



---

## Prevent Abuse of Children Text and Chat Hotline (PACTECH) Project: Call Comparison Pilot Data Report

---

**Wendy Wolfersteig**, PhD, Director  
**Diane Moreland**, MS, Research Analyst  
**Marisol Diaz**, JD, Research Analyst

SIRC Office of Evaluation and Partner Contracts  
Arizona State University, Phoenix, Arizona  
April 15, 2020

Sponsor Award: CHSC-H-001  
Prime Award Number: 90CA1855-01-00  
ASU Reference Number: FP00017101  
ASU Account Number: GR35628

This project is supported by a grant from the Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The opinions, findings, conclusions and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**..... **ii**

**INTRODUCTION** ..... **1**

**SOURCES OF DATA AND METHODS**..... **2**

*Text and Chat Data Collection*..... 2

*Call Comparison Data Collection*..... 2

**RESULTS**..... **3**

**RESEARCH QUESTION 2: HOW EFFECTIVE IS PACTECH AT COMMUNICATING WITH YOUTH, WHO MAY BE VICTIMS OF MALTREATMENT AND PROTECTING THEIR PRIVACY?** ..... **3**

    HELP SEEKER RATINGS OF CHAT AND TEXT CONTACT PREFERENCE..... 3

*Call* ..... 3

*Chat and Text*..... 4

    HELP SEEKER RATINGS OF MODE OF CONTACT ..... 4

*Call* ..... 4

*Chat and Text*..... 5

    HELP SEEKER REPORTS OF PREVIOUS UTILIZATION OF THE CHILDHHELP NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE ..... 5

*Call* ..... 5

*Chat and Text*..... 6

    COUNSELOR RATINGS ..... 7

    COUNSELOR PERCEPTIONS OF HELP SEEKER RATIONALE ABOUT CURRENT CONTACT ..... 7

*Call* ..... 7

*Chat and Text*..... 8

**RESEARCH QUESTION 3: HOW EFFECTIVE IS PACTECH AT ENGAGING WITH YOUTH TO BUILD SKILLS, PROVIDE RESOURCES AND INFORMATION TO MEET THE NEED FOR WHICH THEY SOUGHT HELP?** ..... **9**

    STRESS ..... 9

*Call* ..... 9

*Chat and Text*..... 10

    HOPEFUL..... 10

*Call* ..... 11

*Chat and Text*..... 11

    BETTER PREPARED..... 12

*Call* ..... 12

*Chat and Text*..... 13

    INFORMATION RECEIVED ..... 13

*Call* ..... 13

*Chat and Text*..... 14

    COUNSELOR PERCEPTIONS OF HELP SEEKER STRESS ..... 14

*Call* ..... 14

*Chat and Text*..... 15

    COUNSELOR PERCEPTIONS OF HELP SEEKER HOPEFULNESS..... 15

*Call* ..... 15

*Chat and Text*..... 16

    COUNSELOR PERCEPTIONS OF HELP SEEKER PREPAREDNESS ..... 16

<i>Call</i> .....	16
<i>Chat and Text</i> .....	17
COUNSELOR PERCEPTIONS OF HELP SEEKER GAINED INFORMATION .....	17
<i>Call</i> .....	17
<i>Chat and Text</i> .....	18
<b>RESEARCH QUESTION 4: WHAT ARE THE DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND PRESENTING ISSUES OF HELP SEEKERS THAT USE A TEXT AND CHAT FEATURE OF A CHILD MALTREATMENT HOTLINE? .....</b>	<b>19</b>
DEMOGRAPHICS FOR ALL HELP SEEKERS .....	19
<i>Contact Time</i> .....	20
<i>Age</i> .....	20
<i>Call</i> .....	21
<i>Chat</i> .....	21
<i>Text</i> .....	21
<i>Gender</i> .....	22
<i>Call</i> .....	22
<i>Chat</i> .....	23
<i>Text</i> .....	23
CATEGORY OF HELP SEEKER .....	24
PRESENTING ISSUE .....	24
TEXT EXCHANGES .....	25
POST-SURVEY RESPONSE RATE .....	25
DEMOGRAPHICS FOR LEVEL 2 AND LEVEL 3 HELP SEEKERS IN TARGET POPULATION (AGES 13-24) WITH POST-SURVEY PARTICIPATION .....	26
<i>Contact Time</i> .....	26
<i>Age</i> .....	27
<i>Call</i> .....	27
<i>Chat</i> .....	28
<i>Text</i> .....	28
<i>Gender</i> .....	29
<i>Ethnicity</i> .....	31
<i>Call</i> .....	31
<i>Chat</i> .....	32
<i>Text</i> .....	32
CATEGORY OF HELP SEEKER .....	33
PRESENTING ISSUE .....	34
HEARD ABOUT THE HOTLINE .....	35
<b>NEXT STEPS .....</b>	<b>36</b>

