b>Total subcategories</b>	<b>4,963</b>	<b>41,643</b>	<b>50,530</b>	<b>266,158</b>	<b>2,669</b>	<b>365,963</b>

## 1.6a Peer relationships - gender and region

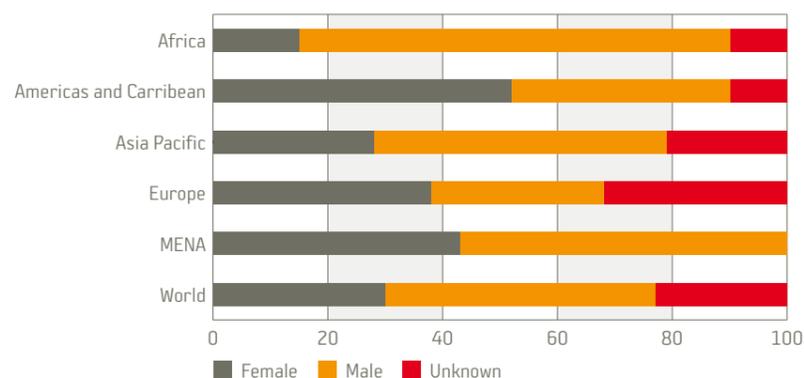
	Africa	Americas and Caribbean	Asia-Pacific	Europa	MENA	World
Female	46%	64%	33%	54%	84%	51%
Male	48%	20%	17%	23%	15%	22%
Unknown	7%	16%	50%	23%	0%	28%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Sexuality (11%)

A little over one tenth of all contacts with known reasons to child helplines in 2010 were about sexuality. Within this category, the majority of contacts with child helplines worldwide were about 'information about sexuality and the facts of life'.<sup>1.7</sup> This holds true for all regions except the Americas and Caribbean (where 'sexual identity' and 'masturbation' together account for the majority of contacts on sexuality), and is particularly notable in the Africa region. In fact, in Africa 99% of the contacts about sexuality from boys related to 'information about sexuality and the facts of life'. Especially in the Americas and Caribbean and in Asia Pacific, many young people contact child helplines about 'sexual identity'. Differentiated by gender, the data shows that more boys generally contacted child helplines about 'sexual identity' than girls, with the exception of Asia Pacific. Other prominent categories within sexuality concerned 'masturbation' related questions and 'contraception' queries.

Child helplines further reported that publicity and news items affected children's calling behaviour with regard to queries about sexuality in 2010. The case studies below highlight this clearly. Case studies from CHI's member child helplines, together with the data collated here, also highlight the need for more information and counselling on sexuality worldwide. Where these services do already exist, for example through specialised services and online forums, child helplines often refer children to them when relevant.

1.7a Sexuality - gender and region



## 1.7 Sexuality - Global

Reasons children contact	Africa	Americas and Caribbean	Asia Pacific	Europe	MENA	Global total
no. of child helplines	14	20	22	38	8	102
<b>Sexuality</b>						
Unspecified and other	9%	13%	2%	16%	70%	13%
Known reasons	91%	87%	98%	84%	30%	87%
<b>Total all reasons</b>	<b>128,215</b>	<b>23,374</b>	<b>39,096</b>	<b>229,349</b>	<b>2,481</b>	<b>422,515</b>

Subcategories	%	%	%	%	%	%
Information about sexuality and facts of life	96%	13%	46%	41%	46%	57%
Pregnancy	1%	14%	10%	21%	4%	13%
Sexual identity	0%	27%	24%	14%	7%	11%
Masturbation	0%	24%	9%	11%	34%	8%
Contraception	2%	18%	4%	6%	1%	5%
Sexual fantasy	0%	1%	2%	7%	7%	4%
STI's/STD's	1%	4%	5%	1%	1%	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>116,348</b>	<b>20,449</b>	<b>38,182</b>	<b>192,031</b>	<b>751</b>	<b>367,761</b>

## Case Studies - Publicity and sexuality:

"In 2010 the judicial system in Malawi was challenged by a case of two gay men coming out in the open. The case triggered much debate on whether Malawi should legalize gay marriages. We saw a rise in the number of calls on sexual identity and homosexuality for the duration of the trial."- Malawi

"In Serbia in 2010 for the first time there was a gay parade, with intense media coverage. This caused the contacts on sexuality to increase."- Serbia

## Case Studies - Sexuality

"In 2010 many girls called with questions on contraceptives and the use of contraceptives, and to express doubts on whether they could be pregnant or not."- Americas and the Caribbean

"A young man experiencing homosexual feelings called the helpline to talk about this. He had no one else to talk to and wanted someone to listen to him. He was scared and confused and wanted to make sense of these feelings."- Europe

>> TRENDS /// PARENT/CHILD RELATIONS >> "THERE HAVE BEEN MORE CALLS FROM ADULTS; PARENTS WHO WANT TO GET TIPS FROM OUR CHILD HELPLINE ON HOW TO DEAL WITH THEIR CHILDREN."- Aruba >> "MANY HOUSEHOLDS STRUGGLE WITH SITUATIONS OF POVERTY AND STRESS- RESULTING IN AN INCREASE IN FAMILY PROBLEMS"- Uruguay >> "DUE TO THE CRISIS, PARENTS HAVE LESS MONEY AND MORE STRESS IN THEIR LIVES; THIS HAS CAUSED AN INCREASE IN CALLS ON PARENT/CHILDREN RELATIONSHIPS"- Croatia

## 1.8 Family relationships - Global

Reasons children contact	Africa	Americas and Caribbean	Asia Pacific	Europe	MENA	Global total
no. of child helplines	14	20	22	38	8	102
<b>Family relationships</b>						
Unspecified and other	10%	51%	41%	34%	13%	37%
Known reasons	90%	49%	59%	66%	87%	63%
<b>Total all reasons</b>	<b>15,683</b>	<b>55,214</b>	<b>80,350</b>	<b>182,814</b>	<b>8,490</b>	<b>342,551</b>

Subcategories	%	%	%	%	%	%
Parent-child relationships	11%	62%	22%	47%	50%	41%
Divorced/separated parents/ parents in conflict	16%	12%	46%	17%	29%	23%
Sibling relationship	2%	15%	8%	11%	9%	10%
Child custody and access	18%	2%	4%	3%	4%	4%
Maintenance and child support	26%	1%	2%	7%	4%	6%
Parents with addiction and/ or mental health problems	2%	0%	5%	5%	1%	4%
Bereavement	1%	6%	5%	8%	1%	6%
New family/ blended family	23%	1%	2%	1%	1%	3%
Adoption issues	1%	0%	5%	1%	1%	2%
<b>Total subcategories</b>	<b>14,188</b>	<b>27,217</b>	<b>47,366</b>	<b>121,167</b>	<b>7,353</b>	<b>217,291</b>

## 1.8a Family relationships - gender and region

	Africa	Americas and Caribbean	Asia Pacific	Europa	MENA	World
Female	40%	52%	32%	51%	72%	47%
Male	40%	17%	23%	22%	20%	22%
Unknown	20%	31%	45%	27%	8%	31%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Family relationships (9%)

Just under one tenth of all contacts with known reasons to child helplines in 2010 were about family relationships. Within this category, the majority of contacts with child helplines worldwide were about 'parent-child relationships', followed by 'divorced, separated parents or parents in conflict' and 'sibling relationships'.<sup>1.8</sup> These same topics were the main reasons for contact about family across all regions, except for Africa. In Africa the majority of contacts with child helplines concerning family were about 'maintenance and child support' and 'new/blended family'. This is compatible with the data on abuse and violence which shows an increase in violence in new/blended families. In the Americas and Caribbean, the proportion of contacts about 'parent-child relationships' was particularly high in 2010 compared to contacts on other family-related matters in that region. This correlates with reports from child helplines in the Americas and Caribbean that many parents also contacted them for advice on how to deal with their children during an especially trying year. In general, the stress and added worries for both parents and children caused by the effects and burdens on families as a result of the global financial hardships of the past year was tangible in cases shared by child helplines worldwide.

### Case Studies - Family relationships

"A 12-year old girl called the child helpline to ask for help. Her father died two years ago and she was left alone with her mother and little sister (aged six). In the past few months her mother had become very aggressive towards her. The mother had lost her job and was at home all the time. The girl said she could not do anything by herself to help her mother, because her mother was screaming at her about everything. Two days ago the mother hit the girl after she had forgotten to buy milk from the store. The girl was very sad and scared because she felt all alone. *She saw the number of the child helpline on the poster at school. A volunteer talked to the girl about her feelings, her rights and that no person is allowed to hit children. The volunteer said that her mother is probably upset about her job and worried how she will survive with no money, but this is not a reason to hit her kids. The volunteer told the girl that her mother probably needs some help, so it would be wise to talk to an adult whom she trusts. After some time the girl said that she has a good relationship with her teacher and that she will talk to her. She felt better after having a plan on what to do next.*" - Europe

"A boy's aunt made the first call to the child helpline and then invited her nephew (13 years old) to come to the phone. The boy was upset and anxious as his parents had separated and each was planning to move to opposite ends of the country. The boy was feeling under pressure to decide who he was going to live with and was very concerned about hurting either of his parents' feelings. *The counsellor was able to work with the boy to help him understand how common this experience is for young people with separated parents. He explained that his role as a counsellor was to listen to the boy and help him work out what he really wanted rather than what he thought would please one or the other parent. The boy said he was relieved to talk to someone who did not know either parent and had no bias either way. He planned to draw up a list of positives for both situations and work out which situation seemed to meet his needs best.*" - Asia Pacific

### Homelessness/runaways/basic needs (4%)

Child helplines are there for all children, and especially the most marginalised, including homeless, runaway and street children. The data collated in 2010 from child helplines around the world for this category paints a grim picture.<sup>1.9</sup> The need for shelter, because children run away from home or are thrown out by their families, is growing. Globally, contacts with child helplines from children 'seeking shelter' made up 28% of all contacts about 'homelessness, runaways and basic needs' for which the reason for contact was known in 2012. This number rises to over two-thirds in the Americas and Caribbean, a third in Europe and nearly a fourth in Asia Pacific. Case studies and narratives presented by CHI's member child helplines confirm that due to an increasing lack of financial opportunities, it has become more and more customary for families to send children away to work, to seek shelter elsewhere or to simply send them away since there are not enough resources at home.

Very distressing also are the number of contacts on 'missing children'. With the exception of the Americas and Caribbean, contacts with child helplines about 'missing children' are alarmingly high. In Europe alone, nearly a third of all contacts on 'homelessness, runaways and basic needs' had to do with missing children. In Africa and Asia-Pacific, contacts about missing children accounted for a quarter of all contacts in this category, and in MENA for one fifth. Another alarming statistic coming out of the child helpline data are the high number of contacts with child helplines for 'children calling for food' in both the African and MENA regions: a quarter of all contacts about 'homelessness, runaways and basic needs' in each of those two regions dealt with children seeking food. In MENA, another quarter of the contacts also dealt with 'resources and financial aid'.

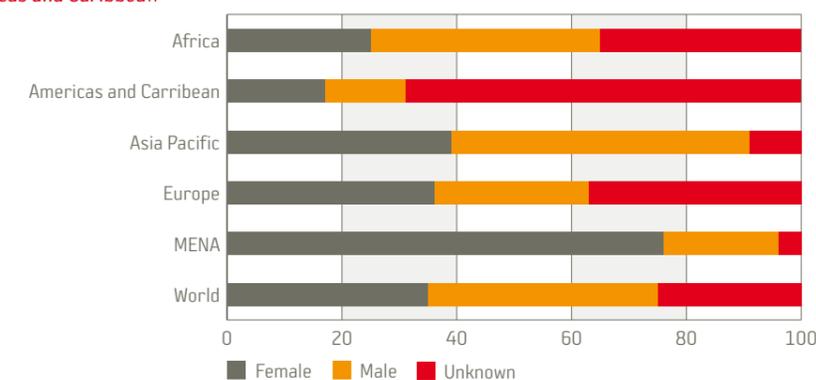
» TRENDS /// HOMELESSNESS AND ECONOMICS » "ECONOMICS ARE AN ISSUE- MORE YOUTH ARE BEING PUSHED OUT OR THROWN OUT OF THEIR FAMILIES; THERE IS LESS SAFE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR YOUTH AND FAMILIES AND THERE IS AN INCREASE IN COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION"- USA

### Case Studies - Homelessness, runaways and basic needs

"A 17-year-old runaway girl called the child helpline because her mother had used the child helpline's message service to get in touch with her daughter. The girl was very nervous. She had run away with her friend (who also was using the child helpline's message service to communicate with her mother) because they had stolen money from their families. The girl was concerned because her mother had filed a police report against her. *The child helpline was able to facilitate communication between the mother and the girl, and after some time organised a conference call, so that they could discuss their next steps. The girl was quite far away and also needed resources for her return home. Through the three way counselling the mother and daughter started communicating again. The mother even called back several days later to thank the child helpline and let the counsellors know that her daughter was home safe and things were going well.*" - Americas and Caribbean

"A family contacted the helpline after their son had been blinded in a domestic accident. The boy dropped out of school and the mother struggled with hospital bills due to the accident. In addition, the boy needed a special school due to his blindness. *A social worker from the child helpline researched and identified a school and managed to assist the family in locating resources. The boy was enrolled in the special school for blind children where he is reported to be amongst the best students.*" - Africa

1.9a Homelessness - gender and region



### 1.9 Homelessness - Global

Reasons children contact	Africa	Americas and Caribbean	Asia Pacific	Europe	MENA	Global total
no. of child helplines	14	20	22	38	8	102
<b>Homelessness</b>						
Unspecified and other	23%	14%	21%	33%	4%	22%
Known reasons	77%	86%	79%	67%	96%	78%
<b>Total all reasons</b>	<b>25,754</b>	<b>18,102</b>	<b>81,190</b>	<b>28,832</b>	<b>3,794</b>	<b>157,672</b>

Subcategories	%	%	%	%	%	%
Resources and financial aid	21%	17%	16%	12%	25%	17%
Seeking shelter	16%	68%	22%	32%	6%	28%
Missing children	24%	2%	26%	29%	20%	23%
Employment opportunities	5%	8%	6%	12%	10%	7%
Children calling for food	26%	2%	3%	8%	23%	8%
Repatriation	0%	0%	16%	0%	6%	9%
Orphaned	1%	0%	4%	0%	3%	2%
Abandoned	7%	3%	5%	6%	6%	5%
Death of child on street	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%
<b>Total subcategories</b>	<b>19,849</b>	<b>15,566</b>	<b>64,178</b>	<b>19,224</b>	<b>3,655</b>	<b>122,472</b>

### 1.10 School related - Global

Every child has a right to an education, and increasingly children around the world are afforded the opportunity to attend school. Not surprisingly, child helplines also receive contacts from children about various school-related topics. Around one third of the specified reasons for contact about school were about 'academic problems', followed by 'teacher problems'<sup>1.10</sup>. This is in line with data from contacts with CHI's member child helplines in 2009, when 33% and 21% respectively of all school-related contacts with known reasons were about 'academic problems' and 'teacher problems'. Contacts from the MENA region about school show a relatively high rate of contacts with child helplines about 'performance anxiety' as well.

Differentiated by gender the data does not show large differences. On the global level slightly more girls contacted child helplines in 2010 because of 'performance anxiety' (14% girls as opposed to 11% boys) and slightly more boys contacted child helplines because of the threat or reality of having to drop out of school.

School related violence and abuse often leads to additional problems, including academic problems, dropping out and performance anxiety at school. Child helplines report that children who are victims of bullying or (sexual) abuse at school often cut school in order to avoid their tormentors and that their school work often suffers as well.

#### Case Study – School related

*"A 15-year old girl contacted the child helpline online through the instant messaging service. The girl had been talking to this service on and off for several months. The girl was difficult to engage initially; she presented as quite nervous about using the service. Once she received reassurance about the child helpline, including its confidentiality practice, she started to open up and talk about what was going on with her. The girl stated that she was finding it hard to cope and feeling really down due to things that had been going on for over six months. After gentle exploration the girl told the child helpline that she was being bullied in school and on the social networking site that she used. She said that she was being called names and threatened in school."- Europe*

### 1.10 School related - Global

Reason child helpline contacted	Africa	Americas and Carribean	Asia Pacific	Europe	MENA	Global total
no. of child helplines	14	20	22	38	8	102
<b>School related</b>						
Unspecified and other	13%	54%	20%	42%	37%	32%
Known reasons	87%	46%	80%	58%	63%	68%
<b>Total all reasons</b>	<b>13,548</b>	<b>9,465</b>	<b>54,426</b>	<b>61,603</b>	<b>8,991</b>	<b>148,033</b>

Subcategories	%	%	%	%	%	%
Performance anxiety	1%	11%	12%	14%	36%	13%
Academic problems	21%	53%	30%	42%	23%	34%
Teacher problems	23%	11%	22%	28%	14%	23%
Other adult related problems	21%	11%	10%	4%	3%	9%
School drop-outs	16%	7%	17%	4%	8%	11%
Homework	18%	7%	9%	9%	16%	10%
<b>Total subcategories</b>	<b>11,814</b>	<b>4,322</b>	<b>43,630</b>	<b>35,773</b>	<b>5,649</b>	<b>101,188</b>

#### 1.10a School related - gender and region

	Africa	Americas and Caribbean	Asia Pacific	Europa	MENA	Global total
Female	45%	35%	38%	46%	62%	44%
Male	44%	21%	43%	26%	37%	34%
Unknown	11%	44%	19%	28%	1%	22%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Physical health (3%)

In 2010 some 3% of all contacts with child helplines for which the reason for contact was known dealt with 'physical health' matters. Over half of these contacts were about 'access to health care', followed by just over a third dealing with 'concerns about illnesses', as well as some questions related to 'hospitalisation'<sup>1.11</sup>. With more specific data, it is easier to advocate for targeted health campaigns.

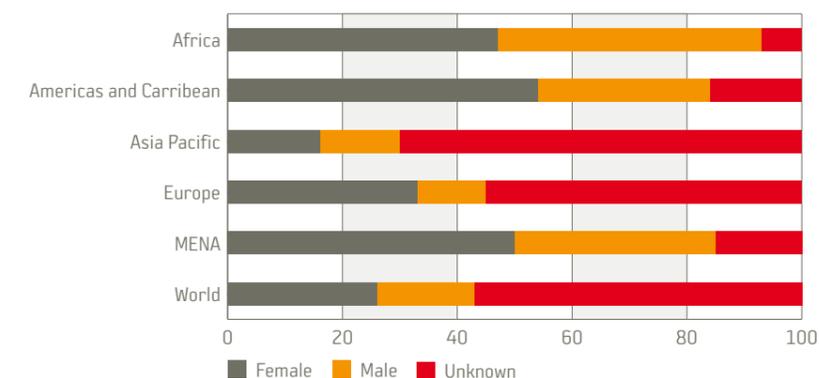
#### Legal matters (2%)

Child helplines are of paramount importance in ensuring that children have access to information on their basic rights, including information on various legal matters. In 2010 over half of all contact with child helplines world-wide about legal matters dealt with 'advice and information'.<sup>1.12</sup> In Asia Pacific, Europe and the MENA region this number was even higher, with 'advice and information' accounting for over 70% of all contacts about legal matters. Europe and the Americas and Caribbean saw a significant number of contacts on legal matters also about 'children in conflict with law'.

Many children, and especially in Africa and the Americas and Caribbean, are still deprived of their basic legal rights, including birth certificates. The data provided by child helplines shows that in both these regions a relatively high proportion of contacts about legal matters in 2010 dealt with 'children in need of legal representation' and 'birth registration'. The latter was particularly high in Africa as compared to other regions. Birth registration has serious implications for children's quality of life. School registration, access to health care and protection from commercial exploitation and child trafficking all require a birth certificate. Having a birth certificate makes it much harder for traffickers to abduct children and to abuse children commercially. Child helplines can play an important role in advocating for birth registration, and most child helplines work to ensure that this and other basic rights of children are met.

