

Violence Against Children
Follow-up report
2 years later

Child Helpline International

Foreword

This Violence Against Children (VAC) follow up report provides an overview of the work done by child helplines around the world to implement the VAC Recommendations made in the UN Secretary General's Study on Violence Against Children in 2006 (Please see: <http://www.childhelplineinternational.org/en/publications>).

In his final conclusions, Professor Pinheiro, the lead expert at the helm of the Study, explicitly recommended that child helplines be used and seen as an important mechanism for the protection of the rights of the child. The full protection of the rights of the child and the prevention of violence against children can only be achieved if a holistic approach is adopted. The implementation of the full set of VAC Recommendations is essential.

Child Helpline International (CHI) would like to thank the members of the Advocacy Taskforce whose advice has been invaluable in developing the 2008 VAC questionnaire. We would also like to thank the 34 child helplines who completed and returned the VAC questionnaire. Without their important input and feedback this report would not have been possible.

The CHI team

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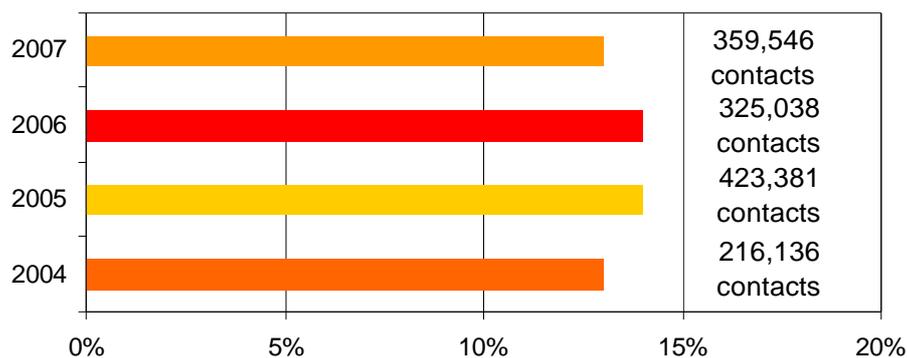
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Introduction

Child helplines around the world deal with cases of violence against children on a daily basis. Data collected by CHI consistently shows violence committed against children as one of the key reasons children contact child helplines. According to our 2007 data, abuse and violence accounted for 13% of all contacts that child helplines had with children and young people:

Child Helpline International has been collecting data since its inception in 2003. From then until now, abuse and violence continues to be one of the most important reasons children contact a child helpline (see chart 1).

Chart 1 Violence and abuse as percentage of total contacts in each year of collection



In the Secretary General's Study on Violence Against Children in 2006, Professor Paulo Pinheiro recommended child helplines 'through which children can report violence, speak to a trained counsellor in confidence and ask for support and advice.'¹ The vital role of child helplines was reiterated in the follow-up report one year later. In recommendation 18, Professor Pinheiro stated: 'Another relevant initiative is the creation of children's helplines, which are dedicated telephone lines or other channels for children and adults to report or discuss concerns or actual incidents.' The chart shows that contacts made to child helplines on issues related to violence and abuse cannot be

¹ Recommendation 8 of "UN Study on Violence Against Children," Report of the independent expert for the United Nations study on violence against children to the sixty-first session of the UN General Assembly, Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/231.

ignored. In 2007, nearly 300,000 calls were made to child helplines, in which the caller wanted to talk about violence that had occurred to themselves or a child that they knew.

Process

Child Helpline International remains committed to combating and preventing violence against children. In 2006, CHI for the first time collected information from the child helplines on the violence against children. A questionnaire was used that was adapted to the VAC recommendations. In this questionnaire child helplines were asked to monitor governments' policies on implementation of Recommendation 8 made in the Study on Violence against Children. The questionnaire, which was modelled after a matrix developed by the VAC Secretariat, proved difficult for child helplines to fill out.

In 2008, the VAC questionnaire was redeveloped to more adequately reflect the work of child helplines. The revised questionnaire was developed in cooperation with representatives from the child helpline network. The questionnaire has two objectives. Firstly, to outline the policies and activities of the child helpline in relation to the recommendations of the VAC report. Secondly, to strengthen awareness about the VAC recommendations amongst child helplines. In May 2008, the VAC questionnaire was sent to child helplines in the CHI network. Thirty-four child helplines completed the questionnaire (see box 1)

Box 1: The following child helplines completed the questionnaire:

Botswana, Guinea Conakry, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Senegal, South Africa, Swaziland, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Democratic Republic Congo, Lesotho, Mozambique, Tanzania, Argentina, Peru, United States of America (Switchboard), Australia, New Zealand (Kidsline), New Zealand (What's Up), South Korea, Austria, Albania, Belarus, Croatia, Denmark, Greece (Smile of the Child), the Netherlands, Slovakia, UAE Sharjah, Jordan, Iran.

How this report is organised

This report consists of two chapters. The first chapter provides five recommendations made by CHI and are based on responses from the CHI network to the VAC questionnaire. Moreover, the recommendations build upon recommendations made in the two previous reports submitted by CHI. The second chapter contains case studies from child helplines on abuse and violence². Finally, the report concludes with several recommendations. The Annex contains the original VAC questionnaire that was sent to the members and the results of the statistical analysis.