**Acknowledgements:** *The authors wish to thank our partner, Julie Murphy, MSW, Senior Research Associate, from James Bell Associates, Inc. We are grateful for her expertise and abundant support in this project. We would also like to thank the PACTECH staff and counselors. Their efforts, support, and guidance are greatly appreciated.*

## INTRODUCTION

This report examines the Childhelp Prevent Abuse of Children Text and Chat Hotline (PACTECH) Project supported by Grant No. 90CA1855 from the Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The PACTECH intervention offers text and live chat services for help seekers looking for information, support, and resources related to child abuse. Childhelp provides oversight of the PACTECH project to help determine best practices and protocols pertaining to the use of text and chat in the child abuse and neglect helpline environment. This project is projected to initially serve a target population of youth ages 13-24, with an additional focus specifically on young parents beginning with the of Implementation Phase 2 (May 2020) for the same age range.

Childhelp partnered with Arizona State University's Southwest Interdisciplinary Research Center (ASU-SIRC) for the research and evaluation components of PACTECH. The research design uses both a formative evaluation to report and improve processes and implementation, and a summative evaluation strategy to report on outcomes. Text services became available nationally 24 hours, 7 days a week, on February 1, 2019 with live chat quickly following in April 2019. Evaluation of the effectiveness of PACTECH is measured with data collected through surveys and through a call comparison pilot-study, which is a central focus of this report. The call comparison pilot was carried out in February 2020. The one-month call comparison pilot data were analyzed in March and April 2020 to determine if call help seekers had similar outcomes to text and chat help seekers. The pilot findings in this report reflect data collected from the help-seekers and counselors.

There are five Research Questions (RQ) for the PACTECH project:

**RQ 1: What are the best practices and protocols in implementing text or chat-based technology for a hotline?**

**RQ 2: How effective is PACTECH at communicating with youth, who may be victims of maltreatment and protecting their privacy?**

**RQ 3: How effective is PACTECH at engaging with youth to build skills, provide resources and information to meet the need for which they sought help?**

**RQ 4: What are the demographic characteristics and presenting issues of help seekers that use a text and chat feature of a child maltreatment hotline?**

**RQ 5: What are the best practices for counselors that will engage help seekers in text and chat-based interactions?**

In addition to data being examined by contact type (calls, text, and chat), data were also examined by level of intervention. Level 1 intervention contacts are informational exchanges and brief in nature, which is the reasoning behind not needing the counselor to answer the survey questions for these inquiries. Level 2 contacts are educational and supportive based contacts, with identification of presenting issues, assessment of resources available, and action planning. Level 3 contacts are crisis oriented, and utilize the interventions employed in Level 2, but in addition apply more acute, crisis intervention responses. This report focuses on Level 2 and Level 3 contact responses.

This call comparison pilot data report examines three of the five Research Questions (i.e., RQ2, RQ3 and RQ4). Research Question 1 pertains to programmatic implementation rather than the quantitative data exports gleaned from iCarol and NICE inContact (call, text and chat software used by counselors). Research Question 5 examines qualitative data and will be investigated in the upcoming phase of the project.

## SOURCES OF DATA AND METHODS

### TEXT AND CHAT DATA COLLECTION

All text and chat users are offered surveys before and after their exchange with a counselor. The opening survey for text and chat is a demographic survey that is presented to the help seeker before the interaction with a counselor. With the initiation of a text or chat, the help seeker immediately receives a message that includes information about the user agreement, as well as information about the number of demographic survey questions being asked. At the conclusion of a text or chat, the counselor sends a pre-populated message letting the help seeker know that they have access to a post-survey, which collects information on knowledge, attitudes, and behavior outcomes. Messaging also includes that the survey is voluntary and can be completed at a later date. Survey information populates in to the associated call report data form through iCarol.

