

BIK Helpline Observatory: 5th Quarterly Report (April – June 2016)¹

INSAFE HELPLINES: MAKING A
DIFFERENCE TO THE LIVES OF CHILDREN
AND YOUNG PEOPLE ONLINE

Choose a trend Choose a period

 EXPLORE



¹ All graphs are based on data collected on the Insafe-INHOPE Assessment Platform. Every three months, Insafe helplines report figures on the number of counselling sessions, per topic, channel, gender and target group. They also provide qualitative information on helpline cases and emerging issues and trends. This report is for internal Insafe network purposes only.

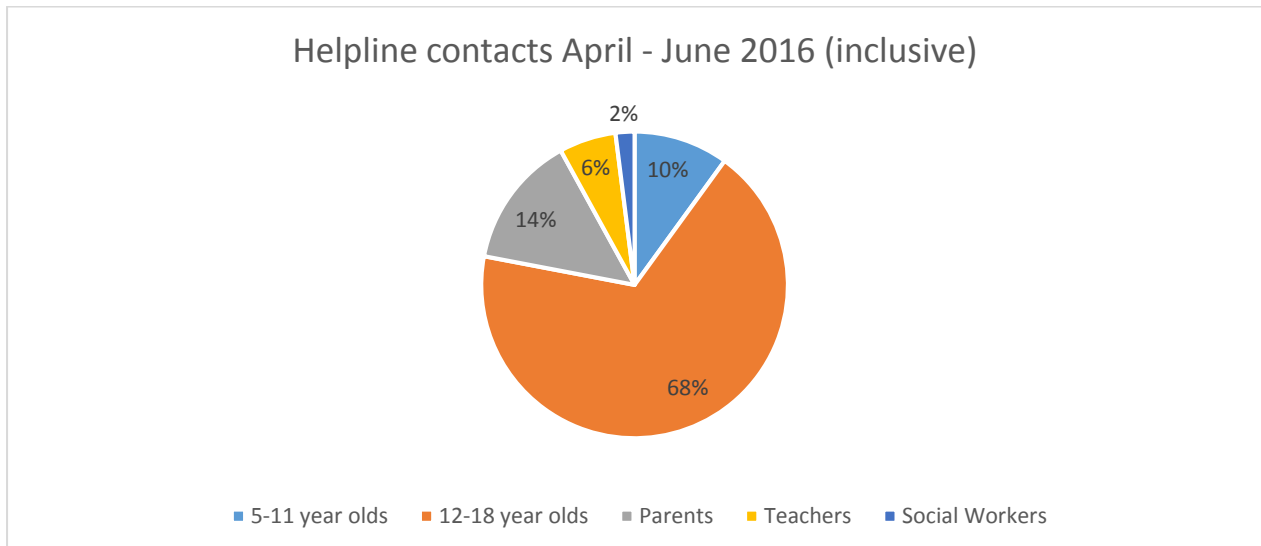
Introduction

30 helplines submitted data for the reporting period 1 April – 30 June 2016.

