

ECOUTER ET AIDER  
ZUHÖREN UND HELFEN

2020

RAPPORT ANNUEL  
JAHRESBERICHT  
ANNUAL REPORT



kjT

# 1.0 PRÉFACE





## PREFACE

It is with great pleasure that we present our Annual Report.

Since March 2020, the Coronavirus pandemic has had a huge impact on the lives of children, adolescents and families, as well as on the KJT (Kanner-Jugendtelefon). The facts tell us that children and adolescents are under increasing stress and that their psychological wellbeing has been considerably affected by the continuance of the pandemic.

During the first confinement in March 2020, our main objective was not to endanger our volunteers while continuing to counsel young people and their parents. "Right now" became our motto.

Ever since the first phase, a considerable amount of adaptation has been required: it was necessary to organise KJT mobile phones, change telephone lines and manage team turnover. Due to vulnerability, the gaps were growing day by day. During this entire phase, all the professionals kept in contact to keep the telephone lines open at a normal level.

During the first confinement we could see a relatively high level of resilience in families, especially those in which harmony was a pillar. Where that was not the case, stress increased for everyone and this was reflected in calls to us. Fear, loneliness and worry are

problems that multiplied as compared to the previous year.

The pandemic has had an impact on all our counselling services. In 2020, the KJT had a total of 1589 contacts, 115 less than the previous year.

With regard to telephone counselling (116 111, the Parents' Helpline and BEE Secure Helpline), we noticed a slight decrease in contacts. As regards online support, we saw a sharp increase in depressive and suicidal moods. The demand for help in English doubled.

Our team was confronted with more challenges than ever before and has worked ceaselessly.

At the end of the first confinement, the service was reorganised and it was amazing to see how a few volunteers had contributed to keeping the normal permanent service running. Gradually more and more colleagues found their way back to work, all the while keeping a social distance and wearing masks.

Life is now different at the KJT since continuous training as a resource has more or less disappeared and supervision is only been possible in small groups or online.

Because of the pandemic, it was unfortunately not possible to implement our BOD campaign as planned, but we are on the right track and things are moving forward.

Nor could the ambassadors team take to the road as they had the previous year either, but they seize every opportunity to be available. In accordance with our Corona motto "Right now", it is important for children and adolescents to know that we are there for them.

It was with great enthusiasm that we worked on the project for our new website and the setting up of our "Online Chat Counselling Service". We hope that with roll-out of the Online Chat Counselling Service on May 17th, 2021, "Child Helpline" day, youngsters in crisis will be motivated to ask for help in an easy and safe way. Access via our new website has also been simplified, especially in the mobile version.

The Annual Report shows that in 2020 the life of children and adolescents was affected by many stress factors, which will lead more and more often to crisis situations requiring specialised support. We will make every effort to maintain this connection with young people in need of help. Often we have been able to find, together with

the young people concerned, a real way of helping.

The role that the KJT is able and willing to play in the system of youth protection has come into ever sharper focus since the Covid-19 crisis.

I am certain that the KJT's counselling work has made a valuable contribution to the management of the crisis.

I would like to say a big thank you to the team of volunteers who have been standing by the side of children, adolescents and parents throughout these unusual times, even if sometimes that went close to their limits.

Thank you, too, to all those who have supported us in carrying out our tasks.

