



Wassup?

What's Up Still In High Demand By Young NZers

20,000. That is the number of calls currently being made to What's Up every month.

And that's after the initial rush of curiosity had died down, following the launch in September 2001 of this new telephone counselling service for children and young people. During November 2001, up to 2500 calls per day were being made to the number 0800WHATSUP (0800 942 8787), which is free to call from any telephone in NZ, including mobiles.

Now, the rate of incoming calls is approximately 670 per day.

Children and young people are reaching out to What's Up from all over New Zealand, with regional proportions in caller statistics almost exactly matching the regional distribution of 5 to 18 year olds in this country.

In March 2002, Grant Taylor, Executive Director of What's Up, released the first statistical summary of 33,247 calls logged between 22nd September 2001 and 21st January 2002. Highlights of this summary are detailed on page 3 of this issue.

"Clearly, children and young people are seeing What's Up as a useful resource", said Mr. Taylor.

(Continued on page 2)

Volume 1, Issue 2

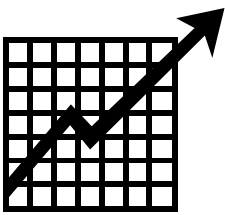
1st May, 2002

Briefly:

- Children and young people still calling in droves
- Summary of caller statistics released
- Relationship with Barnardos developing
- Service standards impressively high
- Counsellors have to deal with wide variety of calls
- A girl uses What's Up to help deal with loss

Inside this issue:

- E..D. Column—High Standards of Counselling Practice 2
- How we help—an anecdote of a grateful caller 2
- Caller statistical summary 3
- What's Up, Counsellor?—a What's Up Counsellor tells it how she sees it 4



Over 170,000 calls to date

Barnardos welcomes What's Up

What's Up's Executive Director, Grant Taylor, recently visited the National Office of leading NZ children's charity, Barnardos. The visit built on previous meetings with Ian Calder, Barnardos' Chief Executive, and Jeff Brown, the National Manager of the Barnardo's Children's Trust. He also visited the team at Barnardos' FAIR Centre, a telephone-based information service for parents and families.

"Barnardos and What's Up have many areas of complementary and shared objectives", said Mr Taylor.

"We are looking forward to working together and strengthening each other's

contributions to the well-being of NZ's children and young people", he said.



Grant Taylor (2nd from right) with the FAIR Centre staff at Barnardos' National Office

"It has been truly exciting and delightful to see our present cohort of Counsellors develop to a uniformly high standard over the past six months, both as individuals and in their levels of professional skill and confidence."

E.D. Column Impressive Standards

I have had the privilege of a long career as a Clinical Psychologist, with over 22 years of full-time clinical practice prior to joining What's Up. During that time, I have worked in a wide variety of settings in the public and private health sectors and consulted to many different types of organizations. I have taught, supervised and examined many students, trainees and junior practitioners from a variety of mental health professions.

On the strength of this experience and the knowledge it has given me, I can confidently say that the quality of What's Up's training, supervision, support and accountability is among the best in any institution, organization or agency that I have worked with.

What's Up has a policy of recruiting Counsellors according to attitudes and aptitudes suited to their job, rather than qualifications or experience (although we have Counsellors with prior

qualifications of the highest level). The result is that any intake of Probationary Counsellors is a very varied group in many ways.

It has been truly exciting and delightful to see our present cohort of Counsellors develop to a uniformly high standard over the past six months, both as individuals and in their levels of professional skill and confidence.

I am already very impressed at their levels of skill, resilience, compassion and understanding—and they have only just finished Probation! Two advanced grades of employment lie ahead of them, each with rigorous requirements to be met.

Our children and young people are very fortunate to have this wonderful resource at the end of every telephone.

Grant Taylor, Executive Director

What's Up in High Demand cont.

(Continued from page 1)

"Not only are large number of kids from right around the country calling us up, but they are re-engaging with us in large numbers, often with the same Counsellor they spoke to previously. In March, 78% of the calls were from people who had rung in previously. I think this indicates that they are very satisfied with the help they have received.

"We are particularly pleased with the proportion of pre-teens ringing, because this is a group we particularly want to reach.

Primary and intermediate school children have less access to counselling services than their high school counterparts and they provide an opportunity to make early interventions", he continued.