² Each year CHI collects data from the child helplines on the contacts that they have with the children. The results are compiled in *Connecting to Children*. It outlines the characteristics of the contacts the child helplines have with the children, e.g. their reason for calling, the age and gender of the caller. It also provides information on the child helplines in the CHI network, e.g. their years of existence and cost of a call to the child helpline. The sixth edition of *Connecting to Children*, outlining data for the year 2006 has been published in August 2008. For this edition of *Connecting to Children* 62 child helplines submitted information, totaling more than 10,5 million calls that have been submitted by them during the data collection efforts of CHI. For more information please go to our website, www.childhelplineinternational.org

Chapter 1: CHI Recommendations

General: Responses to the VAC questionnaire

The VAC questionnaire was sent to child helplines in May 2008. Thirty four members responded, representing all regions: Africa, Americas & Caribbean, Asia Pacific, Europe and Middle East and Northern Africa (MENA). The distribution of the responses can be seen in table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of responses to VAC questionnaire		
Region	Frequency	%
Africa	14	41%
Americas and the Caribbean	6	18%
Asia Pacific	4	12%
Europe	8	23%
MENA	2	6%
Total	34	100%

Recommendation 1

Governments and international stakeholders should recognise child helplines as vital mechanisms in preventing and combating of violence against children.

Children will contact a child helpline if they know that a trustworthy person is on the other end, willing and able to listen to them. Child protection and child rights form the core of child helplines. Child helplines are vital in the struggle to eliminate worldwide violence against children.

The number of contacts about violence and abuse show that child helplines can be viewed as a trusted means for advice and support. Each year CHI collects information on the number of contacts made to child helplines (see footnote 2). Of the thirty-four child helplines that completed the VAC questionnaire, twenty-eight submitted data on the contacts they had with children for 2007. These child helplines answered more than 2,7 million calls from children and youngsters (see Annex III).

What child helplines say...

“We developed a new referral system in which victims of abuse are worm referred which means that after a procedure of informed consent, we make a conference call with a caregiver of the crisis intervention team of the youthcare organisation in his living place. So the child does not need to phone himself to this crisis intervention team”
Kindertelefoon, Netherlands

Recommendation 2

Governments and other national and international stakeholders should work with child helplines in designing holistic strategies tailored to prevent violence against children

What child helplines say...

“Our childline is often not invited or included in the planning stages of strategies but responds to requests to implement training and provide support (psychosocial and protection). It is essential that we are.” *Childline, Zimbabwe*

“The director is an active member of the Commission of Child Abuse in Aruba and she has previously worked with directors of various NGOs to set up and implement a focal point for Child Abuse. Bureau SosteneMi (the Child Abuse focal point) has existed for nearly two years and our child helpline is working very closely with this organisation.” *Telefon pa Hubentud, Aruba*

Child protection strategies and campaigns cannot exist in isolation; constructive and direct services are needed to reach all children who are victims of abuse and violence. Child helplines are such a mechanism. Child helplines offer necessary support to victims of violence and abuse.

Child helplines recognise the vital role they have in combating and preventing violence against children. Along with stakeholders (and often with children themselves), child helplines work to design policies which combat violence against children.

Key decision-makers should acknowledge the role child helplines play in securing the protection of children. Child helplines should be looked to as a source in the designing and implementing of policies to prevent violence against children. Holistic approaches which look to the expertise of each actor in the child protection system will be more successful in eradicating abuse and violence against children.

Table 2: Cooperation with stakeholders to design prevention strategies

Cooperation	No. of child helplines	
	No.	%
no	3	9%
yes	29	91%
Total	32	100%

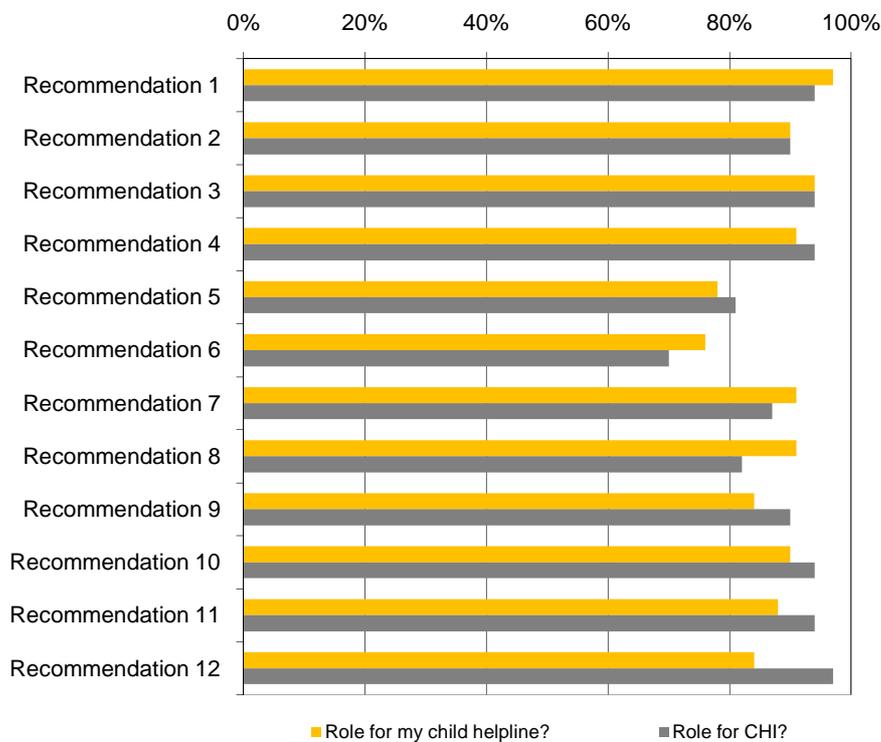
Almost every respondent to the questionnaire works with other stakeholders to design and implement general policies and activities to prevent and combat abuse and violence (see table 2).

