



Wassup?

101,250

Calls Answered

Over 100,000 calls answered!

On the 5th August, the 100,000th call was answered by a Counsellor at What's Up. This is a significant milestone since What's Up was launched as a service for NZ's children and young people just 10 months previously, but no surprise to its Executive Director, Grant Taylor.

"Our initial aim was to answer 90,000 calls in our first year of service", said Mr. Taylor, "however, it has been clear for several months now that we would easily exceed that target.

"We are on track to answer over 115,000 calls by the time of our anniversary on 22nd September. This is a testament to the high level of popularity of What's Up with our client group and to the high levels of skill and productivity of our Counsellors. Our counselling team gives extremely good value, providing callers with excellent service that has them ringing back in large numbers for further help, yet dealing with calls efficiently so that little time is wasted.

"Some credit for their ability to do this twelve hours a day to midnight, seven days a week, must also go to our team of Supervisors. The training, support and guidance they provide for the counselling team is crucial in ensuring that the phones are answered by skillful, motivated, caring and attentive staff. It is a great achievement by everyone involved."

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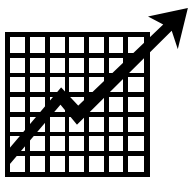
1st August, 2002

Briefly:

- 100,000 calls answered
- What's Up recognized by cash grants
- New counsellors being recruited
- Strategic planning meeting renews vision, reviews governance, sets priorities for immediate development
- KHF in strong position to move forward
- Counselling principles work in transforming difficult callers

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AMP Foundation, Lottery Welfare Give Support To What's Up

The AMP Foundation has awarded a grant of \$30,000 to KHF. This is targeted to assist the development of KHF's marketing and fundraising initiatives, with a view to building sustainability of income over and above the contributions of KHF's major sponsors.

Grant Taylor, Executive Director of The Kids Help Foundation Trust, said, "We are very grateful for this grant. Building a well-balanced and sustainable revenue programme requires the employment of an expert, dedicated Director of Marketing—someone who can spearhead and coordinate activities involving our major sponsors, secondary sources of business support, fundraising events, etc.

"The AMP Foundation grant gives us a seeding fund to establish such a position, which will become self-supporting in the future."

The Lottery Grants Board's Welfare Committee has granted \$10,000 to KHF to be used specifically for increasing the availability of Counsellors. This grant will enable 6,900 calls to be answered that would otherwise not have been responded to.

"It is an honour to receive these grants so soon after our establishment. Both benefactors are very knowledgeable about the charity scene in NZ. I think this is a sign of commendation for What's Up's quality and potential, as well as a recognition of its achievements to date", Mr Taylor said.

“We can now move beyond thinking of ourselves as a start-up organization”

E.D. Column Forging Ahead

As we near the completion of our first year of providing telephone counselling services to children and young people around the country, it feels to me that What’s Up is firmly established and set to move confidently into the future.

We can now move beyond thinking of ourselves as a start-up organization. We have proved the demand for what we are doing and established the high standard of our work. I am receiving positive feedback from various parts of the community indicating that recognition and respect for What’s Up is growing among adults as well as our client group.

Our recent recruitment information sessions for a new intake of Counsellors were heavily oversubscribed, all places being filled before mid-day on Monday after the ads appeared in the Friday community newspapers. Of the 70 people who attended the sessions, 53 took application forms.

What’s Up is beginning to draw people who want to part of the good work we are doing.

This is consistent with the predictions made by Tom Jaap at our strategic planning meeting (see articles on page 3). Tom sees KHF as being positioned to become a hub in the realm of NZ child welfare. As we gather a reputation for reliable information and expertise, people of all ages will come to us for assistance with their particular needs, whether it is one of our client group seeking counselling, another agency seeking information about how they can best address an issue involving a child, or a donor who wants to be part of our good work by supporting the organisation.

Fulfilling Tom’s vision, as well as maximizing our core business of counselling children and young people, requires growth. We must begin building on the lead of our primary corporate sponsors and the many other businesses and individuals who have already recognized the value of What’s Up, to develop our sources of revenue. We can all look forward with excitement to initiatives in this area that will be taken in coming months.

Grant Taylor, Executive Director

What’s Up Makes A Difference

[Some details in this story have been changed slightly to protect the client’s anonymity.]

A 13 year old girl, who we will call Sally, has been calling What’s Up for over 4 months. She lives with her father, but hasn’t felt close to him. Her mother left the family when she was pre-schooler.

When she first started calling, she was very abrupt, sarcastic and abusive towards all the Counsellors at What’s Up. She had a strongly confrontational attitude but didn’t want to deal with it.

In line with our practice with regular but difficult callers, Sally was assigned to work with a specific Counsellor. Placing some limits on the way in which certain, regular callers access our service helps ensure that our contribution to their lives remains constructive and does not add to the chaos they are often experiencing.

Her attitude was very challenging but we believed we could work beneficially with her. Her Counsellor took a long-term view and maintained a firm but patient and accepting line with her. Even though she continued to be abusive, the Counsellor tried to be consistently happy to hear from

her.

Obviously, Sally’s difficult behaviour was not confined to her work with What’s Up and she eventually got expelled from school and kicked out of home by her dad.

One day, our Counsellor was able to have a long talk with her about wanting to help her deal with the anger she was showing everyone. Near the end of the call, Sally maintained a long silence. The Counsellor decided she had gone away from the phone, and hung up.