Although the remaining sub-categories of reasons for contact about legal matters show much smaller percentages of contacts made, when considered in absolute numbers, the

#### 1.11a Physical health - gender and region



### 1.11 Physical health - Global

Reasons children contact	Africa	Americas and Carribean	Asia Pacific	Europe	MENA	Global total
no. of child helplines	14	20	22	38	8	102
<b>Physical health</b>						
Unspecified and other	10%	56%	12%	40%	59%	24%
Known reasons	90%	44%	88%	60%	41%	76%
<b>Total all reasons</b>	<b>6,908</b>	<b>10,258</b>	<b>76,712</b>	<b>33,718</b>	<b>3,138</b>	<b>130,734</b>

Subcategories	%	%	%	%	%	%
Concerns about illnesses	55%	44%	30%	53%	56%	37%
Hospitalisation	18%	0%	6%	17%	28%	9%
Access to health care	28%	56%	64%	30%	16%	54%
<b>Total subcategories</b>	<b>6,235</b>	<b>4,521</b>	<b>67,284</b>	<b>20,336</b>	<b>1,296</b>	<b>99,672</b>

needs of these children are very real. Although just 5% of the reasons for contact about legal matters related to 'child marriage', this 5% accounted for 3,728 contacts. These numbers are only the tip of the iceberg, as many more children facing such predicaments may not be able to make contact.

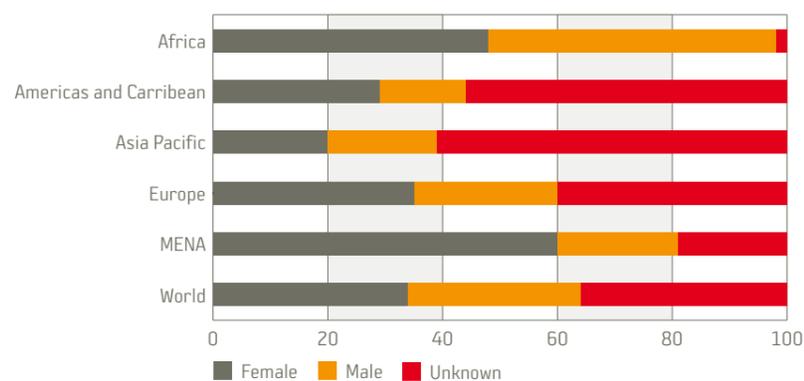
Differentiated by gender the data shows that globally relatively more boys than girls contacted child helplines on the issue of 'children in conflict with the law' in 2010 (16% boys as opposed to 7% girls), while more girls contacted child helplines on issues related to 'child marriage' (9% girls as opposed to 4% boys).

Most child helplines have a legal department well acquainted with the rights of minors in their countries' legal framework. The case studies outline some of the contacts child helplines have received and followed up on involving legal matters.

### Case Studies – Legal matters

*"In February 2006 the child helpline received a call from an anxious father to report a complaint for his missing 14-year-old daughter. After much investigation and effort, the child helpline team managed to rescue the child. She had been threatened and taken to various places and repeatedly violated by those who abducted her. She filed a police complaint in February 2010 in order to receive the justice she deserved, but high profile individuals were involved and the girl's case finally lasted for four years and 38 witnesses were heard. In September 2010, the accused were given double life terms. The child helpline was largely instrumental in the conviction of 20 high profile individuals exposed for their participation in this brutal case.- Asia Pacific*

#### 1.12a Legal matters - gender and region



### 1.12 Legal matters - Global

Reason child helpline contacted	Africa	Americas and Caribbean	Asia Pacific	Europe	MENA	Global total
no. of child helplines	14	20	22	38	8	102
<b>Legal matters</b>						
Unspecified and other	7%	78%	3%	33%	9%	13%
Known reasons	93%	22%	97%	67%	91%	87%
<b>Total all reasons</b>	<b>32,895</b>	<b>4,031</b>	<b>37,297</b>	<b>17,730</b>	<b>1,427</b>	<b>93,380</b>

Subcategories	%	%	%	%	%	%
Advice and information	24%	51%	71%	74%	76%	53%
Children in need of legal representation	28%	28%	4%	2%	8%	13%
Birth registration	27%	2%	7%	0%	8%	13%
Child marriage	3%	2%	7%	1%	3%	5%
Law in conflict with children's rights	3%	1%	4%	2%	3%	3%
Children in conflict with law	7%	13%	5%	21%	3%	8%
Child witness	7%	4%	3%	0%	1%	4%
<b>Total subcategories</b>	<b>30,708</b>	<b>906</b>	<b>36,300</b>	<b>11,938</b>	<b>1,295</b>	<b>81,147</b>

### Child substance use and abuse (1%)

Children also contact child helplines for information and advice on substance abuse, as well as help with addictions, for themselves, friends and sometimes family members. In over a third of contacts related to child substance use and abuse the exact reason for contact is unspecified. The specified contacts are divided between 'information on substances' and 'misuse and addiction'. Globally, the split between these two categories is relatively minor (42% and 58% respectively)<sup>1,13</sup> In Europe 70% of all contacts on child substance use and abuse for which a reason is known were about addiction. Globally, compared to child helpline data from 2009 there is an increase in contacts on abuse of substances. This coincides with individual child helplines narratives. The case study presented to us by a member child helpline from Europe however, showcases a new type of addiction trending.

### Case Study – Internet addiction

*"A 17-year-old boy called the child helpline. He told us that he spends a lot of time on the computer each day. He said he feels annoyed and tensed when he cannot use the internet. At the moment of the call his internet connection was down. He was in a bad mood and he told the counsellor he feels like he would like to destroy the computer or monitor. The counsellor offered him support and the conversation focused on coping with such negative emotions. Since then this boy has called the child helpline several times. During all conversations he became more and more open. The counsellors could define symptoms such as: using online services every day without any exception; obsessive thinking about what is happening on the internet; losing track of time after making a connection; losing relations with friends; bad relations with parents; eating in front of the monitor; feelings of frustration, anxiety and aggression when off the internet. The boy's family situation appeared very difficult and could also be a cause of his internet addiction. The family was suffering from deep grief after the loss of one member – the boy's older brother had committed suicide. The child helpline gave the boy support and advised him to talk with his parents and asked to put him into contact with a psychologist. After a few conversations he told the counsellor that he was ready to talk to his parents. The child helpline provided him with the information about possible places for psychological help close to his home. He called back to tell the child helpline that his parents had agreed and registered him at the psychological help centre." - Europe*

» TRENDS /// INTERNET ADDICTIONS » *"WE OBSERVED THAT THERE ARE MORE AND MORE REPORTS ON DIFFICULTIES WITH ADDICTION TO SOCIAL MEDIA"- Italy*

### 1.13 Child substance use and abuse - Global

Reason child helpline contacted	Africa	Americas and Caribbean	Asia Pacific	Europe	MENA	Global total
no. of child helplines	14	20	22	38	8	102
<b>Child substance use and abuse</b>						
Unspecified and other	3%	8%	38%	49%	0%	37%
Known reasons	97%	92%	62%	51%	100%	63%
<b>Total all reasons</b>	<b>3,069</b>	<b>8,736</b>	<b>14,479</b>	<b>27,972</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>54,492</b>
<b>Subcategories</b>						
Information on substances and misuse	73%	48%	45%	30%	42%	42%
Addiction	27%	52%	55%	70%	58%	58%
<b>Total subcategories</b>	<b>2,971</b>	<b>8,072</b>	<b>8,972</b>	<b>14,342</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>34,593</b>

Table 1.13a Child substance use and abuse - gender and region

	Africa	Americas and Caribbean	Asia Pacific	Europa	MENA	Global total
Female	13%	32%	36%	35%	70%	34%
Male	42%	30%	36%	30%	28%	32%
Unknown	46%	38%	28%	35%	1%	34%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

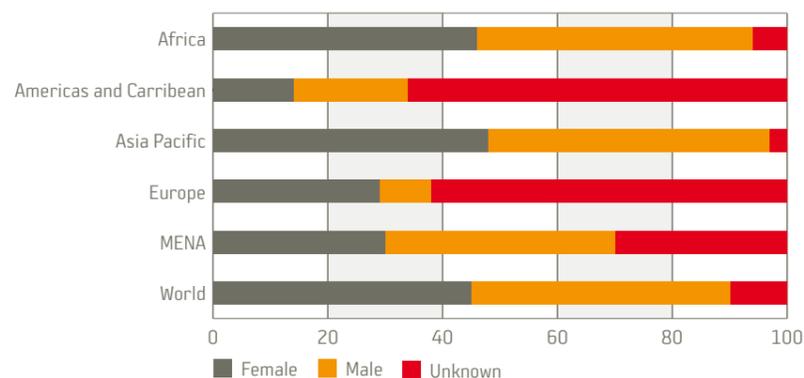
### Commercial exploitation (1%)

Data collated from CHI's member child helplines in 2010 show that 'commercial exploitation' has declined to 1% of the total reasons for contact, compared to 2% in 2009 and 4% of all reasons for contact in 2008. As with the category 'homelessness, runaways and basic needs', however, contacts with child helplines about commercial exploitation in 2010 still paint a very bleak picture, and the implication on the lives and well-being of the children involved are tremendous.

Globally, of all of the cases of commercial exploitation for which the exact reason for contact was disclosed, 'domestic child labour' and 'children used for begging' were most prominent<sup>1.14</sup>. Moreover, compared to 2009 child helpline

data, 2010 saw an increase of 5% in the overall proportion of commercial exploitation contacts on 'domestic child labour' and a rise of 6% in the proportion of commercial exploitation contacts about 'children used for begging'. An increase in domestic child labour and children used for begging quite often indicates an increased conflict of interests between the economic needs of families and the rights of children. As times get harder economically, children are often pulled from school and forced to work to help the family stay afloat. More often than not, child labourers are exploited, mistreated and abused. In the MENA region and Europe, the proportion of reasons to child helplines about 'children used for begging' were particularly high (69% and 47% respectively). In Europe and the Americas and Carib-

1.14a Commercial exploitation - gender and region



### 1.14 Commercial exploitation - Global

Reason child helpline contacted	Africa	Americas and Caribbean	Asia Pacific	Europe	MENA	Global total
no. of child helplines	14	20	22	38	8	102
<b>Commercial exploitation</b>						
Unspecified and other	3%	2%	3%	0%	0%	2%
Known reasons	97%	98%	97%	100%	100%	98%
<b>Total all reasons</b>	<b>12,833</b>	<b>784</b>	<b>29,897</b>	<b>3,507</b>	<b>2,643</b>	<b>49,664</b>

Subcategories	%	%	%	%	%	%
Kidnapping	1%	1%	8%	0%	4%	5%
Children used for begging	14%	2%	9%	47%	69%	16%
Other child labour	2%	55%	19%	1%	0%	13%
Domestic child labour	42%	1%	23%	15%	2%	26%
Bonded child labour	28%	1%	7%	0%	15%	12%
Child sexual exploitation	9%	35%	13%	35%	7%	13%
Child trafficking	3%	4%	14%	2%	0%	10%
Children used for criminal activity	0%	1%	7%	1%	3%	4%
<b>Total subcategories</b>	<b>12,498</b>	<b>772</b>	<b>29,098</b>	<b>3,498</b>	<b>2,643</b>	<b>48,509</b>

bean, the 2010 data also shows alarmingly high rates of contacts with child helplines about 'child sexual exploitation', at over a third of all contacts on commercial exploitation for which the reasons were known in both regions.

Regarding the category of commercial exploitation in general, again it is important not to dismiss the individual stories by considering only percentages. While only 1% regarding commercial exploitation seems low, in absolute numbers this means that 49,664 contacts were made regarding the commercial exploitation of children in 2010. Of these contacts, 6,548 concerned sexually-exploited children, and as many as 4,658 reasons for contacting child helplines concerned child trafficking. What is more, it is well documented that these numbers represent only the tip of the iceberg and that many children still suffer exploitation in silence. Child helplines play a crucial role in investigating and bringing to light child commercial exploitation and in legally dealing with the violators.

### Case Studies - Commercial exploitation

"A teenage girl was sent by her grandmother to another province with the promise of a job as a maid in a shop. She took her one-year-old child with her. Upon arrival she discovered that in fact her grandmother had sold her to the shop owner to act as either his wife or sex slave. When she refused, he violated her and held her captive for a week. At some point she was able to take her child and run. After escaping, her grandmother denied her shelter and the girl lived through difficult times. *The child helpline talked to an organisation where the mother could receive training in life and survival skills such as sewing and knitting, while the baby attended preschool and could stay with the mother.*" - Africa

"A woman called the child helping on behalf of a 14-year-old girl who had knocked on her door for help. The girl had been abused by her father since her mother died. He forced her to go into the streets begging to bring in money. The girl did not want to return home. She had physical ailments on top of the abuse, including heart problems, a body weight below average for her age and severely stunted physical development. *The child helpline sent a professional to assist in the situation and to contact a social welfare unit in order to transfer the girl to medical centre. The girl was admitted to a centre for a diagnosis and referral where she could begin the process to restore her rights.*" - Americas and Caribbean

### 1.15 Discrimination - Global

Reason child helpline contacted	Africa	Americas and Caribbean	Asia Pacific	Europe	MENA	Global total
no. of child helplines	14	20	22	38	8	102
<b>Discrimination</b>						
Unspecified and other	1%	31%	5%	53%	12%	8%
Known reasons	99%	69%	95%	47%	88%	92%
<b>Total all reasons</b>	<b>16,350</b>	<b>696</b>	<b>6,035</b>	<b>2,200</b>	<b>8,111</b>	<b>33,392</b>

Subcategories	%	%	%	%	%	%
Mental and physical health	1%	20%	14%	3%	94%	26%
Immigration related	0%	5%	16%	58%	0%	5%
Access to education	70%	21%	29%	3%	6%	44%
Employment related	5%	1%	25%	0%	0%	8%
Racism related	23%	52%	15%	35%	0%	17%
<b>Total subcategories</b>	<b>16,253</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>5,730</b>	<b>1,024</b>	<b>7,169</b>	<b>30,656</b>

### 1.15a Discrimination - gender and region

	Africa	Americas and Caribbean	Asia Pacific	Europa	MENA	Global total
Female	49%	24%	47%	31%	37%	44%
Male	50%	54%	48%	25%	63%	51%
Unknown	1%	23%	5%	43%	0%	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Discrimination (1%)

Globally, of all reasons for contact related to discrimination, the vast majority fell under the sub-category of 'access to education'.<sup>1.15</sup> This is in line with 2009 data, in which 'access to education' was also the main form of discrimination about which child helplines were contacted (at 36% of all discrimination related contacts with known reasons). In fact, 2010 saw an increase in global contacts about discrimination in access to education. Contacts about discrimination based on 'mental and physical health' were the second most common sub-category worldwide in 2010, registering a significant increase from 2009 (13%) as well. 'Racism related' discrimination was the third most common form of discrimination reported to child helplines globally according to the 2010 data.

Some variations at the regional levels exist: Europe recorded a notably high percentage of discrimination contacts related to 'immigration', while 'access to education' was the predominant reason for contacting a child helpline about discrimination in Africa; In the MENA region the vast majority of contacts about discrimination dealt with 'mental and physical health'; In the Americas and Caribbean, as well as in Europe, 'racism related' discrimination accounted for quite a large number of contacts; and in Asia Pacific contacts about 'employment related' discrimination made up a relatively high portion of contacts with child helplines about discrimination in comparison to other regions.

### 1.16 HIV/AIDS related issues - Global

Reason child helpline contacted	Africa	Americas and Caribbean	Asia Pacific	Europe	MENA	Global total
no. of child helplines	14	20	22	38	8	102
HIV/AIDS infected/affected children						
Unspecified and other	4%	43%	4%	17%	0%	5%
Known reasons	96%	57%	96%	83%	100%	95%
<b>Total all reasons</b>	<b>17,738</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>8,932</b>	<b>1,590</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>28,426</b>

Subcategories	%	%	%	%	%	%
Information about AIDS	81%	33%	24%	95%	35%	64%
Parents (or family) with HIV/AIDS	8%	1%	28%	0%	15%	14%
Children orphaned due to HIV/AIDS	3%	0%	20%	0%	19%	8%
Bereavement	6%	29%	2%	5%	15%	5%
Children living with HIV/AIDS	2%	38%	26%	0%	15%	10%
<b>Total subcategories</b>	<b>16,998</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>8,575</b>	<b>1,327</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27,006</b>

### 1.16a HIV/AIDS related issues - gender and region

	Africa	Americas and Caribbean	Asia Pacific	Europa	MENA	Global total
Female	14%	12%	51%	42%	19%	27%
Male	13%	35%	46%	41%	27%	25%
Unknown	72%	53%	3%	18%	54%	47%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

### HIV/AIDS related (1%)

The vast majority of contacts received by child helplines about HIV/AIDS related issues concerned 'information about AIDS'.<sup>1.16</sup> The proportion of HIV/AIDS related contacts requesting information is increasing annually. The data indicates that more and more children and young people are willing to pick up the phone and get informed about HIV/AIDS. This is a motivating trend, as lack of knowledge on HIV/AIDS has been one of the main reasons for its rapid spread.

Underlying these numbers, however, is the gravity of some of the cases related to HIV/AIDS that child helplines have encountered. The case below presents a very grave side effect of some of the beliefs held on HIV and AIDS.

### Case Study - HIV/AIDS related

"Apart from the most known miseries brought by HIV/AIDS, the pandemic has also perpetrated a lot of abuse against children including child sexual abuse, as some people believe that having sex with a child will cleanse them of the virus. Many African countries have therefore witnessed an increase of child sexual abuse. This includes a five-year-old girl, repeatedly violated by her uncle. When he was finally discovered, the child helpline got involved. *The child helpline took the girl to hospital and supported the judicial process of the case against the uncle. The uncle was sentenced to eight years imprisonment. Post-abuse support was provided in the form of counselling and food supplements. The girl's health had been affected gravely and she now has an HIV infection believed to have been contracted from the abuse.*"- Africa

### Differently-abled children (<1%)

Child helplines received 14,028 contacts concerning differently-abled children in 2010, accounting for less than 1% of all cases for which the reason for contact was known. This does not mean that differently-abled children do not contact child helplines, or that the topic is not of concern to other persons who contact child helplines. It merely shows that the category overlaps with other categories (such as the case study below, which falls also under 'school related' contacts). In fact, child helplines are an accessible and effective means to reach out and get help and support, also for children with physical challenges. Many child helplines have special communication methods, such as mobile text messaging and online chat sessions, to accommodate children with hearing difficulties, for example.

### Case Study - Differently-abled children

"An 11-year-old girl with hearing difficulties was attending a 'regular' primary school. She had difficulty in learning and keeping up with the pace of her classmates. During an outreach programme the child helpline counsellor noticed the girl. Her parents were not able to take her to a special school due to limited finances. *The child helpline helped with locating a special school and securing the girl's admission into this school. In collaboration with a charitable institution the child helpline paid for her first term in the special school. She is now performing very well and emerged as a top student of her class in the first term of school. The child helpline has also lobbied the government through its bursary funding to continue paying school fees for the girl until she completes her education.*"- Africa

# Conclusion

The previous section, *Children's Voices - Worldwide*, outlines the reasons why children contacted child helplines in 2010 and touches upon some of the main trends exposed by the data. Taken together with the different narratives and case studies from child helplines, the data represents a powerful insight into the real, every day problems faced by children, as reported by those children themselves. The data also helps to highlight gaps in child protection systems.

The hope is that policy and decision makers, relevant stakeholders and interested parties will take heed and use these insights to make more informed decisions with regard to child protection. It is also hoped that researchers and academics will use the data as a basis for further study into key areas that go beyond the scope of this publication – such as an exploration of the possible causal relationship or link between some of the different categories of reasons for contact, for example.

Similarly, the data also indicates the need for better, or additional, education and awareness campaigns in a number of areas to increase knowledge and alter attitudes and practices affecting children.

Lastly, while this report does share some of the possible explanations for certain trends and figures that were given by the various child helplines, it does not profess to systematically delve into the different factors which necessarily impact those trends. Where the data indicates potential problems or possible areas for concern, CHI hopes relevant stakeholders and responsible parties will look into the matter and take appropriate action.

## CHILDREN'S VOICES - REGIONAL

Although regional differences were intermittently highlighted in the previous section, the numbers, percentages and aggregates do not do justice to the vast socio-economic and cultural differences that exist between regions, and between countries within those defined regions. In this section we present a more comprehensive regional analysis.

