



„Just one call can save
one child's life”

Activity Report

June 1st 2014 – June 1st 2015



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Contents

Note.....	4
General Information about Child Helpline	6
Chapter 1. General characteristics of the registered calls.....	8
Chapter 2. Profile of incoming calls from adults.....	10
Chapter 3. Profile of incoming calls from children.....	18
Chapter 4. Distribution of calls by month, area of provenience and source of information.....	22
Chapter 5. Awareness raising campaigns and printed materials.....	26
Chapter 6. Conclusions and recommendations	30

Note

Child Helpline was launched as a global toll-free call service to support children in need of care and protection. The service operates as a pan-European number accessible in 28 EU states. There are 192 child helplines in 145 countries around the world and they are part of a global network known as the Child Helpline Foundation.

In the Republic of Moldova, Child Helpline 116 111, was launched in June the 1st 2014, as a national service implemented by the International Centre for Women Rights Protection and Promotion „La Strada” and managed by the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, based on a service agreement between an NGO and a central public authority.

Child Helpline is a toll-free and high specialization confidential national call service. It is accessible 24/7 and offers psychological support, information about Children’s Rights and counselling regarding the child rights protection system. The Child Helpline bases its activity on a regulation and minimum quality standards which include the principles of immediate evaluation of the child’s needs and the potential risk of the child to be exposed to violence, neglect and exploitation. Each call which regards a

child at risk is approached individually, with respect of the principles of non-discrimination and promotion of the best interest of the child. The mandate of the service activity stipulates the referral of information to the responsible institutions, authorities and specialists in the protection of Children’s Rights.

The present report represents an overview of the incoming calls content in the first year of the Child Helpline activity. Firstly, it addresses professional groups who are responsible and have the competencies to provide the respect of the Child Rights and take action according the best interest of the child, strengthening the Child Rights protection system in order to provide a favorable and harmonious environment to the child rise and development, in spite of the child’s vulnerability.

The given Report reflects namely general characteristics of all the incoming calls during one year of the service activity and particularly, the profile of incoming call both, from children and adults. The authors, also proceeded with an analysis of some adjacent characteristics of the calls, such as their calendar frequency (by months of the year), temporality (by time), area of provenience (rural/

urban), as well as a paradigm of the source of information about Child Helpline (media, acquaintances/relatives/friends, informative and promotional activities, etc.). In spite of a relatively short period of activity (one year), the authors completed the report with a particular chapter regarding the awareness campaigns and the elaborated and distributed informative and promotional materials. The Report finishes with conclusions and recommendations regarding the improvement of the toll-free call service

for children and particularly the overall improvement of the system of assistance and Child Rights protection.

The authors of the Report do not consider it as being perfectly done and will be thankful to those who will give some possible suggestions -including critical ones- in order to improve the functionality of the service for the benefit of those who are in need and wait for community support and the essential intervention of the competent institutions.

General Information about Child Helpline

Geographical coverage:	The Republic of Moldova, service launched on June the 1st, 2014.
Vision:	A world where technology allows children to be listened and heard through their own voices and individually, in order to moderate the world where the Child Rights are implemented.
Mission:	To respond to children in need of care and protection, giving them real and immediate support through the Child Helpline 116 111.
Beneficiaries:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Children who call for counseling and information;✓ Parents or caregivers who call for counseling, information and consultation;✓ People who want to speak about cases regarding the need of children assistance.
Goal:	Strengthening the protection level of children through direct and free access to psychological counseling and informing children about their rights and the ways they can be defended.

Objectives:

- ✓ Provide services of psychological counseling, in order to respond to the beneficiaries' needs;
- ✓ Offer informational support about Child Rights and their protection system;
- ✓ Increase the child access to the protection system through the referral mechanism application;
- ✓ Strengthen the child protection system based on the analysis of the activity service data.

Child Helpline 116 111 offers:

- ✓ Psychological counseling;
- ✓ Information in the domain of Child Rights;
- ✓ Consultation in the domain of child protection;
- ✓ Consultations in Romanian and Russian;
- ✓ Individualized consultations;
- ✓ Confidentiality and anonymity;
- ✓ Free calls in the territory of the Republic of Moldova.

Working program:

- ✓ 24/7.

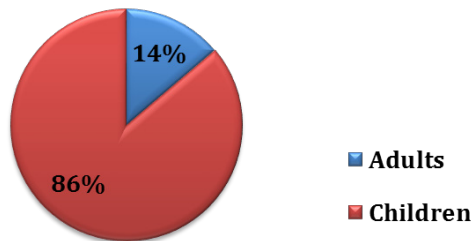
CHAPTER 1. General characteristics of the registered calls

During the period of time between June the 1st 2014 and June the 1st 2015, the Child Helpline 116 111 registered **40.731 calls**. Among them, 3.856 were unique calls, 1.280 were repeated ones and **36.875** were investigation calls¹. Concerning the unique ones, “La Strada” offered psychological counseling, informational support regarding the protection of Child Rights and referred information regarding children at risk, in order to organize an intervention with respon-

sible specialists. Regarding the repeated calls, they were performed by people telling additional information on cases referred to the responsible specialists for the Child Rights protection.

In the first year of its activity, Child Helpline received calls from both children and adults from the whole territory of the Republic of Moldova. Thus, from 3.856 counseled calls, 533 (14%) came from adults, and 3.323 (86%) – from children (Diagram 1).

Diagram 1. Child Helpline 116 111 callers

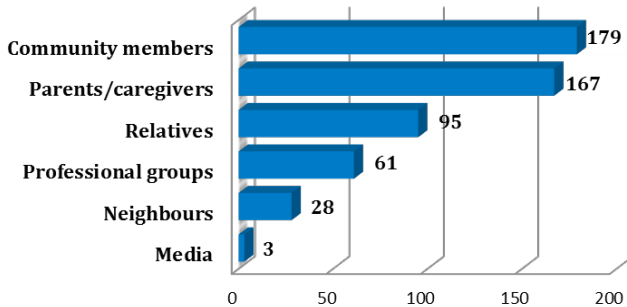


During the reported period, among adults, 179 calls came from community members (Diagram 2). This is the category of people who are not indifferent and report cases of ne-

glect and violence against children. There are also among them those who ask for information falling under the competence of the Child Helpline service.

