

FOREWORD

Dear Readers,

We are pleased to present the 2018 Annual Report. The Kanner-Jugendtelefon (KJT) or “Children and youth helpline” looks back on an intensive year.

The report provides a succinct and informative overview of the many activities of the KJT.

In 2018, we received a total of 1618 requests on our helplines. That's more than ever before in the history of the Kanner-Jugendtelefon. In 2017, there were 1365 contacts.

We are delighted about this increase, which shows that the helpline numbers are becoming well known among the target audience.

The contacts on 1 1 6 1 1 1 (767) as well as the Online Help (218) have increased significantly. The parent telephone (221) has more calls than ever before, and the number of contacts almost doubled on the BEE SECURE Helpline (412). This also means that in 2018, as never before, working hours were supplemented by numerous consultations on the helplines; it also means that the work intensity has increased.

With our article "Minds under pressure" we take a look at the apparent trend that many children and adolescents feel increasingly stressed.

Another challenge was the significant increase in the number of complaints on the BEE SECURE Stopleveline. In this context, we intensified our cooperation with the police and the prosecuting authorities.

Our team of ambassadors represented the KJT in an outstanding way. It is just great to see how much the small team has accomplished in 2018.

Since 2018, the KJT has updated its OUTFIT and launched the new BOD posters as part of a press campaign. Our thanks go to our volunteer advertising team, without which we could not have started the campaign. With the help of the BOD campaign, the largest possible number of children and young people in Luxembourg will be informed about Kanner-Jugendtelefon's offer over the next three years so that they can make use of it if needed.

We, the KJT team, are convinced of the BOD campaign. We hope that we will find general support for this campaign to reach the target audience. We are getting closer to the motto we share with Child Helpline International (CHI): "Every child has the right to be heard."

We thank all those who supported us in our mission, in any way whatsoever. I would particularly like to thank the 70 volunteers who provide advice on our helpline regularly and with great commitment. Without them the KJT would not be what it is. Thank you.

Barbara Gorges-Wagner
Manager of KJT

1992-2018 GROWTH IN THE NUMBER OF CONTACTS ON THE VARIOUS HELPLINES

This overview shows the development of each advisory service between 1992 until 2018.

The (KJT) Kanner-Jugendtelefon was founded in 1992 by the Red Cross, the Kannerschlass Foundation, the Ligue Médico-Sociale and Caritas Jeunes et Familles (Caritas Youth and Families). Those services remain responsible for KJT under the lead management of Caritas Youth and Families. KJT was founded in the course of ratification of the UN Convention on the rights of the child.

As shown in the graph, below, from the beginning KJT has adapted to the needs and the development of society. In 2003, telephone assistance was extended by means of online help and, in 2007, with the 'Ecoute Parents' (Parents' line) and, for children and young people, the BEE SECURE Helpline.

Since 2013, the Kanner-Jugendtelefon has operated under a single Europe-wide number for telephone help services, 1 1 6 1 1 1. This number also enables children and adolescents to contact the helpline from anywhere else in Europe.

The most important goal remains the same: every child and young person in Luxembourg should know the number 1 1 6 1 1 1. No child or young person should be alone with his/her worries, questions and problems - especially in a crisis situation.

All the helplines operate on the principles of anonymity and confidentiality; the threshold for access is therefore very low.

We were contacted 1618 times in 2018. This figure is the highest since we launched. The need for advice on all the helplines has risen steadily over the past few years. This is due, on the one hand, to the work done to increase public awareness and, on the other hand, to information put out by stakeholders in the political, social and economic sectors.

Needless to say, increased use reflects the number of crisis situations and problems experienced by children, young people and parents in Luxembourg.

English version of Online Help

Thanks to the BOD awareness campaign carried out in English-speaking schools and in the Scouts, together with our presence at public English-speaking events (Discover Luxembourg) or in schools (open doors days) the need for advice has risen slightly: more children and young people contacted Online Help than in the previous year.