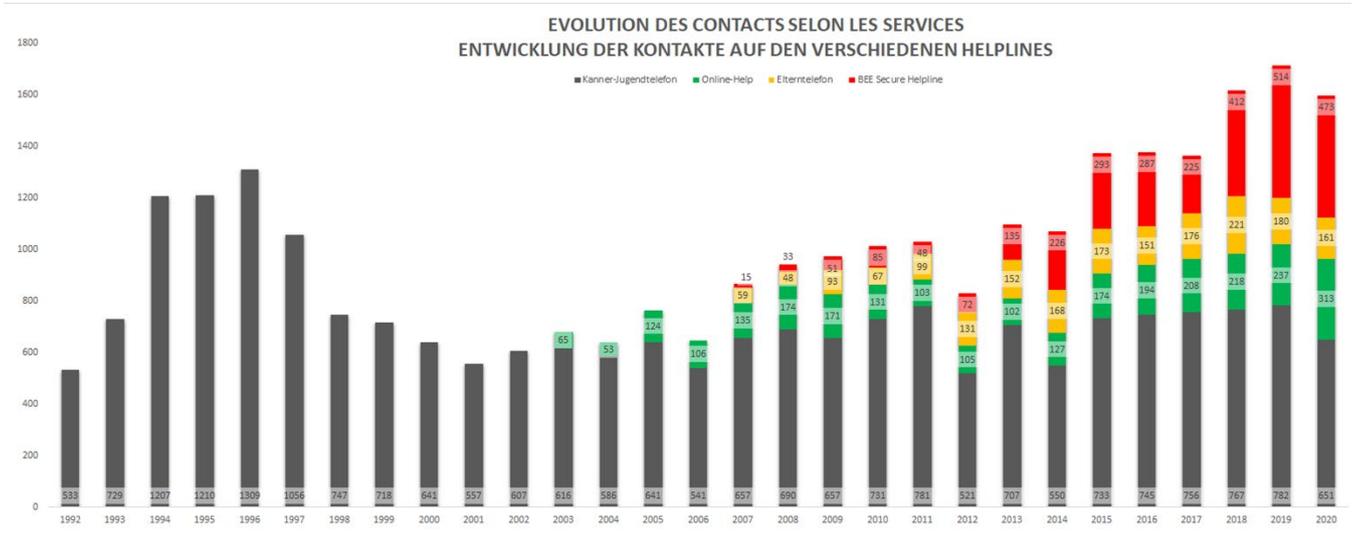


**Barbara Gorges-Wagner**  
Head of Direction

### 3.0 NUMBERS AND CURRENT TRENDS REGARDING THE VARIOUS HELPLINES

1992-2020

DEVELOPMENT OF CONTACTS FOR VARIOUS SERVICES



This overview shows the development of the various counselling services from 1992 to 2020. The (KJT) Kanner-Jugendtelefon was founded in 1992 jointly by Croix Rouge, Fondatioun Kannerschlass, Ligue Médico-Sociale and Caritas Jeunes et Familles. Those charities are still responsible for KJT under the leadership of Caritas Jeunes et Familles. The founding of KJT in 1992 took place in the context of the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

KJT has adapted to the needs and development of society from the very beginning. The telephone counselling service for children and young people was expanded in 2003 to include online counselling; in 2007 the Parents' helpline was added as well as the BEE SECURE helpline.

In 2013, KJT introduced the standardized European phone number 1 1 6 1 1. This phone number also allows children and young people to contact the helpline from other European countries.

The most important goal of KJT remains unchanged. All children and young people in Luxembourg should be aware of the national helpline 1 1 6 1 1. No child or young person should remain alone with their worries, questions and problems – especially not in a crisis situation.

All helplines are based on the basic principles of anonymity and confidentiality, so are extremely low-threshold in terms of access. The fact that 2020 was a very special year can be seen in the shifts within our services. A total of 1598 children, young people and parents reached out to us. This is a decrease of 115 contacts (- 6.7%) compared to the previous year (1713 in 2019).

The decrease mainly concerns the telephone counselling services (116111 Kanner-Jugendtelefon, BEE SECURE Helpline and Parents' Helpline), although there was increased use of online-based counselling services. Compared to the previous year, there were 76 more contacts of that kind, which corresponds to + 32.1%. Possible explanations for these shifts are rather complex. Certainly it can be said that in the first lockdown people were preoccupied with themselves and the new situation; they reorganised their lives. Home-schooling and home-working reduced privacy in some families and thus the opportunity of making phone calls in peace and discreetly. Last but not least, our ambassadors, who bring our services to the attention of children, had to stop their activities completely at times, as most of the youth events at which they were normally present did not take place. In the course of the pandemic, new helplines were created, offering different services for children as well as for parents.

