

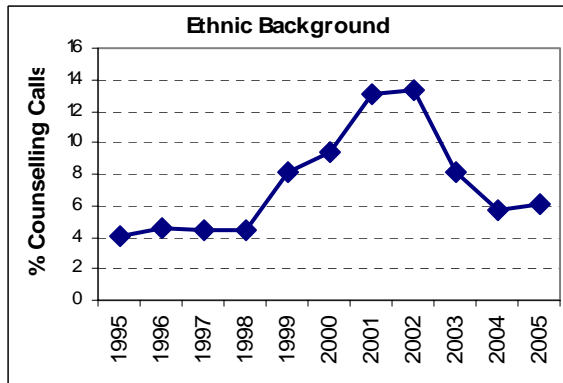
Callers of Non-English Speaking Backgrounds



Definition

Kids Help Line defines NESB callers as any caller whose first language is not English or whose cultural background, of immediate family, is derived from a non-English-speaking tradition. This does not include callers from English speaking nations such as England, USA or Canada.

The proportion of calls Kids Help Line receives each year from children and young people of non-English speaking backgrounds steadily increased from 4.1% in 1995 to a peak of 13.4% in 2001, decreasing to 6.1% of counselling calls made in 2005 (see graph).



The information presented in this report is based on data collected between 2001 and 2005. Across this five year period, 6,201 calls were recorded from NESB children and young people. Given that only 21% of callers choose to reveal their ethnic background, this figure is a significant under-representation of actual calls from children and young people of non-English speaking backgrounds.

What Are Their Main Concerns?

Ten issues stand out as the major concerns for NESB callers, together accounting for 80% of calls from this group of young Australians.

Main Problems	NESB (% of Calls)	ANGLO (% of Calls)
1. Family Relationships	23.0%	18.2%
2. Peer Relationships	13.5%	16.0%
3. Intimate Relationships	10.5%	9.8%
4. Bullying	9.0%	7.8%
5. Child Abuse	5.4%	4.6%
6. Study Issues	4.9%	1.7%
7. Emotional/Behavioural Management	4.6%	4.9%
8. Mental Health	3.3%	3.7%
9. Grief & Loss	2.5%	2.7%
10. Homelessness	2.5%	3.3%

The above table compares the percentage of calls from NESB and Anglo-Australian groups for main ten problems (as represented by proportion of calls from each group).

Are NESB Concerns Different?

As is the case for all callers, regardless of background, young people of non-English-speaking backgrounds most often contact the service to talk about problems related to their family and family relationships.

For study, bullying, self image and loneliness issues, callers of NES backgrounds make significantly higher proportions of calls than their Anglo counterparts. In contrast, problems concerning friends/peers, pregnancy, sexual-activity and drug use attract a significantly lower proportion of calls from NESB youth (see attached table for all problem types).

Have NESB Concerns Changed?

Examination of yearly data shows that family relationships, intimate relationships, bullying, child abuse and study concerns have been consistent for NESB youth across the last five years (see attached table for yearly trends). However, the proportion of calls concerning peer relationships from NESB youth decreased between 2001 and 2005.

In line with trends for callers of all backgrounds, Kids Help Line received a significant increase in the proportion of calls concerning mental health and emotional/behavioural management from NESB youth during 2005.

Are Male & Female Issues Different?

Of the NESB young people, females make the majority (71%) of calls with males making 29%. This is consistent with calls rates to KHL for children and young people of all backgrounds.

While family relationships represent the main concern for both genders, differences are apparent in the problems which concern males and females of non-English speaking backgrounds. The table below shows the top 7 problems for NESB males and females, in rank order.

FEMALE	MALE
Family Relationships	Family Relationships
Peer Relationships	Bullying
Intimate Relationships	Peer Relationships
Bullying	Intimate Relationships
Child Abuse	Study Issues
Emotional/Behavioural Management	Child Abuse
Study Issues	School Authority

Do NESB Concerns Change with Age?