The iCarol system is used to collect help seeker data. Upon initiating each session for all contacts, counselors record demographic answers about the help seeker and continue collecting several data items throughout the session. These data items include: date of contact, time/length of contact, gender, age range, caller relation to issue (parent, self, teacher, etc.), call content, interaction with caller, action plan developed, level of intervention provided, how they heard about the hotline, and reaction to service.

### CALL COMPARISON DATA COLLECTION

The sampling method used for selecting call post-survey participants is a non-probability, voluntary sample of all youth callers, ages 13-24. A phone based automated survey was created to test the survey measures designed for callers and to examine outcomes for help seekers who called the hotline compared to help seekers who contacted the hotline through text or online chat. To study the comparison, data were used from telephone calls, online chats, and text messages for the month of February 2020. During this phase, PACTECH data were collected using two systems: iCarol and NICE inContact. iCarol is a subscription based, helpline software management system that automates all of the processes associated with managing a hotline. iCarol collects data that are used to assess and measure key aspects of the PACTECH project. Data were entered into the iCarol contact report form in a timely and accurate manner. NICE inContact provides the phone survey and is a cloud customer platform that allowed for the iCarol report number be connected to the phone survey when the caller opted to take the survey.

For February 2020 responses, iCarol data were securely transferred in March 2020 to ASU from Childhelp in the form of an Excel spreadsheet. Statistical analysis (SPSS) syntax was written and/or modified to define each variable and import the Excel data into SPSS format. Data were examined and cleaned. New variables were created for analytical purposes. Then analyses were performed to provide results regarding PACTECH objectives and outcomes. This report summarizes the information for the February 2020 one month of call comparison pilot data.

Demographic data were first examined and reported for all help seekers who contacted PACTECH in February 2020. Next, demographic and outcome data were analyzed and reported for only those help seekers in the PACTECH target population (ages 13-24), designated as a Level 2 or 3 intervention, and who started a post-survey which collected data to measure outcomes for this project. The following sections of this report present data collected and analyzed for **Research Questions 2-4**. Demographic data are presented under Research Question 4. Data were collected utilizing a pre-survey, counselor reported responses from interactions between counselors and help seekers for all modes of contact (call, chat and text), and a post-survey.

## RESULTS

### RESEARCH QUESTION 2: HOW EFFECTIVE IS PACTECH AT COMMUNICATING WITH YOUTH, WHO MAY BE VICTIMS OF MALTREATMENT AND PROTECTING THEIR PRIVACY?

Research Question 2 is related to communication. The data were collected from help seeker self-reported post-surveys for each of the three modes of contact (call, chat, and text) in addition to counselor observations. Data were examined and reported for help seekers designated as Level 2 or Level 3. Post-survey items included: mode of contact, usefulness, preferred choice of contact, and whether they had previously contacted the hotline. Counselor observations were collected to assess contact based on availability of chosen mode.

#### HELP SEEKER RATINGS OF CHAT AND TEXT CONTACT PREFERENCE

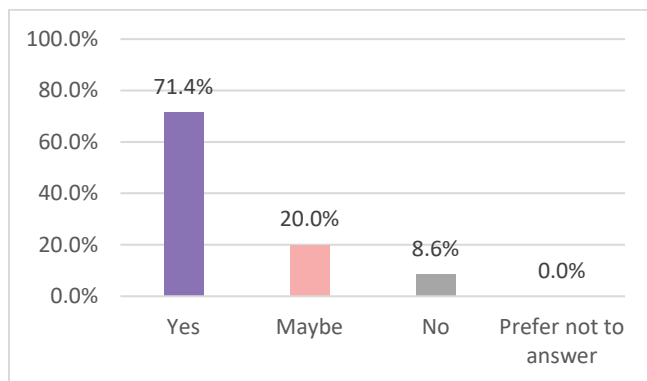
Help seekers were asked to report their willingness to use an alternate mode to contact the hotline. An item to assess willingness to utilize an alternate mode of contact was included in the post-survey. The response categories included Yes, Maybe, No, and Prefer not to answer. Results reported by help seekers, ages 13-24, are included herein.