**DEMANDES SELON ÂGE ET SEXE**  
**ANFRAGEN NACH ALTER UND GESCHLECHT**

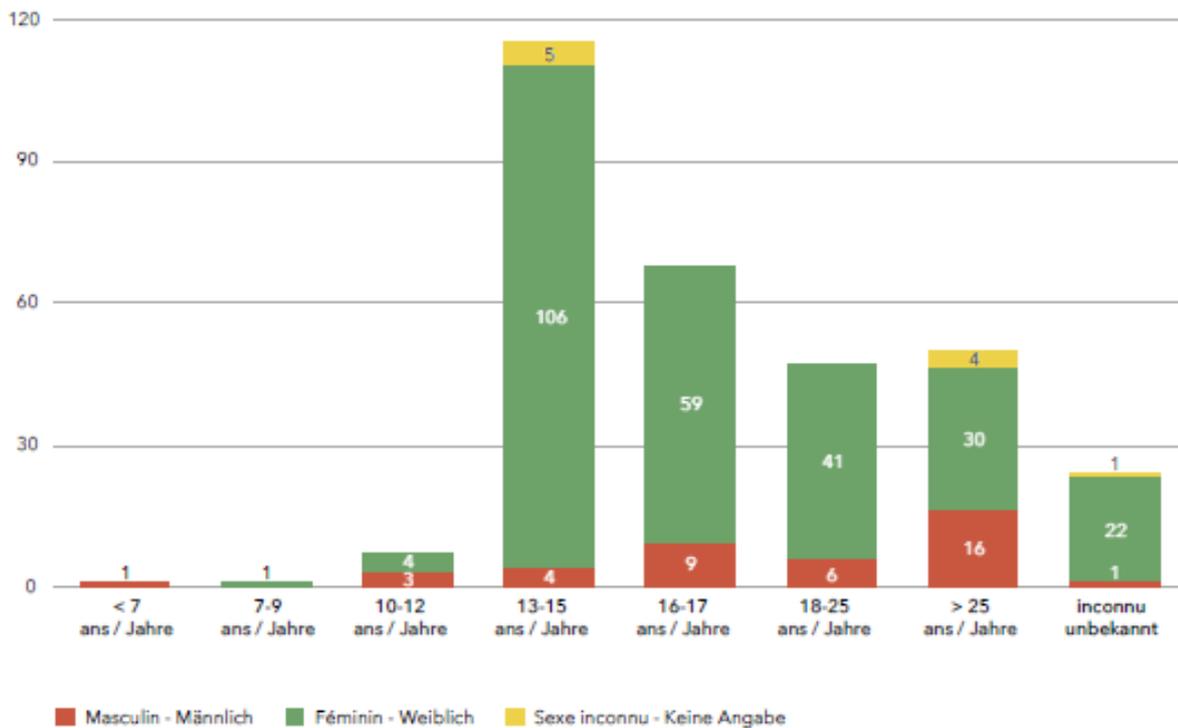
**N-313**

The online counselling format seemed to work better in these unusual times, which developed into a real crisis for some families and young people.

**3.2 ONLINE HELP**

**HELP REQUESTS CLASSIFIED BY AGE AND SEX**

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Overall many more young people contacted us for online help in 2020. There was an increase of 33% as compared with the previous year.

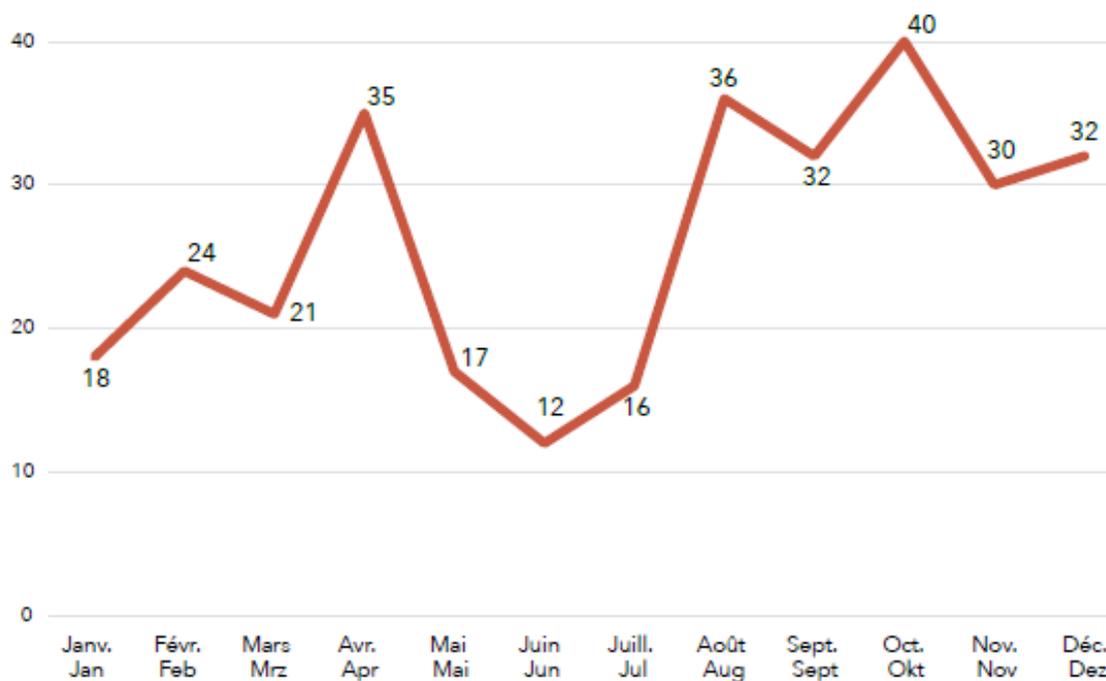
The largest category was the 13-15 age group, followed by 16-17 year-olds. That confirms the trend of the previous year that people seeking advice are on the whole younger than before.