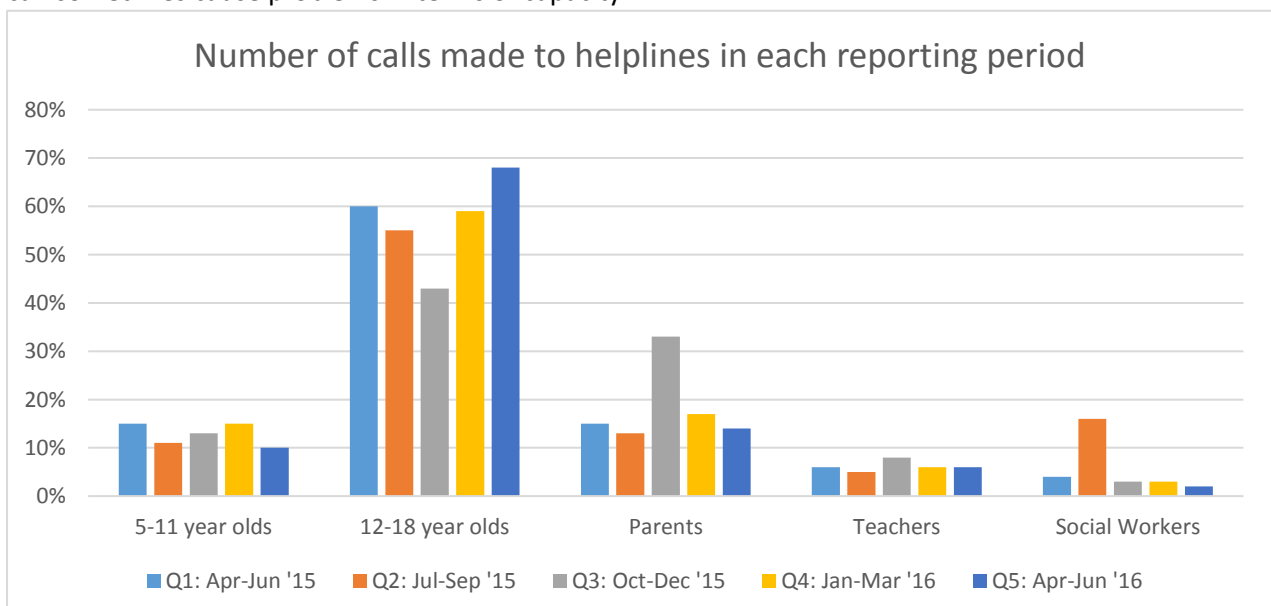
1. Austria
2. Belgium
3. Bulgaria
4. Croatia
5. Cyprus
6. Czech Republic
7. Denmark
8. Estonia
9. Finland
10. France
11. Germany
12. Greece
13. Hungary
14. Iceland
15. Ireland (ISPC)
16. Ireland (NPC)
17. Italy
18. Latvia
19. Lithuania
20. Luxembourg
21. Malta
22. Netherlands
23. Norway
24. Poland
25. Portugal
26. Romania
27. Slovakia
28. Slovenia
29. Sweden
30. United Kingdom

Key trends and issues

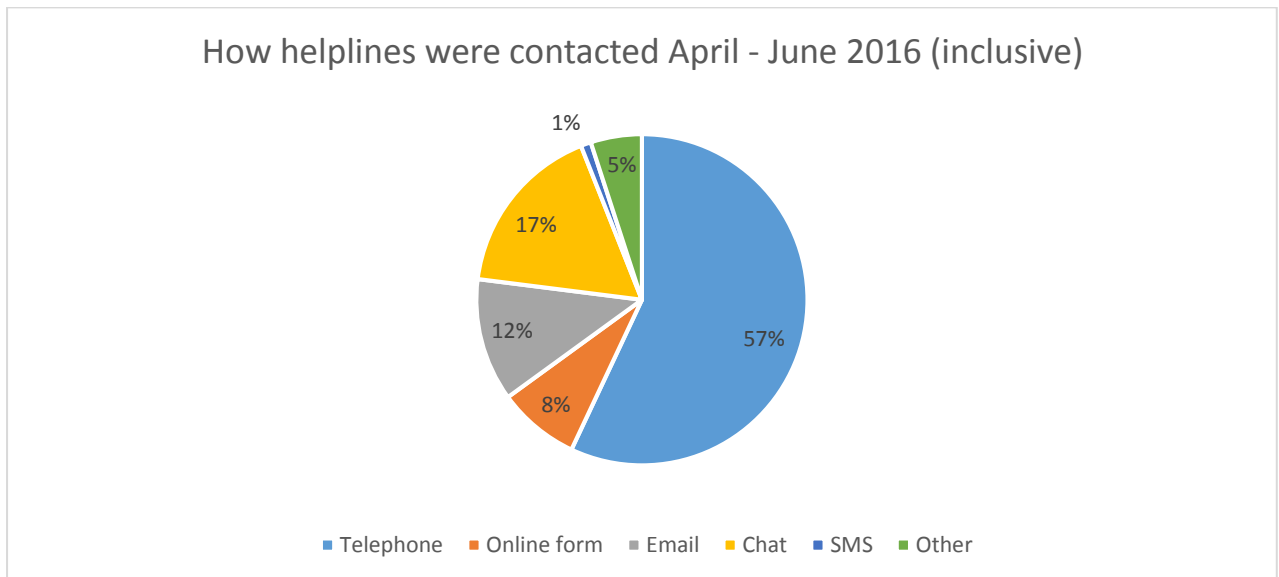
- During the period, helplines received a total of 8,928 contacts which concerned online issues.
- 17 helplines are general helplines and 13 are helplines specifically dealing with online issues.