#### CALL

A large majority (91.4%, n=32) of callers reported being willing to use chat or text to contact the hotline (i.e., Yes or Maybe response; see Figure 1).

**Figure 1**

*Caller: Would you use chat or text to contact the Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline?*



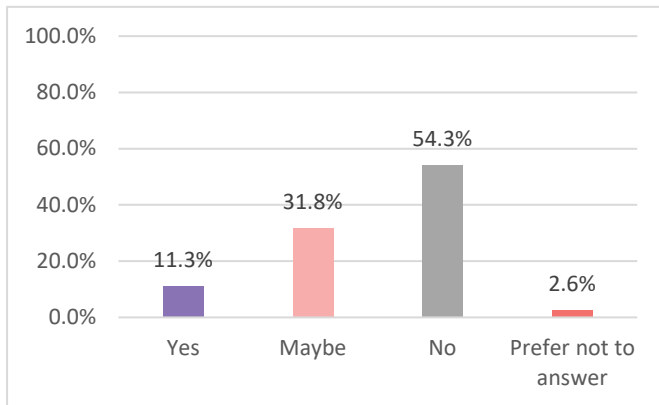
**91.4%** of callers would use chat or text to contact the hotline.

## CHAT AND TEXT

Over half (54.3%, n=82) of chat and text help seekers, ages 13-24, reported they would **not** have called the hotline if chat or text was unavailable (i.e., No response; see Figure 2).

**Figure 2**

*Texter and Chatter: Would you have called the Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline if chat/text was not available?*



**Unlike callers, chatters and texters reported less willingness to use a different mode to contact the hotline.**

## HELP SEEKER RATINGS OF MODE OF CONTACT

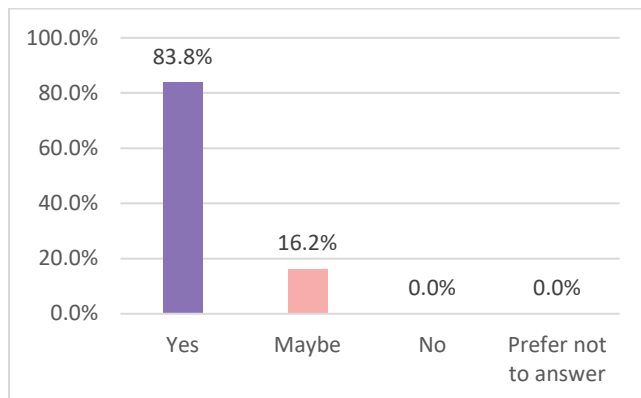
Help seekers were asked to evaluate if the way in which they contacted the hotline was a good way to get help. An item to evaluate mode of contact was included in the post-survey with response categories of Yes, Maybe, No, and Prefer not to answer. Results as reported by help seekers, ages 13-24, are included herein.

### CALL

All callers reported that calling was a good way to get help (100.0%, n=37, Yes or Maybe response; see Figure 3).

**Figure 3**

*Caller: Was calling a good way to get help?*

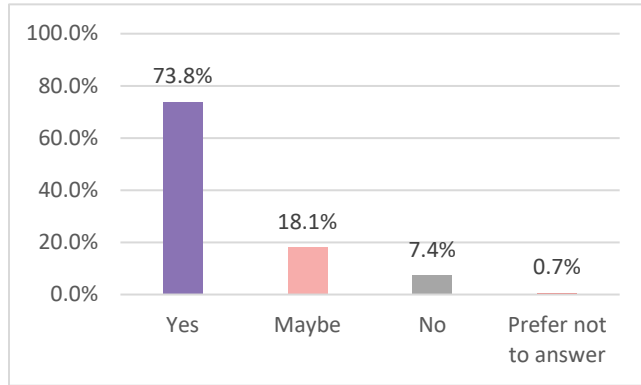


### CHAT AND TEXT

Overall, chat and text help seekers reported that using chat or text was a good way to get help (91.9%, n=137, Yes or Maybe response; see Figure 4).