Online help is mainly requested by girls and young women.

## NOMBRE DE CONTACTS AU COURS DE L'ANNÉE ANZAHL UND VERLAUF DER KONTAKTE

N-313

### NUMBER OF CONTACTS DURING THE YEAR

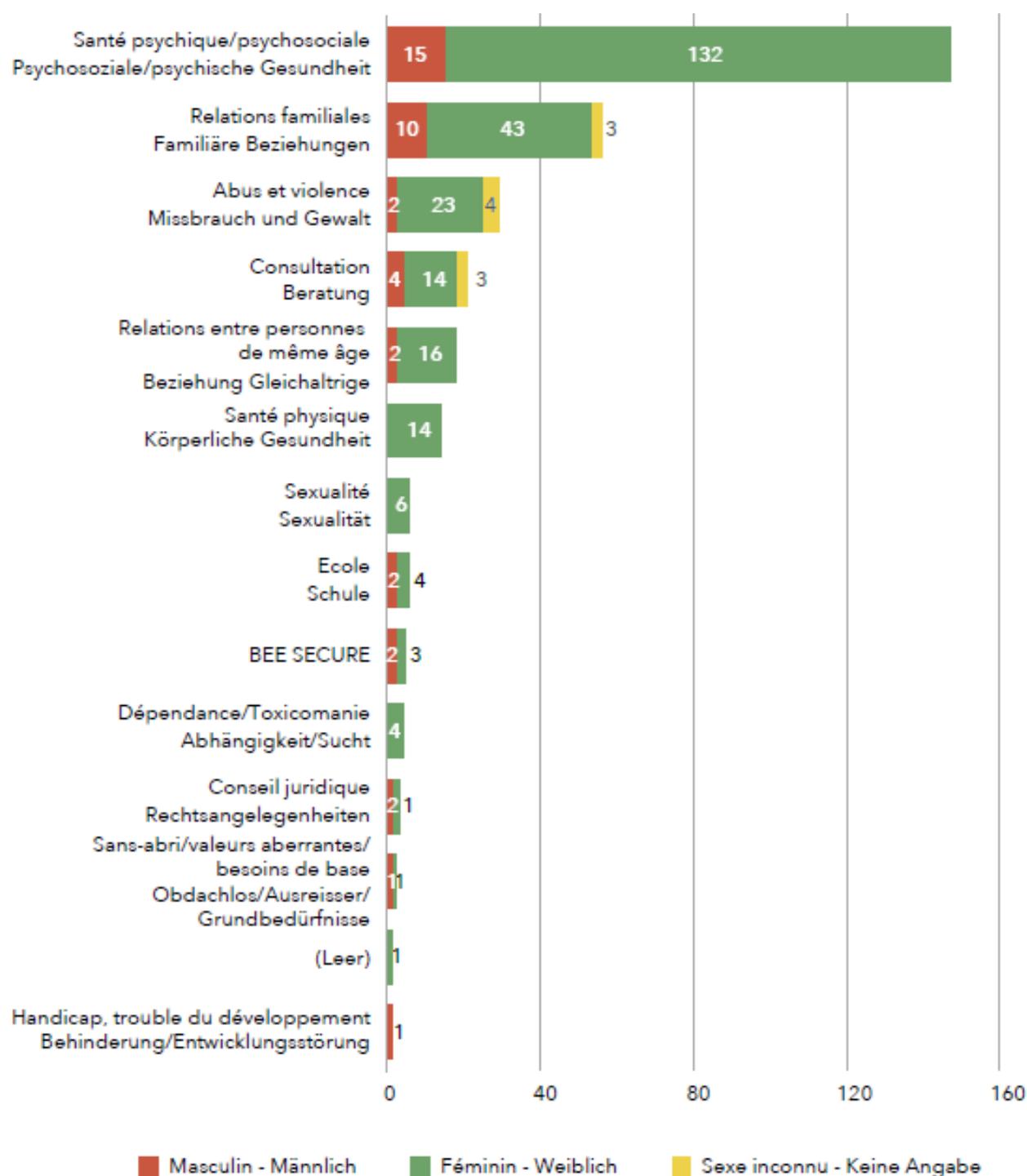


The curve depicts an interesting phenomenon. If we compare the 1 1 6 1 1 1 Kanner-Jugendtelefon curve against that of online help, there is a contrast in contact behavior. While for the 1 1 6 1 1 1 hotline the number of calls increased during the months of May, June and July, these were comparatively quiet times for online help, which overall rose to a very high level.

## SUJETS PRINCIPAUX ZENTRALE PROBLEMNENNUNGEN

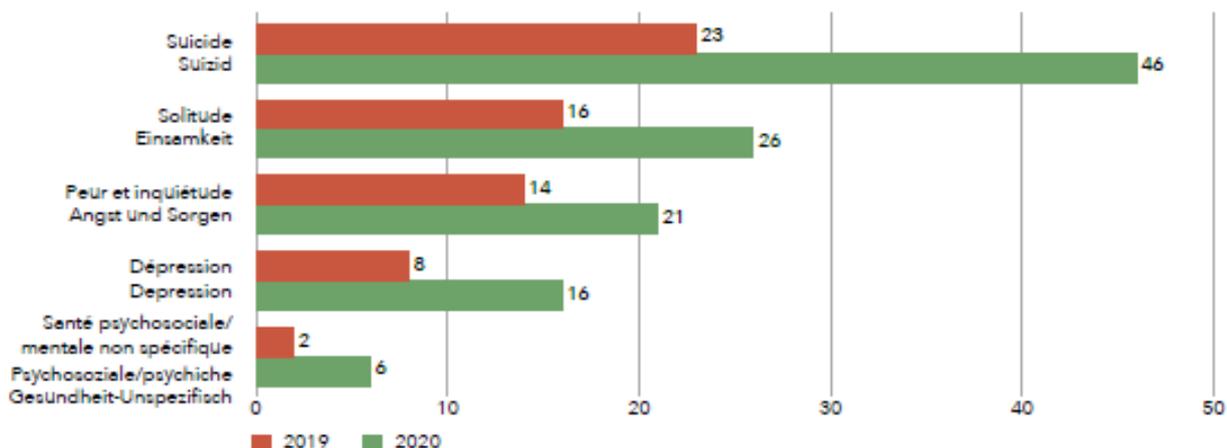
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### MAIN TOPICS



As in previous years, young people turn to online help for issues that weigh upon them. This counseling format is particularly favored by young people in crisis.

The theme of "mental health" (147) is the main topic, as in preceding years. However, this year the number of contacts in that category increased significantly. The rise in the number of contacts concerning loneliness, depression, anxiety, worry, pressure, latent and acute suicidal tendencies and self-harming behaviour reflects the fact that the pandemic situation is weighing down heavily on the young. This is illustrated by the following graphic:



Contacts concerning "family relations" (56 contacts) continue to occupy the second place this year. In the foreground are conflicts with parents, but also the difficult consequences of parents' separation/divorce or a parent having an addiction problem.

What is striking this year is the increase in contacts on the subject of "abuse and violence", which went from 6th place in 2019 to 3rd place in 2020 (29 contacts). Online help's low threshold assists young people to overcome feelings of fear and shame and, often, to tackle issues of sexual, physical or psychological violence for the first time.

In 4th place are contacts relating to "counseling" (21 contacts). This category mainly includes multiple contacts. We help some young people in this way over a long period.

