Internet Safety Helplines: Exploratory Study First Findings

# Details

## Year

2016

## Issued

2016

## Language

English

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## Type

Short report

## Topics

* Wellbeing
* Risks and harms
* Online safety and policy regulation

## Sample

4 national helplines from Belgium, Ireland, Malta and Romania

## Implications For Parents About

## Implications For Educators About

Other

## Implications For Policy Makers About

## Implications For Stakeholders About

Industry

# Abstract

This is the first short report on a study of Helplines, an essential component of the
network of Safer Internet Centres coordinated by Insafe.
70% of all helplines are general service helplines with 30% dedicated specifically to internet safety. All helplines offer a confidential service that offers information, support,
guidance and referral.
 Helplines offer a range of services using a variety of platforms: telephone counselling
services, email support, support using online chat, text services, online forum, peer support, social networking and in some instances face to-face support.
 Among the most important success factors identified by helplines include: ‘positive
feedback from callers’, the ‘number of calls’ and ‘participation from stakeholders’.
 Among the most persistent risks identified by helplines are bullying and cyberbullying (92%) followed by hate speech (88%) and sexual content (75%).
 Recommendations arising from the study call for development of an alert system for
emerging risks, access to technical expertise for helpline staff and support for further
stakeholder collaboration.

# Outcome

"The evidence of this research shows that helplines provide a wide range of accessible and valuable sources of support for children as well as adults and professionals about how to keep safe online. Overall, helplines have delivered positive outcomes that are consistent with their goal of providing information, support, and reducing risk or potential risk of children and service users in relation to internet safety.
Helplines also deliver additional outcomes and benefits that may go unrecognised by the wider community. Complementary modes of access by web, email, text and telephone enable children and young people to access support when and where they need it. In a fast-moving digital era, helplines play a vital role in awareness raising and in delivering flexible and effective help to the young people and community." (Dinh et al., 2016; p. 8)