Table 3: Child helplines have acted to prevent violence against children

My child helpline...	Child helplines	
	No.	%
did not consider this a task of our organisation to fulfil	2	7%
did consider, but did not take any action	2	7%
made plans but did not take any practical action yet	3	11%
made plans and implemented them	13	48%
Other...	7	26%
Total	27	100%

Additionally, responses to the questionnaire show an overwhelming support amongst child helplines for a role in the implementation of the VAC Recommendations (see chart 2).

Chart 2: percentage of child helplines that state that they should have role in the implementation of VAC recommendation...



This shows two things:

- 1) That child helplines view themselves as catalysts for change; and,
- 2) That CHI as a network can work towards monitoring and implementing the VAC Recommendations (see chart 2). Many child helplines already cooperate with stakeholders to design plans combating violence against children.

In the past year, more than 90% of participants mentioned their cooperation with stakeholders.

As shown in table 2, not all plans have been implemented. Only two of the respondents did not design strategies to combat violence against children. These child helplines indicated they either lacked resources or that their services were not in existence at the time.

What child helplines say...

“There is extensive cooperation with the police including high level contacts in the Missing Children Project. We also cooperate with the NGO e-Slovensko (for safer internet) and with the Ministry of Interior, the Day Care Crisis Center (providing services for children with mothers, mostly violence within family). Additionally, we actively participate in UNICEF conferences on violence against children.” TOM, Slovakia

“We cooperate with many organisations in the United Arab Emirates to help us reach out and help child victims of abuse and violence.” *Social Service Department, Sharjah United Arab Emirates*

Recommendation 3

Governments should allocate appropriate resources to child helplines to ensure child helplines can offer proper training to their staff and operate 24-hours per day.

Child helplines are dedicated to assisting children. Data collected by CHI shows that children look to child helplines as an important means to talk about their problems. Child helplines need the resources to carry out long term planning and related activities.

The response to the VAC questionnaire showed that many child helplines, especially in developing countries, lack an awareness of the VAC recommendations. The analysis shows that there is a relationship between the awareness and the engagement with the implementation of the Recommendations (see table 4). This proves that if child helplines are to play a real and meaningful role in enhancing the child protection system, quality improvement and training on the issue of violence against children is essential. Child helplines need the assistance of governments to achieve this.

What child helplines say...

“We see ourselves as implementing the VAC report recommendations through our everyday work in answering calls from children suffering from violence, connecting them to additional care and support services as necessary, collecting data on cases of violence against children, and presenting these in publications and conference talks, etc.” *What’s Up, New Zealand*

“As a national child helpline operating for 20 years, it is one of our priorities to fight against violence against children - daily. We publish articles, press-releases and TV-spots on our website to raise awareness continuously.” *Rat auf Draht, Austria*

The analysis of the responses also shows that a relationship exists between the region where a child helpline is located and the active engagement in the implementation of the VAC recommendation. In the African region, many child helplines did not actively engage in the implementation of the VAC recommendations. At the same time, many

Table 4: Analysis of awareness and relation with role in implementation

The child helpline was engaged in implementation?	Our child helpline...						Total
	Was not aware of existence of VAC recommendations	Was aware, but did not consider a role in implementation	Did consider, but our organisation did not have the capacity	Made plans and implemented them	Other		
no	9	1	2	0	5	17	
yes	1	1	0	10	3	15	
Total	10	2	2	10	8	32	

child helplines in this group were also not aware of the existence of the VAC recommendations. Respondents for both groups indicated that they either lacked resources to provide training to their staff on the subject of abuse and violence or that they were not operating yet as a child helpline in the past year.

Although the majority of the respondents did not target advocacy efforts to actively implement VAC recommendations, most child helplines do strive to prevent violence against children via their general policies. Child helplines consider the prevention of violence and abuse as central to their objectives.

Data shows that child helplines are able to reach more children if they are operating 24 hours per day, compared to child helplines that are open fewer hours. Statistical analysis of the data that CHI collects from the child helplines on the number of contacts they have with children shows that child helplines are able to reach three times as many children if they are available 24 hours per day³.

What child helplines say...

“Violence against children will not wait for a specific timeline. The majority of cases are reported early in the morning between 4 – 6 am and late evening between 9 – 11 pm.”
Tithandize, Malawi

Violence and abuse does not adhere to a 9-to-5 schedule and it is important for victims of child abuse and violence that they are able to reach support that they can trust free of cost at all times of the day wherever they are. Contacts with child helplines show that many calls regarding violence against children are made during the night and early morning. However not all child helpline have sufficient funding to operate during these hours. Structural support from donors and governments is vital to achieve this.

³ Analysis of data collected on the contacts that child helplines have with the children for the year 2007. Analysed by Dr. Ruben Fukkink of the University of Amsterdam. The full analysis can be received on request from CHI.