## AFRICA

Africa is the world's second largest and second most populous continent, having seen very rapid population growth in the last forty years - from 221 million inhabitants in 1950 to 1 billion in 2009. As a result, Africa is a relatively 'young' continent; half or more of the populations of a number of African nations fall well under 25 years of age. Today Africa is divided into five geographic sub-regions: Northern, Western, Central, Eastern and Southern Africa, each with its own unique history and cultural and linguistic characteristics. At the same time, there are some discernible trends when comparing the reasons for contact with child helplines in Africa as a whole to other regions and to global trends.

Contacts made with child helplines in Africa in 2010 indicate that children are looking for information about themselves and everything around them. Almost 19% of the contacts recorded by African child helplines in 2010 dealt with requests for information. While these contacts were about information on general aspects, there were other inquiries more specifically related to sexuality. In societies and cultures where discussions about sexuality are rare, children often approach child helplines to gain information and knowledge about the subject. 31% of all contacts with African child helplines had to do with sexuality, compared to a world average of just 11%. Amongst the children who contacted child helplines in Africa about sexuality, 76%

were boys and 15% girls.<sup>1.7a</sup> Most were curious to know more about sexuality in general, pregnancy and contraception.

As in all parts of the world, 'abuse and violence' ranks comparatively high amongst the reasons why children in Africa contact child helplines. 12% of all contacts with known reasons were about abuse and violence against children. Some 45% of those contacts involved girls and 27% boys.<sup>1.4a</sup> Sexual abuse is one of the major issues that girl children face in Africa: 33% of contacts on abuse and violence involving girls dealt with sexual abuse, while only 10% of violence and abuse related contacts involving boys did. Physical abuse is high amongst boys, amounting to 31% of all contacts on abuse and violence involving boys, as compared to 21% of all abuse and violence cases reported by girls. Neglect of children is also a common reason for contacting child helplines in Africa. As much as 12% of violence and abuse contacts involving girls and 11% of such contacts related to boys dealt with neglect. Another glaring aspect about abuse and violence impacting children in Africa is children witnessing violence. As compared with other regions in the world, more children in Africa contact child helplines to tell them that they have witnessed violence. Nearly a quarter of all contacts on violence involving boys in Africa had to do with witnessing violence. No doubt the ongoing civil wars, strife and natural disasters in Africa contribute to this high ratio.



Many African child helplines reported that they were contacted on legal matters. Almost 8% of the reasons for contact dealt with legal matters (compared to a 2% global average). Of these, 28% of contacts with known reasons had to do with children in need of legal representation. Birth registration issues (27%) and legal advice (24%) were also significantly higher than in other regions.

Missing children, homelessness, and basic needs such as food, shelter, resources and money were also significant reasons for contacts with child helplines in Africa (accounting for 6% of the total contacts in Africa).

The data collected from child helplines in 2010 also highlights a regional distinction with regard to family relationship problems. The global trend shows 'parent-child relationships' and 'divorced/separated parents/parents in conflict' to be the two main reasons why children contact child helplines about family relationships. In Africa the two most prominent reasons why children contacted child helplines about family matters were 'maintenance and child support' and 'new family/blend family'. In both cases the regional percentages were far higher than the global average (26% versus 6% and 23% versus 3% respectively).

### Case Study – Africa

Two sisters aged 10 and 12 years, who stayed with their father after he separated from their mother, were sexually abused by their father for quite some time until they were able to confide in their mother who lived in the same village but had remarried another man at the time. When the girls informed their mother, she reported the matter to the local officials who allegedly did nothing about it. A member of the community, who had previously watched a TV talk show where child helpline officers were hosted, took note of the child helpline number and later called to report the matter. *The counsellor present that day obtained relevant details from the caller that enabled one of the case workers to take a trip to the girls' town for effective follow-up. As a result, the matter was reported to the police who arrested the offender. The girls were medically examined and treated and psychosocial support was offered. At the same time, the girls were resettled with their mother. The case has been committed to high court and a legal officer is closely following up the matter.*



## AMERICAS AND CARIBBEAN

The Americas and Caribbean is a diverse region. It consists of North America, South America, Central America and the Caribbean. Each of these areas has a very different history, cultural heritage and socio-economic and political makeup. While Southern and Central America have known much strife, frequent political upheaval, violence and glaringly large poverty gaps, North America is mostly characterised by high HDI levels and stability. The Caribbean islands are individually distinguished by their Dutch, English, French and Spanish colonial heritages. While most (with the notable exception of Haiti) are doing quite well, with relatively high HDI levels, they do face their own unique brand of socio-economic difficulties, stemming from their relative geographic isolation and small sizes.

Globally, 13% of all contacts with known reasons were about 'psycho-social mental health'; In the Americas and Caribbean contacts about 'psycho-social mental health' accounted for a fifth (20%). For both boys and girls the most common reasons for contact for 'psycho-social mental health' were 'suicide', 'depression' and 'fear and anxiety'. The figures for contacts about suicide in the Americas and Caribbean are particularly worrisome. 29% of all contacts on 'psycho-social mental health' dealt with suicide, compared to a 15% global average. Looking at the contact rates for boys and girls separately, nearly one third of all 'psycho-social mental health' contacts for both boys and girls was on 'suicide' (31%

and 32% for girls and boys respectively), followed by 'depression' (19% of contacts for boys and 18% of contacts for girls) and 'fear and anxiety' (18% of contact both boys and girls).

Another significant reason for contact in the Americas and Caribbean region was 'family relationships'. Within this category there were more than twice as many contacts involving girls as there were involving boys, in total representing 15% of all contacts made in the region.<sup>1.8a</sup> For both boys and girls more than half the contacts about family were about 'parent-child relationships' (54% and 59% respectively). 'Sibling relationships' represented more than one in seven contacts (17% and 16% for boys and girls). 'Divorced and separated parents' represented 12% and 15% of all calls about family matters for girls and boys respectively.

Exactly like the world average, 'Peer relationships' represented 12% of all contacts with known reasons in the Americas and Caribbean in 2010. Three quarters of contacts on this subject for which the gender of concerned child was known involved girls (76%).<sup>1.6a</sup> When calling about peer relationships, girls in the region mainly contacted child helplines about 'problems with friends' (58%), while boys in the region mostly contacted about 'problems with partners' (51%). Worldwide the latter issue is the most common reason for contact for both boys and girls (56% and 58% for girls and boys respectively).



### Case Studies – the Americas and the Caribbean

A 15-year-old girl reported that she and her two brothers (aged 8 and 10) were left alone at the house a lot since her father was in a new relationship after a divorce. The father was spending most of the time at his girlfriend's house. Every day, he would bring take-out food for the children and then he would leave again. The girl and her younger brothers were left to sleep alone at night. *The girl told the child helpline counsellor that she wants her father to come home and stay with them and take the responsibility for taking care of them. The counsellor first assessed the possibility of another family member mediating, but the girl said that they did not have contact with anyone else. The counsellor also advised the girl to contact the Department of Social Affairs to get support and through them seek the help of a family therapist. The girl was very thankful for the advice and said she would call the child helpline to let them know how it went.*

A mother found the child helpline website during an internet search. Her six-year-old son had disclosed sexual abuse by his father - her husband. The mother wanted to tell the father that she would call the police if he did not stop the abuse, but wanted the advice of the child helpline. *A counsellor spoke to the mother about the need to bring in outside authorities. By keeping the abuse a secret within the family, she would not be able to get professional help and treatment for her son; her husband would not be able to get sex offender treatment; and she, herself, would not be able to get needed support. In addition, threatening a sex offender with the police without any other measures is often not enough to stop someone from abusing. The counsellor gave the mother resources for reporting, bringing her son to a child advocacy centre, getting advice about how she could speak with her husband, and getting support for herself.*

'Abuse and violence' is the fourth most common reason for contact in this region, contrary to global trends.\* There is no clear relationship with HDI levels or any discernible sub-regional trend within the Americas and Caribbean that would explain this lower level of reporting on abuse and violence compared to other regions. CHI's member child helplines have, however, noticed a general culture of accepted violence (in the home and at schools) in the southern and central areas of the region which seems to be causing underreporting on abuse and violence issues. This was noted, for example, by child helplines who have implemented family programmes to help reduce domestic violence. Child helplines in the region further report that children tend to contact them for a different reason, with abuse and violence issues only surfacing at a later stage in the conversation.

\* Globally 'abuse and violence' is the number one known reason for contact aside from general requests for information.

## ASIA PACIFIC

Asia Pacific is one of the most diverse regions in the world. Countries in the region run the gamut of HDI levels and range from some of the world's poorest to some of the world's richest, and from geographically small to geographically large nations. Asia, Oceania (including Australia and New Zealand) and large and small Pacific island nations alike are all included in this culturally rich region. The data received from CHI's 22 member child helplines operating in Asia Pacific reflects the complexity of the region, while also reinforcing the trends demonstrated by other regions in the world.

The 2010 data collated by CHI indicates that as many as 36% of the contacts with child helplines in Asia Pacific were about information requested, compared to 22% globally. The second most common reason for contact with child helplines in the region was 'psycho-social and mental health' at 14% of all contacts with a known reason. Interestingly, most of these contacts were made in Asian Pacific countries with higher HDI levels. Overall, a large number of the contacts on 'psycho-social and mental health' concerned 'boredom' (28% of the boys and 19% of the girls who contacted a child helpline about 'psycho-social and mental health' mentioned boredom as their main reason for contact). 'Fear and anxiety' were also high in the minds of children in the region. 17% of the boys and 11% of the girls contacting child helplines about 'psycho-social and mental health' cited 'fear and anxiety'

as their reason for seeking support. The data also indicates an alarmingly high incidence of contacts about 'self-harm' in the region. 23% of all contacts on 'psycho-social and mental health' with a known reason were about 'self-harm'. This is by far the highest percentage across all regions (followed by Europe at 7% as the next highest incidence of contacts about 'self-harm'), and far above the global average of 12%. The numbers were significantly higher for girls (26% of all contacts from girls about 'psycho-social and mental health' dealt with 'self-harm', compared to 5% for boys). The same is true for suicidal tendencies, with 15% of all contacts on 'psycho-social and mental health' from girls dealing with suicide, compared to 4% for boys. For boys, on the other hand, 'lack of confidence' constituted a predominant reason for contact within the 'psycho-social and mental health' category (22%, compared to 10% for girls).

'Abuse and violence' was the third most common reason for children to make contact with child helplines in Asia Pacific region in 2010 (12% of all contacts with known reasons, of which 22% concerned girls and 18% boys).<sup>1.4a</sup> Overall, bullying was an issue reported on by girls and boys alike (22% of all contacts about 'abuse and violence' from both boys and girls were about bullying). 'Physical abuse' was also a significant overall reason for contact within the 'abuse and violence' category in Asia Pacific (33% of all contacts on 'abuse and violence' from boys, and 28% of 'abuse and violence'

contacts from girls). A further 19% of the girls and 10% of boys making contact about 'abuse and violence' mentioned 'sexual abuse' as their reason for seeking help, and 15% and 11% of boys and girls respectively cited 'domestic violence'. 'Emotional abuse' accounted for 10% of all contacts about 'abuse and violence' amongst both boys and girls.

Within the Asia Pacific region, CHI's member child helplines noticed a number of additional trends with regard to 'abuse and violence'. Child helplines in the south-eastern parts of the region noted that children, and adults on behalf of children, tended to contact child helplines about child labour only when severe physical or sexual abuse was involved. Child helplines in the south-eastern areas of Asia Pacific often have significant rescue departments used for interventions in severe cases of abuse. In the Pacific region of Asia Pacific, child abuse is less often a reason for contact with child helplines. Children in the Pacific area tend to contact child helplines more on bullying, including cyber-bullying.

### Case Studies – Asia Pacific

Two female neighbours contacted the child helpline and reported seeing a 4-year-old boy with several scratches and pinch marks on his body, a swollen forehead and several hematomas on the arms. Aside from the physical maltreatment he received, the boy was also forced to eat meagre leftovers by his mother. When authorities came, the boy's mother denied knowing any boy living in her house and when they left, she immediately placed the boy inside a bag and fled the place. Fortunately, through several witnesses, authorities were able to track down the boy, hidden in another neighbour's house. A child helpline social worker immediately conducted a visit and assisted in attending to the boy's medical and legal needs. Thereafter, the boy was placed under the protective custody of the child helpline where he is presently undergoing rehabilitation.

An 11-year-old boy called the child helpline last year and confided that he was feeling disappointed about his school results and hurt by the way his mother treats him. His mother had on many previous occasions told him to "go to hell" and called him "brainless". His mother had also beaten him with the metal part of a belt. The last beating happened the day before he called. The boy refused to see a doctor for his bruises because he did not want to waste money. He did not tell anyone, afraid it might cause his parents to divorce. The boy shared that his father does love him. With the boy's permission, the child helpline volunteer referred the call to the staff in charge. The staff then contacted the boy's school counsellor and shared with her about the alleged abuse happening to the boy. The school counsellor followed-up with the case by identifying the boy and subsequently the case was referred to the national child protection services for further investigation.

## EUROPE

While Europe is generally perceived as a relatively well-off region, poverty levels vary quite a bit across Europe with the southern, Mediterranean and Baltic states showing higher poverty and unemployment rates than the rest of the region. Contacts with child helplines in Europe tend to reflect global trends, while highlighting some of the particular types of problems faced by children in established nations.

Most of the contacts with European child helplines (20%) were about 'peer relationships'. This compares to 12% of all contacts worldwide. Seven out of ten reports about 'peer relationships' in which the gender of the child was known involved girls. Contrary to world trends, most 'peer relationship' contacts involving girls were about 'problems with friends' (54%). Similarly, for contacts involving boys, two thirds of contacts were about 'problems with friends' (67%). Worldwide, the majority of contacts for both girls and boys were about 'partnership relationships' (56% and 58% respectively).

More than half of all contacts with child helplines around the world about 'psycho-social mental health' in 2010 were made by children in European countries. Two thirds of all 'psycho-social mental health' contacts in Europe involved girls (66%) and one third boys (33%).<sup>1.5a</sup> For girls, the most common reasons for contact concerning 'psycho-social mental health' were 'fear and anxiety', 'body/physical appearance', 'bore-

dom' and 'loneliness' (15%, 15%, 13% and 13% respectively). Nearly one quarter of contacts about 'psycho-social mental health' involving boys were about 'boredom', while nearly one in five contacts with boys were about 'body or physical appearance' (19%). Interestingly, there were relatively more contacts about 'body or physical appearance' from boys than there were from girls (although in absolute terms the general number of contacts from girls was much higher). For both boys and girls the shares of 'psycho-social mental health' contacts about body image and physical appearances were much higher than the world averages, with all the other regions recording only 3% overall 'psycho-social mental health' contacts about body image and appearances each, compared to 14% for Europe. 'Loneliness' and 'fear and anxiety' represented nearly one in seven 'psycho-social mental health' contacts each (14% and 13% for boys; 13% and 15% for girls).

Half of all contacts on 'abuse and violence' worldwide were made to European child helplines, indicating quite clearly that 'abuse and violence' against children is most definitely not a problem only in less-developed regions. 61% of all contacts on 'abuse and violence' in Europe for which the child's gender was known involved girls.<sup>1.4a</sup> For both boys and girls the most common form of abuse reported to European child helplines in 2010 was 'bullying' (44% and 38% respectively, representing 31% of all contacts on 'abuse and violence' in

Europe). An additional 23% of contacts about 'abuse and violence' involving girls was about 'sexual abuse' - twice as many such contacts than for boys. For boys, 25% of all 'abuse and violence' contacts for which a reason was given were about 'physical abuse'.

'Sexuality' represented 15% of all contacts with known reasons made to European child helplines in 2010. The majority of contacts in the region about 'sexuality' were made by girls (59% versus 41% for boys).<sup>1.7a</sup> This is contrary to the worldwide trend, which showed that most contacts with child helplines about 'sexuality' came from boys. For both boys and girls, 'information about sexuality and the facts of life' was the most common reason for contact in this category in Europe (49% and 44% respectively). One third of contacts with girls regarding sexuality was on 'pregnancy' (32%), followed by one in ten contacts on 'sexual identity' (10%). For boys one in five contacts was on 'sexual identity' (20%).

### Case Study - Europe

A 17-year old girl, the victim of online grooming, called because she was upset about a chat conversation that occurred a few minutes before; she was on her favourite online chat when she started to talk with a user that she supposed to be a very smart peer. In the first part of the conversation they shared hobbies, passions and interests. After moving to a private chat-room the man started making indecent proposals. The girl refused to continue. He then told her: "Last week I had fun with a 12-year-old girl on chat". *The counsellor praises the girl for not giving the user any personal data, stopping the conversation and calling the child helpline. The counsellor discusses with the girl the possibility of referring what happened to the police department that deals with computer crimes in order to investigate further and help keep other girls safe.*

A 15-year-old girl contacted the child helpline with extreme depression and suicidal thoughts. She confessed that before dialling the child helpline she had overdosed on medication and had drunk alcohol. During the conversation the girl agreed to give the child helpline all her information and asked for help. *The shift manager immediately contacted the emergency unit and the counsellor waited with the girl on the line until an ambulance arrived. A few days later the girl contacted the child helpline again to say she was at the hospital. She thanked the child helpline for their actions and support.*

## MENA

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region is as economically and demographically diverse as its general problems are shared. The region is characterised by significant disparities in HDI levels and per capita income, due in large part to varying endowments of oil and natural gases, as well as large differences in national literacy rates, health and education. At the same time, a number of shared issues plague the region, including the highest youth unemployment rate amongst all regions in the world; low participation of women in the labour force; and significant gender disparities in literacy rates. There is also a relatively high youth dependency rate\* in most MENA countries. Interestingly, most of the child helplines in the MENA region are government-operated and fall under the flag of family services. Unlike in the rest of the regions, most of the contacts with child helplines in MENA are from adults as opposed to children, and the main reasons for calling in MENA reflect this, as seen below.\*\*

'Abuse and violence' (14%) represented the largest category for contacts with known reasons in the MENA region in 2010. The large majority of the 'abuse and violence' contacts recorded involved girls (79% as opposed to 17% involving boys and only 4% in which the gender was not known).<sup>1.4a</sup> Similar to much of the rest of the world, the largest subcategory of 'abuse and violence' related contact was 'physical violence' for both girls and boys (31% and 36% respectively). One notable trend in MENA was the high incidence of 'abuse

and violence' contacts with child helplines specifically about 'domestic violence'. 'Domestic violence' accounted for 20% of all 'abuse and violence' related contacts with known reasons, compared to 11% on average worldwide. 'Neglect' cases, especially amongst boys, also made up quite a high proportion of contacts about 'abuse and violence' in the MENA region: 20% of all 'abuse and violence' related contacts about boys and 12% of all such contacts about girls dealt with 'neglect'.

This goes hand in hand with contacts in the MENA region about 'resources and financial aid' and 'children calling for food', for which the percentages were quite high within the category of 'homelessness'. 25% of all contacts about 'homelessness' in MENA in 2010 were about 'resources and financial aid', compared to 17% globally, and 23% were about 'children calling for food' as compared to only 8% on average worldwide.<sup>1.9</sup>

Following world trends, 'psycho-social mental health' (9%) represented the second largest category for contacts with known reasons in the MENA region in 2010. Less than 1% of these contacts were recorded with unknown gender, and the division of the contacts between girls and boys does not differ greatly (57% and 43% respectively).<sup>1.15a</sup> At 37%, and contrary to elsewhere in the world, 'fear and anxiety' by far constituted the largest subcategory with regard to 'psycho-social mental health' contacts for both genders.



## Case Studies - MENA

The child helpline received a call from the police that a child was locked in a room and tied with iron chains. *Child helpline staff, together with the police, went to the house in question and freed the child and moved him to a protective shelter. The father was legally punished. After that, counselling was offered to the father on how to treat his son. The child's right to education was also secured.*

A 16-year-old girl was sexually abused by a dentist who was treating her. When her parents found out, her mother called the child helpline to ask for help and guidance. *The child helpline counsellors met with the parents to verify the case and reported the matter to the local police department so that the appropriate measures could be taken. The child helpline continued to provide support and follow up until the court ruling was issued.*

A mother of two hyperactive five-year-old twin girls called asking for support to help her with the two girls after her husband left her. The woman was struggling on her own, having to move frequently and still uncertain about her legal rights with regard to her marriage. *Counsellors from the child helpline visited the mother at her home and helped her to access support for herself and therapy for the girls, including play therapy and exercises to help with their hyperactivity.*

This was followed by 'boredom'. 13% of all 'psycho-social mental health' contacts involving girls and 15% of such contacts involving boys were about 'boredom'. 'Lack of confidence' made up for 12% of all 'psycho-social mental health' contacts in 2010 – the third most common 'psycho-social mental health' reason for contact in the region, compared to being only the seventh largest subcategory in the world as a whole.

