



Wassup?

Kiwi Kids Flock to Help Line with their Concerns

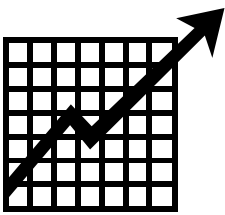
Two months since opening for business, What's Up, the free, nationwide telephone counselling service for children and young people, says it is right on target, both in terms of the need for the service and also in terms of what's bugging Kiwi kids.

Executive Director of the service, Grant Taylor, says some 130,000 children and young people between the age of five and 18 years have called What's Up since its inception on September 21.

For the most part the concerns they have discussed with What's Up's professionally trained counsellors have involved their everyday relationships with peers and family members, while virtually 60% of the calls were made by seven to 12 year olds.

Before What's Up was established, extensive research was carried out to determine what sort of service would be most relevant. The research identified a need for an early intervention counselling service for children and young people, in particular those aged seven to 12 years, and that their issues would revolve around relationships.

"Based on our first two months of operation, What's Up is right on target," Mr Taylor said. In his report to the Board of Directors of the Kids Help Foundation Trust, which operates What's Up, he said data on caller characteristics and problems was largely in accordance with expectations.



Over 70,000 calls in 8 weeks

Praise—by email

"Hi im a yr 8 student and i would just like 2 say that this is such a great idea because theres so many kids these days that have problems and arent up 2 sharing them with others. I think your ad is also very appealing 2 kids its our kind of music and style and its just

Well-wishers Attend What's Up? Launch Event



Some young New Zealanders open What's Up?

Over 100 people attended the Launch Event for What's Up at its new premises in Mt Eden, Auckland on 21st September, 2001.

Included among the guests were Hon. Georgina Te Heu Heu, QSO, Andrew Davidson, CEO of Woolworths (NZ) Ltd, Jude Mannion, General Manager of Kellogg's NZ, Anthony Nowell, Managing Director of Griffins Foods Ltd, Peter McClure, CEO of NZ Dairy Foods Ltd, Rick Friesen, Managing Director of TV3/TV4, Dr Ian Hassall, Children's Advocate, Jocelyn Cowern, Children's Advocate from the USA, and Pat Hadlee, Chairperson of the Board of Youthline.

The guests were greeted with a speech by Phil

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Briefly:

- What's Up launch meets with high acceptance and uptake
- Caller profile closely matches service objectives
- Feedback indicates callers and families value the service highly
- Music and animation work well to reach kids

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“Hard work is needed over the coming months to develop and implement a fundraising strategy. Offers to assist with this aspect of our organization would be very warmly received!”

E.D. Column Fundraising a High Priority

The success of What’s Up in gaining the acceptance of the NZ community has thoroughly vindicated the work of The Kids Help Foundation Trust establishment Board in founding What’s Up. I would like to congratulate all members of the Board for their foresight, perseverance, and commitment over three long years. They have truly achieved a great deal.

It is very clear that the needs of NZ children are being only partially addressed by What’s Up’s current capacities. Already we are having strong requests for a text-based service, such as our planned email and web-based facilities. Obviously, more counsellor hours are needed to answer a larger proportion of the incoming calls—both within the current hours of operation and to provide a service that spans a greater proportion of the day. A broad range of language abilities among the counselling

staff will be a recruitment goal, once there is room to expand our roster. And so on.

Although the solid commitment we receive from our major sponsors, Woolworths, Kellogg’s, Griffin’s and NZ Dairy Foods, is crucial in enabling What’s Up to be provided, further sources of income are needed to allow growth to meet the needs we are revealing.

Hard work is needed over the coming months to develop and implement a fundraising strategy. Offers to assist with this aspect of our organization would be very warmly received!

Grant Taylor, Executive Director

Well-wishers Attend What’s Up? Launch Event cont.

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and Esther Davis, representing the Ngati Whatua o Orakei. Phil spoke in support of What’s Up as

an initiative for all the children and young people of New Zealand and Esther sang a waiata to grace the occasion.

Pip Walter, an Auckland 5th former MC’d the event and Grant Taylor, Executive Director of The Kids Help Foundation Trust and Allan Barber, Chairman of the Trust board, spoke of the development, principles and promise of this new ser-

vice for children and young people.

The climax of the evening was a colourful ribbon-cutting ceremony conducted by the children and the cutting of a beautiful celebratory cake, kindly donated by The City Cake Company.

The names of the dozens of individuals, businesses and organizations who contributed generously to the launch of What’s Up were displayed during the evening on a large screen. Mr Taylor said he had been struck by the willingness of people to contribute goods and services free of charge to What’s Up. “They clearly see that this is something that is greatly needed by NZ children”, he said.



The cutting of the cake by (l-r) Grant Taylor, Allan Barber, Jocelyn Cowern and the children.

Who’s Calling What’s Up?

So far, the people calling What’s Up are following pretty closely the patterns expected.

By far, children and young people are most concerned about issues surrounding relationships with peers and families, including bullying at school - 29% of the calls involved relationships with peers, 22% bullying and 17% with family relationship issues.

This is consistent with the service’s aim to provide early intervention with the objective of helping solve issues before they escalate.

The most common age of callers is 10, with the average age being 11. 50% of callers are be-

tween 9 and 14 years of age.