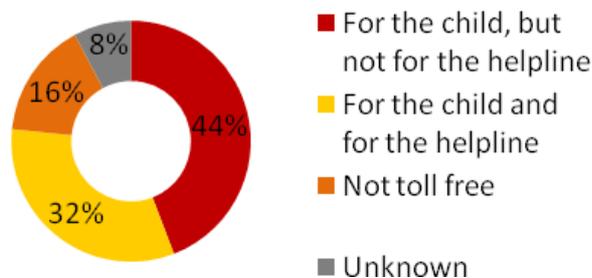
Recommendation 4

Governments, actors from the telecommunications sector and other stakeholders should cooperate to allocate to the child helpline a short, 3-4 digit, toll-free telephone number for both the child and the child helpline.

Data collected by CHI shows a relationship between the number of calls a child helpline receives and the status of its telephone number: child helplines with a toll-free number are called more often by children. Statistical analysis of the number of contacts that child helplines have with the children shows that child helplines with a toll-free number are able to reach ten times more children than if children have to pay for their call⁴.

Child helplines are able to reach more children if they can be reached through a toll-free number. Is it therefore essential that child helplines have a telephone number that is free of cost for the child so that every child has the ability to call a child helplines no matter where they are and whatever situation they are in.

Chart 3 Toll free status land line



⁴ Analysis of data collected on the contacts that child helplines have with the children for the year 2007. Analysed by Dr. Ruben Fukkink of the University of Amsterdam. The full analysis can be received on request from CHI

Chart 3 provides an overview of the percentage of child helplines in the CHI network that had a toll-free number in 2007. Still many child helplines do not have telephone number that is toll-free for both the child and the helpline. This means that many children risk slipping through the safety net and the valuable resources of child helplines are spent on paying for the phone bill.

Children that are the victim of violence or abuse often experience confusion and shock. They need to be able to dial an easy-to-remember telephone number at a moment's notice. Research in Ireland has shown that children can easily remember short three-to-four digit numbers. Childline India teaches street children to dial the toll-free telephone number 1098 to reach the child helpline. Experience shows that these marginalised children use and remember these short numbers to their benefit.

Box 2: Examples of harmonisation of short telephone numbers for child helplines.

Europe

In the European Union, the European Commission allocated the telephone number 116 111 to child helplines. As a result, the European Conference of Postal and Telecom Agencies (CEPT) has requested that all 48 members states across Europe follow the example of the European Commission and allocate the number 116 111 to child helplines. As a consequence of these decisions, child helplines in 11 European countries have been allocated this short, easy to remember telephone number.

Asia

In South Asia several child helplines have been allocated short, toll-free telephone numbers: In India and Nepal children can use the number 1098. In Maldives a child helpline will be launched shortly that will use the number 1412.

Americas

In the South America, the child helpline in Argentina uses the number 102. The child helpline in Aruba and Trinidad & Tobago can be dialled through 131, The Colombian child helpline can be reached through 106 and the Paraguayan child helpline uses 147.

Africa

In Africa an increasing amount of child helplines can be reached through the number 116. The child helpline in Kenya has launched this number and other countries are in the process to do so (e.g. Mozambique).

The examples (see box 2) show that a significant number of child helplines can be reached through a short telephone number. To be able to assist as many children as possible and prevent violence against children, all child helplines should be reachable via short, toll-free numbers at all times. Governments and telecommunication agencies should ensure the allocation of these vital resources to child helplines.

Recommendation 5

If no child helpline is active yet, governments should cooperate with other key stakeholders to establish a child helpline. This is a crucial step in countering violence against children.

Table 5: Number of child helplines in the CHI network	
Date	No. of child helplines
December 1, 2003	49
December 1, 2005	83
December 1, 2006	88
December 1, 2007	91
August 1, 2008	97

Stakeholders in the child protection system increasingly recognise the importance of child helplines. This is shown through the strong growth in the number of child helplines that are a part of the CHI network (see table 5).

Government support is vital in stages in establishing of a child helpline. Notwithstanding the growth in the number of child helplines and the support they receive from governments, many countries still lack a child helpline. Governments should support efforts in their country to establish a child helpline and provide assistance to an emerging child helpline. *Moreover, if a child helpline already exists in a country, governments and donors should support it and not double up efforts by establishing additional child helplines.*

Conclusion

Preventing and combating violence against children is important to the work of child helplines. For the most part, child helplines have designed policies to prevent violence and abuse of children through their work. Even so, child helplines do not always have policies to implement the recommendations. This can be attributed to a lack of awareness or the unavailability of resources.

Violence against children is a daily occurrence. The rights of children can only be protected if they are shielded from abuse and violence. The findings herein show that child helplines deem all VAC Recommendations vital. The Recommendation regarding child helplines cannot be implemented in isolation. Stakeholders in the child protection system, including child helplines, should cooperate to implement a holistic approach to fully implement all Recommendation made by Professor Pinheiro to eradicate violence against children.

Child helplines are the first point of contact for many children who are victims of violence and abuse. The contacts made to child helplines shows that violence and abuse remains one of the most important reasons for children to contact a child helpline. Violence against children is not a thing of the past. Continued efforts are needed to protect children from becoming a victim of violence and abuse.

Child helplines are important for children to assist children in their daily lives and protect them from becoming a victim. The information that child helplines have on children's issues should be used to inform the policies of other stakeholders in the child protection system, such as government agencies, hospitals and police.

Many child helplines indicated that they lack knowledge on the VAC Recommendations, while still working to protect children from violence and abuse through their policies and in their daily activities. CHI remains committed to increasing awareness of the VAC Recommendations.