Two-thirds of the requests that we received came from children and young people. We were mostly contacted by young adults aged between 18 and 25. English-speaking parents mostly used the Online Help aimed at parents.

As part of our public awareness work in the English-speaking area, it is noticeable that English-speaking callers tend more frequently to use the BEE SECURE Helpline.

PRINCIPAL TOPICS

N=37

In 2018, the main topics for which we were contacted were:

1. Psycho-social and psychological health
2. Family relationships
3. Relationships between people of the same age
4. Disabilities and developmental problems
5. Legal advice
6. Sexuality

Other subjects were the same as in the previous year.

Note:

We received 20 requests (14 female, 4 male and 2 unknown) via our contact e-mail address. Since we cannot guarantee confidentiality and anonymity through that means, we transferred the requests to our Online Help service. The subjects were relevant to KJT as they involved psychological health (suicidal tendencies, depression, loneliness, self-harm, eating disorders), family relationships (conflicts with parents, quarrelling parents, bereavement - the loss of a family member, relationships between people of the same age (quarrel with a friend, break-ups), abuse and violence (bullying, cyberbullying, physical violence, neglect) and problems at school.

FOCUS POINT: MINDS UNDER PRESSURE

Our contacts show that more and more youngsters feel stressed and under pressure for a variety of reasons. These include a high level of performance pressure from school and parents, digital overstimulation, bullying on social networking sites and fear of failure.

Stressed children are easily irritated and potentially much more likely to be aggressive: they often react with anger or even fury. Depressive moods and/or social isolation are also common. Scientific studies have also reported the following symptoms: restlessness, poor concentration, exhaustion, reduced appetite, skin problems, sleep disorders, headaches, stomach aches, and so on.

Packed schedules, football training, theatre rehearsals, tutoring in mathematics, French or German, may also be a source of temporary or permanent stress. Children do not have enough time to simply play and relax.

Average academic performance is no longer good enough; only the best marks count. Anxiety about the future is often the reason for self-imposed performance pressure, which is now part of everyday life.

Additionally, others suffer from excessive emotional burdens when, for instance, their parents are sick, the atmosphere at home is fraught with conflict, separation and divorce are dominant subjects or a re-organization of the family is imminent.

Cyber-bullying can also have consequences for the mental health of children and adolescents, often leading to a refusal to go to school or suicidal thoughts.

Excessive use of the internet and smartphones can become problematical too. Young people can begin to ignore the demands of school and family; they neglect their friends and their obligations.

Furthermore, social values and ideals of physical attractiveness also put young people under pressure. Recognition and acceptance by others are fundamental requirements and the presentation of oneself online and offline turns into a basic need. The number of “likes” is a virtual quantification of social acceptance.

Last but not least, stressed parents directly promote a stressed way of life, especially when they are always telling their children to “hurry up”.

Stress occurs when a person is facing various tasks but no longer believes they are capable of carrying out those tasks. Short periods of stress are normal: they can even encourage and motivate. However, suffering from chronic stress can provoke psychological disorders. Chronic stress is considered a risk factor for psychological disorders.

Rest is a basic human need, just like eating, drinking and sleeping (Maslow Pyramid) and therefore an important factor in preventing stress and pressure.

We encourage parents and teachers to support their children. Appreciation and recognition of everything that has been achieved is the foundation of growth. “A tree with strong roots is more resilient.” Being aware not only of every person’s individuality but also their interaction with the things and people around them is crucial when we are counselling.

Our mascot BOD represents this attitude. We are open to every child and adolescent, with their own individual feelings.

Children in pressurized situations can call and talk to us on 1 1 6 111 or email us via our Online Help service. No child should be without a person to talk to.

Parents and teachers have the parents’ phonenumber at their disposal: 26 64 05 055.

The features described above are set out, for instance, in the KKH (Kaufmännische Krankenkasse Hannover) Stress Evaluation; Press Release of 24.10.2018: “Destination depression: when everything becomes too much for schoolchildren. More and more 6-18 year olds are experiencing psychological problems”.