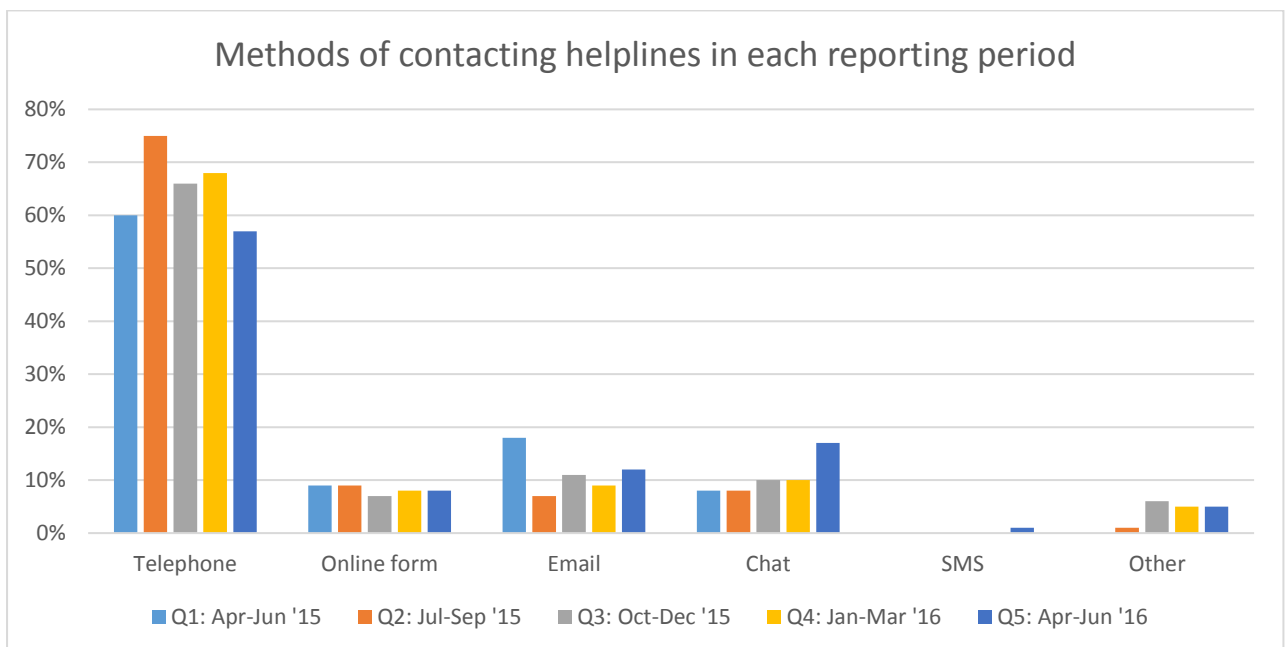
Once again the main helpline users are teens, showing that helplines are effective at reaching their target audience. Awareness centres would also agree that teens tend to be the group that can face the greatest challenges online. Almost three quarters of helplines have 12-18 year olds as their main group using the helpline services. Ten percent have more teachers using the service than any other group but it is important to recognise that one of these helplines is POSH (Professionals Online Safety Helpline) in the UK which is aimed at providing support to professionals who work with children and young people (rather than young people themselves). 17 per cent of helplines receive most calls from parents although overall the number of parents contacting helplines has continued to fall as can be seen from the graph below which shows callers across the last five quarters. There are some spikes in calls which can be attributed to specific campaigns targeted at different audiences which helplines acknowledge are very successful. It is worth noting that these campaigns can sometimes cause problems in terms of capacity.