Chapter 2: Case studies

Child helplines deal with cases of violence against children on a daily basis. This chapter presents a few case studies on violence and abuse of children and outlines how child helplines have dealt with them. To protect the identity of the children, the case studies have been slightly altered.

Physical abuse and violence

Asia-Pacific

The mother of a young boy called the child helpline for help. Her son, while attending preschool, was beaten by the teacher and his side was bruised. The mother reported the incident to the head master and asked for help. Despite the teacher's confession, no action had been taken by the school. The boy, who became very anxious, refused to go to school. The counsellor from the helpline provided the mother with information to help her take care of her son and guided her to make an official report to preschool board, including pictures of the boy's bruises.

The counsellor also contacted the pre-school, demanding action. The school finally responded by conducting a critical reflection meeting to review the teacher's mistake and asked her to officially apologise to the boy and his family. The school board also agreed to move the boy to another class if he did not want to continue with the teacher. The boy's mother called and thanked the child helpline for its support.

Europe

An eleven year old girl reported that she was the victim of violence from a group of girls on the street. The counsellor first actively listened and reflected on the girl's expressed emotions with her: defenceless, patronised and weak. The counsellor partnered with the crisis intervention team in order to calm the girl and develop a plan of action. After a lengthy period of time, the girl was soothed and could reflect with the counsellor on her options. She eventually decided to inform her parents and the police.

Europe

A girl called the child helpline and said the following: "I am 12 years old and I called to tell you that my classmate is being beaten by his father. I think he was badly beaten

yesterday night because he has many injuries on his face and hands. I asked him what happened and he said he had a bad fight with his brother. I didn't believe him because his brother is 8 years old and he couldn't hurt him that bad. I also saw some blood stains on his clothes. This morning his mother brought him to school and I saw she had some injuries on her face too."

The child helpline's counsellor got all the necessary information from the girl and contacted partners in the Child Protection Agency, Police Department and School Inspectorate, whose interventions proved vital for the child's safety.

Sexual abuse

Asia-Pacific

A woman contacted the child helpline for advice on how to help an abused child. She began to disclose the circumstances of the abuse, but withheld the details of the child's complete address. The woman promised that she would call back. The child helpline specialist coordinated with local government units to locate the child. The child, an eight year old girl was found thanks to these efforts. She was being raped by her uncle and grandfather. The child helpline started a legal process to hold the adults responsible, but attempts to find them have been unsuccessful. The girl has been provided with therapy and enrolled in a rehabilitation programme. She is now attending school and enjoys theatre.

Europe

A young teenage girl called the child helpline and began talking about every day things. She asked for general information about the child helpline and its policies. As the relationship and trust in the counsellor grew, the girl mentioned her father's sexual abuse. It had been going on for years, but she did not really understand that it was wrong until recently. Her mother didn't know and the girl didn't think her mother would believe her. Moreover, she didn't feel that there was another adult she could trust. After providing the girl with emotional support, the caller finally allows the counsellor to put her into contact with social services. The girl contacts the service, and after several sessions, provides them with her contact information so that they can intervene.

Europe

A mother called after finding a text message on the mobile phone of her daughter. In it the girl said that she had been drugged and raped a year and a half earlier. The girl had stayed in touch with the rapist, who had put (pornographic) pictures of her on the Internet. The father of the girl lived abroad and did not know anything about the situation. The child helpline contacted police in the area in order to place a confidential report. The police worked together with the helpline, which offered guidance and consultancy, to take legal action against the rapist and provide support to the mother and daughter.

Middle East and Northern Africa

A person called the child helpline stating that his relative was sexually abusing his own daughters. The person clarified that the father had threatened to divorce the mother if she told anyone about what he was doing. The child helpline immediately informed a representative of the Ministry of Interior, which sent a police force to the man's house. The man was arrested and the girls were given therapy.

Americas and the Caribbean

The child helpline was contacted by a children's home who had been approached by a mother with her five year old daughter. The mother was looking for guidance and information for her daughter who had recently been sexually abused by her father. The child helpline recorded all the details of the case and guided the children's home staff member in intervening quickly. The mother was suffering from extreme anxiety and the daughter appeared to be in shock.

The child helpline faxed the details of the case to the Public Ministry and the police for them to intervene directly. Meanwhile, the girl was looked after in a health centre and received psychological attention by the psychologists of the children's home. The child helpline followed up with the institutions in order to ensure that the case received proper attention. The child helpline also facilitated a workshop for civil agents and institutional personnel on child abuse, sexual abuse, and effective ways of detecting abuse cases in the community where the case occurred.

Americas and the Caribbean

A fourteen year old girl phoned the child helpline several times to talk about a problem with the driver who took her to school by car every day. The driver had tried to kiss her. She was afraid to tell anyone. She didn't want the driver to lose his job because he married to one of her cousins and to cause problems within the family. The child helpline counsellor together with the girl analysed the arguments in favour and against to tell the girl's mother of the incidents. The counsellor tried to show the girl the danger of keeping the driver's behaviour a secret. They also tried to identify a person within the family with whom the girl could speak in trust. Several days later the girl called back and said that she had spoken with her mother and that they had decided together to report the situation.

