



INTERNATIONAL CONSULTATION OF CHILD HELPLINES

27–29 SEPTEMBER 2022
STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN

RESILIENCE: CHILDREN AND CHILD HELPLINES IN TIMES OF CRISIS

STOCKHOLM DECLARATION

of the 10th INTERNATIONAL CONSULTATION OF CHILD HELPLINES

We are child helplines independently operating in over 140 countries and territories around the world and coming together as the global network Child Helpline International. **We are essential in supporting children and young people and upholding their rights.**

Every year, child helplines receive millions of contacts from children and young people worldwide. **We listen, provide counselling, make referrals, give assistance and provide other essential services to children and young people in need.**

Children and young people have been deeply affected by the recent global crises that have put them at increased risk for their health and wellbeing. Millions of children have been and still are particularly vulnerable and at risk as a result of losses, lockdowns and anxieties related to the coronavirus pandemic or armed conflicts.

Child helplines have demonstrated that, just like children and young people, they are capable of exemplary resilience. Throughout all these crises and challenges, we have never stopped providing crucial support to children and young people through multiple channels and amplifying their voices to the public and to decision-makers.

The issues facing children and young people, which child helplines bring to light, are those infringements on children's rights to health and development, as established in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, that present **a threat to their ability to flourish.** At the International Consultation of Child Helplines held in Bangkok in 2016 we called upon governments to act urgently to implement the Sustainable Development Goals – with a specific focus on SDG Target 16.2, to end all forms of violence against children. We are now reiterating that call, and we include an additional focus on SDG Target 3.4 – promoting mental health and wellbeing – as **this is urgent to prevent what may be the next global pandemic: that of child and youth mental ill-health.**

In this time of uncertainty and continued challenges, we are calling on governments and UN Treaty bodies to ensure that **the rights of all children are respected, protected and fulfilled,** and that **children and young people are provided with the support they need and to which they are entitled.**

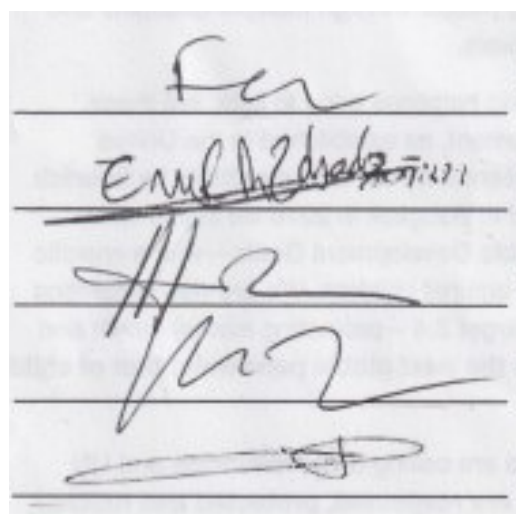
Gathered in Stockholm, Sweden, for the **10th International Consultation of Child Helplines**, we hereby call upon governments and the UN to:

1. Ensure that every child and young person around the world has **free and unrestricted access to high-quality child helplines services**
2. **Protect children and young people from all forms of violence** by implementing or strengthening **robust legal, social and educational measures**.
3. **Address the increasing mental health challenges facing children** through measures **promoting mental health and preventing mental illness**.
4. **Respect and ensure children's rights to health, development and protection**, including by creating and maintaining structured partnerships with civil society and the private sector.
5. **Recognise national child helplines as essential children's services** and provide **financial support** to ensure **high-quality and sustainable child helpline services**.
6. **Include the voices of children and young people in policy making**, by integrating **child helpline data and youth participation** in the decision-making processes that affect children and young people.
7. Take all steps necessary to **ensure the achievement of SDG Targets 3.4 and 16.2 before 2030**, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Furthermore, we call upon not only our governments but also our partners in civil society, international agencies, and the private sector including telecoms and the information and communications technology industry, to:

- **Actively promote a change in culture** to eradicate all attitudes and behaviours that tolerate violence against children and young people.
- **Support the sustainability of child helplines** by providing adequate resources and support to ensure their continuous ability to operate, free of all costs, 24 hours a day and 7 days a week.

Stockholm, 29 September 2022



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