Contrary to the world trend (4% and seventh overall), 'school related' reasons for contacting the child helplines made up 7%, and one of the three large categories for contact in the MENA region in 2010. 62% of 'school related' contacts were reported as involving a girl, while 37% involved a boy, and only 1% were reported with unknown gender.<sup>1.10a</sup> The division of these contacts into subcategories also shows a different picture from the world trend, and differs between the genders. For both girls and boys in the MENA region, by far the most commonly reported 'school related' issue was 'performance anxiety' (38% and 30% respectively, and 36% overall as compared to just 13% worldwide). Girls more commonly contacted child helplines about 'academic problems' (a quarter of all contacts on 'school related' matters by girls), while boys tended to make contact more about 'teacher problems' (22% of all contacts on 'school related' matters by boys). 18% of all contacts on 'school related' matters by girls had to do with 'homework', which 17% of all contacts on 'school related' matters by boys dealt with 'school drop-outs'.

# A closer look at child helplines

With such a vast and global network of child helplines, CHI is in a position to offer its members, partners and other stakeholders worldwide an unprecedented overview of the latest developments and issues facing child helplines today. CHI collates data and information from its members about emerging trends in child helpline services and, importantly, on the gaps in access to those services. The data presented in this chapter highlights the tremendous importance of child helplines in child protection, as well as the challenges child helplines face as they work to provide continuous, quality services to children everywhere.

## About child helplines

Child helplines are help and support services for children, based on the principles of children's rights and child protection, as laid out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Child helplines use a variety of methods to ensure that children can access help and find someone to talk to, safely and confidentially, at all times. These methods include:

- telephone services;
- mobile phone SMS/text messaging;
- online services such as email, chats and discussion forums;
- letter 'drop boxes' in schools, community centres and other public places;
- postal services;
- radio programmes;
- mobile outreach units.

Child helpline staff, counsellors and volunteers actively listen to children who wish to express their concerns and also link children to resources and emergency assistance when needed. Especially in countries with lower HDI levels, where means are often scarce and child protection systems more porous, many child helplines also provide additional services such as direct intervention, shelter, education and legal services themselves. Child helplines also reach out to children who may not be able to access their services easily on their

own, including street children, children with disabilities and children in difficult to access areas or communities.

In order to be effective, child helplines have to be readily accessible at all times, to all children, no matter how marginalised or isolated. To this end, child helplines strive to obtain the use of short (3-4 digit), easy to remember, toll-free numbers. Child helplines also make efforts to be available to children via the channels and methods of communication that are most accessible and most popular with children themselves. This means that child helplines are constantly working to adapt their services to best meet the changing needs of the children they serve. Often, child helplines are a young persons' first point of contact with child protection services and the most trusted and accessible gateway for them to find much needed support.

There are many operational variations amongst the child helplines in CHI's global network. Depending on their exact situation and means, different child helplines employ different methods of communication and have varying operating hours and staff/volunteer compositions. There are also differences between well-established and recently launched child helplines, and between child helplines in highly developed areas and those in less developed regions. The analysis below looks at the number of contacts received by child helplines in 2010, the communication methods used, access

and staff constructions. All together the data paints a clear picture of the best practices, trends, needs and challenges child helplines across the globe contend with as they work tirelessly to help children in need.

## 'Answered' and 'responded to' calls

In 2010, CHI's member child helplines together received nearly 13.4 million contacts from children (and adults on behalf of children) in need (not counting website hits). Table 2.1 shows the number of contacts received per communication method and region.<sup>2.1</sup>

The most important feature of a child helpline is its capacity to attend to children's appeals for help and support. Unfortunately, unlike most other types of communication, not all of the telephone calls child helplines receive can be attended to. Because of limited operating capacities or shortages of staff, some telephone calls might go to a machine or other automated response mechanism, rather than being picked up by the child helpline staff. For this reason, child helplines differentiate between the total number of calls received, and the number of calls actually answered. This report deals only with the answered calls.

Answered calls include only those contacts actually attended to by the child helpline. A further distinction is made between 'answered' calls and 'responded to' calls. Any call that is answered by a member of the child helpline staff, whether resulting in actual interaction or not, is considered 'answered'. This includes silent, abusive and test calls, as well as those where the caller just wants to be heard, and is not in direct need of any action by the child helpline. 'Responded to' calls are all the 'answered' calls for which the child helpline provided assistance, and/or was able to categorise the case(s) according to the CHI glossary. Responses can include interactive counselling, referral to another service or agency for assistance, or an intervention by the child helpline itself. This distinction is important because calls that were responded to, as a percentage of the answered calls, gives a good indication both of children's needs for further counselling and support. Table 2.2 shows the number of 'answered' and 'responded' calls by region<sup>2.2</sup>.

2010 saw a 2% increase in the percentage of 'responded to' calls over 2009, from 31% to 33% worldwide. Child helplines further report that this indicates both a greater capacity of child helplines to respond to incoming calls, and also an increase in the proportion of children needing active counselling during their call and/or follow-up referrals or services.

## 2.1 Communication type per region

Region	Method of communication- Total									
	Telephone Based		In -person		Web-based		Postal		Total	
Africa	1,912,427	82%	389,014	17%	16,601	1%	5,779	0%	2,323,821	100%
Americas	846,259	95%	632	0%	45,271	5%	2,002	0%	894,164	100%
Asia Pacific	3,320,518	87%	203,828	5%	29,864	1%	253,692	7%	3,807,902	100%
Europe	5,500,745	90%	10,133	0%	578,607	10%	18	0%	6,089,503	100%
MENA	266,074	97%	6,809	2%	633	0%	62	0%	273,578	100%
World	11,846,023	88%	610,416	5%	670,976	5%	261,553	2%	13,388,968	100%

Note 1: telephone based contacts are based on the number of answered calls

Note 2: web-based contacts are excluding website visits.

## 2.1a Communication type per region including website hits

Region	website	Global including website hits	Percentage webbased of global including website hits
Africa	129,582	2,453,403	6%
Americas	1,322,499	2,216,663	62%
Asia Pacific	1,354,451	5,162,353	27%
Europe	11,513,893	17,603,396	69%
MENA	0	273,578	0%
World	14,320,425	27,709,393	54%

The only region where the percentage of 'responded to' calls declined slightly was the Africa region. 2009 data from the Africa region indicated that 33% of all 'answered' calls were responded to; the 2010 data indicates that 27% of the 'answered' calls were responded to.<sup>2,2</sup> This can be explained by the large number of younger child helplines in the region.<sup>2,12</sup> Younger child helplines by default experience a higher number of silent and test calls, as children are inclined to test the service for a period before they decide if they can trust it.

The Americas and Caribbean region continues to have the highest percentage of responded to calls (55% in 2009; 56% in 2010). However, in 2010 the Americas and Caribbean region displayed a drop of over 20% in absolute numbers in telephone calls, from 1,047,318 in 2009 to 846,213 in 2010.<sup>2,2 & 2,4</sup> This is at least partially because three of the larger child helplines in the region have had to decrease their opening hours, as well as their telephone communication, due to budget cuts, and have resorted instead to more web-based solutions.

Asia Pacific and Europe both show great increases in the percentage of telephone calls they were able to respond to in 2010 as compared to 2009 (from 26% and 30% in 2009 to 33% and 32% in 2010 respectively). Child helplines in these two regions note that the numbers are indicative of their efforts to reduce the number of test calls they receive. Test calls, though very valuable for the caller who is testing the waters before using a child helpline service, can be very demotivating for staff, usurp resources and keep the lines busy for other, potentially critical callers. This is especially true in high HDI level countries which tend to field more test and silent calls.

» TRENDS // TEST CALLS » "SINCE 2007 THE AMOUNT OF TEST CALLS HAS BEEN DECREASING. IN 2007 WE HAD 56% AND IN 2010 IT WAS 27%. WE HAVE BEEN TRAINING OUR VOLUNTEERS TO BE PATIENT WITH THE CHILDREN AND THEIR WAY OF MAKING CONTACT. IT HAS BEEN PRODUCING GOOD THINGS!" - Finland

## 2.2 Answered and responded to calls per region

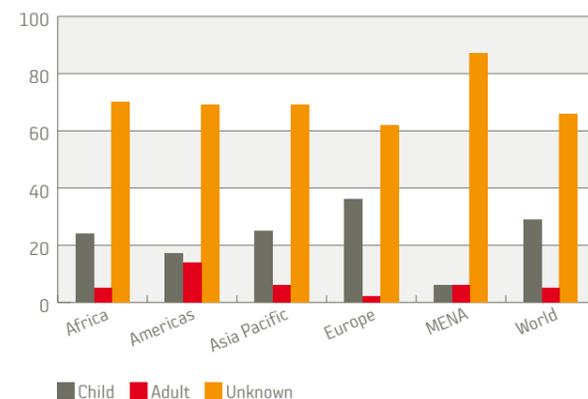
Region	Answered	Responded	% of answered calls responded to	Test and silent calls as % of answered calls
Africa	1,902,322	510,102	27%	23%
Americas	846,213	477,110	56%	38%
Asia Pacific	3,116,021	1,021,831	33%	24%
Europe	5,474,331	1,731,088	32%	36%
MENA	266,007	54,971	21%	26%
World	11,604,894	3,795,102	33%	31%

## Who contacts child helplines?

Not all children in need are always in a position to contact a child helpline themselves. Adults, including parents, neighbours, teachers and other concerned individuals can also contact a child helpline on their behalf. CHI collects basic information from its member child helplines about the people who contact them. This data provides child helplines and the network as a whole with good insights for more targeted development of awareness-raising campaigns, fundraising and strategic operational planning.

Figure 2.3 presents information on the status of individuals who contacted child helplines in the different regions in 2010. For 66% of all contacts responded to by the child helplines, the status of the individual involved is unknown. For most regions, the majority of contacts do, however, come from children. Two regions stand out for the relatively high percentage of adults who contact child helplines on behalf of children: the Americas and Caribbean and MENA.<sup>2,3</sup> Child helplines in the two regions explain that these numbers reflect a more general mind-set about telephones being predominantly considered for adults only.

2.3 Status of caller by region



## Communication methods

Although telephone-based contacts do greatly outnumber other communication methods,<sup>2,1</sup> most child helplines are actually more than just telephone services. Most child helplines use a vast array of communication methods to ensure that children in need can reach them. These methods, which include newer telephone-based methods such as SMS/mobile text counselling and various in-person and also web-based communications,<sup>2,1 & 2,4</sup> are constantly evolving to meet the changing needs of the children. Websites are a good example. In previous editions of *Connecting to Children* website hits were not considered counselling mechanism, as most child helplines used this medium for awareness raising and general information only. However, as the technical possibilities and features of websites evolve, so are the possibilities of safely and efficiently using them for actual online counselling. Moreover, child helplines are increasingly using their websites, as well as online social media such as facebook and twitter, to disseminate information popularly requested by children, for counselling and also controlled peer counselling. Starting with this edition of *Connecting to Children*, CHI will track this new trend alongside the usual communication methods reported by its member child helplines.<sup>2,1a</sup> The general analyses, however, will still exclude website hits, to

allow for comparisons and the detection of general trends over time.

The data collated from CHI's member child helplines in 2010 highlights a number of note-worthy trends. In general, there was a slight increase in the number and proportion of telephone-based contacts from 2009 (11,781,433 telephone-based contacts comprising 84% of all contacts) to 2010 (11,846,023 telephone-based contacts comprising 88% of all contacts). One reason for this is that the number of child helplines offering SMS/mobile text message counselling has increased, leading to an increase in communication by children via SMS/mobile texts to child helplines. This is especially notable in Asia Pacific where the use of mobile phone SMS/text messaging appears to be on the rise. In 2010 5% of all telephone-based contacts in Asia Pacific were via SMS/mobile text messaging. This is quite a high ratio compared to all other regions.<sup>2,4</sup>

For the Africa region the number of contacts made in person (via outreach services or walk-ins to child helpline centres) still makes up 17% of the regional total. This is significantly higher than in other regions.<sup>2,4</sup> However, when compared

» TRENDS // SMS/MOBILE TEXT COUNSELLING » "THE USE OF SMARTPHONES AND SMS AND TEXTING IS GROWING AMONG YOUNGSTERS." - Aruba

## 2.4 Communication type per region

	Africa	Americas	Asia Pacific	Europe	MENA	Global
<b>Telephone based</b>						
Telephone	1,902,322	846,213	3,116,021	5,474,331	266,007	11,604,903
SMS	10,105	0	204,429	26,413	0	240,947
Fax	0	46	68	1	67	182
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,912,427</b>	<b>846,259</b>	<b>3,320,518</b>	<b>5,500,745</b>	<b>266,074</b>	<b>11,846,033</b>
<b>Web-based</b>						
Email	11,447	22,504	19,232	53,044	633	106,863
Web post and bulletin board	0	22,260	1,213	336,390	0	359,864
Chat	5,154	507	9,419	189,173	0	204,254
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,601</b>	<b>45,271</b>	<b>29,864</b>	<b>578,607</b>	<b>633</b>	<b>670,981</b>
<b>In person</b>						
Outreach	323,468	598	190,593	7,445	4,931	527,039
Walk in	65,546	34	13,235	2,688	1,878	83,382
<b>Total</b>	<b>389,014</b>	<b>632</b>	<b>203,828</b>	<b>10,133</b>	<b>6,809</b>	<b>610,420</b>
<b>Postal</b>						
Postal	5,779	2,002	253,692	18	62	261,558
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,323,821</b>	<b>894,164</b>	<b>3,807,902</b>	<b>6,089,503</b>	<b>273,578</b>	<b>13,388,978</b>

to data collected in 2009, it becomes apparent that the total number of in-person contacts is actually going down. In 2009 the African child helplines saw 55,512 in-person contacts, compared to 389,014 in 2010. The reason for this decline is twofold: Increasingly more children in Africa have access to telephone lines; and, as more and more child helplines succeed in obtaining toll-free numbers for children to call them with, child helplines become more easily accessible that way (See 'Free of cost access to child helplines' below for more on this).

Tables 2.1a and 2.4 indicate that the use of websites is especially prevalent in the Americas and Caribbean and in Europe, but significantly less common in Africa and MENA.<sup>2.1a&2.4</sup> This perhaps reflects the fact that children in the Americas and Caribbean and Europe have internet facilities more readily available to them, and that this is their preferred method of communication. Data on communication methods organised by Human Development Index (HDI) levels strengthens this hypothesis.<sup>2.5</sup> The data shows that medium and high HDI level countries have far higher percentages of web-based contacts (8% of all communication types each) than low HDI level countries (1% of all communication types).

» **TRENDS // WEB-BASED CONTACTS** » "OUR WEB-BASED CONTACTS ARE UP 300% OVER LAST YEAR. KIDS ARE NOT CALLING US AS MUCH AS THEY USED TO. NOW THAT WE HAVE A WEBSITE - WE ARE GETTING EMAILS AND GETTING KIDS INVOLVED WITH ONE-ON-ONE CHAT SERVICES WITH A COUNSELLOR." - **USA** » "WE HAVE SEEN A DECREASE IN CALL VOLUME AMONG YOUTH OVERALL THIS PAST YEAR. WE FEEL THIS DECREASE IS A RESPONSE TO THE AMOUNT OF COMMUNICATION METHODS AVAILABLE TO ALL OF US TODAY. IN ADDITION, THE TREND DEMONSTRATES THAT YOUNG PEOPLE ARE CHOOSING TO NOT PICK UP THE PHONE ON A REGULAR BASIS TO TALK WITH A SOCIAL SERVICE OR ANYONE THEY DO NOT KNOW. THEREFORE, ADJUSTMENTS TO THE PROGRAM MUST BE MADE TO MEET THIS NEED, SUCH AS ONLINE LIVE CHAT TO OPEN THE DOOR OF COMMUNICATION AND EDUCATE YOUTH ABOUT WHAT IT MEANS TO CALL A HELPLINE." - **USA** » "TELEPHONE COUNSELLING IS SLIGHTLY FALLING IN FAVOUR OF ONLINE COUNSELLING. VISITS TO OUR WEBSITE, WEB PAGES AND FACEBOOK PAGE ARE INCREASING. OUR FACEBOOK PAGE IS VERY WELL ACCEPTED." - **Austria** » "LAST YEAR MANY CHILDREN USED THE INTERNET TO REACH US THROUGH FACEBOOK OR EMAILS, ASKING FOR HELP. FOR THAT REASON WE DECIDED TO ORGANIZE A WEB COUNSELLING SERVICE." - **Greece** » "IN 2010 WE LAUNCHED THE "CHAT WITH TELEFONO AZZURRO" SERVICE. WE OBSERVED THAT SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE RUN TOGETHER WITH NEW TECHNOLOGIES, AND SO DOES THEIR HELP SEEKING BEHAVIOUR." - **Italy** » "OUR CHAT SERVICE, STILL A DEVELOPMENT PROJECT, INCREASED SUBSTANTIALLY, 66% - FROM 1,838 SUPPORTIVE CHATS IN 2009 TO 3,053 IN 2010. THERE WAS ALSO A GREAT INCREASE IN THE USE OF OUR FOR (PEER-TO-PEER-SUPPORT) - THERE WAS A 9% INCREASE UP TO 34,648 PUBLISHED POSTS IN 2010." - **Sweden**

## 2.5 Communication type- HDI including subtype

	HDI -status						Total	%
	Low	%	Medium	%	High	%		
<b>Telephone based</b>								
Telephone	921,280	81%	3,620,453	84%	7,072,161	85%	11,604,894	87%
SMS	10,075	1%	1.219	0%	229,653	3%	240,947	2%
Fax	67	0%	67	0%	48	0%	182	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>922,422</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>3,621,739</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>7,301,862</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>11,846,023</b>	<b>88%</b>
<b>Web-based</b>								
Email	11,029	1%	1,872	0%	93,959	1%	106,860	1%
Web post and bulletin board	0	0%	102	0%	359,761	4%	359,863	3%
Chat	0	0%	5,154	0%	199,099	2%	204,253	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,029</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>7,128</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>652,819</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>670,976</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>In person</b>								
Outreach	139,267	12%	340,125	8%	47,643	1%	527,035	4%
Walk in	54,100	5%	18,112	0%	11,169	0%	83,381	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>193,367</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>358,237</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>58,812</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>610,416</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Postal</b>								
Postal	5,830	1%	108	0%	255,615	3%	261,553	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,132,648</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3,987,212</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>8,269,108</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>13,388,968</b>	<b>100%</b>

The data for web-based counselling shows further trends with regard to the exact kind of web-based communication method most used in countries with different HDI levels<sup>2.5</sup>. In low HDI level countries there is prevalence of web-based contacts made via email (100% of all web-based contacts in low HDI level nations); in medium HDI countries there is a prevalence of chat services used (72% of all web-based contacts in medium HDI level nations); and in high HDI level countries the most common form of web-based communication was 'web post and bulletin boards' (55% of all of the web-based contacts in high HDI level nations). These figures support the hypothesis that as means of communications evolve, children tend to make use of their preferred method to access information.

Division by HDI levels also shows disparities in the prevalence of in-person contacts.<sup>2.5</sup> In-person contacts, especially via outreach services, remains a very common method of communication in low HDI level countries (17% of all types of contact). This method of communication is also not uncommon in medium HDI level countries (8%), but significantly less so in countries with high HDI levels (1%). Within this category outreach is by far more common than walk-in contacts for all regions and across all HDI levels. Outreach-based contacts should not be underestimated, however, as often it is only through outreach services that the most marginalised and isolated children can be reached and given support and help.

Child helplines are constantly adapting and working to implement the most up-to-date and relevant means of communication possible. The aim is to always be accessible for children in ways that are easy and reliable. On one end of the spectrum, child helplines aim to ensure that children can readily access their services via the methods of communication which they prefer and navigate best, such as online media and SMS/mobile texts today; On the other end of the spectrum is the difficult reality of children who do not have any means of communication and who depend upon the child helplines to reach out and find them.