Africa

A man called the child helpline to report that his neighbour was sexually abusing the caller's niece. He explained he stumbled upon them by accident and that when he confronted his niece, she confirmed that she had been having sexual relations with him for over a year in exchange for money. The uncle was very disturbed by the fact that the sexual abuse had been occurring without his niece reporting the matter to him. The child helpline scheduled a meeting between the uncle and his niece to assist them in dealing with the matter. At the meeting, the uncle revealed that the neighbour had become notorious in their neighbourhood for making sexual advances at children. As part of his decision to ensure that the 'affair' would not continue between his niece and the neighbour, the niece was sent back to live with her father, who lived at quite a distance.

Africa

A 14 year old girl called the child helpline to report that her classmate was being sexually abused by her father. After child helpline counsellors interviewed the girl's classmate, they learned that her mother and father were alcoholics, which meant that she was often left alone. The child helpline intervened, inspected the home, and offered counselling to the traumatised child. They further asked the police to open an official investigation and arrest the father. The child helpline ensured that the girl was moved to a safe place, where she continued her education at a new school.

Neglect

Europe

A girl of thirteen called the child helpline alleging physical abuse and neglect from her mother. Her parents were divorced and her father had moved away and started a new family now. The girl said that she was very sad and lonely. The girl tried talking to her mother, but her mother was tired from her long work days; she often yelled at her, calling her names and criticising her, for example for not washing the dishes. Her mother spent weekends at her new boyfriend's house and left her daughter home alone. The girl tried to talk to her mother about her feelings to no avail. A volunteer talked to the girl about her school, friends and relationship with her teachers. Together they decided that the girl would talk about her problem with a school teacher and psychologist and she would also talk to her father. A volunteer explained to her that her father is a parent too and he had a responsibility to protect her.

Bullying

Europe

A young girl called the helpline because she was being bullied at school. Other girls hit her and called her names. This happened every single day and she did not want to go to school anymore. She was scared every time she left the classroom because other girls were waiting to tease her. Her parents did not know anything about what was happening at school. She told them that she didn't want to go to school because she was tired and had headaches. She had tried to talk to her mother once but her mother did not believe her. The counsellor encouraged the girl to talk to her parents and teachers and explored the reasons that prevented her from doing so. The counsellor advised her not to be alone at school but to walk around with other kids who would support her. The girl was encouraged to call the child helpline again if she needed more time to talk and additional support to overcome her difficulties.

Annex I: The CHI VAC questionnaire

Question 1

Has your child helpline in this past year engaged itself to implement the recommendations in the VAC report in wider society?

Yes No

Our child helpline: (Please tick the appropriate answer(s))

Was not aware of existence of VAC recommendations

Was aware, but did not consider a role in implementation

Did not consider this a task of our organisation to fulfil

Did consider, but VAC recommendations are not a priority for our helpline

Did consider, but did not take any action

Did consider, but our organisation did not have the capacity

Made plans but did not take any practical action yet

Made plans and implemented them

Other:.....

Please provide an explanation and/or examples of the answer you just provided

Please specify any hindrances or obstacles that your organisation has encountered over the past year that prevented implementation by your child helpline or while implementing the VAC recommendations

Is there any assistance your organisation would like from CHI and the network regarding development of a strategy for your organisation to implement the VAC recommendations?

Question 2

Has your child helpline this past year cooperated with other stakeholders to design tailored strategies to reach children who are the victims of abuse and violence?

Yes No

Please explain your answer explanation.

Our child helpline: (Please tick the appropriate answer(s))

Did not consider this a task of our organisation to fulfil

Did consider, but did not take any action

Did consider, but our organisation did not have the capacity

Made plans but did not take any practical action yet

Made plans and implemented them

Other:.....

Please provide an explanation and/or examples of the answer you just provided

Question 3

Do you think your child helpline and CHI as a network should help to implement the VAC recommendations? Below, the recommendations of the VAC are summarised. Please specify with each recommendation what your opinion is. Also please clarify your answers if you think this necessary.

Child helplines should help to:

1. Strengthen national and local commitment and action: Establishing a national focal point on violence against children and integration of cations into national planning processes.

My child helpline should help

Yes No

CHI as a network should help

Yes No

2. Prohibit all violence against children: Introducing and implementation of laws that prohibit violence against children.

My child helpline should help

Yes No

CHI as a network should help

Yes No

3. Prioritize prevention: Active prevention of all forms of violence against children

My child helpline should help

Yes No

CHI as a network should help

Yes No

4. Promote non-violent values and awareness-raising: Changing the attitude of everyone in the society toward violence against children, so that is no longer condoned or normalised.

My child helpline should help

Yes No

CHI as a network should help

Yes No

5. Enhance the capacity of all who work with and for children: To develop the capacity of all those who work with and for children to improve prevention, detection and responses.

My child helpline should help

Yes No

CHI as a network should help

Yes No

6. Provide recovery and social reintegration services: To provide accessible, child-sensitive and universal health and social services to victims of violence

My child helpline should help

Yes No

CHI as a network should help

Yes No

7. Ensure participation of children: This refers to States and their partners actively engaging with children and respecting their views.

My child helpline should help

Yes No

CHI as a network should help

Yes No

8. Create accessible and child-friendly reporting systems and services:

Establishing safe, well known and accessible mechanisms for children, their representatives and others to report violence against children.

My child helpline should help

Yes No

CHI as a network should help

Yes No

9. Ensure accountability and end impunity: Building confidence in the justice system by bringing all perpetrators of violence against children to justice.