Contacts on the topic of "peer relations" decreased slightly in the year of the pandemic, going from 3rd place in 2019 to 5th (18 contacts). Conflicts with friends (quarrels, exclusion, discrimination), as well as conflicts and relationship problems were discussed.



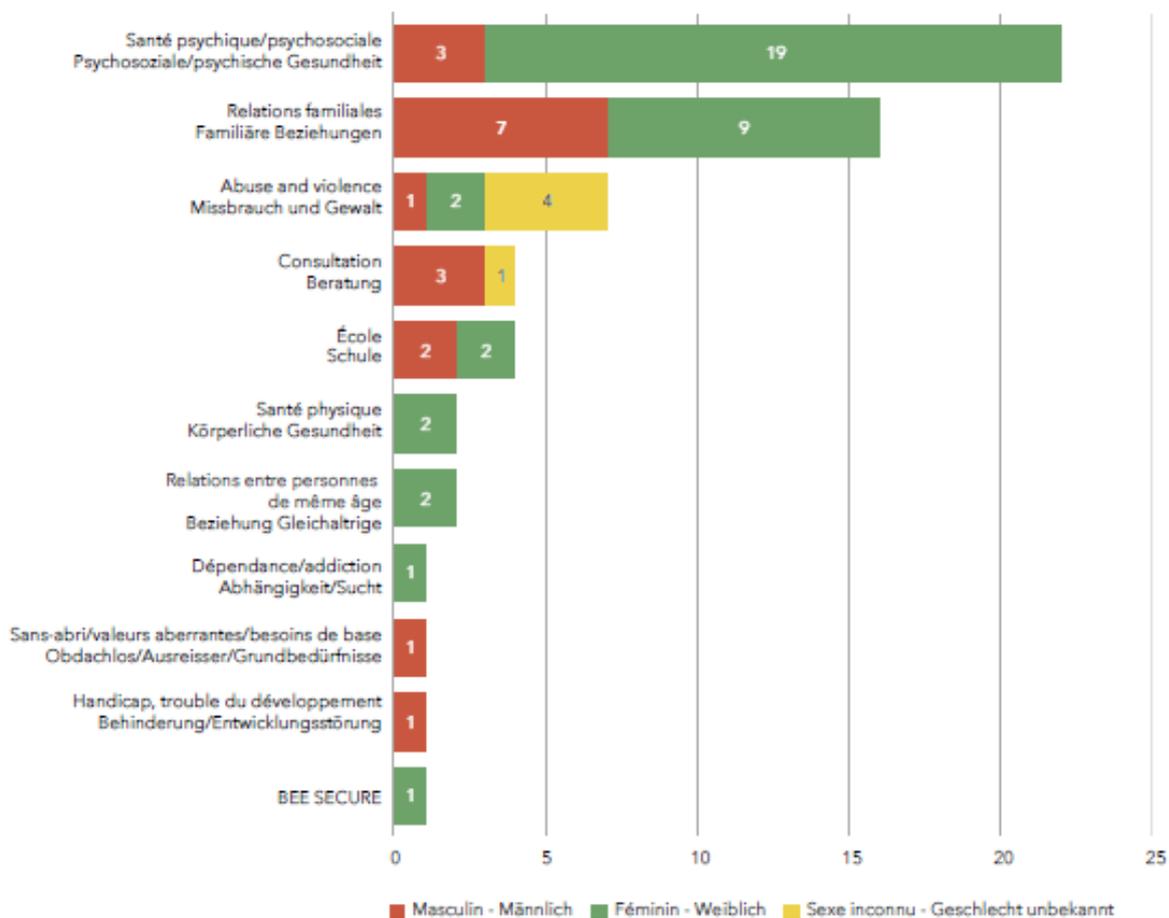
## ONLINE HELP FOR ENGLISH SPEAKERS

This year we had almost double the number of contacts (from 31 to 61). Our intensive public relations work last year seems to have borne results (video in English with Tessy Antony of Nassau, produced by and with students from European School I, Darkness into Light; Open Days in English-speaking schools; “posts” in English on Facebook and Instagram; information on the KJT's services communicated to employees of European institutions as support during the pandemic, etc.).

We note that this year again, more contacts (1/3) were made by parents or guardians (20 adults over 30 years old). Most contacts were from young people aged 16-17 (15), followed closely by those in the 13-15 age group (14). Online help was contacted more often by girls (38) than by boys (18) (gender unknown 5).