The majority of callers of non-English speaking backgrounds are aged between 15 and 18. This is a different pattern of service usage than is the case with callers from an Anglo background (see table below).

AGE	NESB	ANGLO
5-9 years	3.0%	5.7%
10-14 years	43.4%	47.4%
15-18 years	53.6%	46.9%

Family relationships, peer relationships and child abuse emerge as concerns for NESB youth across all ages while bullying is more of an issue for children younger than 15. As age increases, problems involving intimate relationships and study become more of an issue.

What is the Nature of Main Concerns?

Family Relationships

Relationships with parents and family is the biggest concern, accounting for 1 in 4 calls from NESB young people. Almost 60% of these young people report experiencing frequent or major family conflict or disruption while a further 25% report occasional conflict/disruption. The remaining NESB youth phone about concern for a family member or family breakdown (including separation or divorce).

Compared with their Anglo-Australian peers, NESB callers are more likely to seek help about frequent or major family conflict and disruption and less likely to be phoning about family breakdown, separation or divorce.

Peer Relationships

The majority of peer relationship concerns from NESB youth relate to occasional or one-off friendship problems (38%) and significant relationship problems (25%). A further 21% of calls relate to difficulties making or maintaining friendships. The remaining 16% of callers have concerns for a friend's wellbeing.

When compared to their Anglo-Australian counterparts, NESB children and young people are more likely to phone about difficulties making/maintaining friendships and more likely to seek help about significant or ongoing friendship problems.

Intimate Relationships

Relationships with partners is the third most common concern for young people of non-English speaking backgrounds. The majority (53%) of their concerns relate to establishing or negotiating new relationships. A further 43% of calls relate to significant relationship difficulties or relationship breakdown. The remaining 4% of calls are from NESB youth with concerns about their partner's wellbeing.

The nature of these concerns are consistent with concerns presented by Anglo-Australian children and young people to Kids Help Line.

Bullying

Of the calls concerning bullying and school-based harassment, 96% of NESB youth report being bullied at least once - 10% reporting an isolated incident, 34% reporting episodic incidents and 52% experiencing frequent incidents or continual harassment. The remaining 4% are seeking information or concerned about a friend.

When compared to their Anglo-Australian counterparts, NESB children and young people make more calls about bullying and report more severe or frequent incidents - they are more likely to be experiencing frequent bullying or continual harassment (52%) than Anglo-Australian young people (42%).

Child Abuse

Child abuse is the fifth most common concern for NESB youth, accounting for over 5% of calls. The majority of these calls concern physical abuse (59%) while emotional abuse (20%) and sexual abuse (18%) are also significant issues. The remaining 3% of calls from NESB youth concern neglect.

Compared with their Anglo-Australian peers, NESB child abuse concerns are more often about physical abuse (59% compared with 48%) and less often about sexual abuse (18% compared with 38% for the Anglo group).

Study Issues

Young people of non-English speaking backgrounds are more than twice as likely to be concerned about study issues, accounting for 4.9% of NESB calls as compared to 1.7% of Anglo-Australian calls.

In addition, NESB young people are more likely to be calling about study-related stress than Anglo callers. Almost half (45%) of calls from NESB youth relate to workload, study pressure or exams, compared to 29% of Anglo callers. Other common issues include difficulties with study, need for assistance in managing schoolwork or difficulties with subject or course selection.

What Were the Outcomes of Calls?

Counsellors were able to assist 73% of NESB young people directly without referring the caller to another agency. Eleven percent were referred to another support service for ongoing assistance (including crisis response and 3-way linkups). Twelve percent were referred to their doctor, school/guidance counsellor, mental health worker or other non-specific referral. In 4% of calls, counsellors were unable to give a referral because either no appropriate service was available or the caller finished the call.

Updated: January 2006

For more detailed information about children and young people of non-English speaking backgrounds who contact Kids Help Line a comprehensive report, including qualitative analysis, is available from the Kids Help Line website:

"Issues and Concerns Facing Young People from Non-English Speaking Backgrounds"

For more information

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