**Figure 4**

*Chatter and Texter: Was using chat/text a good way for you to get help?*



**Call, chat and text help seekers reported that their respective way of reaching out to the hotline was a good way to get help (100.0%, 91.9%, respectively).**

### HELP SEEKER REPORTS OF PREVIOUS UTILIZATION OF THE CHILDEHELP NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE

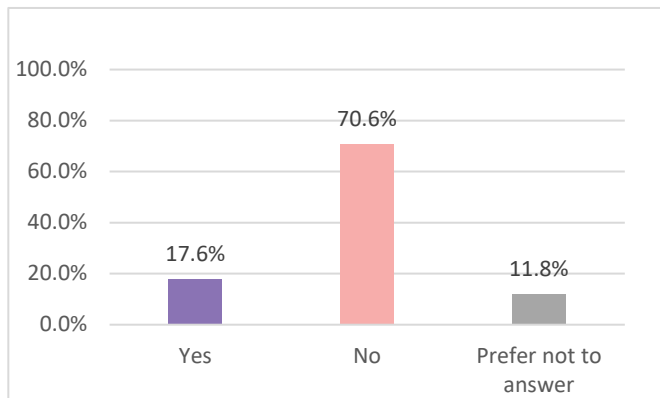
An item was included in the post-survey to assess whether help seekers had previously reached out to the hotline. The response categories included Yes (1-3 times or 4 or more times), No, and Prefer not to answer. Results as reported by help seekers, ages 13-24, are included herein.

### CALL

Only 17.6% (n=6) of call help seekers had previously reached out to the hotline before (see Figure 5). Two respondents reported 1-3 times previously and two reported four or more times previously. (Two help seekers did not respond.)

**Figure 5**

*Caller: Have you reached out to the Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline before?*



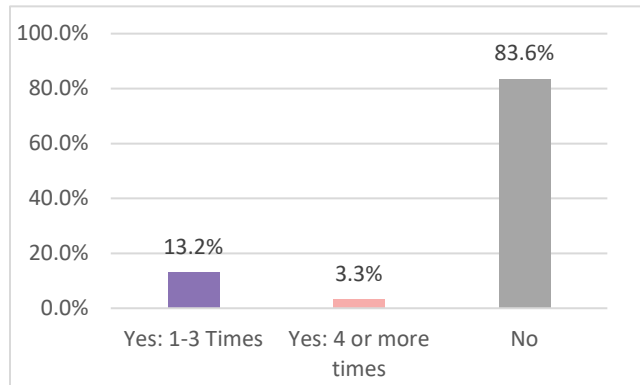


## CHAT AND TEXT

Only 16.5% (n=25) of chat and text help seekers had reached out to the hotline before. Only a small number (3.3%, n=5) of chat and text help seekers had reached out four or more times previously (see Figure 6).

**Figure 6**

*Chatter and Texter: Have you reached out to the Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline before?*



**Call, chat and text help seekers were similar in the percentage of help seekers who had previously reached out to the hotline (17.6% and 16.5%, respectively).**

## COUNSELOR RATINGS

In addition to help seeker self-report responses about mode of contact, counselors completed a similar item to document their observations. Counselors were asked to assess if help seekers contacted the hotline because the chosen mode of contact was offered. Counselor responses regarding help seekers, ages 13-24, are reported herein.

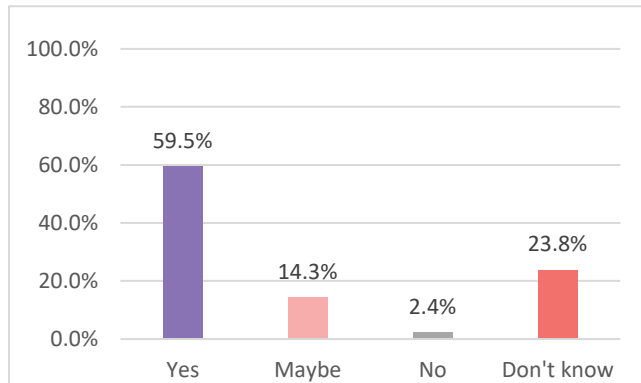
## COUNSELOR PERCEPTIONS OF HELP SEEKER RATIONALE ABOUT CURRENT CONTACT

### CALL

Almost three-quarters of counselors (73.8%, n=31) reported that callers contacted the hotline because calling was an option (i.e., Yes or Maybe; see Figure 7).