## SUJETS PRINCIPAUX ZENTRALE PROBLEMNENNUNGEN

N=61



### MAIN TOPICS

Once again this year, the main themes of online help in English are "psycho-social/mental health" (13 in 2019, 22 in 2020). The topics are similar to those of online help in Luxembourgish/ German and French, relating predominantly to anxiety, worry, loneliness and suicide.

As compared with 2019, we had a lot more conversations on the subject of family relationships, abuse and violence. This was most likely due to the specific situation of the pandemic, as with the other helplines.



## **KANNER-JUGENDTELEFON AMBASSADORS**

Since 2014, the ambassadors team has been visiting schools, Maisons Relais and events all over the country. The 7-member team consists of volunteers, former members of the 1 1 6 1 1 1 telephone counselling service. When necessary, the team of ambassadors is supported by permanent staff of the KJT. The aim of this outreach activity is to give as many children and young people as possible the assurance that there is a place where they can bring their worries at any time and where they are always welcome - "No one should be left alone." This primarily takes the form of interactive workshops. The "Ambassadors" project, launched in 2014, is now well established, and a psychologist has been available since June to generate more tasks in connection with organizing and supporting the team.

This exchange concerning the services and basic principles of the KJT helps to build trust and facilitates access for children and young people. Not only does it give students and teachers an opportunity to learn about the number 1 1 6 1 1 1, but it also makes them aware of how and under what conditions they can use it.

All invitations are very welcome!

Even in this unusual year, ambassadors were on the move. Together with the children and pedagogical teams, they rose to the challenge to work together during the pandemic and adapted workshops to hygiene measures. A permanent standstill was not an option for the ambassador's team: they care too much about their task of bringing the KJT number to the attention of children and young people. They found a way to show their presence, which was more important than ever, despite distancing and masks. Students needed to know that the KJT continues to provide a point of contact for them. With the motto "spatial distance, not social distance", the ambassadors again visited schools in all regions of the country. Equipped with masks, disinfectant and a lot of joy and commitment in their luggage, 33 out of 51 planned workshops were held (42 workshops were held in classes in 2019). As a result, about 561 children were spoken to directly and made aware that KJT is there for them even, and more especially, in these Corona times.

Meeting with ambassadors can really open the door for some children and young people to seek help.

While visits could take place in the Maisons Relais and schools, it was a quiet time for public events. Traditional dates such as the Digi Rallye, Teenage Dream or World Play Day were victims of the lockdown. The ambassadors also ventured into new territory: they took part in the virtual "Journée d'orientation", organized by the "Office National de l'Accueil" (ONA). An ambassador avatar was present at the virtual booth and gave information to visitors to the stand via Chat. KJT was also on the road in the municipality of Dudelange. Here we could introduce ourselves via Power Point on the virtual "Matinée santé" (Health Morning).

Without the ambassadors, our presence in the public sphere in its present form and frequency would not be possible, even though it is absolutely essential.

The ambassadors give KJT a face.



## 11.0 IN FOCUS

### **Happiness is precious and fragile. How can we preserve it?**

We have just lived through a year of pandemic during which we all witnessed the disruption of our daily routine and curbs on our freedom. Many children and young people felt more isolated and sad than ever before. In that context, we would like to reflect upon the subject of happiness.

We know that happiness is an extremely precious part of our lives, but it is also fragile, as it is often very elusive and can change quickly. We all wish from the bottom of our hearts to capture it in both hands and enjoy it for as long as possible.

Handling such a delicate feeling requires sensitivity, awareness and tenderness. These human traits come in useful when we live together in our families and seek to achieve what we call *happiness*.

Our feeling of happiness can be very fleeting and fragile if we do not respect or pay attention to it. It can depart quickly and unexpectedly, even before we notice its presence. If we don't seize it, hold it in both hands and enjoy it when it's there, it can shatter very quickly, just like glass.

The following short story illustrates the significance of awareness: a poor widow found an egg and joyfully called her children together to fantasize about what she could do with it. She did not pay attention, though, and the egg fell from her hand and broke. That is what can happen in our families as well, if we organize our life together with only future pleasures in mind. Tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, next summer, the next vacation, when I retire ..., but not today, not now.