## Free-of-cost access to child helplines

In order to be effective, child helplines must be readily accessible to children. As noted above, the vast majority of contacts made with child helplines are telephone-based,<sup>2.1&2.4</sup> both traditional landlines and mobile phones, and every phone call made and text message sent has to be paid for by someone. Ideally, neither the child nor the child helpline is burdened with these costs. For children, having to pay for a call or SMS/text message to a child helpline is a major deterrent. Most children do not have the means to pay for calls and texts themselves. Moreover, in many cases phones and mobile devices are shared with adults (parents and others) who might see charges for calls or texts sent to a child helpline. Especially in cases of abuse and violence, but also when children are calling about taboo subject such as sexual-ity for example, having their parent or guardian find out

## 2.6 Toll free status land line - region

Toll-free status	Region					
	Africa	Americas and Caribbean	Asia Pacific	Europa	MENA	World
	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.	no.
For the child and for the helpline	10	5	7	16	4	42
For the child, but not for the helpline	2	14	14	17	2	49
Not toll free	2	1	1	4	2	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>101</b>

## 2.6a Toll free status mobile phone - region

Toll-free status	Region					
	Africa	Americas and Caribbean	Asia Pacific	Europa	MENA	World
For the child and for the helpline	8	5	4	16	4	37
For the child, but not for the helpline	0	9	7	16	1	33
Not toll free	2	4	10	4	1	21
Not applicable	4	2	1	1	2	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>101</b>

about contact with a child helpline can be embarrassing at the least and even quite dangerous in many circumstances. For child helplines, securing cost-free phone communication on their end means that often already scarce resources can be directed instead into providing and improving services. Unfortunately, far too many child helplines are not yet able to operate with fully toll-free numbers. CHI classifies the data collected from its member child helplines about their toll-free statuses into three principle categories:

- Toll-free for the child and the child helpline: neither the caller nor child helpline pay, but instead a third party such as a telecom company, the government or a private sponsor, assumes the costs of all incoming and outgoing calls;
- Toll-free for the child: the caller does not pay for calls made to the child helpline, but the child helpline does;
- Not toll-free: the caller pays for the call.

The data for 2010 shows that for 42% of CHI's member child helplines telephone calls were free-of-cost for both the child helpline and the caller using landlines.<sup>2.6</sup> While this is an important achievement, nearly half of all the child helplines still bore the costs for incoming calls (49% toll-free status for callers only), severely impacting their ability to operate all of their services full-time. An additional 10% of the child

helplines did not have any toll-free number available at all. Compared to data from 2009, slightly more child helplines were able to secure a completely toll-free number over the past year for their landlines (41% full toll-free status for landlines in 2009, compared to 42% in 2010).

Regarding the use of mobile phones, 70% (2009 data shows 69%) of the child helplines had toll-free lines for callers in 2010, although about half of those calls were still paid for by the child helpline.<sup>2.6a</sup> Data from the International Telecommunication Union\* shows that the mobile phone sector has seen phenomenal growth over the past five years, in contrast to the slow, fixed growth of regular telephone lines. This is especially true in some of the less developed regions of the world. Unlike most developed countries, where there is already an existing network of communications through landlines, mobile phones in regions such as Africa are providing communication where there previously was none\*\*. This creates important opportunities for child helplines in both economically developed and developing countries to reach out to children in need of care and protection through mobile phones, and makes the need to lobby for toll-free statuses all the more relevant. It is quite worrying that so many children and child helplines must pay for calls made from mobile phones, which are generally more expensive than landlines.

>> TRENDS // TOLL-FREE ACCESS >> "THERE WAS A PHENOMENAL INCREASE IN CALLS DUE TO INCREASED ACCESS OF THE TELEPHONE FACILITY AS BOTH MOBILE AND LANDLINES CAN NOW ACCESS CHILDLINE."- Zimbabwe >> "OVER THE PAST 10 YEARS, THE TELECOM SECTOR HAS COMPLETELY CHANGED IN INDIA. IN 2003, 95% OF ALL PHONES IN INDIA WERE CONNECTED BY A PHYSICAL CABLE. IN 2010, 96% OF ALL PHONE SUBSCRIBERS WERE WIRELESS, WHICH INCLUDES MOBILE TELEPHONY. DURING THIS PERIOD THE NUMBER OF TELEPHONE SUBSCRIBERS HAS EXPLODED TO ABOUT 750 MILLION AND GROWS AT ABOUT 16 MILLION PER MONTH. THIS HAS RESULTED IN A SPECTACULAR DECLINE OF PHYSICAL CABLE INSTALLATIONS/USAGE. THE PUBLIC SECTOR TELEPHONE SERVICE PROVIDERS ARE SEEING A DECLINE OF 8% ANNUALLY. CONSEQUENTLY, CALLS FROM MOBILES TO CHILDLINE 1098 ARE NOW RAPIDLY INCREASING. THIS IS A NEW TREND."- India

## 2.7 Toll free land line status - Human Development Index

Toll-free status	Low	Medium	High	World
For the child and for the helpline	64%	58%	32%	42%
For the child, but not for the helpline	14%	37%	59%	49%
Not toll free	21%	5%	9%	10%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

### 2.7a Toll free mobile status - Human Development Index

Toll-free status	Low	Medium	High	World
For the child and for the helpline	50%	47%	31%	37%
For the child, but not for the helpline	7%	16%	43%	33%
Not toll free	21%	32%	18%	21%
Not applicable	21%	5%	9%	10%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Sorting the data by HDI levels highlights some interesting trends. The percentage of child helplines which have free-of-cost landlines for both the child helpline and the caller is higher in countries with low HDI levels than in countries with a medium or high HDI ranking.<sup>2.7a</sup> This trend was first noticed in the analysis of data collected in 2008. For comparison, in 2009 33% of high level HDI nations, 46% of medium level HDI countries and 78% of low HDI level countries had complete free-of-cost status. Incidentally, it is also the lower level HDI countries with the largest proportion of child helplines whose landlines are not at all cost-free (21% in 2010, compared to just 5% and 9% of all child helplines in medium and high HDI level countries in 2010). Considering the importance of free-of-cost phone lines for accessibility and service provision, this fact, and the fact that nearly half of all child helplines worldwide were still not fully free-of-cost in 2010 is cause for concern. 1 in 10 child helplines did not have any free-of-cost landlines at all in 2010. This number is even higher for mobile phones, with 21% of all child helplines worldwide still not having any free-of-cost capacities for mobile contacts in 2010.<sup>2.7a</sup>

Overall there has been a slight decrease in number of child helplines operating without any support with the costs of calls (landlines and mobile) for both themselves and the children calling them since 2007.<sup>2.8 & 2.8a</sup> Especially with regard to mobile calls, an increasing number of child helplines worldwide have successfully procured free-of-cost status since 2007 (up from 22% in 2007 to 37% in 2010). However, 49% of all child helplines in 2010 were still bearing the costs of calls from landlines and 33% the costs of mobile calls. For far too many child helplines both the child helpline and the callers still have to pay for access to much needed and often life-saving services. Much work is still needed in order to raise awareness of the critical need for free-of-cost numbers for all child helplines. The goal is to ensure 100% free-of-cost status for both the callers and the child helplines worldwide.

### National child helpline accessibility

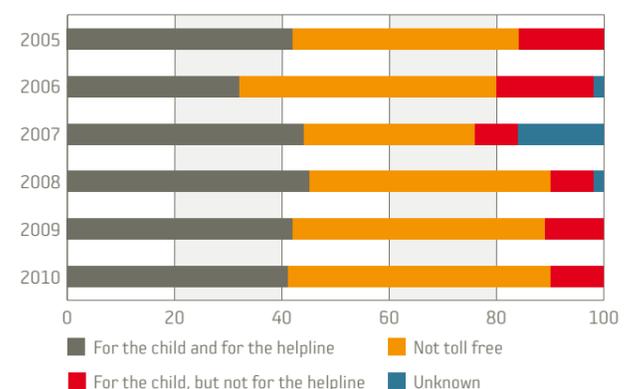
The wider the coverage a child helpline has, the greater the likelihood that children will be able to access its services. In countries where various child helplines are operational in tandem, whether as specialised services or within certain geographical boundaries, and especially when they all use a different number, access becomes diminished. Children are less likely to know which child helplines to contact, and are also less likely to remember the numbers to call. Ideally, every country should have one national child helpline, operating with one, nation-wide short number that is well publicised and widely known.

The geographical range of child helplines' availability to children varies between countries and regions, and can be categorised into four geographic areas:

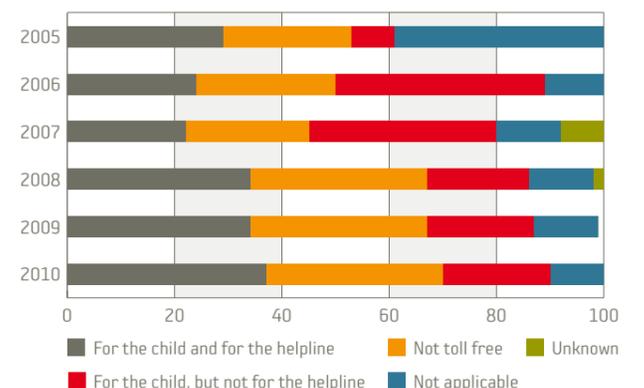
- Local - the number is accessible only in one city or area of the country;
- Multi-local - the number is accessible in several cities or areas within the country;
- Regional - the number is accessible in two or more regions, but not throughout the entire country;
- National - the number is accessible to every child in the country wherever there is access to telecommunications.

On the global level, 81% of the 101 member child helplines included in this analysis had national coverage in 2010, 10% had only local coverage, 5% multi-local coverage and 4% had regional coverage.<sup>2.9 & 2.9a</sup> Since CHI first began collecting data from its members in 2002 child helplines have been gradually moving from local coverage to more national coverage. Since 2009 the percentage of child helplines with national coverage remained stable, while child helplines with only local coverage went up by 4%. This could indicate that child helplines just starting up generally first offer local service, and only later expand their coverage from local to national.

## 2.8 Toll free status landline 2005-2010



## 2.8a Toll free status mobile phones 2005-2010



From the above it can be concluded that the child helpline movement is not only growing in numbers, but also in strength and national presence in individual countries. The number of children who have access to a child helpline is thereby increasing year by year, and more children in need of protection and vital assistance are being reached.

### Child helpline counsellors and staff

Child helpline counsellors make up the core of all that child helplines do. They are the reassuring voices on the other end of the line, the trusted listening ear and the lifeline in times of fear, crisis and trouble. Child helpline counsellors are the first and most imperative link to meeting the needs of the children who contact child helplines. Who exactly answers incoming contacts from children varies from one child helpline to another, depending on general philosophy and also available means. While child helplines may vary in their exact call response methodology, with some preferring peer-counselling and others making use of more differentiated staff for example, all child helplines do provide qualitative training for those responding to children's queries. Counsellors can differ in age and gender, and very generally fall in one of three groups:

- Children (under 18 years old) - trained child helpline counsellors/workers under the age of eighteen;
- Young people (18 to 25 years old) - trained child helpline workers between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five;
- Adults - trained child helpline workers who are over the age of 25.

The data collated by CHI in 2010 shows that the majority of all contacts worldwide are handled by adults<sup>2.10</sup>. Children (under 18 years) answer a greater proportion of incoming queries in low HDI level countries (35%, compared to 0% in medium HDI level countries and 3% in high HDI level countries). These percentages may grow in the future, as many child helplines are exploring the benefits of peer-to-peer counselling, especially for teenagers. For medium HDI level countries young people answer the majority of all contacts, with this number seeming to be on the rise in recent years. When data for 2011 becomes available it can be assessed whether these are continuing trends.

A well-staffed child helpline can better serve children in need of care and protection. While most child helplines do have paid staff, many also rely on the services of paid and unpaid volunteers\*. Member child helplines worldwide overall employed 3,551 paid staff and 9,641 volunteers in 2010 (compared 4,194 paid and 9,706 volunteers in 2009). In line with data collected in previous years, data 2010 again demonstrates that child helplines in countries with high HDI levels tend to rely more on unpaid volunteers than nations with low and medium HDI levels.<sup>2.11</sup> Child helplines in low HDI level countries consisted largely of paid staff and paid volunteers, while child helplines from medium HDI level countries generally have more paid staff, both full- and part-time.<sup>2.11</sup> Generally, child helplines tend to have more female staff. In high HDI level countries more than 70% of all staff were female in 2010.

### Years of existence

As existing child helplines continue to grow and mature, new child helplines are also launched every year. While there is some overlap, in general more established child helplines encompass different challenges than newly starting child helplines. On the whole, all child helplines in 2010 reported that decreasing funds for social enterprises, including child protection, affected their abilities to operate fully. Several established child helplines reported the need to change the nature and level of their services due to budget cuts, for example. CHI supports both starting and established child helplines by sharing the network's expertise.

Consistent with data from previous editions of *Connecting to Children*, child helplines in countries worldwide continue to mature. This is an important factor in the development of services, as more established child helplines adapt and improve their services with experience, and knowledge. The 2010 snapshot as presented shows that the number of maturing child helplines in all regions is growing.<sup>2.12</sup> Higher HDI level countries tend to have more established, longer-running child helplines, while medium and lower HDI level countries are still catching up with the ongoing establishment of new national child helplines in countries where there previously were none.<sup>2.12a</sup>

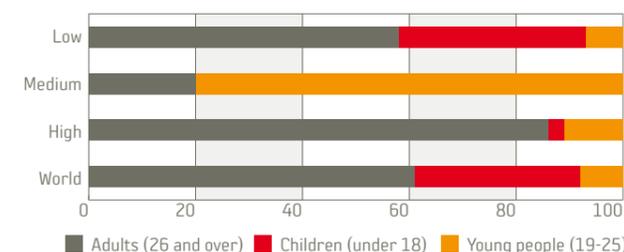
## 2.9 Child helpline accessibility - by region

Accessibility	Region							
	Africa	Americas and Caribbean	Asia Pacific	Europa	MENA	World		
Local	2	2	3	2	1	10	10%	
Multi-Local	0	1	1	1	2	5	5%	
National	12	14	18	33	5	82	81%	
Regional	0	3	0	1	0	4	0%	
unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>100%</b>	

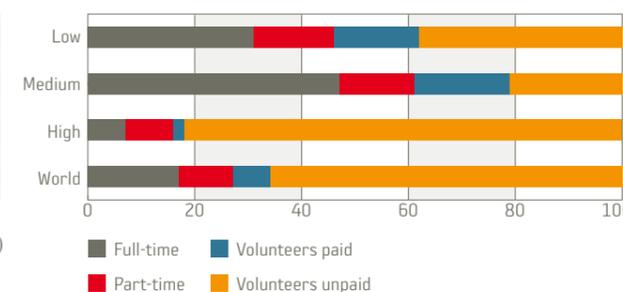
### 2.9a Child helpline accesibility- Human Development Index

Accessibility	Region					
	Africa	Americas and Caribbean	Asia Pacific	World		
Local	4	0	6	10	10%	
Multi-Local	1	0	4	5	5%	
National	8	19	55	82	81%	
Regional	1	0	3	4	4%	
unknown	0	0	0	0	0%	
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>100%</b>	

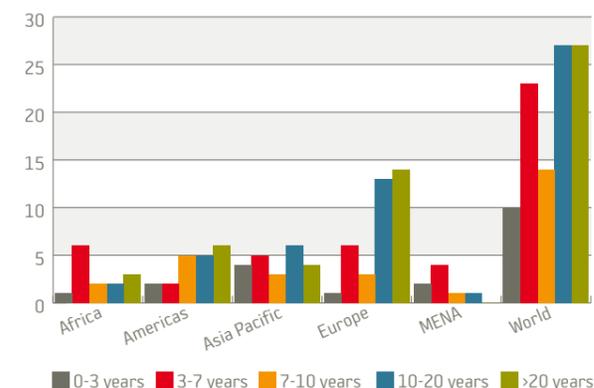
### 2.10 Who responds to the calls - Human Development Index



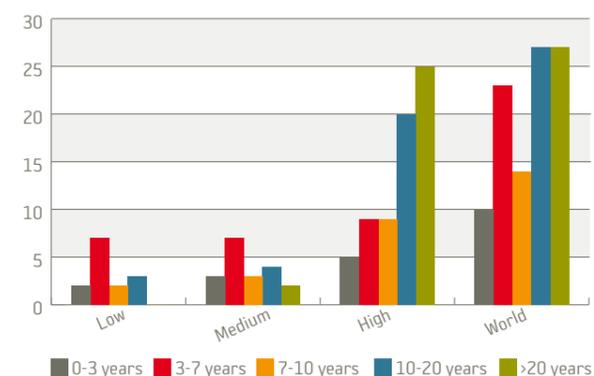
### 2.11 Staff Structure - Human Development Index



### 2.12 Years of existence - by region



### 2.12a Years of existence - Human Development Index



\* Staff (either full-time or part-time) are employed by the child helpline organisation on the basis of a legal contract, whereas volunteers are not connected officially to the organisation, but may still be paid on the basis of the work performed (see also the Glossary of child helpline terminology at the back of this publication).

# Conclusion

101 member child helplines submitted data about 2010. While the data shows that the child helpline movement continues to develop and strengthen, it is interesting to note that there is a continuous shift in the methods used by children to contact child helplines. While the number of contacts made via telephone remains relatively steady, the growth in other forms of contact is noticeable.

Generally, over the years, CHI's data has indicated a steady decrease in telephone-based contacts, hand-in-hand with a steady increase in web-based contacts. Since 2009, however, and continuing into 2010, there was a slight increase again in telephone-based contacts, and a decline in web-based contacts such as chat and e-mail. At the same time, there was an increase in the use of interactive website visits and social media. In order to better map these trends CHI has begun tracking web page visits, starting with 2010 data.

Concerning the availability of free-of-cost telephone numbers, it is disturbing to see that in comparison to 2009, the percentage of child helplines in CHI's network offering free-of-cost services to children has declined, especially in low HDI level countries where scarce resources already make the operation of child helplines a challenge. The high number of telephone-based contacts recorded in 2010 shows that the child helpline movement is rapidly increasing in popularity as a key entry point for children and young people in need into the child protection system.

CHI will continue its efforts to establish new child helplines and to obtain toll-free telephone numbers for both callers and the child helplines. Notwithstanding the importance of telephone accessibility, other methods of communication are also being introduced to continue to help reduce child helplines' overall costs.

Overall, the data collated by CHI over the years does reflect a clear trend: children are increasingly using the newest technologies to communicate. Telephone land lines are now often considered a traditional form of communication as more and more children are discovering their own preferred methods to communicate with child helplines and in general. Mobile usage has increased exponentially and the innovative use of social media presents exciting new opportunities and challenges for child helplines, as they work to develop services that can be most readily used by children. Having a variety of communication options is also important, as the data also indicates that children tend to use different methods of communication depending on the severity of the issue they are contacting a child helpline for. Contacts about sexual violence are more often made via more anonymous communication means such as chat rooms and mobile text messages, for example, with follow-up once the initial trust has been established continuing via telephone or in-person referral or counselling.

In the words of Ms. Marta Santos Pais, United Nations Special Representative on Violence Against: *"Child helplines are core components of comprehensive, robust and integrated national child protection systems"* which should be supported and strengthened in every country so that no child anywhere is ever left alone when they need help and support most.

# Child helplines in emergencies

The role of child helplines as recognised and trusted havens for support and assistance for children is all the more crucial in times of calamity. Both natural and human-induced disasters can wreak havoc on the immediate and longer-term lives of children, often the silent victims of circumstances far beyond their control or doing. In 2009 and 2010 a number of CHI's member child helplines found themselves confronted with hardship and tragedy – economic suffering, health epidemics, political upheaval, wars and natural disasters (see box 1 for a full list). Throughout all of these difficult times, child helpline staff and volunteers found the resilience to stay operational, and in many cases to even expand their services to meet the pressing needs of the hour. Despite floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, tsunamis, famine, fires, social unrest, political clashes, civil wars, brutal attacks and other conflicts and disasters, CHI's member child helplines found ways to continue to respond to the urgent and long-term needs of the children directly and indirectly affected. The lessons learned by these child helplines in real-time are important to share, both across the network and with partners and stakeholders, so that national child protection systems may be strengthened and better prepared for whatever may come.