**Figure 7**

*Counselor Ratings of Callers: Does counselor feel help seeker made contact today because call was an option instead of texting or chatting?*

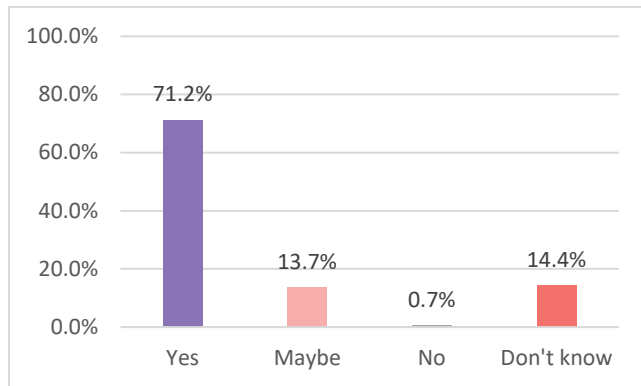


**CHAT AND TEXT**

A large majority (84.9%, n=130) of counselors reported chat and text help seekers contacted the hotline because (chat and text) was an option (i.e., Yes or Maybe). However, some counselors reported that they did not know if chat and text help seekers had contacted the hotline because chat and text was an option (14.4%, n=22; see figure 8).

**Figure 8**

*Counselor Ratings of Chatters and Texters: Does counselor feel help seeker made contact today because chat/text was an option instead of calling?*



**Counselors reported that call, chat, and text help seekers, ages 13-24, contacted the hotline because their respective mode for contacting the hotline was available as an option (73.8% and 84.9%, respectively).**

**RESEARCH QUESTION 3: HOW EFFECTIVE IS PACTECH AT ENGAGING WITH YOUTH TO BUILD SKILLS, PROVIDE RESOURCES AND INFORMATION TO MEET THE NEED FOR WHICH THEY SOUGHT HELP?**

Research Question 3 pertained to engaging youth to build skills, providing resources and sharing of needed information. The data were collected from help seeker self-reported post-surveys for each of the three modes of contact (call, chat, and text) in addition to counselor observations. Data were examined and reported for only those help seekers designated as Level 2 or Level 3 contact. Post-survey items included assessing decreased stress, increased hopefulness, increased preparedness and gained information. Counselor observations were collected to assess the same areas.

**STRESS**

Stress reduction following contact with PACTECH was evaluated. An item regarding stress was included in the post-survey with response categories of Yes, Maybe, No, and Prefer not to answer. Results as reported by help seekers, ages 13-24, are included herein. Additionally, under Research Question 3, there was an outcome objective for PACTECH regarding decreasing stress which stated that 60% of text/chat/call users who complete a post-survey will report that their stress level decreased after the text or chat session.

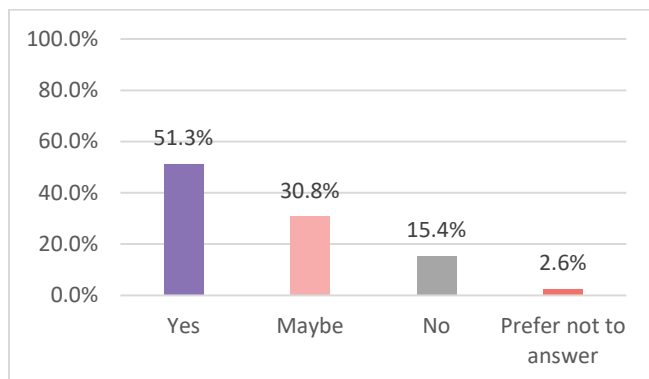
**Outcome objective exceeded with more than 60% of help seekers having reported decreased stress after the session.**

**CALL**

Call help seekers, ages 13-24, (82.1%, n=32) reported that they felt less stress after the call session (i.e., Yes and Maybe response; see Figure 9).