But the glory of human happiness lies in the present moment, in the here and now. Marie de Ebner-Eschenbach once said: "He who masters the present moment masters life." Many people worry intensely and often about what they could have done or should have done, they worry too much about what was not good or wasn't exactly as they would have liked.

Yesterday can become so important that there is no longer room for today. On the other hand, there are many people who waste a large part of their life energy just thinking about tomorrow. But life, and not just in the family, takes place in the present.

A smile today, kindness or tenderness at this very moment, the mutual exchange of spontaneous and passing feelings, ideas and wishes, the need to take the other by the arm, to be there for them today, to tackle everyday problems together, are decisive for happiness.

Matthias Jung, the doctor and psychotherapist, rightly pointed out that it is not real life, with all its problems and difficulties, that overwhelms and torments us so much, but rather the "unlived life" that makes us feel more and more depressed. Listening to each other, attentiveness and the many other small gestures of tenderness are all necessary in a family, especially during a time like a pandemic. During the first confinement, we had enough experience of suddenly not being able to give love and care when someone close was seriously ill and completely isolated.



Just as a glass usually shatters in places that have already been weakened by many small cracks which then fall apart at the slightest impact, so it is in family life. It is not great conflicts, overt violence, an evil plan or serious physical or mental injury that lead suddenly to unhappiness. Rather, it is the many daily, unspectacular, minor acts of unkindness or indifference in the past which are barely noticed and not discussed together, that, in a perhaps otherwise harmless stressful situation, can suddenly lead to a crisis in the family.

The greatest danger probably lies not in instances of bitter and open conflict, but in underhand nagging, in many thoughtless "small" unkindness's.

Important relationships, like the handling of glass, require sensitivity and tact; when they are really successful, it is not just down to „pure luck", but to daily and honest efforts to be attentive and caring with one's partner, children and grandparents, especially in these times of pandemic. In our pursuit of happiness as friends, couples and families, what matters is what Kurt Tucholsky described as: "A little tenderness - and all would be well."

## 12.0 Outlook

This year, marked by the pandemic, required a great degree of flexibility on the part of KJT. Most of all, letting go/abandoning and permanently adapting useful routines at the organisational level, in the light of a constantly changing (social) situation, presented a challenge for everyone. Hence, it is not surprising that a little more stability and certainty in planning is at the top of our wish list. We really hope that we can implement our proposed training program planned for 2021: if there is one thing the past year has shown us, it is the importance of continuous training programs for KJT. They are a way for voluntary staff to connect and motivate each other through the training courses offered. Sessions on recurring topics such as “Dealing with suicidal young people” strengthen everyone’s confidence in their own counselling skills.

After almost a year and a half of preparation and planning, we are eagerly anticipating the successful launch of Chat Counselling in May 2021. We have put together a highly motivated “peer to peer” counselling team during many individual and group meetings, elaborated a concept and developed and adapted the necessary software. We look forward to supporting the chat counsellors and integrating them into our service. We are now implementing our plan to offer young people an additional, contemporary means of communication that will directly support, empower, comfort and encourage them in their lives. Remember, that young people can only use what they are aware of. Here we count upon the strong support of everyone to promote the new service. Meanwhile the planning for a social media campaign is underway.



The development of the new website took time and now we are looking forward impatiently to the feedback. Clarity and user friendliness have been improved, especially in the mobile version. Here, retrospectively and prospectively, we want to say a big thank you to Farshad Afsharimehr, who voluntarily oversaw the project, with his fantastic vigour and knowledge, and to all those who made the project possible with their generous donations. The vision will become reality in May 2021.

At the same time the BOD campaign, which had a wonderful start, will continue and we hope that the certified training “Even children have worries - BOD helps: How to talk to children about their worries and fears”, which was badly slowed down by the pandemic, will resume soon. The same goes for the awareness activities of our ambassadors.

In the second half of the year, we will launch the “Stop sexual violence against children” campaign, a project that has been developed by the “Täter-AG” (Working Group on Perpetrators) and the BEE Secure Advisory Board, together with ECPAT Luxembourg. Mainly planned as a social media campaign, the first thematic block (language and definition) will be brought to the target group in September. The second block (reporting to the BEE SECURE Stoptline), which is designed for the general public, will be published in October, and the third block (political and social dimension) will be the focus in November.

It is therefore a busy year that lies ahead of us, during which we will already be looking forward to 2022, when we celebrate the 30th anniversary of KJT.



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