## EFFECTS ON CHILDREN

Natural and human induced disasters often have unfathomable repercussions for children and young people. In addition to direct physical injuries, the loss of basic needs (food, water, sanitation, medical provisions) and the shocking and instantaneous deaths of loved-ones, the displacement, upheaval and violence that often accompanies traumatic events also leave children deprived of their usual support systems and familiar coping mechanisms. All too often, children are the silent victims of natural and manmade upheaval, having to take on responsibilities and face situations far beyond their natural development and years. Older children caring for younger siblings, the role reversals of children watching over sick or injured parents, children forced to

leave school and work or take to the streets due to difficult circumstances and children left to deal with grief, fear, anger, guilt, trauma and despair are just a few of the harsh realities and long-term psychosocial effects left in the wake of disasters and tough times. Box 2 highlights some of the types of contacts child helplines received from children living in disaster areas.

## EFFECTS ON CHILD HELPLINE OPERATIONS

Unfortunately, most child helplines will also find their own organisation affected by the very emergencies during which their services are most crucial for children. In some cases the operations of child helplines are directly impacted by the disastrous events. Damage, loss of property and lack of access to child helpline facilities by staff caused by flooding, earthquakes or dangerous situations are some of the ways in which the work of the child helplines can be affected. In some cases it can mean the cessation of a service or services which could function as a vital support in such times. Child helplines in areas of disaster or hardship which were not directly affected also experienced enormous increases in contacts. Many child helplines also find themselves having to step into voids left in child protection during times of crises, when other services are overloaded or out of commission. In many cases child helplines had to take on more supportive roles than usual. A number of CHI's member child helplines noted the importance of partnerships with other national and international actors as well. Box 3 showcases various experiences and responses of CHI member child

1

Child helplines across all regions have had to deal with a number of challenging situations in recent years, including:

**Asia-Pacific:** earthquakes (New Zealand), flooding (Australia), flash flood, landslides and strong winds (Brunei), earthquake, tsunami and accidents in nuclear plants (Japan).

**Africa:** struggles with HIV/AIDS (Botswana), drought and famine (Kenya), political upheaval and social unrest

(Ivory Coast), and civil war (Uganda) can be mentioned as some of the disasters.

**America and Caribbean:** heavy rains, floods and mudslides (Brazil) and hurricane (USA).

**Europe:** floodwater (Austria), catastrophic fire (Greece), mud flood (Hungary), international war and conflict (Israel), and attacks (Norway).

**MENA:** attacks (Palestine), political upheaval and social unrest (Pakistan and Afghanistan).

2

## THE IMPACT OF DISASTERS ON CHILDREN - RECORDED BY CHILD HELPLINES

As the accounts below from CHI's member child helplines around the world show, there is an urgent need to provide children caught up in natural and manmade disasters with support and services that can help counteract the potentially devastating effects, immediately, and also long after the dangers have past.

**Kenya:** The drought and famine in Kenya has led to children dropping out of school, since their parents can not afford school fees. There is also an increase in reports about drops in overall academic performances due to hunger.

**Ivory Coast:** The political

upheaval and social unrest following the 2010 presidential elections in Ivory Coast affected children in several ways. The child helpline registered reports about separated families, abuse and psychological traumas.

**Northern Uganda:** The conflict in Northern Uganda has led to numerous problems for children and impingement on their rights due to the breakdown of families, communities and institutions. These effects take different forms, from lack of basic needs to direct involvement in the conflict and the ensuing psychological effects. The conflict also meant that children lost loved-ones or property, or went missing themselves. This led to significant social challenges in

the country.

**Brazil:** The 2010 heavy rains that hit Rio de Janeiro, Brazil provoked floods and mudslides. Many children contacted the child helpline and talked about how this affected them, including not being able to attend classes and not being able to leave their homes. Many expressed worry and fear for their own and their loved-one's safeties.

**Norway:** The attacks in Norway in July 2011 had an impact on children in several ways. The child helpline reports that a significant number of callers in the immediate aftermath were scared and frightened and had trouble sleeping, or were angry and frustrated, wondering how this disaster could happen. There were also many children who expressed feelings of guilt

for thinking about their own problems, who called to express a wish they could do more to help those directly affected, or who were in need of attention, feeling forgotten and especially lonely with everyone focused on the attacks.

**Israel:** The ongoing conflict in Israel affects Israeli children on many levels. The child helplines receive contacts from children who have experienced death, bereavement and loss due to the conflict, and many show psychological symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and report deep feelings of fear and uncertainty. These in turn effect many other aspects of their lives.

### EXPERIENCES AND RESPONSES TO DISASTERS RECORDED BY CHILD HELPLINES

**Kenya:** The call centre of the Kenyan child helpline saw an increase in calls from 270 in the period of November to December 2009, to 726 calls in the period of January to March 2010, when Kenya was hit by draught and famine. Most of these calls were about food aid or the need for counselling. The child helpline responded to this huge upsurge in calls by upgrading the call centre and increasing the extension capacity, as well as referring callers to the Toll Free Famine Relief number when relevant.

**Ivory Coast:** During the conflict in Ivory Coast the child helpline received calls concerning the need for aid and regarding abuse and violence. The child helpline continued their work and provided information on how to protect oneself from the

disaster. It also offered places to stay for children affected by the conflict and had added a psychologist to the child helpline team.

**Northern Uganda:** The conflict in Northern Uganda meant that child helpline personnel could not be easily deployed in the conflict zone due to the insecurity and high risks involved. The child helpline's connectivity was also frequently disrupted and there were threats to staff and a high turnover rate. The child helpline adapted to the crisis by further developing psychosocial principles to guide counsellors in emergencies.

**Brazil:** Flooding and mudslides in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil directly affected the child helpline for four days as telephone services were disrupted and access to the call centre was limited. The child helpline did not see a drastic rise in the number of calls during the heavy rains, but did receive some calls

regarding the emergency. The child helpline contacted the telephone company to fix the phone problem urgently, however this took some time.

**USA:** The Covenant House Neline, one of CHI's seven member child helplines in the United States, recognised the recent hurricane as a crisis immediately. They saw a need for basic needs assistance that continued for a month after the disaster. The child helpline used volunteers and per diems to deal with the increase in calls, and also provided coverage specifically during peak hour to keep costs down as they had no emergency budget.

**Australia:** CHI's member child helpline in Australia was directly affected by heavy flooding in early 2011. The child helpline suffered significant damage to its property, losing vehicles and administration offices on the ground floor. With waters rapidly rising, the service had to relocate quickly

so that it could continue to be there when young people needed help the most. Fortunately, the child helpline's major partner, the telecommunications company Optus, was able to provide suitable space and phone lines in their Brisbane office, away from flooded areas. The telephone counsellors were relocated within six hours of Optus' offer of support, minimising the time the service was closed. Powered by a generator, the email and web counselling service was able to continue operating out of the second floor of the child helpline building. Even as water was pumped from the flooded floors below and clean up and demolition work began, counsellors were able to continue supporting young people 24/7. The child helpline saw a 50% increase in contacts during the month of the flooding.

helplines during natural and human-made disasters. Many child helplines increased their opening hours, and others temporarily added extra phone lines and manpower in order to cope with the increase in contacts. Of course, these steps are all quite costly, and many child helplines have had to find ways to stay operational and increase their reach without over extending already very tight budgets. Child helplines found that recruiting more volunteers, and veteran volunteers stepping up during emergencies, were a tremendous asset in this regard. In addition to the immediate increase in service provision, child helplines also reported a need to train and prepare their staff for the nuances of responding to young people affected by disasters. A number of child helplines brought in extra support from experts and others with the appropriate backgrounds and training to bolster their services during and immediately after crisis situations. Partnerships with other organisations and corporate partners (such as telecoms providers) were also often crucial to help child helplines stay operational and expand their capacities to meet the demands of difficult times.

While responding to immediate crises and emergency situations is a priority when disasters strike, many child helplines report feeling the ongoing financial and operational strain long after the disasters have subsided. Many of those who have experienced first-hand such difficult times are now looking for ways to bolster reserves and better prepare for future contingencies. While some child helplines, such as those in Israel, already have special emergency budgets and procedures, others do not yet. Interestingly, in a number of cases, the actions taken and lessons learned during calamities and emergencies left the child helplines with new and improved operational elements and infrastructure. The three cases below, presented in more detail, highlight many of these points.

### CHILD HELPLINE OPERATIONS DURING DISASTERS

**Japan:** Following the devastating earthquake and tsunami in Japan, CHI's Japanese member child helpline had to deal with very difficult operating circumstances. With many child helpline satellite centres destroyed and basic phone, power and transportation infrastructures wiped out in other areas, the child helpline had to find ways to reroute calls to centres in unaffected areas so that children could still get support, information and assistance. Many of the child helpline's own staff and volunteers were also directly affected, suffering injuries and losing loved ones and property, especially in Miyagi prefecture.

**New Zealand:** CHI's member child helpline in New Zealand's centre in Christchurch was badly damaged during the earthquake there, but all calls and texts were rerouted through to other centres around the country. Luckily, all paid and volunteer staff were safe and accounted for. The child helpline increased advertising of its contact information and free text message service to those in Christchurch via radio, internet and newspapers. The child helpline further responded to the crisis by giving speciality grief and trauma training to staff and providing them with information and guidance. The child helpline did not have a specific emergency budget, so they pooled resources from other areas and had enormous support from volunteers.

**Greece:** In Greece contacts with the child helplines about the provision of food and psychological support for children who had lost loved ones increased during the devastating fires in 2009. The child helpline brought in additional social workers and psychologists to help the child helpline staff answer such contacts.

**Israel:** The ERAN child helpline in Israel reports that in times of national emergency, or a multi-causality incident, there is usually a 40% increase in calls. It is customary for volunteers to take on extra shifts during such emergencies, and the child helpline is evolving a system where volunteers can work from other locations and via the internet to increase efficiency and ensure ongoing operations. This

project will be implemented when the necessary funding is found.

**Palestine:** The child helpline in Palestine saw a large peak in calls from Gaza when the latest wave of armed conflict began there. The child helpline responded immediately by expanding to 24-hour operation and later implemented a permanent expansion of 30 additional lines, 16 hours a day. The child helpline also brought on new staff and volunteers and trained their staff to counsel victims of war trauma, in addition to improving their technologies. Other activities were strained as staff gave extra time to this and the child helpline requested and received emergency funds from a number of donors to cover costs.

### A CLOSER LOOK: THREE IN-DEPTH CASES OF CHILD HELPLINES FACING DISASTERS

#### The flu-pandemic in Mexico

The outbreak of an unprecedented pandemic virus, influenza epidemic A H1N1, in April 2009 in Mexico had major effect on the Mexican child helplines. Public and private facilities within the country were closed in order to contain the spread of the virus. Many flights to Mexico were cancelled. Nevertheless, the virus spread globally and was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organisation (WHO). Clinics were overwhelmed by people infected and the high death toll increased the public's fear of the virus. Mexico's leading child helpline, Acercatel, arranged with the Ministry of Health that it would support the national campaign to contain the virus by expanding child helpline services to also be an information and referral line for children and adults with doubts, symptoms or relatives with symptoms of the virus.

In order to prepare, the child helpline expanded its staff by four volunteers and increased its opening hours. Main virus-related topics and the answers to recurring questions were posted on the bulletin board, and the child helpline instituted a daily exchange of information updates with the responsible health entities.

The child helpline recorded an increase in calls in particular from children and adults who were afraid of the virus or had suspicions that they might be infected. The child helpline

### AWARENESS AND RECOGNITION IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE PANDEMIC

*For most of the year, from April to December 2009, support was given by the Mexican child helpline to the public information campaign regarding the influenza epidemic A H1N1. As a result, physical health was a recurring theme in the reasons for contact with the child helpline during this time. The child helpline fielded many contacts concerning information, doubts, methods of prevention and everything related to the matter. At the end of the year interest in this topic fell sharply as the endemic was contained.*

*However, the child helpline got a lot more out of the campaign than expected. As a result of its involvement in supporting authorities on the dissemination of information and fielding of contacts from concerned citizens, Acercatel gained considerable recognition on a national level. All over Mexico awareness of the child helpline was raised and people recognised its work and the need for its existence. This was boosted by involvement of the mobile phone sector which worked to raise awareness of the child helpline number during the crisis, for example. The efforts undertaken during the flu pandemic also helped Acercatel to expand its services to cover more territory and communication methods.*

kept a record of all clinics in the nation, making it possible to refer each and every individual to the clinics closest to them. In more severe cases, the child helpline contacted the clinics directly and arrange for help and treatment.

In the aftermath of the crisis, the child helpline, other support lines and the responsible authorities together evaluated the cooperation as very effective and efficient. By making use of the available infrastructures, authorities and coordinating organisations wasted no time and could immediately respond to the questions of anxious citizens, as well as contain the flu pandemic as much as possible.

### The earthquake in Italy

In April 2009, one of Italy's severest earthquakes left at least 150 dead in its wake in the region of Abruzzo, about 100 kilometres northeast of Rome. Over 1,500 people were injured and tens of thousands of people became homeless over night. Many buildings were damaged or destroyed. While the government did respond quickly, aftershocks frustrated many of the emergency response efforts. The incident left the Italian population fearful and anxious, not just in Abruzzo itself.

Telefono Azzurro is a well-known and well-established child helpline in Italy. In coordination with other child protection and child counselling organisations, Azzurro was one of the organisations which immediately responded to the trauma counselling needs of children in the emergency shelter camps set up following the devastating earthquake, as well as the needs of all children through increased telephone and on-line counselling services. Cases recorded by the child helpline highlighted the importance of providing assurance and

counselling to children in disaster areas, and especially the value of simply ensuring that they have a safe, confidential place to express their worries, fears and emotions.

Throughout 2010 Azzurro still received a large number of calls from children who are in need of trauma counselling and adults seeking advice on how to support children during the long-term healing process.

### The armed conflict in Gaza

Palestine's child helpline SAWA underwent a temporary transformation to a 24-hour emergency helpline for children, families and adults during the war on Gaza in December 2008 and January 2009, and in the weeks thereafter. There were a number of key factors which led to the decision for SAWA to take on broader responsibilities during the crisis:

- It was clear that Gaza would be difficult for international and other NGO's to reach during the war, so a number of welfare organisations came together to discuss how they could best respond to the newly emerging needs of children living in Gaza during these tense and dangerous times.
- SAWA had just recently launched a large awareness campaign about its number, 121. The recognition of 121 as an emergency number was therefore quite high and cooperation with the various media that were involved in

the awareness campaign already in place. A few days into the war, the media was contacted again to ask them to advertise the child helpline as a resource for all Gazans.

- Partner organisations and SAWA decided that it was best to allocate all available resources to the SAWA number and operations centre, as these were in the best position to handle the expected surge in people needing help and support. Staff from other child and social welfare and child protections organisations volunteered their time and resources to keep SAWA running 24/7 throughout the crisis. The fact that SAWA was already well known to all partners and had a broad referral circle was very helpful in this regard.

A number of adjustments had to quickly be made in order to be prepared for the expected increase in calls.:

- From the outset of the war, SAWA began to experience a huge increase in calls to 121. As a result of the additional advertisements in the media a few days into the war, so many calls poured in that SAWA needed to increase its hours and the number of phone lines available.
- Palestinian Telecommunications installed extra phone lines at the helpline's centre free of charge, and the Palestinian mobile phone company Jawwal announced that all calls from Jawwal phones would be toll-free for those calling the helpline number. A voice-over IP system was installed to allow counsellors unable to reach the call centre due to dangerous conditions on the streets and military curfews to still work remotely and continue to answer incoming calls.
- A caller information database which records reasons for calls, number of calls, and gender, age, and locations of callers was implemented. This was very useful for quick reference on repeat callers, and also helped to identify trends in caller concerns and the number of answered versus unanswered calls during the war.
- Volunteers worked double shifts and employees volunteered their time outside of paid working hours.
- New volunteers were recruited.
- Radio and TV stations which broadcast in Gaza offered free advertisements for SAWA through the war.
- To cover increased costs, SAWA sought and received small emergency grants from UNIFEM and the NGO Development Center.
- SAWA staff were given a two-day training on war-related and post-trauma symptoms and issues.
- A social worker in Gaza was hired to help callers reach referral organizations, lead informational workshops and to conduct follow-up visits with callers when necessary.
- The helpline increased from a staff of five to a staff of 42, mostly volunteers who were working more shifts in order to accommodate all incoming calls.

## 7 CHILDREN IN NEED – THE WAR IN GAZA AS SEEN THROUGH CHILD HELPLINE CALLS

During the war in Gaza in late 2008 and early 2009, child helpline SAWA received over 8,000 calls in just three weeks. These are just two examples of the type of calls SAWA dealt with:

*'SAWA received a call from a seven-year-old boy. His parents had left the house to search for the grandparents in between the bombardments. They had not yet returned. The boy did not know how to take care of his little sister and was worried he would never see his parents again. After settling the boys panic, the counsellor managed to find out in which area the family lived and was able to establish contact with the shelter where the parents had gone. The boy was quickly reunited with the parents.'*

*'SAWA received a call from a five-year-old girl who was left alone at the house with her three-year-old brother. The parents had apparently not returned from a short outing during the bombings some three days ago. SAWA counselors managed to locate the girls' whereabouts and were able to send an emergency vehicle to retrieve the siblings and to bring them to a safe place. Their pictures were pinned to search boards around the city and the parents were able to locate them three days later.'*  
-Palestine, SAWA

Following the war, SAWA received more than 22,000 calls in just a few months, many of which dealt with lingering and long-term effects of the violence and war. Many children were left scared and traumatised, having borne witness to death and bloodshed, and having had to face situations and take on responsibilities far beyond their years. The case of 'S', outlined in the box below, highlights these horribly unjust effects of strife and conflict on the children.

## 6

### THE IMPORTANCE OF LENDING AN EAR – CHILD HELPLINE AZZURRO IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE EARTHQUAKE IN ABRUZZO REGION

The 30th of April 2009 we received a call from a 10-year-old boy, who called from L'Aquila. The boy needed to share his experience. This case reflects his narrative: *'I am shocked, I'd like to talk to someone....I know Telefono Azzurro is here in the camp... I thought I could call the child helpline too. I was in my bed when my mom woke me because we had to go away from the house, she grasped my hand and when we got out the house collapsed. Sometimes I feel very sad. The house is not there anymore, we can't get in.'* At the time of the call the child

lived in a tent in the camp together with his parents, his 16-year-old brother and another family, who they did not know before the earthquake. It is very cold in the tent, and the boy still wakes up at night very often. When he wakes up he is too scared to fall asleep again. The boy also talks about the family that shares the tent with them: *'They're very empathic, but also very sad because their son died when their house collapsed. Their mom swallows pills to get calm. My granny takes pills too, after the earthquake. She's in the tent where the injured are recovering.'* The counselor expressed his understanding of the boy's feelings, and explained that it is ok to feel shocked and confused when you are living side by side with suffering people and the usual things about your life are

temporarily gone. The boy relates that he is sad and that he prefers not to talk about the earthquake with the other children in the makeshift camp: *'...otherwise we get sad. That's why we tend to avoid our thoughts by playing. We collect and share all we have....I got acquainted with many other children in this situation.'* The boy mentions that he does go to school in a precast building near the camp: *'There are many children in each room. Rooms are not enough. My teachers are not the previous ones but I like them, because they help us a lot.'* The counselor encourages the boy to keep talking to the adults around him about his anxiety and fears, even though he feels tired and confused about the situation. The counselor asks him to choose words, adjectives or feelings, to describe the

earthquake. This way the boy would be able to verbalize his emotional experiences, even if negative. The boy says: *'I felt a deep fear when we walked on the floor that was moving and shifting, and heavy sadness for the loss of our home, and fear for dad who fell down when we ran away from the house and had his leg injured. He has a bandage now!'* The last word chosen by the boy is: *'Cruelty. For all the pain that the earthquake caused to people.'* At the end of the call, the boy says: *'I feel better now... I feel relieved.'*

The counsellor assured the boy that he could call again any time to talk, which further assuages the boy's feelings of isolation and worry. - **Italy, Telefono Azzurro.**

## POST-EMERGENCY CARE – THE WAR IN GAZA AND SAWA'S ONGOING ROLE

Children under the age of 12 make up over half of Gaza's population of nearly 1.5 million inhabitants. Unfortunately, they also bear the brunt of the ongoing conflict.