"The decision to accept calls from mobile phones has been a good one, too", he said.

"Approximately 31% of our calls are made from mobiles. I am sure our callers value the benefits in privacy and flexibility of location that mobiles provide".

How we help . . .

What's Up's counsellors have the opportunity to assist children and young people in all sorts of ways. Here's a touching anecdote of someone who felt that What's Up really made a difference.

A 14 year old girl rang one afternoon to share her grief about her Aunt having lost her baby in child birth. This was not her Aunt's first pregnancy loss. The caller was feeling very sad about it and wondering what she could do to help herself cope with these feelings.

After talking to the counsellor, she decided to write the baby a letter to express her sense of loss and to keep the letter as a memorial to the little girl.

Ten days later, the caller rang back and aksed for the counsellor she had spoken to. She thanked her for helping a lot with her grief and to share the good news that her Aunt was pregnant again.



Statistical summary released

In early March, What's Up released the first Statistical Summary of call details.

What's Up records non-identifying information on every call answered. This data provides a pool of valuable information on issues of concern to the young people who phone the service. The information is made available to any agencies or individuals to use for the benefit of children and young people.

Calls are categorized into one of eleven different problem categories, which are further divided into 35 problem types.

The adjoining table shows the number and percentage of calls for these problem categories during the period from 22 September 2001 to 21st January 2002.

Relationships with others and issues to do with school make up the great majority of calls to What's Up.

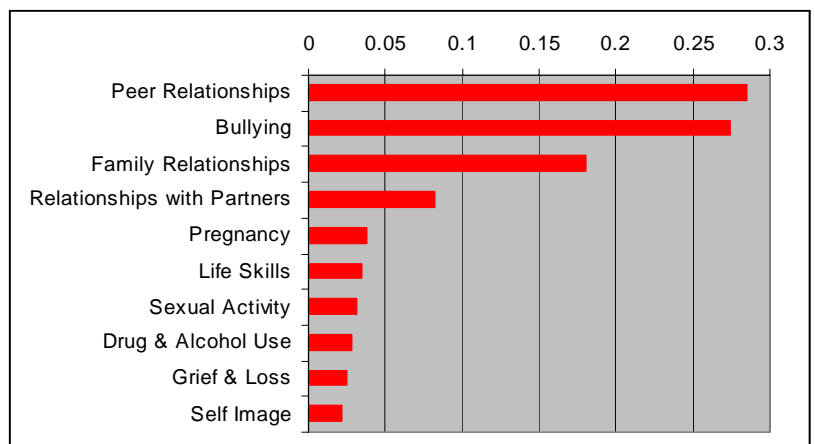
The bar graph (middle right) shows the top ten problem types. This clarifies that relationships with friends, bullying, family relationships, and relationships with partners are the most frequent concerns of the children and young people who call What's Up.

The age distribution of callers is shown in the graph, bottom right. Fifty-six percent of the callers are in the 7 to 12 year age range, which is the group What's Up is most keen to reach. Only 44% of 5 to 18 year olds in NZ lie in this age range.

For a complete copy of the summary, please contact the What's Up office.

Problem Category	No. of Calls	% of Counseling Calls
RELATIONSHIPS	3,947	45.0
SCHOOL RELATED	2,245	25.6
SEX RELATED	605	6.9
PRACTICAL	351	4.0
EMOTIONAL	349	4.0
SELF CONCEPT	349	4.0
CHILD ABUSE	318	3.6
DRUG & ALCOHOL USE	241	2.7
HEALTH	227	2.6
VIOLENCE	128	1.5
CULTS/GANGS	19	0.2
TOTAL	8,779	100.0