**Figure 9**

*Caller: Do you feel less stress after this call?*

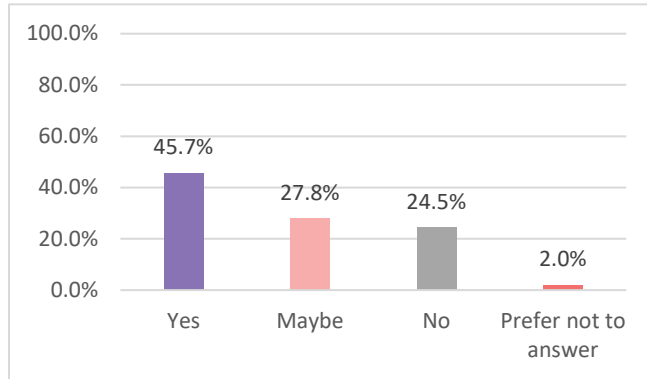


## CHAT AND TEXT

Almost three-fourths of chat and text help seekers (73.5%, n=111) reported feeling less stress after the chat or text session (i.e., Yes and Maybe response; see Figure 10).

**Figure 10**

*Chatter and Texter: Do you feel less stress after this chat/text session?*



**Most help seekers, ages 13-24, reported feeling less stress after the session, however more callers appeared to feel less stress after contacting the hotline than chat and text help seekers (82.1% and 73.5%, respectively). All forms of contact with the hotline, call, chat, and text, reduced help seeker stress.**

## HOPEFUL

Help seeker hopefulness following contact with PACTECH was evaluated. An item measuring hopefulness was included in the post-survey with response categories of A lot, A little, Not at all, and Prefer not to answer. Results as reported by help seekers, ages 13-24, are included herein. Additionally, under Research Question 3, there was an outcome objective for PACTECH regarding increasing hopefulness, which stated that 60% of text/chat/call users who complete a post-survey would report their hopefulness increased after the text or chat session.

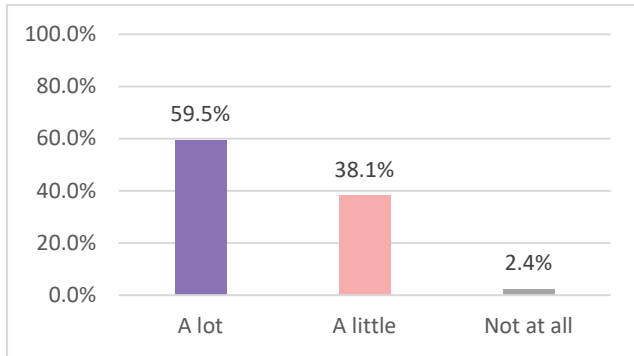
**Outcome objective exceeded with more than 60% of help seekers having reported increased hopefulness after the session.**

**CALL**

Almost all call help seekers, ages 13-24 (97.6%, n=41) reported feeling more positive or hopeful after the call session (i.e., A lot and A little; see Figure 11).

**Figure 11**

*Caller: Do you feel more positive or hopeful after this call?*

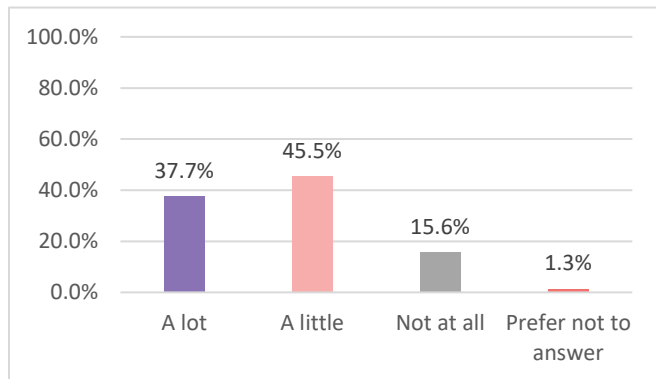


**CHAT AND TEXT**

More than three-fourths of chat and text help seekers, ages 13-24 (83.2%, n=128) reported feeling more positive or hopeful after the call session (i.e., A lot and A little; see Figure 12).