My child helpline should help

Yes No

CHI as a network should help

Yes No

10. Address the gender dimension of violence against children: Paying attention to the integral role of gender biases in violence against children, and promote and protect the rights of women and girls as a part of all forms of violence against children.

My child helpline should help

Yes No

CHI as a network should help

Yes No

11. Develop and implement systematic national data collection and research:

Improving data collection and information systems on the incidence and forms of violence against children to be able to better respond to it.

My child helpline should help

Yes No

CHI as a network should help

Yes No

12. Strengthen international commitment: Ratification by states of international treaties and implementation of international standards.

My child helpline should help

Yes No

CHI as a network should help

Yes No

Please provide an explanation or rational you might have in the answers you have just provided for the role of your child helpline

Please provide an explanation or rational you might have in the answers you have just provided for the role of CHI as a network

Is there any additional assistance your organisation would like to receive from CHI for your organisation to realise this vision?

Question 4

Which three recommendation of the VAC study do you think are the three most important?

A summary of the recommendations can be found in Annex I.

I think Recommendations (please tick three boxes)

1 , 2 , 3 , 4 , 5 , 6 , 7 , 8 , 9 , 10 , 11 , 12

are most important

Please provide a rationale or explanation of the choices you made

Question 5

Do you have any other comments, points or ideas in relation to the VAC study and its recommendations and the role of child helplines that you would like to state?

Please do not hesitate to provide your honest opinion, all comments are welcome

Annex II: The VAC recommendations

Below the twelve VAC recommendations are listed. The recommendations are formulated for all stakeholders and states specifically to take action to prevent and combat violence against children.

Professor Pinheiro made the following recommendations in his final report:

A. Overarching recommendations

1. Strengthen national and local commitment and action: I recommend that all States develop a multifaceted and systematic framework to respond to violence against children which is integrated into national planning processes. A national strategy, policy or plan of action on violence against children with realistic and time-bound targets, coordinated by an agency with the capacity to involve multiple sectors in a broad-based implementation strategy, should be formulated. National laws, policies, plans and programmes should fully comply with international human rights and current scientific knowledge. The implementation of the national strategy, policy or plan should be systematically evaluated according to established targets and timetables, and provided with adequate human and financial resources to support its implementation. However, any strategy, policy, plan or programme to address the issue of violence against children must be compatible with the conditions and resources of the country under consideration.

2. Prohibit all violence against children: I urge States to ensure that no person below 18 years of age is subjected to the death penalty or a sentence of life imprisonment without possibility of release. I recommend that States take all necessary measures to immediately suspend the execution of all death penalties imposed on persons for crimes committed before reaching the age of 18 and take the appropriate legal measures to convert them into penalties that are in conformity with international human rights standards. The death penalty as a sentence imposed on persons for crimes committed before reaching the age of 18 should be abolished as a matter of highest priority.

I urge States to prohibit all forms of violence against children, in all settings, including all corporal punishment, harmful traditional practices, such as early and forced marriages, female genital mutilation and so-called honour crimes, sexual violence, and torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, as required by international treaties, including the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. I draw attention to general comment No. 8 (2006) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on the right of the child to protection from corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment (articles 19, 28, para. 2, and 37, inter alia) (CRC/C/GC/8).

3. Prioritize prevention: I recommend that States prioritize preventing violence against children by addressing its underlying causes. Just as resources devoted to intervening after violence has occurred are essential, States should allocate adequate resources to address risk factors and prevent violence before it occurs. Policies and programmes should address immediate risk factors, such as a lack of parent-child attachment,

family breakdown, abuse of alcohol or drugs, and access to firearms. In line with the Millennium Development Goals, attention should be focused on economic and social policies that address poverty, gender and other forms of inequality, income gaps, unemployment, urban overcrowding, and other factors which undermine society.

4. Promote non-violent values and awareness-raising: I recommend that States and civil society should strive to transform attitudes that condone or normalize violence against children, including stereotypical gender roles and discrimination, acceptance of corporal punishment and harmful traditional practices. States should ensure that children's rights are disseminated and understood, including by children. Public information campaigns should be used to sensitize the public about the harmful effects that violence has on children. States should encourage the media to promote non-violent values and implement guidelines to ensure full respect for the rights of the child in all media coverage.

5. Enhance the capacity of all who work with and for children: I recommend that the capacity of all those who work with and for children to contribute to eliminate all violence against them must be developed. Initial and in service training which imparts knowledge and respect for children's rights should be provided. States should invest in systematic education and training programmes both for professionals and non-professionals who work with or for children and families to prevent, detect and respond to violence against children. Codes of conduct and clear standards of practice, incorporating the prohibition and rejection of all forms of violence, should be formulated and implemented.

6. Provide recovery and social reintegration services: I recommend that States should provide accessible, child-sensitive and universal health and social services, including pre-hospital and emergency care, legal assistance to children and, where appropriate, their families when violence is detected or disclosed. Health, criminal justice and social service systems should be designed to meet the special needs of children.

7. Ensure participation of children: I recommend that States actively engage with children and respect their views in all aspects of prevention, response and monitoring of violence against them, taking into account article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Children's organizations and child-led initiatives to address violence guided by the best interests of the child should be supported and encouraged

8. Create accessible and child-friendly reporting systems and service: I recommend that States should establish safe, well-publicized, confidential and accessible mechanisms for children, their representatives and others to report violence against children. All children, including those in care and justice institutions, should be aware of the existence of mechanisms of complaint. Mechanisms such as telephone helplines, through which children can report abuse, speak to a trained counsellor in confidence and ask for support and advice, should be established and the creation of other ways of reporting violence through new technologies should be considered.

