



# Their STORIES



"I was so depressed from being bullied at school. I just couldn't take it any more. I wanted to kill myself. I actually tried to a number of times. I had hit rock bottom. Then I emailed Kids Helpline. They were so kind and understanding. They saved my life."

Meg\*, 12



"Today I called Kids Helpline and I was on the edge of suicide. A counsellor helped me out and now I am the happiest I have been in months. I have never been more grateful than I am right now. Just thank you."

Nathan\*, 17



"My family has been going through a tough time. Mum has been getting really angry at me and my siblings, but we weren't always fighting. A couple of months ago we went bankrupt and had to go to a homeless shelter. I called Kids Helpline and the counsellor helped me. I still call every couple of days."

Naomi\*, 11

\*Names changed to protect privacy

## A message FROM THE CEO



From left: Tracy Adams, David Field (with daughter Daisy), Miranda Kerr and Therese Kerr.

As our Golden Anniversary year ends, it is time to reflect on what we achieved not only in the past 50 years, but also during 2011.

By partnering with others, we found new ways to reach out to children and young people. Kids Helpline joined with Optus to create 'Make Cyberspace a Better Place', a national cybersafety campaign rolled out to every school across Australia. We also joined with actor David Field, supermodel Miranda Kerr and the Corilee Foundation to produce a youth suicide prevention campaign - 'Too Many Too Soon'.

The number of young Australians assisted also grew during the year. More than 7,000 young people participated in our employment programs. At the same time Kids Helpline and Parentline counselling services supported over 300,000 children, young people and families.

We reached one of our proudest achievements only through the help of our generous supporters - the opening of our new \$1.2 million parenting centre in Deception Bay. The centre was completely funded by BoysTown supporters and we cannot thank you enough for your generosity.

Fifty years ago, the De La Salle Brothers had a vision to improve the lives of young Australians. I am proud to be part of BoysTown and am humbled by your continued commitment to that original vision. Thank you for your generous support and compassion and for keeping the needs of young people in your heart.

T.J. Adams

Tracy Adams  
CEO  
BoysTown



## From the COUNSELLOR'S DESK

*"Part of me hates you for what you did. I'm so angry at you! And part of me thanks you ... because now I know he can't hurt me anymore"...*

These were the words of my first ever regular client at Kids Helpline. At the time, this caller was 13 and after months of developing the trusting relationship required for this obviously frightened and wounded girl to tell us what she kept hinting at, she finally disclosed that her father had been regularly sexually abusing her. We decided that a notification\* was in this girl's best interests.

The notification led to an investigation, legal proceedings, a committal hearing, and a guilty plea from her father due to overwhelming evidence against him.

As I say goodbye to this same girl on the phone for the last time some six years later, she thanks me again for my role in her life. I genuinely thank her back, for there is no richer, more rewarding experience than to be invited into a vulnerable person's life, bear witness to their suffering, and walk alongside them on

a journey towards liberation, relief, self-acceptance and meaning.

I suspect that for the rest of my life, I will remain touched by the stories I have heard at Kids Helpline - stories that for many young people have been so distressing that they have been unable to tell them in person. Stories told over the phone in hushed whispers from inside the wardrobe; stories of sexual abuse relived so vividly that to be reminded it ended years ago is of no consolation; stories told from hospital, through gritted teeth, while the IV drip is being changed; stories told from a payphone on a cold night in an unknown neighbourhood, and unknown street.

For the young person quoted above the story ends well. This amazing young woman, now in her 20s, has gone on to develop friendships, hold down a job, pursue a vocation in the humanities, write letters to political leaders about the injustices of the legal system, start up a web page for girls who have experienced sexual abuse, and plans to publish a book.

It is thanks to the generosity of our donors that this story ends well. Thank you for making it possible for me to help her.

\*A notification refers to our Duty of Care obligations to report suspected abuse under State laws.

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