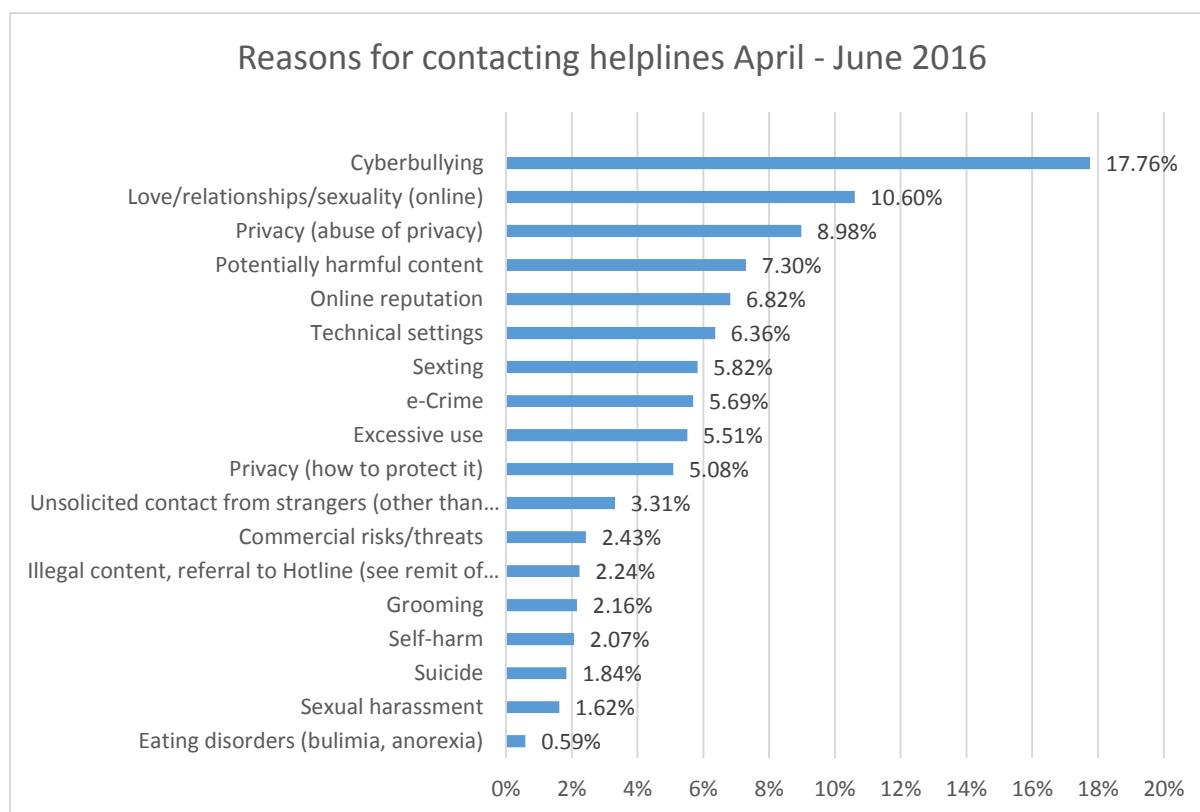
The chart below shows how the helplines were contacted, with 57 per cent of contacts still being made by phone. Chat is being used more often now with 17 per cent of contacts being received through these services during the current reporting period.



Looking at the project as a whole there has been a slight overall decline in the number of contacts by phone although this remains by far the most common method used to get in touch. The number of contacts using chat and, to a lesser extent, email has risen slightly. This recognises the growing number of helplines that are introducing this capability in order to meet the demand particularly from teens who favour this method of contact.



Contacts were logged against a set of 19 agreed categories with results as shown below.