Two weeks later she called and was very different. Her confrontational attitude had gone and she sounded really happy.

When asked what had happened, she said she had made up with her dad, who was being nice to her now. She then thanked the Counsellor for helping her. She said it was important to her that she had always felt accepted by the Counsellor, despite her abusiveness.

She said she believed the Counsellor could help her to set goals for the future and that she would keep in touch.



KHF Vision: “Enabling Young People”

Strategic planning meeting produces over-arching vision statement and clear development priorities

The purpose and vision of The Kids Help Foundation Trust is best captured by the phrase, “Enabling Young People”, according to a strategic planning meeting for the Trust held on 13th July, 2002.

Facilitated free-of-charge by internationally recognized business development consultant, Centell’s Tom Jaap, this meeting brought together members of the KHF Board, staff and sponsors.

A review of the operating principles of What’s Up and the tremendous response to the establishment of the service by children and young people right throughout NZ led the group to this simple slogan.

Grant Taylor, Executive Director of KHF said, “I am very happy with how this captures the essence of our work.”

“‘Enabling’ encompasses the principles of child-centred practice and empowerment that form the context for all our activities, as well as our desire to provide preventive interventions and data-based advocacy.”

Quality and Teamwork Key Strengths

The success of What’s Up was attributed not just to the quality of the concepts that lie at its foundations, but also to the quality of the people who have built the service. This includes the founding Board, the sponsors and their agencies and consultants who were involved with the launch, and the What’s Up staff.

Quality of service was clearly seen as underpinning the future relevance and utilisation of What’s Up. Ensuring a high quality of service hinged upon selecting excellent team members and taking good care of them. In Tom Jaap’s words: “You need to get the right people on the bus, all sitting in the

right seats so they can make their best contributions”.

What’s Up Counsellor Rhonda, who participated in the planning meeting, said, “I feel that the needs of the Counsellors are being taken very seriously. The Board is very interested in what it is like to be a Counsellor, what the



“The right people on the bus, all in the right seats”

work environment is like, and what would make things better working at What’s Up. I feel really inspired about what the KHF Board and management are doing to develop the future of What’s Up.”

Data-based Advocacy, Fundraising Linked Priorities

Although What’s Up is doing a great job in providing high-quality telephone counselling services for NZ children and young people, growth will come from its advocacy objectives—building and using the wealth of information collected from What’s Up’s callers to raise awareness of and influence policy on children’s issues.

The strategic planning meeting concluded that development of What’s Up will be greatly enhanced by the fund of stories and systematically collected data reflecting life as a child or young person in NZ. The high quality of What’s Up’s data and information technology provides compelling evidence of the need for the service, its ability to address real issues, and its high standards of professionalism.

As What’s Up acts as a voice for children and young people that is based on facts, not just opinions, this will translate into confidence within the community, opening access to financial resources enabling healthy growth and development of the organisation.

Facilitator of the meeting, Tom Jaap, said, “KHF is in a position to become such a strong source of skills, knowledge and information about matters to do with children and young people that people throughout the community will routinely seek it out with requests for assistance and offers of support.”

KHF Governance For The Future

The governance of The Kids Help Foundation Trust must be reviewed as the organisation moves beyond its establishment phase, says Chairman Allan Barber.

“Now that What’s Up is firmly established, it is time to consider what will be the best governance structure to take KHF forward, and who should be conducting that governance”, he said.

The strategic planning meeting recommended building a two-tier governance structure.

A Supervisory Board would be responsible for establishing policy and strategy and ensuring that the broad objectives of the organisation are being met. It would also enable broader representation in the governance of KHF, including members of the principle stakeholder groups such as as sponsors, community groups, clients, and staff, as well as KHF management.

The second tier, an Executive Board, would attend to day-to-day operations, supporting and holding accountable the Executive Director.



Tom Jaap, President of Centell—Centre for Enabling Leadership



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Dr Ian Hassall (Trustee)

Jude Mannion

Grant Taylor (Exec. Dir.)

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.

In the Midnight Hour—by Kim, What's Up Counsellor

It's 30 minutes to midnight and every 2nd caller over the last two hours has reminded me that tonight is party night. Friday out on the town. Yet, here I sit, slippers and all, talking to a young caller who is pissed off because I didn't deliver her laundry home tonight!

"Sorry buddy, you've called What's Up, the child telephone counselling service."

Oh, and for the record to all our charming prank callers out there:—

We don't do

- laundry deliveries
- dial-a-pizza
- song requests

(although the thought does cross my mind sometimes).

Great!! Fifteen minutes to go. Here's a call coming in.

Its Johnny—a runaway wanting out of a gang he's in. So, we talk, share, consider his options until he's comfortable with working on a particular plan.

(K) "Are you OK to work through this issue?"

(J) "Yeah"

(K) "Call us back if you need to, and give me a call in a couple of

days, just to see how you are."

(J) "Yeah bro — I mean, Kim."

As I hang up and reflect on the call, I hope that he has the courage and determination to go through with it. Even with all our support, its still up to him.

It's calls like this, that remind me of why we're here.

New Counsellors For What's Up

A group of five new Counsellors for What's Up is being recruited for training.

A number of men have presented strong applications, so existing staff are optimistic that in future we will be able to meet our principle of offering callers a choice of Counsellor gender.

The new recruits will take the Counsellor roster to 18 in number.

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