*'S', a nine-year-old girl living in a marginalized rural area with her family of six, is one of these children. Because of constant war and lack of available employment, the family's monthly income does not exceed US \$320 and they depend*

*heavily on aid to meet even their basic needs, let alone post-traumatic care. The case of 'S' represents the most vulnerable part of the population. These children are often severely psychologically distressed and deeply affected mentally and emotionally by the violence around them and the damage to their homes and surroundings.*

*In the case of 'S', SAWA was able to provide much needed help. Her mother heard about Sawa's services and contacted the child helpline for advice. A social worker from the child helpline assessed the girl's situation and*

*found that she was suffering from a number of worrisome symptoms, including: Increasing level of violent outburst; bed-wetting; sleeping problems, with feelings of fear and anxiety; changes in attachment to family and community; difficulty in speech and self-expression; various emotional and cognitive problems such as inability to concentrate; and decreasing hope in the future.*

*After a period of three months of confidential support for both "S" and her mother, the child helpline coordinator identified an improvement in the girl's*

*condition and recommended a social worker in Gaza to take over the case and continue follow-up care. The social worker was able to provide continued support and interventions in parallel with an UNRWA psychological support program for 'S'. The mother was better equipped now also to recognise early signs of high risk amongst her children. The treatment and support was essential in preventing secondary psychosocial impairments and long-term problems. - Palestine, SAWA.*

The improvements made to SAWA's infrastructure during the war are still in place, including the free extra phone lines and free calls from Jawwal mobile phones, as well as the database and voice-over IP systems. SAWA now operates 16 hours a day, 7 days a week, and continues to receive calls from Gazans suffering from a variety of post-traumatic effects from the war.

# Conclusion

Child helplines' flexibility to adapt to difficult circumstances and the additional counselling needs of children during disasters and emergencies is important in their quest to protect and serve children when they are most vulnerable and in need. In fact, a child's healthy development can often depend on having access to the proper care and support when it is most needed, and especially during such traumatic times. The various cases presented in this chapter clearly highlight the undisputable importance of child helplines around the world in reaching out to children everywhere and under any circumstance

## Additional Case Studies

**Child helplines have proven to be an important life-line and vital support mechanism for children and young people in times of emergency. Below are some additional case studies from countries that have experienced emergency and disaster situations, which further portray how child helplines can help:**

**USA, Covenant House Neline:** An 18-year-old female caller is seeking shelter. She is living with her aunt since her own home was destroyed by the hurricane in New Orleans. The girl is originally from New York, and was living on her own in New Orleans, ahead of her mother was getting ready to move to New Orleans and join her. The young woman is worried, cries a lot and states that she is extremely scared because the house she was in was flooded and she had to be rescued by coast guard, who transferred her and her aunt's family to a temporary shelter. She is also worried that her aunt will be transferred to a hospital for medical reasons and that there will be no more room for her in the shelters. A conference call is made to Covenant house New Orleans and the young woman is informed that they have space for her. Arrangements are made with the temporary shelter facility coordinator for the caller to be transferred to the Covenant House.

**New Zealand, What's Up:** An 11-year-old girl contacts the child helpline, worried about going to sleep in fear of aftershocks from the Christchurch earthquake. She has been having nightmares and is afraid to sleep alone in case another aftershock happens while she is sleeping. The girl lives with her mother and father and has slept in their bed the last two weeks since the earthquake. She is afraid about having to sleep in her own bed. The counsellor lets the girl talk through her experience of the earthquake and what life has been like since then. The girl feels more relaxed and sleepy and says she will go to sleep but that she will call back to the same counsellor next time she feels scared.

**Italy, SOS II Telefono Azzuro:** The child helpline receives a call from a mother who asks for suggestions and counselling to help her nine-year-old daughter who is deeply frightened since a devastating earthquake hit the Abruzzo region. Her daughter is asking many questions about the earthquake and is experiencing difficulties falling asleep, nightmares, fears of recurrence of the event and separation anxiety. The operator explains that these are normal reactions for children who have experienced stressful events. The mother is informed about the importance of explaining what happened to her child with simple words, correcting any unclear or confused information as well as of helping the child to feel protected, also through physical closeness. The mother is advised to listen to the fears of the child, in particular the fact that she does not want to separate from the mother, and to answer to her questions in a realistic way without giving false expectations. Encouraging the child to engage in recreational activities is also mentioned as useful.

**Palestine, Sawa Child Protection Helpline 121:** A seven-year-old Gazan boy calls for help since his parents have not returned home after going out for supplies during the bombardments. Left to care of his younger siblings he grew frightened as the absence of his parents lengthened. A Sawa counsellor stays with the boy, giving him practical instructions on how to care for the house and the younger siblings, how to soothe them, and helping him to remain calm until his parents return.

**Israel:** A mother from one of Israel's border towns calls because her four-year-old girl is suffering from severe trauma. She says her girl cries every time she hears Grad rockets or anything that sounds like a rocket. On Memorial Day, when the sirens sound to commemorate those who have fallen in Israeli wars, the little girl's fear intensifies and she is literally paralysed by her by distress. The girl no longer wants to sleep in her own room and only agrees to try and sleep when let into her parents' bed. Every sudden noise scares her, whether it is a car alarm or a door slamming. She lives in a constant state of anxiety. The child helpline counsellor offers advice on how the parents can best support their child and provides information on where the family can go for counselling and further help.

# Partnerships for stronger child protection – Dutch alliances

CHI's member child helplines around the world give children the opportunity to express themselves, and to find invaluable help and support when they need it. This is the first step: to listen. The second step is to make sure that what is being expressed also makes a difference. Through publications like this one, and through concerted advocacy based on solid data, CHI strives to give children's voices a platform from which to be heard, and to bring their unadulterated thoughts, opinions, ideas and concerns to the attention of all those involved in child protection. It is imperative that the chorus of children's voices reaching out to child helplines worldwide reaches those with the power to effect change – including other child protection agencies, governments and non-governmental stakeholders.

CHI does not work in isolation, however, and partnerships with relevant stakeholders and key actors in the field of child protection are essential components of CHI's efforts. CHI works closely with existing partners\* and is always looking for additional opportunities for cooperation and collaboration. By enhancing access to information and sharing knowledge, resources and expertise with other, like-minded organisations, CHI hopes to increase the reach and effectiveness of the network as a whole and strengthen national child protection systems everywhere.

## MFS II – DUTCH ALLIANCES

In 2010 CHI forged collaborative partnerships with a number of Dutch partners, via the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs' five-year grants programme, *the Medefinancierings Stelsel II* (known as the 'MFS II' Co-financing Framework). The aim of the Ministry was to encourage like-minded organisations with complementary skills and operational methods to join forces under jointly funded enterprises. The first alliance programme CHI is part of is called **Girl Power** and focuses on equal rights and opportunities for girls and young women in 10 developing countries through the strengthening of civil society. The programme of the second alliance in

which CHI is a partner is called **Conn@ct.Now** and is designed to reach, support and enable the social activation of children and young people in five fragile states to exercise and claim their rights. Partners in each of the two alliances are:

- **Girl Power Alliance:** Plan Netherlands and CHI, with Defence for Children International & ECPAT, Free Press Unlimited, International Child Development Initiatives (ICDI) and WomenWin.
- **Conn@ct.Now Alliance:** War Child Holland and CHI, with Free Press Unlimited, T-Mobile and research institute TNO.

In addition to allowing CHI and its partners to join forces for more effective programming by sharing complementary skills and expertise and expanding their reach into one another's operational locales, these MFS II alliances also open up possibilities for more robust data sharing, monitoring and dissemination.

## CHI's position in the MFS II alliances

CHI has a unique position in both alliances as it is the only non-donor, membership-based network organisation within the consortia. As a global network with access to singular and unadulterated insights into the problems and concerns of children, CHI is particularly well suited to actively reinforce and underpin the efforts of both alliances with valuable data and information. At the same time, CHI is able to incorporate the opportunities these partnerships afford into its ongoing efforts to support local stakeholders working toward the implementation and consolidation of fully operational, national child helplines in every country around the world. The concerted efforts in the specific target countries of both of the MFS II alliance programmes serve to strengthen the CHI network as a whole by bringing in new partners across the network, enhancing data and information collection to strengthen regional and global advocacy efforts, and creating more opportunities for knowledge sharing and cooperation.

## Child Rights Alliance (Girl Power Programme)

- The Child Rights Alliance is a consortium of five organisations, working together for the improvement of child protection and child rights, and focused on the enhancement of empowerment and opportunities for girls and young women.
- The consortium consists of Plan Netherlands and CHI, together with Defence for Children International & ECPAT, Free Press Unlimited, International Child Development Initiatives (ICDI) and WomenWin. Each of these partners brings different strengths, expertises, partnerships and approaches to the table, teaming up to maximise impact on child protection everywhere.
- The Girl Power programme is piloting in 10 developing countries: Bangladesh, Bolivia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Liberia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Sierra Leone and Zambia.
- Girl Power will work towards four strategic goals:
  1. The reduction of sexual and gender based violence against girls and young women;
  2. Increased access to (post)- primary education for girls;
  3. Increased socio-economic empowerment of Girls and young women;
  4. Increased social-political empowerment of girls and young women.

The work of both individual child helplines and CHI as a whole is in line with these areas of intervention. Child helplines, through their direct contact with children, work as services for child protection and identify the needs and gaps within the child protection services available. Within the Girl Power alliance, child helplines can support the efforts of partner organisations in addressing child protection issues, as well as benefit from improved referral partner and stakeholder cooperation. Other child helplines in CHI's network can tap into the knowledge gained about Girl Power issues and strengthen their own efforts and referral systems accordingly. CHI's specific objective within the programme is aligned to our general overall strategic goal to support the start of child helplines and to strengthen, widen and deepen national child protection services.

## Conn@ct.Now Alliance

- The Conn@ct.Now programme aims to reach, support and enable the social activation of children and young people in fragile states to exercise and claim their rights. Innovative methods such as Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and media are used to achieve these objectives.
- The programme development and implementation of Conn@ct.Now is led by a platform of six consortium members: War Child Holland and CHI, with Free Press Unlimited, T-Mobile and research institute TNO.
- The main focus includes expanding existing activities for children and young people in five programme countries: Burundi, Colombia, Uganda, Sudan and South Sudan.
- The specific objectives of Conn@ct.Now are to increase:
  1. Protection of children from violence, abuse, and exploitation;
  2. Access to (non-)formal, child friendly and quality basic education opportunities for children and young people (including those in remote or unsafe areas);
  3. Access to and quality of psychosocial services (safety net) for children and young people.

The expertise and overall objectives of CHI's global network are congruous with these programme objectives. Similar to CHI, Conn@ct.Now works with three main strategies: direct services, capacity building and advocacy. Conn@ct.Now includes the implementation of direct services as identified by children and young people from the outset. The programme also builds the capacity of Southern partners, empowering them to work within their own communities and countries to support individuals in claiming their rights. These local partners have been instrumental in designing the programme and will implement the activities and monitor and evaluate the outcomes. The approach of the programme is strengthened by advocacy activities. CHI's participation in

the Conn@ct.Now programme allows it to contribute the vast knowledge and experience garnered throughout the network on the core topics outlined above, while learning valuable lessons and best practices from its partners. At the same time, supporting partners Free Press Unlimited, T-Mobile and TNO can help CHI and its members expand their services and abilities, reaching more children in need.

### The way forward: MFS II from 2011- 2015

Partnerships are important vehicles for enhancing child protection systems worldwide. By pooling programmatic resources, expertise, knowledge and complementary operational capacities, we can all better serve children, and especially those most prone to falling through the cracks. Throughout the five-year MFS II programme, CHI and its strategic partners will work systematically to achieve these common goals. Joint base-line studies, ongoing benchmark monitoring and evaluation, and concerted data collection from target countries will strengthen CHI's efforts and help support the work of CHI's member child helplines everywhere. From this edition onward, a special section of *Connecting to Children* will be dedicated to showcase the data collected and the progress made in both MFS II programmes towards 2015.

### MFS Partners 2011-2015

CHILD RIGHTS Alliance Countries	CHI Partners	Status of the Childhelpline	Indicator : Full toll free status for land-lines and mobile of the child helpline	GOAL by 2015
		2010	2010	
Ghana	AMPPCAN	Potential	n/a	toll free hl
Liberia	ANPPCAN	Potential	n/a	toll free hl
Sierra Leone	Don Bosco	Potential	n/a	toll free hl
Ethiopia	ECFA	Associate	In progress ( 116)	toll free hl
Zambia	UNICEF &Plan Zambia will identify	Associate	Yes (982)	toll free hl
Bangladesh	Aparajeyo Bangladesh	Full	Yes (1098)	toll free hl
Nepal	CWIN-Nepal	Full	Yes (1098)	toll free hl
Pakistan	Madadgaar Helpline for Children and Women Suffering from Violence and Abuse	Full	In progress (1098)	toll free hl
Bolivia	Educativ	Associate	n/a	toll free hl
Nicaragua	Plan Nicaragua & Ministerio de la Familia	Potential	133	toll free hl

CONN@ct NOW Alliance Countries	CHI Partners	Status of the Childhelpline	Indicator : Toll free status of the child helpline	GOAL by 2015
Burundi	World Vision	Potential	n/a	toll free hl
Uganda	UCRNN	Full	Yes	toll free hl
Colombia	Corpolatin	Full	Yes (only for child)	toll free hl
Sudan	National Council for Children Welfare	Associate	Yes (9292)	toll free hl
South Sudan	TBC	Potential	n/a	toll free hl

# Glossary of Helpline Terms

The primary aim of this portion of the CHI Glossary is to streamline basic concepts used by child helplines around the world as they complete CHI's annual data proforma. It also provides a platform for common understanding and use of terminology amongst child helplines. This will assist child helplines in filling out/completing the proforma, making data comparable across regions.

## A. POCKETBOOK OF CHILD HELPLINE TERMS

This section is meant to define words used in the data questionnaire in general. It is arranged by alphabetical order.

**BUDGET:** A detailed breakdown of the helpline's total costs that can be used to estimate how much funding is needed to run the helpline the following year. Includes breaking up the cost for each type of activity.

**Child:** All human beings under the age of 18, unless the relevant national laws recognise an earlier age of majority. (Article 1, Convention on the Rights of the Child.)

**Child Helpline:** Telecommunication services (includes the web) for/on behalf of children providing direct services intervention including, but not limited to: counselling, referral and active listening.

**Child Participation:** Encouraging and enabling children to make their views known on issues that affect them, and structuring services around their suggestions. Strategies that promote children's participation in the planning, implementation and monitoring of the child helpline are essential.

**Child Protection:** The legally-mandated obligation of the state to enact and enforce laws which protect children from violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect.

**Child Protection System (CPS):** Entities enabling a protective environment include government agencies (national and local governments from the Ministries of Social Welfare, Education, Health, Justice, Planning and Telecommunications), children and youth representatives, Parliament, magistrates, media, national and international NGOs, communities, multilateral and bilateral agencies, human rights activists and private sector".

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** A system which ensures that the user's privacy and identifying information will be maintained.

**CONTACTS:** All types of communication made to a child helpline. This refers to all forms of communication including those made via telephone, online, SMS, post/mail and face-to-face contact. It includes test calls, but does not include group work with young people.

**Silent call:** phone call where the caller remains silent for the whole duration of the phone call.

**Test call:** phone call where the caller will contact the helpline several times to ensure that the helpline can be trusted. If reassured, the caller will progressively expose the reason for contact.

**CONTINUUM OF CONTACTS:** Range in which calls are received and recorded for the helpline's record-keeping purposes.

**Telephone-based:** A helpline where children and/or adults may obtain service via the telephone.

**SMS/Text:** A helpline service where children and/or adults may send their questions to the helpline via SMS/text messaging, and receive a response in the same manner.

**Fax:** A helpline service that allows children to send questions to the helpline via fax.

**Web-based:** A helpline service that provides a web space where children and/or adults can obtain information and assistance about the helpline and other relevant services.

**E-mail:** A helpline service that allows children to send questions to the helpline via email.

**Web-post/Bulletin Board:** A helpline service that allows children and/or adults to post their questions and concerns on the website, and where a helpline representative answers the posters' question on site, which allows all visitors to read.

**Chat:** A helpline website service where children can talk to other children and/or helpline counsellors in real time about their concerns.

**Library:** A web-based space where children can obtain information on child-related issues and concerns.

**Social media:** Interactive web-based and mobile technologies (such as face book, twitter) used to turn online and mobile communication into interactive dialogue.

**IN-PERSON:** All contacts where there is face-to-face communication.

**Outreach-Based Contact:** A counselling method based on going to a child's location and providing counselling.

**Walk-In/In-Person Contact:** A child helpline service where clients can meet with a helpline representative at the child helpline.

**Postal:** A helpline service where children and/or adults can ask questions and/or raise concerns via post/mail.

**Other:** Any other means the helpline may use to reach out to children.

**Total:** The total number of contacts with children and/or adults.

## CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (CRC)

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, often referred to as CRC or UNCRC, is an international convention setting out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural human rights of persons up to the age of 18 years. In 41 substantive articles, it establishes in international law that States Parties must ensure that all children – without discrimination in any form – benefit from special protection measures and assistance; have access to services such

as education and health care; can develop their personalities, abilities and talents to the fullest potential; grow up in an environment of happiness, love and understanding; and are informed about and participate in, achieving their rights in an accessible and active manner.

#### COST OF CHILD HELPLINES:

The total amount of money needed to run the helpline. (See budget).

**Fundraising:** The amount of money/resources spent and/or used by the helpline to raise money (mailings; publication materials; gala events; etc.)

**Outreach:** The amount of money/resources spent and/or used by the helpline to raise awareness about the helpline in the targeted community, for donors or amongst the general public.

**Advocacy:** The amount of money/resources spent and/or used by the helpline for advocacy purposes.

**Helpline:** The amount of money/resources spent and/or used by the helpline to operate the helpline itself.

**Administration:** The amount of money/resources spent and/or used by the helpline to cover the administrative costs of the helpline (accountants; postage; day to day costs)

**Intervention:** The amount of money/resources spent and/or used by the helpline to provide services to the child concerned.

**Referral:** The amount of money/resources spent and/or used by the helpline to refer the contact with the appropriate services.

**Other:** Any other budget item not included in the list above.

**COVERAGE:** The geographical range where service is available. For example, (local, regional and national)

**Local:** The number is accessible only in one area of the country.

**Multi-local:** The number is accessible in several areas within country.

**Regional:** The number is accessible to a child in two or more areas/regions, but not the entire country, even though there is access to telecommunications.

**National:** The number is accessible to every child in the country where there is access to telecommunications.

#### ESTABLISHMENT YEAR:

The year the helpline opened and began serving the public.

#### FUNDING INFORMATION:

The source(s) from which the helpline obtains donations to continue its services

**Individuals:** To receive a grant for the continuity of helpline services from private individuals.

**Self:** Monies raised by a helpline itself.

**Government:** To receive a grant for the continuity of helpline services from local, national or regional government/or government-supported agencies and/or office.

**Corporate:** A donation of money or in-kind services from a corporation or business.

**Donor Organisations:** Usually private organisations. To receive a grant for the continuity of helpline services from institutions that make grants for scientific, educational, cultural, religious, or other charitable purposes.

**Bilateral Organisations:** To receive a grant for the continuity of helpline services from national development cooperation organisations. Can also be government to government

**Multilateral Organisations:** To receive a grant for the continuity of helpline services from development banks which operate as lending agencies (e.g., African Development Bank; Asian Development Bank; Inter-American Development Bank; International Monetary Fund). Can also be government to government

**Parent organisation:** A parent organisation is an entity that governs, controls the management and the operations of the subsidiary organisation at various levels. Examples are a ministry, a ministerial body, an NGO or company.

**HELPLINE NUMBER:** The telephone number which children can call to seek assistance.

#### HOURS OF OPERATION:

The hours that a helpline is open to the public.