- As expected, cyberbullying continues to be the issue that helplines receive the most calls on. This has been the case since the Insafe network started collecting data.
- Sextortion remains a growing concern. Some helplines have noted that more recently threats to publish photos online have been carried out. For example the Belgian helpline noted that in their sextortion case files they are seeing more and more cases of photos actually being published. The network will continue to monitor this and work closely with law enforcement and others to provide the best response. The Dutch helpline also noted that many people are now contacted through Facebook in sextortion cases. They have worked with Facebook and are able to use Facebook coupons in order to place ads on the site to promote the work of the helpline.
- Several helplines reported having had some technical problems with chat platforms and websites. Ongoing work is needed to ensure that these facilities and services function properly but this is clearly time consuming and can be costly. Some helplines also talked about the challenges associated with making reporting platforms mobile friendly given the ubiquity of handheld mobile devices with young people.
- Worryingly but perhaps not surprisingly some helplines reported a rise in cases related to unsolicited contact from strangers which resulted in various different problems and challenges for callers. As more and more people are connected and own devices the opportunities for unsolicited contact only increase. Sites such as Oovoo and Omegle² were cited as problematic in this area – helplines have supported users to take control of privacy

² Further information on both of these sites can be found in the [guide to online services](#)

settings where appropriate and awareness centres continue to try and provide educational information about how to take control of privacy on specific sites and platforms.

- Helplines report good collaboration with industry colleagues but that this can also be challenging at times. On more than one occasion the Insafe coordinator has been able to intervene on behalf of a helpline in order to either remove or reinstate content when mainstream reporting or escalation channels have not been effective. The Insafe coordinator is continuing to be proactive in developing new relationships and supporting helplines in their work in this area. Specifically there are ongoing discussions with Facebook, Google, Twitter, Ask.fm, Kik, Snapchat and Tumblr.

Comparative data

A comparison with data from previous reporting periods is shown below: (figures shown are percentages)

				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
	April – Oct 2013	Oct – March 2014	April – Oct 2014	April – June 2015	July- Sept 2015	Oct – Dec 2015	Jan – Mar 2016	April- June 2016
Commercial risks	2	2	3	2	3	3	2	2
Cyberbullying	22	22	21	15	14	17	18	18
Eating disorders	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1
e-crime	7	5	4	5	7	4	6	6
Excessive use	5	5	5	7	7	5	5	6
Grooming	3	3	3	2	2	3	2	2
Illegal content	2	2	1	5	3	2	3	2
Love, relationships, sex	10	9	10	12	13	9	11	11
Online reputation	6	5	5	7	6	7	6	7
Potentially harmful content	9	8	7	5	4	8	8	7
Privacy (abuse of privacy)	6	7	8	10	9	11	8	9
Privacy (how to protect it)	4	5	5	4	4	5	4	5
Privacy (combined)	10	12	13	14	13	16	12	14
Racist	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	0
Self-harm	2	2	4	3	2	3	2	2
Sexting	3	4	4	5	6	5	7	6
Sexual harassment	3	4	2	3	3	3	1	2
Suicide	2	1	5	3	3	4	2	2
Technical settings	7	8	9	8	8	6	8	6
Unsolicited contact from strangers (other than grooming)	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3

Possible questions to consider

There is some degree of consistency in the data collected across different reporting periods. Cyberbullying, privacy and love, sex and relationships remain the three issues which helplines deal with most often. Is enough being done in terms of awareness raising in these areas? If so, why hasn't there been a reduction in the number of calls on these issues?

The assessment platform submission allows helplines to provide additional information about challenges, successes and possible emerging trends. More helplines are taking advantage of this and sharing important information. The helpline case repository is also providing a wealth of information about a wide range of issues that helplines are dealing with. There are over 230 individual case reports in the repository which contain information about the type of case, advice and guidance given and also any useful resources which were shared. The repository is available to the helplines only and is fully searchable. In line with the stats above there are more cases concerning cyberbullying than any other category. The other most common subjects are love, sex and relationships and privacy. Facebook features in many of the case studies recognising the huge and growing user base in most countries.

An ongoing challenge is around the accuracy of reporting – are helplines able to capture meaningful data with regards to the number of calls which contain online elements? Increasingly helplines are acknowledging that most calls do make reference to the internet and online communication technologies. The Italian helpline highlighted this in their most recent submission:

Considering the massive use and spread of technology throughout everyday life, for a general helpline as we are, is becoming difficult to clearly distinguish between internet-related cases and situations in which the web isn't involved at all. Indeed, always more frequently, in every situation (e.g. physical abuse cases) the web could have a role; it can be the place where to express the related psychological distress as well as the way through which to ask for help.