¹ Investigation calls are the calls coming from callers who test the existence of the service, having no courage to speak. In the first year of its activity, Child Helpline registered a high number of such kind of calls because the beneficiaries tested the line to gain trust, and called back later asking for information or telling about situations with children at risk.

Diagram 2. **Child Helpline callers (adults)**



During one year of activity, Child Helpline became a guideline for parents, offering them counseling and information in 167 calls. Parents/caregivers are usually those who ask for psychological support in order to cope with the difficulties of communication and education concerning their children.

There were registered a significant number of calls coming from relatives, especially from grandparents. These ones asked for counseling and help to solve conflicts with their children that had made suffer the grandchildren. It should be mentioned that grandparents got involved in solving conflicts, calling back seeking information about what else they could have done and to be counselled about some changes on their children's and grandchildren's situations.

During the reported period there were registered 61 calls from professional groups. These calls came from social assistants, local and territorial guardianship authorities, teachers, police officers and medical workers. Usually, they asked for additional information

on cases referred to them by the Child Helpline or spoke about new cases regarding children at risk from the community, being in need of informational support. This category includes also calls referring to the collaboration with professional groups that asked for information about the *Law 140 from 14.06.13 regarding the special protection of children at risk and children separated from their parents*, and also, the *Instructions upon the cross-sector mechanism of cooperation for the identification, evaluation, referral, assistance and monitoring of children victims or potential victims of violence, neglect, exploitation and trafficking* (Decree of the Government of the Republic of Moldova nr. 270 from 08.04.2014).

In 28 cases, neighbours called to refer information about cases of child neglect or abuse. It is gratifying that neighbours are motivated to get involved in cases of child neglect or different types of abuse, calling at the Child Helpline, even if they ask for anonymity.

CHAPTER 2. Profile of incoming calls from adults

Type of offered services to the adult caller

From 533 incoming calls from adults, 183 are **Calls of Information**. This category includes requests for general information (ex: information regarding the type of assistance offered by the Child Helpline, information concerning the violation of Child Rights, etc.) and particular information (ex: financial support for caregivers of more children, procedure of the establishment of a child visit schedule for divorced parents, etc.).

The majority of incoming calls to the Child Helpline are in relation to the **Psychological Counseling** for adults – 41 calls. Usually, those who ask for psychological support are parents and grandparents. The callers speak about situations of misunderstanding with children of different ages. They were concerned about some aspects of children's behaviour -especially teenagers-,

and ask for advice and recommendations to deal with some circumstances.

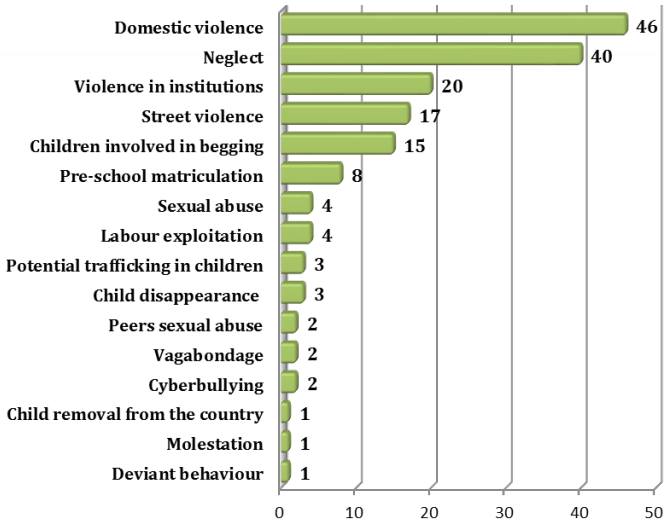
Special attention was given to calls upon **Alternative services to child protection**. 9 calls were registered regarding the establishment of guardianship services. The callers asked for information about the legal procedure of the establishment of guardianship services, professional parental assistance or child adoption.

During the reported period 131 calls were registered and had been categorized as "Others". This category includes demands fallen under the competence of the Child Helpline. Adults asked for information about different public services and the way to get in contact with them.

Reported problems by the adult callers

From the **533** calls received from adults, **169** calls concerned different issues (Diagram 3)

Diagram 3. Problems reported by adult callers



During the reported period, the highest number of cases concerned **domestic violence - 46 calls**. There were related cases of emotional and physical violence against children. Emotional and physical violence against children came from family members in the

following order: parents – **39** cases, grandparents – **3** cases, tutor – **1** case, mother’s cohabitant – **1** case, uncle – **1** case, peers – **1** case. The following case (call to the Child Helpline) describes one of the situations of violence against children.

„My children found a girl in a shack”

Alina, 10 years old, was given shelter by a family from her community. The girl was found by some children that had been playing next to an abandoned house. The child was scared, hungry and dirty.

Alina left her home and that night had slept in a shack nearby the abandoned house. The child’s parents used to drink alcohol and manifested physical and emotional violence against the little girl. Also, they were often sending their daughter to buy alcohol and cigarettes. In case of disobedience, the girl was beaten. Thus, Alina refused to go back with her family.

To clarify the details, the Child Helpline counselors asked the caller to put the girl on the phone. She explained that the parents used to punish her for refusing to buy alcohol, often using a belt, hard things, or even pulling her hair. Given this situation, the counselors contacted immediately the local guardianship authority. It was imperious to ensure the safety of the girl and keep her away from all the risks for her health and life. guardianshipFurthermore, an evaluation and monitoring of the family of the child was requested.

Due to an operative intervention, the girl was separated from her parents for a while and accommodated at a placement centre in the district. Meanwhile, the responsible specialist for the Child Rights protection and the social assistant were monitoring the family. Subsequently, the girl's parents followed a detoxification treatment and prepared a separated room for when their daughter would return home..

At the moment, the girl is in the care of a professional parental assistance service from a neighbour locality. She will stay there until the beginning of the school year when the final evaluation of the parents will be concluded.

(The registered case at the Child Helpline was edited with the respect of confidentiality principle.)

During one year of activity, Child Helpline registered and counseled **20 calls** regarding **violence against children in the school environment**. This category includes calls where children told to the counselors about violence in the school environment. In the majority of cases those who manifested violence were

teachers (18 cases), peers (1 case) and medical workers (1 case). Thus, children, affected by emotional and physical violence, spoke about their emotional situations. Regarding the violence coming from the teachers, it was mentioned that children had refused to go back to school, or their schools results had decreased.

„I don't want to be offended at school!"

Irina, 11 years old, was pronouncing these words every day. The child refused to go to school because her teacher had been humiliating her and bullying her . The teacher's attitude had made her feel bad at school. The humiliating words said by the teacher made it unbearable for the girl to go to school. The girl's peers had also a negative behaviour towards her, since the teacher herself was showing disrespect and allowing the other kids being rude to Irina.

From the phone conversation, the counselors found out that the teacher had threatened the girl not to finish successfully the school year or get poor grades. Besides the fact that the teacher was using humiliating words, she was harassing the child by *pinching* her.

The teacher had this behaviour with other children from different school years. Irina, always had good marks, but the teacher's behaviour made her fail at many school subjects.

The counselors contacted the Direction of Education from the district. The specialists were collaborative at solving this problem, announcing the counselors that a responsible person had been named to evaluate the situation in the above mentioned school. According to the Child Helpline mandate, the confidentiality of both the caller and the girl was respected.

After a short period of time, the counselors received a repeated call about the fact that a parent meeting had been organized and the parents had been blamed because some child had denounced the behaviour of that teacher.

Finally, the person who called asked insistently the counselors not to get involved in that situation, because the child's fear had increased and was refusing to go to school.

(The registered case at the Child Helpline was edited with respect of confidentiality principle.)

In 17 calls, individuals spoke about **street violence**. These calls referred to physical and emotional violence from neighbours (10 cases), peers (5 cases) and other community members (2 cases).

The profile of these calls reflects the fact that people who manifest violence (often people who work with children), direct their own problems on children. Unfortunately, some children are victims of adults' aggressions every day. Consequently, they cannot benefit from safety in the family, school or street environment.

During one year of activity, 40 calls from adults brought information to the Child Helpline about cases of **neglect of children**. The cases of neglect referred to parents who had neglected their duties of child rise and education. Furthermore, the children were not supervised, being at risk. The content of the calls referred to parents who had a disorganized way of living or were alcohol or drug addicts. The case below describes a situation of neglect from an incoming call at the Child Helpline.

„Take me with you!”

The community was worried about Catalina, 6 years old. People were giving clothes and food to the girl who was repeating these words every day. They felt sorry for her, but didn't know how to help the child. The girl's mother was not looking after her daughter properly, having a disorganized lifestyle. The child was living in an unheated room, without food or surveillance. The mother was often consuming alcohol and visited by men, the child being witness of her mother's indecent behaviour. Catalina was asking people to take her to their home.

The person who called to the Child Helpline, wanted the girl to live in his/her house. The Child Helpline counselors informed the caller that the intervention of specialists from the child protection domain was necessary.

Thus, the counselor contacted the local and territorial guardianship authorities. The girl was separated from her mother and placed in centre in their district.

The mother has not showed any intention of changing in order to make her daughter's life better.. Consequently, when a further evaluation of the family was carried

out, the results proved the need to keep the child in the placement. Starting with the new school year, Catalina will go to a school near the centre.

(The registered case at the Child Helpline was edited with respect of confidentiality principle.)

The category **Children involved in begging** includes 15 calls (Diagram 3). The callers informed about people who were begging carrying children in their arms in crowded places. As related, the children were passive and sleeping for a long period of time. Moreover, they were not wearing suitable clothes for the weather outside. The callers also informed about situations when children aged 7-15 were begging in the street. They told that they had noticed that beggars had been supervised by other adults.

The category **Pre-school matriculation** includes 8 calls where parents/caregivers asked for information regarding the procedure of pre-school matriculation.

The adults informed about **sexual abuse** in 4 calls. The presumed victims of abuse were children of different ages. From these 4 cases, 2 referred to family environment where the supposed abusers were family members. The other 2 cases described situations of children abused by people outside the family environment.

Four calls referred to potential cases of **child labour exploitation**. In 2 of the 4 calls, people spoke about children aged under 10 who had been obligated to do a work too

hard for their age. The other 2 cases referred to teenagers who had been working in harmful conditions to their harmonious development and emotional health.

Other 3 calls referred to potential cases of **trafficking in children**. The Child Helpline was informed in one call about the situation of a mother who would have sold her children to a Roma family. Another call referred to a minor who had given birth to a baby being at risk to be "helped" by an acquaintance to go abroad for work. The third call referred to a minor who was manifesting a deviant behaviour and, as related, was suspected to be sexually exploited by people who had been taking advantage of the vulnerability of age and unawareness of all risks.

The Child Helpline counselors were informed in 3 calls about **child disappearance**. Those calls referred, as narrated, to the cases of some boys who had a deviant behaviour and used to leave regularly their homes. In that category of calls, parents confessed that they didn't know how to keep home their children and avoid similar situations. They also affirmed that they had consulted a psychologist, but the specialist's suggestions didn't help to improve the situation.

Peer sexual abuse cases were narrated in 2 calls Referring to the situation of 2 minors, aged under 10, who would have been abused by 2 other minors, aged 12 – 14. In both situations they had been threatened to keep the secret, but close people to the abused children had noticed visible signs of the abuse and had found out what happened discussing with the children.

Two calls pointed the situations of vagabondage. In both situations the vagabondage had been preceded by home running. The children were included in programs of rehabilitation, but unfortunately, at the given moment, they do not attend them. It is typical for these children to run away from placement centers or other institutions. It is about the fact that it is necessary to elaborate individualized rehabilitation programs that would satisfy the needs of these children.

Two calls at the Child Helpline referred to cases of **cyber bullying**. The parents/callers asked for the intervention of toll-free call service specialist in order to delete the offensive messages addressed to their children.

One call informed the Child Helpline about a **child removal from the country**. As related, the father decided to leave the country with the child without the mother's agreement, the parents being in a divorce process.

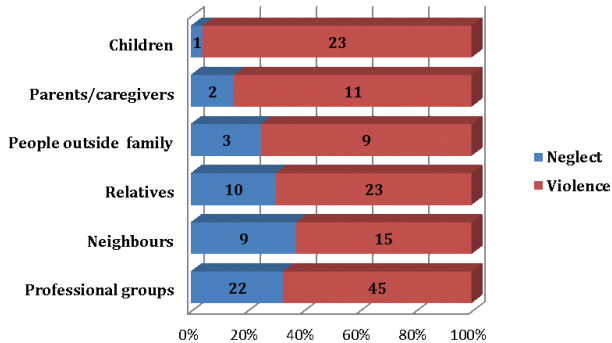
One call referred to **child molestation**. It was suspected that the child had been molested by the owner of the flat that the mother had been renting.

One call referred to the case of a 14 year-old child who had a **deviant behaviour**. The misunderstandings and conflicts made the child's father call the Child Helpline and ask for help to overcome the problem. It was difficult to control the child because he/she used to lie, steal, have a conflict with the father or run away from home for few days.

The content of the calls from the reported period shows a high degree of responsibility from the adults who had announced cases of children at risk. It is gratifying that parents, relatives or neighbours called the Child Helpline, worried about the fate of other children as of their own ones.

We could mention that the callers of the Child Helpline called repeatedly to bring more information about the evolution of the situation. The Diagram 4 represents the repeated calls, including the report on cases of neglect and violence. The repeated calls are as important as the unique ones, because they include important information about the situation of risk, details about the evolution of the case and the active involvement or the passivity of the specialists to solve it.

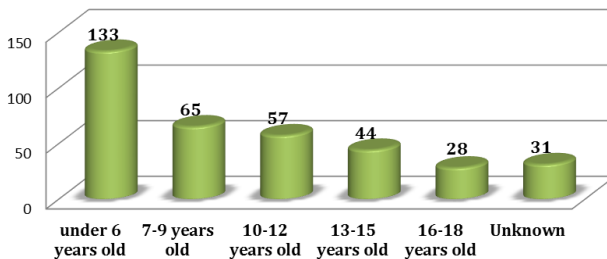
Diagram 4. Repeated calls, including cases of neglect and violence



From the launching of the service until now, the counselors received calls from adults about the situations involving children of different ages at risk (Diagram 5). In the

majority of the calls the received information referred to more children from the same family that had been neglected, abused, involved in begging or exploited.

Diagram 5. Age of children referred in the incoming calls from adults



The adults called the Child Helpline to inform about cases requiring immediate intervention of specialists. It is gratifying to acknowledge that the Child Helpline gained people's trust by proving confidentiality of personal data.

The examples that describe the risky situations involving children are not the only ones in the history of the Child Helpline. Using the required information, the Child Helpline counselors tried to intervene as operative as possible, informing simultaneously

the callers about the existing ways of child protection in the national law.

The family is the first responsible for the child's growing, education and also to provide favorable psychological climate. Some psycho-social and biological factors generated by parents deprive the children of the possibility to grow up in healthy physical and psychological environment. Thus,

the people who must ask for the help of the different existing services are relatives, friends and other people from the immediate environment of the family with children at risk. Risky situations and cases could be avoided, the child's life could take a turn for the better and this fact is proved by those few cases described in the given report.

Chapter 3. Profile of incoming calls from children

During the reported period, among the 3.323 incoming calls from children, 2.495 calls are **check calls**.

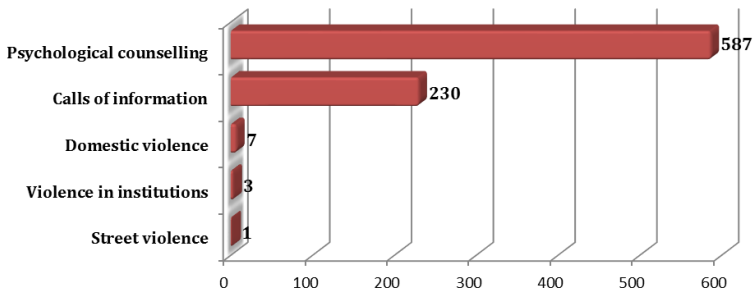
Check calls include questions, stories about situations children face day by day. The children often speak about their misunderstandings with friends or parents, quarrels or other tense situations they are involved in or they witness. In some calls of this category, the

callers are groups of children who speak about things that they should not know at their age, situations involving adults that they have witnessed.

It can be noticed that children know in which situations they can call the Child Helpline 116 111 to ask for the help or support they need.

Diagram 6 reflects the profile of incoming calls from children.

Diagram 6. Profile of incoming calls from children



The children have managed in a short period of time to approach through their calls issues that reflect the specific of the service. Speaking about different situations, children tested the service functionality. It was noticeable, that children trusted in the Child Helpline counselors, calling repeatedly in moments where they

needed psychological support and telling about things that had happened at school or in their families. This kind of calls were categorized as **psychological counseling**.

Children received psychological counseling in 594 calls. They shared their sentimental problems and asked advice in different situations. Also,

usually children in conflict situations asked counselors for advice, such as overcoming the fear or taking decisions in difficult moments. Speaking with children, it was apparent the fact that children lacked of communication and affection from their parents.

It is important to be mentioned that during this year of activity, children of early age and being home alone called the Child Helpline to share their thoughts, activities or things that bothered them. The multitude of subjects the children spoke about and the repeated calls from their side, demonstrates the fact that the young beneficiaries got real trust in the Child Helpline 116 111.

In **230 calls of information** received, children asked about their rights and, informed themselves about the **Child Helpline specific**. In the majority of the calls (218), the children asked

about the situations in which they could call the Child Helpline.

In 7 cases children spoke about **domestic violence**. Physical and psychological violence against children, as related, was performed by family members: parents (4 cases), grandparents, mother's cohabitant or uncle (1 case). The children asked for specialists' intervention in order to change the situation.

Children spoke about **violence in institutions** in 3 cases. The callers told about violence outside the family environment used by their peers (2 cases) or teacher (1 case).

One case regarded **street violence** carried out by a neighbour.

During this year of the service activity, the children called to share things that happened to them day by day. The cases below represent some situations narrated by children.

„My mother feels bad, I am afraid to call the emergency!“

Mary, 10 years old, was saying this, being worried by her mother's health. The girl was crying and telling that she was taking care of her mother who used to have crisis, losing consciousness. The girl confessed that she was afraid of those moments. Speaking with the counselor, Mary was repeating that her mother would commit suicide and that she felt guilty for all that had happened. Mary's mother, having some psychological problems and no job, was often repeating to her daughter that she would commit suicide and the girl would be left alone.

The counselors assured to Mary that she could call every time she needed support. As well, they informed the local and territorial guardianship authorities to evaluate and monitor the situation of the family and child.

Thus, the family is monitored by the specialists from child protection system and benefits of financial support. The child attends the school and has sessions with a psychologist.

(The registered case at the Child Helpline was edited with respect of confidentiality principle.)

The counselors, also, received calls from children who spoke about different home chores too difficult for their age. Usually, children ask for advice about how to take care of their younger siblings, heat the food up or take care of domestic animals. In all these situations children mentioned that there was no adult to help them. All these calls reflect the fact that

children are often given work that is hard for their age and detrimental for their development.

When they receive this kind of calls, the counselors make sure that children are out of risk and give them concrete instructions and advice to face the tasks they tell about.

„I am home alone!”

During a long period of time, every day, the counselors were talking with Ionut, 6 years old, who was home alone because his parents were working until late hours and the child was not attending the kindergarden because of a flue. The child found out about the Child Helpline on the TV and decided to call, being bored. In this case, the counselors were next to Ionut when he was drawing or playing, preparing food or having the need to speak with someone while his parents were returning home almost by midnight. The child convinced the counselors that even being at an early age, he could manage alone, but he was just feeling very sad. The parents were highly surprised when the child passed them the call to the Child Helpline 116 111 to convince them that it really existed.

The boy was encouraged to call back every time he needed a friend that would listen to him.

The registered case at the Child Helpline was edited with respect of confidentiality principle.)

„I don't resist to live in this tense environment!”

The words of Olga, 16 years old, started her conversation with the Child Helpline. Her grandfather was telling her mean words, repeating that she would become „nobody” in life. The man was accusing the girl to eat and live for free in his house. Putting up with this situation for 3 years, the girl was forced to work after classes. Olga told the counselors that she wanted to go home where her brother and sister needed her, being neglected by their mother. There was a cohabitant and other relatives who lived in their common house. It was in bad conditions and the adults were repeatedly consuming alcohol.

The girl's mother was insisting that Olga lived in the grandfather's house in order to get his flat one day. The woman threatened her with beating in case of disobedience. Olga was disappointed, she wanted very much to continue studies and get a job.

The counselors intervened immediately. Thus, the child was told that the local and territorial guardianship authorities would be informed about her situation. The girl

mentioned that she would like to be placed in a centre.

The counselors contacted immediately the local and territorial guardianship authorities and Olga was placed in a centre. The girl's family was referred to specialists for evaluation and monitoring.

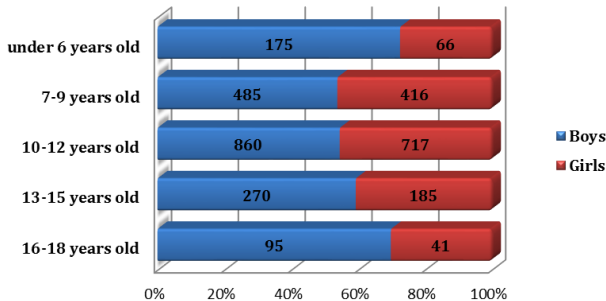
(The registered case at the Child Helpline was edited with respect of confidentiality principle.)

Children that had called the Child Helpline spoke about problems that they had been facing at school and at home: bullying, conflicts with family members and friends or situations they felt uncomfortable to speak about with relatives.

Both girls and boys spoke about different situations that they had gone

through. However, boys called more often than girls (Diagram 7). The higher number of calls from boys could be explained by the fact that boys feel more embarrassed than girls when it comes to speak openly with adults or peers about their problems. Thus, they call repeatedly to share the real problems that bothered them.

Diagram 7. Distribution of incoming calls from children by gender and age



More often, the boys related cases of physical violence among peers, school bullying and harassment, asking for support to overcome emotional barriers. Girls spoke more easily about their concerns, feelings and situations they faced. They often narrated situations that had happened to their colleagues or other people they knew. Their problems concerned misunderstandings with family members or friends or emotional issues.

The lack of efficient communication and affection from parents or caregivers, make children looking for communication elsewhere, where they can share their emotions, achievements or daily struggles. From this perspective, the Child Helpline represents an indispensable instrument that helps children not only in situations of risk, but also when they lack of communication with close people.

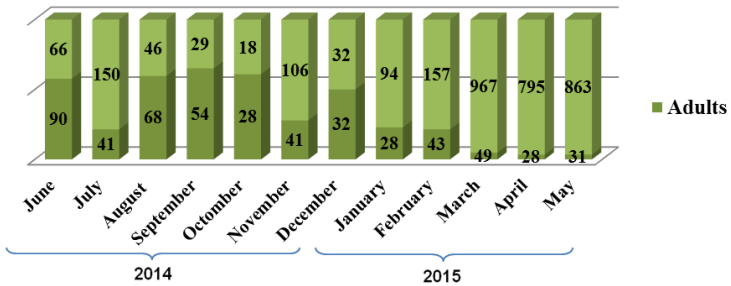
Chapter 4. Repartition of calls by months, area of provenience and source of information

Calendar repartition of calls

The dynamic of calls during the reported period was changing. Thus, if in the first 6 months there was reg-

istered a slight increase of incoming calls from both adults and children, from February 2015 the number of calls from children increased considerably (Diagram 8).

Diagram 8. Distribution of calls by months of the year



The significant increase of incoming calls from children during the period February – May 2015 is due to the promotional campaign of the Child Helpline 116 111 Romania. The campaign "Don't be naughty, be friendly" had been broadcasted over the Romanian TV channel Cartoon Network, watched as well by children from the Republic of Moldova. Thus, a high number of children found out about the existence of the service from the mentioned above channel and didn't hesitate to contact the Child Helpline.

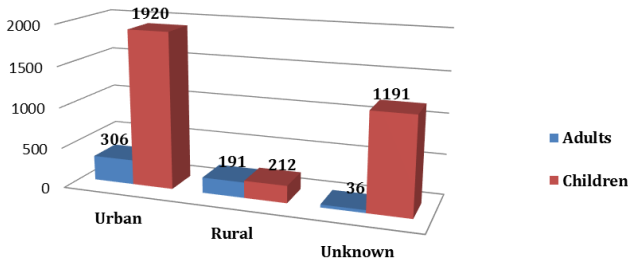
Calls' area of provenience

The repartition of calls according to the principle urban/rural shows a considerable difference: most of the calls were received from the urban area (Diagram 9). This difference could be explained by the fact that the Child Helpline had not been promoted in the rural area as much as in the urban. The majority of the calls were received from Chisinau municipality and its suburbs. Concerning the rural area, the most calls were received from the districts Ungheni, Calarasi

and Nisporeni. The rest of districts follow with a small difference of calls. According to this context, it could be remarked that in the rural area the

callers informed each other about the existence of the service thanks to the previous reports about children at risk in those areas.

Diagram 9. Calls' area of provenience

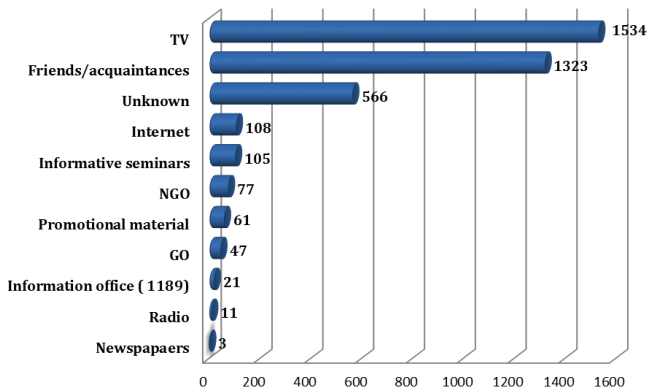


Source of information about the Child Helpline

The Diagram 10 reflects data about the source of information about the Child Helpline. In most of the cases the callers found out about the service from different TV channels. The majority of calls where this source was mentioned had been received from children. The children told about the informational campaign against bullying "Don't be

naughty, be friendly!", launched on the TV channel Cartoon Network. Considering that the TV campaign mentioned the number of the Child Helpline in Romania, the children called 116 111 to ask questions or talk about issues that were bothering them without knowing about the existence of the service in Moldova or thinking that the campaign was also being carried out in our country.

Diagram 10. Source of information about Child Helpline



Another often mentioned source is Friends/Acquaintances. It can be noticed that both children and adult informed each other about the existence of the service.

A frequent source of information for adults is the Internet. The parents, relatives, neighbours of children or community members explained that they had accessed the Internet to find guidelines about the protection of the Rights of children at risk and, finding out about the Child Helpline, called to ask questions or report cases.

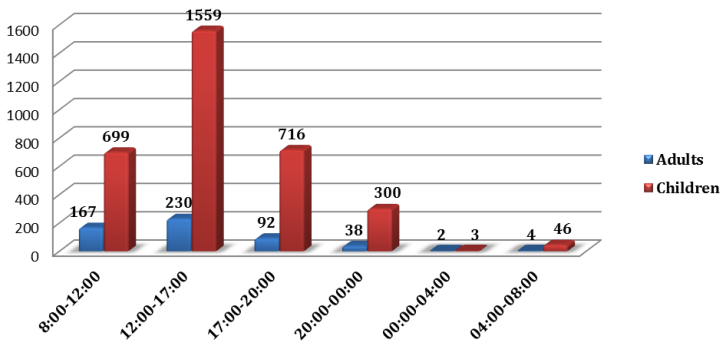
Other sources of information, presented in the diagram (internet, informative seminars, promotional

material, NGO, GO, information office 1189, radio and newspapers) were mentioned in fewer cases in comparison with the mentioned above (Friends/Acquaintances).

Time of calls

Due to the fact that the Child Helpline service is available 24/7, it is appropriate to present some details about the distribution of the calls within 24 hours. Most of the calls, both from children and adults, were received between 12:00 – 17:00 (Diagram 11). That could be explained by the fact that the given interval of time is the most active part of the day.

Diagram 11. Time of calls



Children are also active in other periods of the day – evening hours, when they play with friends, morning hours, calling from school. It was noticed that despite of the fact that the period of time 20:00 – 00.00 was predominantly adults' calls period, children also called during late hours. Analyzing the profile of calls for this period of time, it could be remarked that children were not supervised

when they called. The parents were at work or allowed children to be out of home at that time.

The dynamics of the calling hours from both adults and children underlines the fact that everyone prefers to call during the active part of the day, the morning hours and the evening hours after work when they can call the Child Helpline.

It is also important to talk about the night calls. From all the incoming night calls, comprised between 20:00 – 8:00. 17 unique calls were registered, concerning different issues: cases of Domestic violence (6 calls), Violence against children outside home (4 calls), Child disappearance (1 call), Neglect (4 calls), Molestation (1 call). Three from 17 cases above mentioned

needed an emergency intervention to avoid an imminent danger for children. The counselors contacted immediately the police office, the only specialists that had instructions for night interventions. Even if the intervention of the local guardianship authority was necessary, it was not possible because of the work program of the specialists of the child protection system.

Chapter 5. Awareness campaigns and printed materials

Awareness campaign "Child Helpline shares smiles to children"



International Child Day was a good opportunity to celebrate the childhood and one year of the Child Helpline activity. The activities were

organized by the Child Helpline team, in the public park "Stefan cel Mare", as a part of the campaign "I want to know", organized by the Ministry of Education and the National Council for the Child Rights Protection.

The goal of the event was to bring joy for children, involving them in activities where they could manifest their

creativity and find out that at the Child Helpline 116 111 and on the **www.siguronline.md** portal they could find support and guidelines. Also, the International Centre "La Strada" put the objective to raise awareness among the community members to report cases of child rights violation.

Children benefited from a well-organized program. They were encouraged to leave messages on the panel "Cheerful messages", getting as a gift a "Child Helpline 116 111" cap. The children's wishes were expressed in





slogans such as: *"The colour doesn't matter, we all have a place under the sun", "Happiness to all the children in the world", "I love my parents";* words that underlined the children's hopes and dreams. This speaks about the fact that every child has something to say and wants to be heard.

Both, children and parents were pleased to take home personalized magnets with the child's or family's photo. It was a nice occasion to keep in mind memories from the event they had participated in.

"Define your personality with a temporary henna tattoo"– is another call for children who were present at the event. The art of henna decoration impressed the children. They asked for patterns on the hand

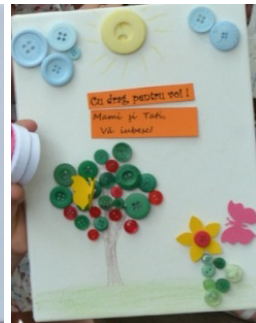
such as flowers, peacocks and other drawings.

The parents also participated with the children at the activity "Be creative". They could make jewelry and accessories from different colorful patterns, decorated boxes and pictures with buttons and other material, getting nice personalized compositions.

The children proved to be very skillful and creative, expressing feelings through their work. They were happy to take home their creations, mentioning that they would offer them as gifts to close people.

Thus, the event "The Child Helpline offers smiles to children" managed to bring up the spirits of children, parents and caregivers. Both, children and adults were delighted with the organized activities.

There were informed almost 1500 people (adults and children) during the event. There were distributed almost 1000 flyers and 475 caps. The event was organized with the financial support of the International Organization for Migration Moldova.



Informative calendar „Call 116 111”

There were edited 2000 exemplars of calendars in one edition. All the informative materials had a promotional goal (to inform the beneficiaries about the existence of the toll-free call service) and an informational one (to inform about the beneficiaries of the service and the offered assistance).

The Child Helpline team aimed to obtain a calendar that would inform the beneficiaries about the existence of the service. The calendars were dis-

Informative leaflet “One call distance”

Sună 116 111!

Comenziile de la serviciul de asistență telefonică gratuită pentru copii

Apelul tău poate ajuta un copil!

Serviciul de asistență telefonică gratuită pentru copii

116 111

Gratuit, confidențial și anonim

Împreună putem contribui la ameliorarea situației copiilor din Republica Moldova

- ✓ contribuie la sporirea nivelului de protecție copilului prin oferirea ajutorului direct și gratuit la comenzi psihologice și suport psihic emoțional;
- ✓ informază operatorii despre drepturile copilului și sensibilizările cum ar fi de exemplu prin fișe aplicative;
- ✓ oferă cazurile de violență, neglijență și abuzuri a copiilor către autoritățile abilitate, pentru a solicita protecția copilului.

Sună 116 111!

Suntem la un sunet distanță, Zăbur de luni până duminică 24/24 ore

Gratuit de la orice operator de telefonie din Republica Moldova

Confidențial și anonim

Împreună putem găsi o soluție pentru problema ta.

Serviciul de asistență telefonică gratuită pentru copii

116 111

TELEFONUL COPILULUI

Suntem mereu disponibili să te ascultăm.

destinat tuturor copiilor din Republica Moldova

Flyer for adult

In January 2015, the Child Helpline elaborated and distributed informative leaflets for children and parents to be closer to its beneficiaries. The



tributed in schools within some activities of information.

The children were encouraged to call 116 111 when they needed support to find optimal solutions in difficult situations.

Suntem la un sunet distanță

Zăbur de luni până duminică 24/24 ore

Serviciul de asistență telefonică gratuită pentru copii

116 111

eferte:

- consiliere psihologică și suport psihic emoțional copilului;
- referențiere în domeniul drepturilor copilului;
- consultanță în domeniul protecției copilului.

Dău! ceva te preocupă?

Comenziile de la serviciul de asistență telefonică gratuită pentru copii

Gratuit de la orice operator de telefonie din Republica Moldova

Confidențial și anonim

La serviciul de asistență telefonică gratuită pentru copii

116 111

Pot suna copiii de diferite vârste, Căi și țipi sau care vor să vorbescă despre starea unui copil?

Flyer for children

materials were distributed within informative seminars organized in schools and institutions from the child protection system.

Chapter 6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

- The first year of activity confirmed the necessity and the utility of the Child Helpline for its beneficiaries. Thus, during one year there have been registered and counseled 3.856 unique calls and 1.280 repeated calls. The Child Helpline was understood by people (children and adults) as an alternative instrument to report and refer cases of child rights violation, with respect of anonymity and confidentiality.
- The children called more often than adults: 86 % of calls were received from them. This figure confirms the trust the children have in this service, asking whatever they want to know at anytime. Another advantage of the pan-European number 116 111 was also confirmed by the campaign "Don't be naughty, be friendly" developed by the Child Helpline Romania at the TV channel Cartoon Network. The campaign had also an impact on children in Moldova.
- The children addressed a variety of problems and questions. Even though children tested the service in their first call, sometimes making jokes and inventing stories, they called repeatedly to ask for support and discuss real problems they were facing.
- The most problems during the school year 2014-2015 referred to situations of school bullying. The children complained that nobody had helped them or had intervened in those situations. Thus, children need to learn how to solve the conflicts themselves. To do it more efficiently, they need the guidance of their parents and teachers. Many children received that guidance not in the family or school, but calling the Child Helpline. Children are also affected by the problem of the relationships with their peers/friends. Thus, they called to ask for advice when they had conflicts or had feelings for someone. The lack of communication with the adults (parents or caregivers) that children need every day was the reason of these calls.
- The adults called also to talk about different topics. The seriousness of some reported situations demonstrate the fact that there is a high number of cases of child rights violation. The risky situations that some children face and were reported at the Child Helpline represent

a consequence of a segmentation of approaches in rising and educating children. On one hand, this is due to the parents' attitude of neglect. On the other hand, it is due to a narrow, sometimes, unprofessional approach of specialists that do not examine/solve in complexity the cases of child rights violation. Last but not least, there is a lack of therapy and rehabilitation programs for both, children at risk and parents, and specialized services for children at risk, victims and potential victims of violence, neglect, exploitation and trafficking.

- Neglect, violence and abuse were the most serious forms of child rights violation registered at the Child Helpline. The physical and psychological health of the children that faced such situations was at a high risk. In most of the cases, children confronted those situations in the family (parents, grandparents, tutors). Furthermore, cases of violence against children outside of their homes (staff of the educational institutions, neighbours or community members) were also reported. Thus, it can be noted that children who are victims of violence at home and in school, consider it as a norm and a unique way of survival.
- Parents who called the Child Helpline and received psychological support, face relationship problems because they do not know

enough about the age particularities of children and how they should react in different situations they may find themselves in. Socio-economic or psycho-emotional factors and the limited knowledge of child psychology make parents feel frustrated and communicate inefficiently with their children, or even use violent methods as a way of educating them.

- Analyzing the phone conversations with the specialists from the child protection domain, it should be highlighted that there are organizational and instrumental difficulties to solve situations of risk involving children. The *Law 140 regarding the special protection of children at risk and children separated from their parents*, as well as the *Instructions regarding the cross-sector mechanism of collaboration for the identification, evaluation, referral, assistance and monitoring of children victims and potential victims of violence, neglect, exploitation and trafficking* (Decree of the Government of the Republic of Moldova Nr.270 from 08.04.2014) designates the responsible persons of the protection of the Children's Rights, but the lack of psychologists in schools and in the community, the absence of responsible specialists in rural areas, placement centres and alternative services of child protection, stagnates

or makes the interventions and case management impractical (especially after 5 p.m. and during weekends).

- Unfortunately, the cases of children involved in begging stay unsolved. There is no concrete and efficient mechanism to manage these situations and ensure the child's best interest and respect of child rights.
- The informative activities about the existence of the service, promotional materials distributed to the children, parents and specialists increased the visibility of the Child Helpline and the services it offers. At the same time, it is necessary to develop and promote the service, using modern informational technologies widely used by children from the Republic of Moldova.

Recommendations:

- To develop and to promote the awareness raising campaigns about the first signs of neglect and different forms of violence against children, in order to make people report each case of violence against children at the Child Helpline and/or specialists, institutions responsible for the child rights protection.
- To train local specialists (responsible for the child rights protection) about the applicability of the *Law 140 from 14.06.2013 regarding the special protection*

of children at risk and the children separated by their parents and the Instructions of the cross-sector mechanism of collaboration regarding the identification, referral, assistance and monitoring of children victims and potential victims of violence, neglect, exploitation and trafficking (Decree of the Government of the Republic of Moldova Nr. 270 from 08.04.2014).

- Consolidate the multidisciplinary approach and efficient collaboration of the specialists from the child protection system, so that the cross-sector mechanism contributes to quick and effective solutions of cases regarding child rights violation and immediate intervention of specialists responsible for the child rights protection in the evening, after 5 p.m. and during the weekend.
- To develop programs of therapy and long-term rehabilitation for children at risk, victims and potential victims of violence, neglect, exploitation and trafficking, as well as special programs for parents, in order to ensure a better protection and respect of child rights.
- To organize seminars and workshops about bullying in schools, in order to help children to react correctly and ask for help in these kind of situations. It is also necessary to prepare local specialists to respond and have abilities

in counseling children victims of bullying and other forms of violence against children.

- To train psychologists regarding the counseling of families with children at risk and work with the parents.
- To elaborate and institutionalize a clear and efficient mechanism for responsible authorities of the child rights protection in cases of begging involving children.
- To develop an awareness raising campaign for children, elaborate and launch a website and social networks, so that every child has access to the Child Helpline, through an inclusive use of informational technologies.

116 111
TELEFONUL
COPILULUI



24 | hours
free anonymous
and confidential