#### HOW CHILD HELPLINES WORK WITH CHILDREN

**Active Listening:** Structured form of listening and responding that focuses the attention on caller.

#### Face-to-Face Interventions:

Contact where the helpline physically meets the caller or child concerned.

#### Phone-Based Interventions:

Contact between a caller and helpline that occurs strictly via the phone with no face to face contact. The contact may include counselling/active listening; sharing of information and referral to community resources. Any face to face contact that occurs as a result of the phone contact or in follow up to the phone contact should be counted separately as a face to face contact.

**Referral:** Providing information to a caller in need about another source of help and/or providing information and/or also contacting the other source to assist the caller in need.

#### ISSUES TAKING PLACE IN SPORTS / RECREATION FORUM:

Any type of negative or abusive behaviour against a child participating in a sports or recreational activity. It can take place as part of organised sports or at a recreational/park facility. These actions can have a harmful affect on the targeted/receiver child, where sports and recreation can and should be preventative by developing life skills, and building resiliency in children recovering from post-trauma.

**MARGINALISED CHILD:** A child that is excluded from the benefits or entitlements of the majority group or society because of his or

her membership in a particular group (such as ethnic, racial, social, economic and/or religious group).

**OUTREACH:** Helpline's way of taking the message out to the community. The methods an organisation uses or undertakes to make its services known to the community and/or when an organisation brings its services directly to people at home or to where they spend time. This can be done through telecommunication services; directly in the community; in the classroom, etc.

#### PROFILE OF THE CONTACT:

A description of the individual contacting the helpline.

#### CHILD:

**School Children:** Children who attend school.

#### Street Children/Runaways

Children living on the streets because of parental absence; abandonment; neglect or lack of resources; children who voluntarily left home regardless of whether or not they lived in an abusive environment

**Child Labourer/Worker:** A child who works for low pay; can easily fall victim to physical, emotional or sexual abuse and usually does not attend school.

**Child Unknown:** The status of the child is unknown.

#### ADULT:

**Caregivers:** The adult responsible for the well-being of a child, such as a guardian, foster parent or institutional authority.

**Concerned Adults:** An adult, usually but not necessarily, unrelated to the child concerned, who has observed/witnessed suspicious or abusive behaviour directed at a child (i.e., neighbour, passerby; teacher; etc). This includes relatives of the child.

**Parents:** The legally-recognised parents of the child.

**Adult Unknown:** The relationship of the adult with the child is unknown.

#### RESIDENCE (WITH WHOM WAS THE CONCERNED CHILD STAYING WITH AT THE TIME OF CONTACT:

The living situation of the concerned child when contact was made to the helpline.

**Family:** The child's family (either mother and/or father)

**Relatives:** A child who lives with an adult relative, other than his parent (aunts; uncles; grandparents; adult siblings; cousins; etc.)

**Child-Headed Household:** A child who lives in a household headed by him or herself or by another child.

**Living Alone:** A child who lives alone (i.e., empty house; squatter; etc).

**Living with friends:** A child who lives with family neighbourhood friends.

**Street:** A child who lives on the street.

**Shelter:** A child who lives in a temporary housing provided by a helpline or another institution.

#### SERVICES:

**Counselling:** Professional advice or guidance the child helpline provides to children or others that contact them concerning a social or personal issue. There are various types of counselling ranging from social work and support to psychological therapies.

**Legal advice:** A legal opinion or assistance provided by a lawyer or other law professional or knowledgeable person working for child helpline or requested to do so by a child helpline concerning a specific issue to a child or family member.

**Intervention:** Action or attempt of action of the child helpline aimed to directly and immediately alleviate or to compel the situation of child in a grave or emergency situation

**Shelter:** Temporary housing provided by the helpline or other institution to support a difficult situation or protect from a danger.

**Education:** Helpline efforts and initiatives to provide educational support to ensure develop and maintain children's right for education. The support can range from advocacy to various educational activities.

**Rehabilitation:** Helpline actions or process of supporting the recovery of a person or patient calling so he/she may regain and maintain independence and quality of life. The whole process can consist of therapies, counselling and/or medication to help the patient.

#### SOCIAL WELFARE INSTITUTIONS:

Institutions committed to the welfare, protection and rehabilitation of the most deprived sections of the society. Such institutions ensure the safety and care of the destitute, elderly, widows, physically and mentally differently-abled people, children and other vulnerable people.

#### STAFF STRUCTURE:

**Full time:** Team members, staff or employees that are considered full-time workers according to the labour regulations of the country.

**Part-time:** Team members, staff or employees that are considered part-time workers according to the labour regulations of the country.

#### Volunteers

➤ **Paid:** Volunteers who are paid a small amount of money for work performed at the helpline.

➤ **Unpaid:** Volunteers who are not paid any amount but may be reimbursed for expenses such as travel, etc.

**TARGETED AT:** The child helpline's method of reaching its target group

**Urban:** The main users of the child helpline are from urban areas.

**Rural:** The main users of the child helpline are from rural areas.

**Target-Group Based:** The main users of the child helpline are from a particular group (faith-based; ethnic minorities; disabled; refugee camps tent-dwelling nomads or any other such specific category).

**Language-Based:** The child helpline's primary services are in a particular language.

**General:** The child helpline's services are targeted at the general public, and usually in the official language of the country where the child helpline is located.

#### TELEPHONE CONTACTS PER HELPLINE:

**Attempted:** The number of times the helpline's phone number has been dialled, including calls that did not manage to get through to the helpline.

**Answered:** All calls answered by the helpline, excluding calls answered by a telephone answering machine. This includes calls where the helpline provides the child with assistance or active listening; for example, silent, abusive, test and other calls.

**Responded To:** Level of engagement sufficient to gather information about the child.

All answered calls where the helpline is able to provide assistance and/or categorise calls according to the CHI proforma

#### Total Number of Calls Received

**Since Inception:** The number of calls the helpline has received since the year it started operating.

**TOLL-FREE:** No charge to the caller.

**For the Child, but not for the helpline (Helpline Pays):** The caller does not pay, and the helpline pays costs for call (i.e., registration; access fee; etc)

**For the Child, and for the helpline:** Neither the caller nor the helpline pays.

Instead, a telecom, the government or some type of sponsorship agrees to pay for the cost of the call.

**Not toll-free (Child Pays):** The caller pays for the call.

#### WHO RESPONDS TO CONTACT:

All contacts answered and responded to by trained helpline workers.

**Children (Under 18):** Contacts answered by trained helpline workers under the age of 18.

**Young Persons (19 – 25):** Contacts answered by trained helpline workers between the ages of 19 – 25.

**Adults:** All contacts answered by trained helpline workers who are over the age of 25.

## B.CHI RECOMMENDED TERMS OF INTERVENTION

### ABUSE AND VIOLENCE

**Abuse:** All forms of harm directed toward a child by an adult or another child with more power and/or authority. While there are many forms of abuse, including negligence and commercial exploitation, there are three main types: physical, emotional and sexual. *Child abuse may take place in many settings: home, school, institutional...etc*

**Bullying:** A form of abuse, bullying usually involves a child being repeatedly picked on, ridiculed and intimidated by another child, other children or adults. Bullying may involve physical and psychological violence.

**Cyber bullying:** A form of abuse that occurs through the means of internet and social media. Cyber bullying usually involves a child being repeatedly picked on, ridiculed and intimidated by another, other children or adults. Cyber bullying includes (sexually tinted) exposure on the internet and may involve psychological violence.

**Domestic Violence:** The physical, emotional and/or verbal abuse of a partner.

**Emotional Abuse:** One of the three main forms of abuse (physical, emotional, and sexual), emotional abuse is the pervasive lack of display of love and affection toward a child by an adult entrusted with his care and development, or by another child in a position of authority. This includes constant belittlement, blaming, criticizing, as well as intentionally failing to display emotion to a child, such as not smiling at a child or simply not acknowledging a child's existence by not looking at him or exclusively engaging a child in a closed and confining emotional relationship.

**Neglect:** The failure of a parental figure, whether intentional or not, to provide a child with the basic needs required for the child's development. Basic needs include food, shelter, clothing, love, affection and appropriate discipline. See "Basic Needs."

**Physical Abuse:** One of the three main forms of abuse (physical, emotional, and sexual), physical abuse is the exertion of physical force against a child with the intention of hurting or injuring the victim. Physical abuse can occur within the home, in public institutions (schools, police custody) and in public.

**Sexual Abuse:** One of the three main forms of abuse (physical, emotional, and sexual), there are several forms of sexual abuse. This includes sexual penetration, which consists of sexual intercourse with a child; the intentional exposure of a child to sexual activity, such as showing and/or taking sexually explicit or implicit pictures of the child telling jokes or stories of a sexual nature; tickling in erogenous zones and demanding to be tickled in return. Pressure is usually exerted by an adult or another child in a position of authority (fuller definition of last sentence). *This includes rape and incest. Commercial*

*Sexual Exploitation is also Sexual Abuse for CHI purposes; see Exploitation section, "Commercial Sexual Exploitation."*

**Violence:** The intentional use of power to control a child through obvious and not so obvious ways, including any action or word intended to hurt another person, whether through intimidation, verbal acts or bodily threats. *Many helplines use violence interchangeably with all forms of abuse.*

**Witness to Violence:** A child who sees or has seen acts of aggression or hostility committed either in public or at home.

### COMMERCIAL EXPLOITATION

**Bonded Child Labour:** Parents forced to take a loan to feed their family or to meet their basic needs. When the loan is made, their child is forced to work as a way to repay the debt. See "Worst Forms of Child Labour."

**Child Prostitution/Child Sexual Exploitation:** Child prostitution consists of a child performing a sexual act in exchange for something of value (money, shelter, objects, etc). Child prostitutes are often the victims of trafficking, impoverished situations or undocumented immigration. This includes pornography.

**Child Trafficking:** The recruitment and/or transport of a child by adults with the intent of exploiting the child through various means (prostitution, begging, child labour, etc.).

**Children In Armed Conflict:** Children who engage in local or national wars, conflicts, battles, etc., regardless of the capacity in which the child acts (soldier, messenger, cook, etc.)

**Children Used for Begging:** Children used by adults or other children to ask for money from passersby.

### Children Used for Criminal Activity:

Children used for the purpose of committing criminal acts under the custody of an adult(s) and/or other children.

**Domestic Child Labour:** Describes the labour situations in which children, usually girls, are hired or used to perform domestic duties in a household that is generally not headed by family members. Children usually work long hours for low or no pay.

**Kidnapping:** The illegal apprehension and movement of a child from one place to another against the child and parents' will.

**Other Child Labour:** Children younger than their country's legal working-age requirement who work in exchange for money to fulfil or to contribute to their family's basic needs. This does not include domestic chores in the home or children working in compliance with national legal working requirements.

### HOMELESSNESS/RUNAWAYS/BASIC NEEDS

**Abandoned Child:** A child that has been untended and uncared for by his guardian or parents.

**Children Calling for Food:** Children who call the helpline asking for food.

**Death of Child on Street:** The death or likely death of another child, whether a sibling, friend or street acquaintance. *A child may call to share his concern, sadness and/or confusion about the death of another child.*

### Employment Opportunities:

The availability of jobs that provide payment in exchange for services. *Children or adults may call the helpline looking for information on how or where to find a job. Children may also not be aware of the illegality of some employment.*

**Homelessness:** The state of being without a home; includes a child who is kicked out of the house. *CHI recognises that the definition varies from country to country and depends on each country's level of wealth.*

**Missing Children:** Children whose whereabouts are unknown to their family, guardians and/or community.

**Orphaned:** A child whose parent(s) or caretakers have died. Orphaned children may call the helpline on their own behalf or on behalf of other children seeking information on adoption; institutional care; or alternative care.

**Repatriation:** The return of child to his or her home or legal guardian.

**Resources and Financial Aid:** Money or objects or that assist an individual in fulfilling his or her basic needs. *Children may call the helpline seeking information on how and where to get assistance.*

**Runaways:** A child who voluntarily leaves his or her home regardless of whether or not he or she lived in an abusive environment.

**Seeking Shelter:** The lack of having a permanent home that requires an individual to look for temporary or permanent accommodation.

### HIV/AIDS INFECTED/AFFECTED CHILDREN

**Bereavement:** The emotional devastation people feel when a loved one dies.

### Children Living with HIV/AIDS:

Children who have been diagnosed as infected with the AIDS/HIV virus, whether through sexual intercourse, blood transfusion or birth.

### Children Orphaned due to HIV/AIDS:

Children whose parent(s) or caretakers have died as a result of the AIDS virus.

**Information about AIDS:** Resources about HIV/AIDS, including how it is spread and how it can be treated.

### Parents (or family) with HIV/AIDS:

Any family member who has been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS.

### PEER RELATIONSHIPS

**Partner Relationships:** Concerns that arise between heterosexual or homosexual couples.

**Problems with friends:** Disagreements or confrontations with friends. *Children may call feeling upset over the real or imagined possibility of loss of a friendship.*

### SCHOOL RELATED

**Academic Problems:** Difficulties children may have with school performance.

**Homework:** Schoolwork given to children to complete at home.

**Other Adult-Related Problems:** Difficulties a child may have with adults who are in a position of authority and influence.

**Performance Anxiety:** The fear that children may have of not being able to perform well in school, either academically or socially.

**School Dropouts:** Leaving school intentionally without completing the required courseload.

**Teacher Problems:** A child's failure to get along with a teacher, whether real or imagined, which may have a negative effect on the child's performance.

### LEGAL MATTERS

**Advice and Information:** Legal advice in response to given circumstances.

**Birth Registration:** Legal document that certifies birth.

**Child Marriage:** The traditional custom of marrying off children, usually young girls, with or without their consent.

**Children in Conflict with Law:** Actions or decisions that a child may have taken, or that another person or child with more authority made for the child, that may have legal consequences.

**Children in Need of Legal Representation:** Children involved with the legal system and who may be in need of legal advice, representation or guidance.

**Child Witness:** A child who testifies in a legal proceeding, whether under oath or not.

### Law in Conflict with Children's Rights:

Laws, however well-meaning they may be, that may have a negative effect on a child's life. For example, laws that strictly observe the custody of natural parents without taking into consideration the best interests of the child.

### CHILD SUBSTANCE USE AND ABUSE

**Addiction:** The body's inability to function without using drugs. Overcoming an addiction often requires treatment.

**Information on Substances and Misuse:** When a child calls the helpline asking for resources which describe the effects of drugs, how to stop using drugs, and where to seek help.

**Differently-abled Children:** Children with a physical, motor or intellectual impairment.

### SEXUALITY

**Contraception:** Methods used to prevent pregnancy. Includes emergency contraception.

### Information about Sexuality/Facts of life:

The availability of resources dealing with information on all aspects of sexuality, such as information on sexual orientation, sexual intercourse, contraceptives, pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.

**Masturbation:** The act of stimulating one's sexual organs for pleasure.

**Pregnancy:** The physical state of a baby growing inside a woman's body. *Children may call requesting information on pregnancy prevention; wanting information on pre-natal care; or seeking options for an unwanted pregnancy.*

**Sexual Fantasy:** Any daydreams or conscious desires of a sexual nature that a child may have.

**Sexual Identity:** The sex/gender or group a child identifies with and/or the sex(es) to which he is attracted. *Children may call feeling confused about their identity.*

**Sexually Transmitted Infections/ Sexually Transmitted Diseases STI's/ STD's:** Infections that are spread through sexual contact.

### FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

**Adoption:** A legal act consisting of one or two adults taking a non-biological child as their own, and agreeing to raise the child as their biological child, with all of the rights, responsibilities and requirements therein. Includes situations in which children live with non-biological families in culturally accepted arrangements (i.e., kaffala, guardianships, etc.).

**Adoption Issues:** Problems or concerns that may arise during and after the adoption of a child, including the trafficking and exploitation of children. Includes situations in which children live with non-biological families in culturally accepted arrangements (i.e., kaffala, guardianships, etc.).

**Bereavement:** The emotions experienced by an individual when a person they love dies.

**Child Custody and Access:** A legal decision that determines the living arrangement(s) of a child, usually after the parents decide to separate or divorce. There is no one model; instead, custody should be determined according to the best interests of the child. Custody is always granted to an adult, and may include arrangements between divorced, separated or unmarried parents, as well as by relatives or family friends.

### Divorced Parents/Separated parents/ Parents in Conflict:

A situation in which a child's parents are not a couple, either as a result of the legal dissolution of their marriage, through their voluntary decision not to live together as such, or parents who constantly display animosity towards one another.

### Maintenance and Child Support:

A parent or guardian's responsibility to ensure that a child's basic needs are met.

**New family/Blended Family:** The relationship between members of two families who come together as one, such as when a child's parent(s) remarries or moves in with a new partner who may also have his or her own children from a previous relationship.

**Parent-child Relationships:** The dynamic between a parent and child.

**Parents with Addiction and/or Mental Health Issues:** Parents who regularly take drugs and are unwilling or unable to stop, and parents who have mental health issues.

**Sibling Relationship:** The inter-personal relationship amongst brothers and/or sisters.

### PSYCHO-SOCIAL MENTAL HEALTH

**Body/Physical Appearance:** The feelings and opinions a child has about the appearance of his or her body.

**Boredom:** The feeling that there is nothing interesting to do.

**Depression:** A child's persistent or temporary state of feeling sad, anxious and/or withdrawn that may be biological or may be in reaction to a life event.

**Eating Disorders:** A psychological disorder that manifests itself in unhealthy eating habits, such as anorexia nervosa (not eating enough to sustain healthy weight) or bulimia (self-induced vomiting). Most common in adolescent girls, though adults or boys may be afflicted.

**Fear and Anxiety:** Fear is the state of being afraid of something. Anxiety is the state of feeling an often-irrational amount of fear.

**Identity and Purpose of Life:**

The way a child defines himself. For example, sexually and/or racially, and the way this may influence the treatment others give the child in response to the child's self-identification, as well as the goals, hopes, ideas and ambitions a child has now and in the future.

**Lack of Confidence:** The failure of a child to believe in his or her capabilities and talents. A lack of confidence may lead to make poor decisions, withdraw socially, underperform in school, etc.

**Loneliness:** The state of a child feeling alone in the world and without support.

**Phobias and Obsessions:** A persistent, abnormal, and irrational fear of a specific thing or situation, despite the awareness and reassurance that it is not dangerous.

**Self Harm:** The act some children have of physically harming themselves. Usually cutting and burning.

**Suicide:** The intentional act of killing oneself because life does not seem to have a purpose. Includes the act of dealing with a parent's suicide.

**PHYSICAL HEALTH**

**Access to Health Care:** The state of being able to obtain needed assistance for physical well-being.

**Concerns about Illness:** Questions or issues relating to a child's physical, psychological, emotional unwellness.

**Hospitalisation:** The state of being admitted to a hospital to be treated or cared for as a result of a sudden, temporary or longstanding medical condition or trauma.

**INFORMATION REQUESTED**

**About the Helpline:** Requested Information about helpline services, operations, etc.

**About Children's Issues/  
About Children's Rights:** Callers who want to discuss or ask about issues affecting children.

**Thank you for Assistance:** Callers who contact the helpline to express their gratitude for help provided.

**DISCRIMINATION**

**Access to Education:** The failure of a public institution to provide access to its known services due to a user's race, gender, ethnicity, religious, language, sexual orientation or disability.

**Employment related:** The unfair and/or illegal treatment of an individual at the workplace. *Children or adults may call to seek advice on how to enforce their rights or the rights of their parents.*

**Immigration related:** The unfair and/or illegal treatment of an individual based on his immigration status or country of origin. Discrimination may prevent a child from obtaining an education; health care or any other rights that are meant for all individuals. *Children or adults may call to seek advice on how to enforce their rights.*

**Mental and Physical Health:**

The unfair and/or illegal treatment of a child because of their mental and/or physical illness.

**Racism related:** The unfair and/or illegal treatment of a child based on his ethnic origin. Discrimination may prevent a child from obtaining an education; health care or any other rights that are meant for all individuals. *Children or adults may call to seek advice on how to enforce their rights.*

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**Child Helpline International (CHI)** is the global network of child helplines in 133 countries (as of December 2011), which together receive **over 14 million contacts** a year from children and young people in need of care and protection. CHI supports the creation and strengthening of national toll-free child helplines worldwide, and uses child helpline data and knowledge to highlight gaps in child protection systems and advocate for the rights of children.

