

LISTEN

Q&A

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1. How do crisis lines work? Does it cost anything? Who are their operators?

Crisis lines provide crisis intervention and advice for callers most often by phone, chat or email. They are often nationwide free of charge lines with continuous service. Among the well-known operating crisis lines in the country belong – to add. Operators (or so-called consultants) of helplines must have the appropriate training required by the Social Service Act to carry out their work. To fulfill a range of education according to each country's requirements. People with the capacity for the empathy and listening are often better suited than uncommunicative experts.

2. What are emergency lines intended for?

Crisis lines are easily accessible to anyone who is in distress. When somebody is being hurt they often have no one to speak to and feel very depressed. These Crisis/Helplines are available to listen 24/7 and many of them never close. Many offer a live chat or email counselling service, so victims can write anytime. Many people are ashamed of having a problem, so they often don't confide with anyone. Crisis line is anonymous – you do not see who is on the other side and he/she cannot see you. When you talk about something you are ashamed of you do not have to look away the next day when meeting this person. You do not have to be worried about them leaking your secret. Quite often discussing the problem with a stranger and getting the support to resolve the issue is beneficial. The consultant on the line will listen to you. They do not judge you. You can just talk or ask for their advice on how to move forward. You can cry and scream and feel that someone is listening. You don't have to think exactly about what you are going to say and how you are going to say it. You can call them as often as you need their support.

3. Do operators maintain confidentiality?

As far as possible the operators on the Crisis Line are try to ensure the anonymity of the caller. In the situation when it is appropriate to involve other institutions to resolve an issue the line operator leaves the decision to remain anonymous with the child. The operator follows the rule that only the requested and properly timed assistance is a good help. The only exception where the anonymity of phone number is disclosed by the operator of Crisis line is in a case where the child's life or health is endangered. In that case the operator will contact the Police, which has the right to request a phone number from the operator, or the location of the child.

4. How many calls do they receive per day? How many times does someone call from the fun?

Crisis line receives up to 500 calls a day. It can use up to seven telephone operators at full capacity. The call is taken first at the headquarters, where crank callers or practical jokers are screened out. Subsequently children with real issues are referred to a consultant. In 2018 Crisis Line 39% of all calls were considered as prank calls and screened out. These so called test calls were handled at headquarters (the ones call which usually last max. two minutes and they are not referred from different reasons to consultants).

But children often test the line and hang up the first few times. Foreign research on the child Crisis lines showed that a child who wants to confide will often test the line first – sometimes even tests multiple times. Once the child checks the trustworthiness of the people on the line, they often share their problem.

Of the calls that have been referred to a consultant and have dealt with at least one topic, less than 10% are terminated due to pranks or testing. These conclusions cannot be generalized to all crisis lines. The testing is a natural part of their development for children during adolescence (which are the children who most often call to us). The testing relates almost exclusively to telephone service. There is a minimum test contact on chat and email.

5. What problems are solved on Crisis lines the most often?

The most common caller profile on the Crisis line is a girl aged 14. Boys call less than girls. Children and adolescents in the same way as adults deal with problems in the family, relationships with peers, and partnerships.

The type of solved problems is very diverse. It can range from a common argument between a child and a parent, to a drug use problem, bullying or sexual abuse.

The wide range of topics has to do with the fact that children and adult perceives the limit of a crisis situation a little differently.

6. What are the different psychological problems which young people face?

All communication channels of the Crisis Line (i.e. telephone, e-mail and chat) show that the topic of suicide most often arises from mental problems. It can simply be thoughts, specific plans or the child has already made an attempt. The second most common topic is self-harm followed by various fears and phobias. There are also hundreds of contacts on the topics of depression and sadness, self-esteem, eating disorders or anxiety. Topics relating to mental issues are more represented in written forms of communication (chat, e-mail). We attribute this to the fact that online communication is more natural for today's children and young people when it comes to communicating more intimate topics.

Resources

Childline

If you're under 19, you can contact Childline:

telephone: 0800 1111

<https://www.childline.org.uk>

Lifeline

If you or someone you know needs help, you can telephone Lifeline free at any time. Lifeline is a crisis response helpline available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to people in Northern Ireland. It offers immediate help over the telephone if you, or someone you know, is in distress or despair.

telephone: 0808 808 8000

The Samaritans

The Samaritans offer a 24-hour telephone helpline:

telephone: 028 9066 4422 (local call charges apply)

National telephone: 116 123 (this number is free to call)

textphone: 08457 90 91 92

<https://www.samaritans.org/branches/>