More girls than boys - over about twice as many - have called What’s Up. The Executive Director, Grant Taylor, says generally girls are more comfortable talking about their issues.

Other data shows the majority of callers were Pakeha, but a large number registered their ethnicity as Maori. At least thirteen different ethnic groups have been among What’s Up’s callers.

“These statistics are a valuable source of information for developing the service to best meet the needs of the callers”, said Mr Taylor.

Meet our ambassadors

How do you carry serious messages about life's problems to children as young as 5 years of age?

Meet Shaq, Miyu, Shanelle and Spud. They are a bunch of diverse young people who are united in their enjoyment of music. They know that irrespective of their differences, they each have their trials and tribulations and need support from others. They know how useful the telephone can be to summon this up when it is needed. They perform songs that acknowledge the difficulties children and young people face in their day-to-day lives and deliver messages of encouragement and support about seeking help and where to find it.

These characters, developed and animated by students at the School of Design at Christchurch Polytechnic, appear in all of What's Up's promotions to children and young people.

On the recent TV advertisements donated by TV3, we see them struggling alone before coming together in support of one another. We see them enjoying themselves as a musical group, performing the song that has been running throughout the ad.

They feature in all the material distributed to children through schools in October.

And the kids love them. What's Up has had many enquiries about their names and where their figures can be bought.

The song has proved popular too, especially with the iwi radio stations around the country. Its catchy tune, hip-hop/ragga style and lyrics that are serious without being earnest seems to have very broad appeal.



Song Lyrics: Wassup –Your Call

Ever had one of those days when everyone gets you down -From your teacher on through to your best friend?
Let me tell you what's up ...

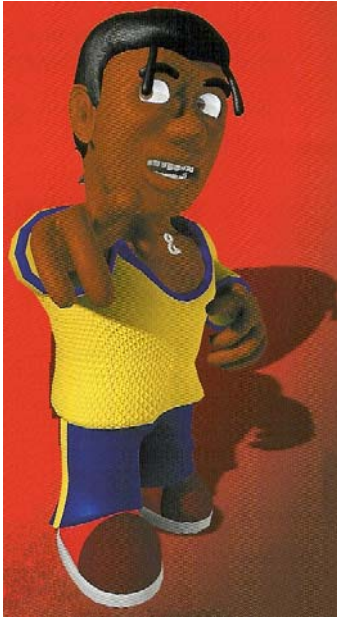
When you got a taste of a bitter aggravation
Everything around got the contamination
No way - can you see salvation
No help comin' from your friends or your relations
Your call - Relieve that frustration
Your call - Self-preservation
Your call, your call, your call.

(Chorus)

Wassup? We're gonna hear you when you call
Wassup? We'll help you stand up if you fall
Wassup? When the whole world is upside down
We're around, wassup? We're listening, wassup?
We're around.

You're down and it's a bad situation
Done nothing wrong but you copped the condemnation
No one listening - no appreciation
Your world - crazy disintegration
Your call - A simple conversation
Your call - Your motivation
Your call - Self-preservation
Your call, your call, your call.

"Meet Shaq, Miyu, Shanelle and Spud . . . a bunch of diverse young people who are united in their enjoyment of music."



During 1999, The Kids Help Foundation Trust (a registered charity) completed an extensive feasibility study as to how the needs of young New Zealanders were being met. This involved consultation with a wide range of child welfare provision agencies from both the governmental and non-government sector. The reception was almost unanimously extremely supportive and validating of the need for a service of the kind proposed.

Government research has found that of young New Zealanders between the age of 5 and 19 years old, 5% are already engaged with social workers. A further 20% are identified as being at risk. We have one of the highest rates of youth suicide in the world, and disproportionately high rates of child abuse.

Experience in Australia indicates that a well-marketed telephone counselling service should reach 12% of the population of children and young people each year. In New Zealand, this translates to reaching out to about 90,000 young New Zealanders a year. What's Up has the potential to make an early intervention in the lives of many, teaching them how to solve problems and access appropriate support before matters become too serious. This service makes a difference to many young lives.

New Zealand research indicates that at any one time, up to fifty percent of families may be at some risk of poor outcomes if they hit a crisis situation. The children of these families need sources of psychological support outside of the family that are acceptable and accessible to them. What's Up is a source of independent, child-centred, confidential and professional support and information that will empower the children who call us to deal with their lives more effectively.



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Help For Young New Zealanders



Our Sponsors

The Kids Help Foundation Trust is fortunate to have the commitment of four major corporate sponsors. They provide the cornerstones of financial support for What's Up.

This is an excellent example of business working for the good of the community and the independence of The Kids Help Foundation Trust is clearly established in its constitution and the terms of agreement with the sponsors.

The sponsors work together to further the interests of the service and provide generously in many ways.

Our Board

The Kids Help Foundation Trust is governed by a Board of Directors with wide ranging experience in business and the community.

Allan Barber, Management Consultant - Chairman and Trustee

Andrew Davidson, CEO Woolworth's New Zealand and Trustee

Jocelyn Cowern, Children's Advocate and Trustee

Trevor Carlyon, Executive Director, Kids Help Line Australia

Ian Hassall, Children's Advocate

Christine Parker, Human Resources Director, Restaurant Brands

Jude Mannion, General Manager New Zealand, Kellogg's

Grant Taylor, Clinical Psychologist – Executive Director

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