9. Ensure accountability and end impunity: I recommend that States should build community confidence in the justice system by bringing all perpetrators of violence against children to justice and ensure that they are held accountable through appropriate criminal, civil, administrative and professional proceedings and sanctions. Persons

convicted of violent offences and sexual abuse of children should be prevented from working with children.

10. Address the gender dimension of violence against children: I recommend that States should ensure that anti-violence policies and programmes are designed and implemented from a gender perspective, taking into account the different risks facing girls and boys in respect of violence; States should promote and protect the human rights of women and girls and address all forms of gender discrimination as part of a comprehensive violence-prevention strategy.

11. Develop and implement systematic national data collection and research: I recommend that States improve data collection and information systems in order to identify vulnerable subgroups, inform policy and programming at all levels, and track progress towards the goal of preventing violence against children. States should use national indicators based on internationally agreed standards, and ensure that data are compiled, analysed and disseminated to monitor progress over time. Where not currently in place, birth, death and marriage data registries with full national coverage should be created and maintained. States should also create and maintain data on children without parental care and children in the criminal justice system. Data should be disaggregated by sex, age, urban/rural, household and family characteristics, education and ethnicity. States should also develop a national research agenda on violence against children across settings where violence occurs, including through interview studies with children and parents, with particular attention to vulnerable groups of girls and boys.

12. Strengthen international commitment: I recommend that all States ratify and implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its two Optional Protocols on the involvement of children in armed conflict and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. All reservations that are incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention and the Optional Protocols should be withdrawn in accordance with the Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Conference on Human Rights of 1993. States should ratify all relevant international and regional human rights instruments that provide protection for children including the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and its Optional Protocol; the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol; ILO Conventions No. 138 on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour; and the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. States should implement all their international legal obligations and strengthen their cooperation with the treaty bodies.

109. I recommend that States act in conformity with their commitments on the prevention of violence made at the special session of the General Assembly on children and in the context of the WHO Health Assembly resolution⁷⁴ on implementing the recommendations of the World Report on Violence and Health, and other regional public health resolutions that reinforce this resolution.

Annex III: Answered number of calls in 2007

Country	Region	Name child helpline	Answered number of calls ⁵
Botswana ⁶	Africa	Childline Botswana	1,160
Guinee Conakry	Africa	AGUIAS	5,915
Kenya	Africa	Childline Kenya	4,808
Malawi	Africa	Tithandizane	10,026
Namibia	Africa	Lifeline/Childline Namibia	2,766
Senegal	Africa	Centre GINDDI	2,221
South Africa	Africa	Childline South Africa	1,224,443
Swaziland	Africa	Ministry of Education - Guidance and Counselling	398
Uganda	Africa	Uganda Child Helpline	3,339
Zimbabwe	Africa	CHILDLINE Zimbabwe	50,511
DR Congo	Africa		<i>Not started yet</i>
Lesotho	Africa		<i>Not started in 2007</i>
Mozambique	Africa		<i>Just started</i>
Tanzania	Africa		<i>Not started yet</i>
Argentina	Americas	Linea 102	4,452
Aruba	Americas	Fundacion Telefon pa Hubentud Aruba	2,411
Peru	Americas	Fundacion ANAR Peru	15,432
Trinidad and Tobago	Americas	Childline Trinidad and Tobago	4,641
USA	Americas	National Runaway Switchboard	82,851
Australia	Asia Pacific	Kids Helpline	300,223
South Korea	Asia Pacific	1577-1391 (Child Protection Hotline)	9,478
New Zealand	Asia Pacific	What's Up?	122,681
New Zealand	Asia Pacific	Kidsline	19,887
Albania	Europe	MCMCM	<i>Not started in 2007</i>
Austria	Europe	147 Rat auf Draht	205,662
Belarus	Europe	Smorgon information centre on children rights	<i>Not known</i>
Croatia	Europe	Hrabri telefon - The Brave Phone	12,750
Denmark	Europe	Bornetelefonen	36,647
Greece	Europe	S.O.S. 1056	302,419
Netherlands	Europe	De Kindertelefoon	297,654
Slovakia	Europe	Linka detskej istory pri SV UNICEF	16,564
Iran	MENA	SPRC (Sedaye Yara)	3,625
UAE Sharjah	MENA	Social Service Department	<i>Not known</i>
Jordan	MENA	Jordan River Foundation	<i>Not started in 2007</i>
Total			2,742,964

⁵ of child helplines that completed the CHI VAC Questionnaire

⁶ Childline Botswana did not provide data for the year 2007, but it did submit data for the year 2006. This data is used here.

Colophon

Child Helpline International (CHI) is the global member network of child helplines, working to protect the rights of the child. We work in over 160 countries and were founded on the belief that children and young people not only have rights, but that they alone are the best individuals to identify their problems if they are equipped with the proper tools.

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The percentages in the cells of tables have been rounded to a maximum of two significant figures and do not make use of decimal notation. The shares of the individual (sub-) categories therefore do not always add up to one hundred percent, although the cells containing the total percentage, in these cases do show this figure.