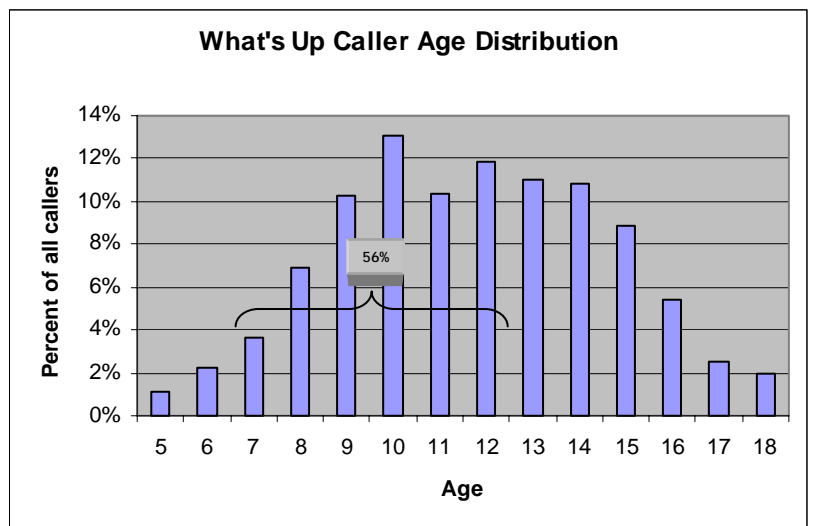
Problem categories in descending order of magnitude.



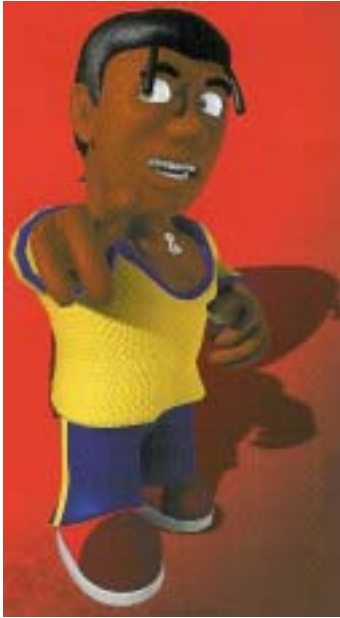
Top ten problem types as proportion of all problems presented.

SOME IMPORTANT FACTS

- On average, 747 young people call What's Up each day
- On average, What's Up's Counselors answer 373 (49.9%) of these calls
- Males make 32% of calls, females 68%
- The average age of callers is 11.
- 59% of callers are 12 years old or younger
- In March 2002, 78% of callers said they had previously contacted What's Up



Caller age distribution, showing proportion of callers between 7 and 12 years old.



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.



The Kids Help Foundation Trust

The Kids Help Foundation Trust
PO Box 56-642
Dominion Rd
Auckland
Phone: +64-9-630-4144
Fax: +64-9-630-4840
Email: info@whatsup.co.nz

Help For Young New Zealanders

Founder

Jocelyn Cowern

Board

Allan Barber (Chair, Trustee)

Trevor Carlyon

Andrew Davidson (Trustee)

Dr Ian Hassall (Trustee)

Jude Mannion

Christine Parker

Grant Taylor (Exec. Dir.)

What's Up, Counsellor? by AHUNIK, What's Up Counsellor

I've picked up my lunch, got to work, hassled the Admin. Manager, and eaten. It's 12 noon - time to hit the 'phones.

The electronic billboard on my computer terminal gives me the latest messages to all staff and I take my first call for the day.

"What's Up, Niki speaking. How can I help you?"

"Oh hi, my name is Bob and people keep beating me up! He he he he."

"Oh yeah", I say, curiously. "So, do you think its funny?"

Huge laughter on the end of the 'phone and he hangs up.

Two hours and about 30 calls go by with mainly hang ups, callers joking around ("prank calls"), and a few callers who really want some help to deal with things. Time for a break.

A 'cuppa', annoy the Supervisors, talk to Grant if he is in his office. Back to the 'phones for the 3pm after-school onslaught!

This afternoon there are lots of bored callers ringing for a chat. That's cool - one day they will want to talk about something more serious. Then they will feel like they know us already.

One caller rings on a cellphone, "hands free", so all his friends can hear too.

The last hour of my shift finally arrives. An hour of calls about being bullied, troubles with friends, and "my boyfriend cheated on me, what should I do?" A caller who is having problems with her parents, and someone who thinks we are Pizza Hut.

The callers who really want to talk about issues that are concerning them make it all worthwhile. But it is hard work and I am relieved when my shift comes to its end.

5 pm. Time to sign out, say goodbyes and go home.

Now, what am I going to cook for tea? .

...

Proudly sponsored by:

