Friendship, and the social support it provides, is consistently associated with less psychological distress in children and young people (King & Terrance, 2008; Klineberg et al., 2006; Roach, 2018). It is also related to other important outcomes in a child or young person’s life, such as school attainment (Ng-Knight et al., 2019) and well-being (Bayer et al., 2018). It may even act as a buffer against many mental health problems (Van Droogenbroeck et al., 2018) such as depressive symptoms and loneliness (Nangle et al., 2003), as well as against issues that may arise from negative events in children’s lives – suffering from bullying, for example (Bayer et al., 2018). For these reasons, it is crucial for children and young people to maintain positive relationships with their peers. Child helplines can support children and young people in these efforts by providing guidance and building the skills necessary to foster these positive relationships (friendships, romantic relationships and so on).

Every time a child or a young person contacts a child helpline, the child helpline takes note of that contact. This child helpline data sheds light on the concerns of children and young people, directly through their voices.

We received data from 69 of our child helpline members who reported counselling contacts relating to **Peer Relationships** in 2021. Almost 1 in every 10 children or young people (up to the age of 24 years old) who reached out to a child helpline in 2021 made contact due to a concern relating to their relationship with a peer.

In 2021, our child helpline members around the world reported a total of 271,068 contacts about Peer Relationships, out of a total of 2,800,826 counselling contacts. This means that Peer Relationships accounted for 9.7% of all counselling contacts, showing how concerned children and young people are with their peer relationships. Almost half of the peer relationships contacts in 2021 related to **Friends and Friendships** (41.6%) with 112,651 contacts.
That’s What Friends Are For!

Find your national child helpline here: childhelplineinternational.org/helplines

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