**Figure 12**

*Chatter and Texter: Do you feel more positive or hopeful after this chat/text session?*



**More call help seekers, ages 13-24, reported feeling more positive or hopeful after contacting the hotline when compared to chat and text help seekers (97.6% and 83.2%, respectively).**

## BETTER PREPARED

Help seekers, ages 13-24, were asked to report if they felt better prepared to deal with the situation after contacting the hotline. An item measuring preparedness was included in the post-survey with a scale of A lot, A little, Not at all, and Prefer not to answer. Results for call as compared to chat and text help seeker groups are reported herein.

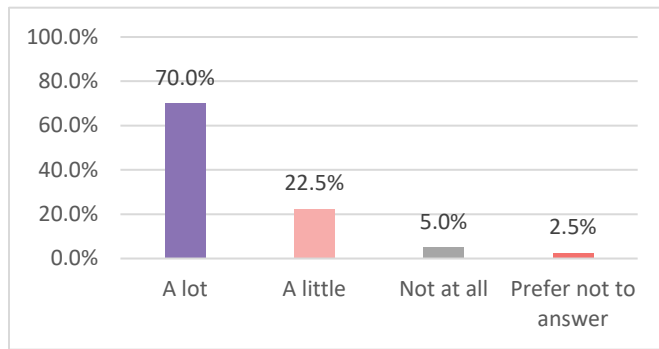
---

### CALL

Almost all call help seekers, ages 13-24 (92.5%, n=37) reported feeling better prepared to deal with the situation after the call session (i.e., A lot and A little response; see Figure 13).

**Figure 13**

*Caller: Do you feel better prepared to deal with the situation after this call?*

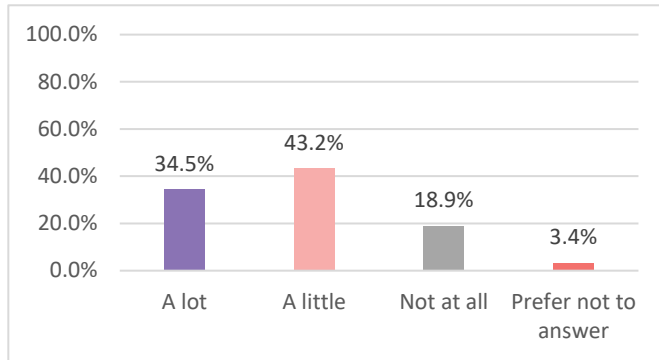


**CHAT AND TEXT**

Over three-fourths of the chat and text help seekers, ages 13-24 (77.7%, n= 115) reported feeling better prepared to deal with the situation after the call session (i.e., A lot or A little response; see Figure 14).

**Figure 14**

*Chatter and Texter: Do you feel better prepared to deal with the situation after this chat/text session?*



**More call help seekers, ages 13-24, reported feeling better prepared following contact with the hotline when compared to chat and text help seekers (i.e., 92.5% and 77.7%, respectively). A small percentage of call help seekers, ages 13-24, reported not feeling better prepared to deal with the situation when compared to chat and text help seekers (5.0% and 18.9%, respectively, Not at all).**

**INFORMATION RECEIVED**

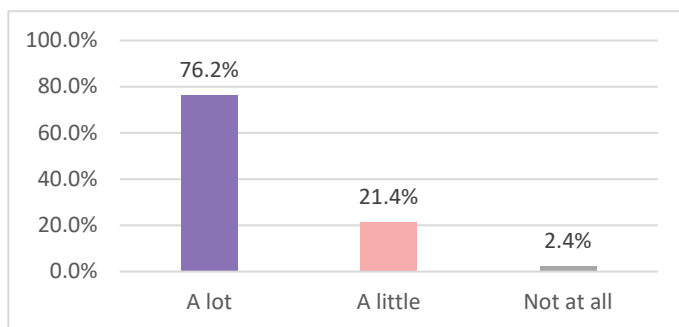
A post-survey item measured if help seekers got the information needed from the session. The response categories included A lot, A little, Not at all, and Prefer not to answer. Responses from help seekers, ages 13-24, are summarized herein.

**CALL**

Almost all call help seekers, ages 13-24 (97.6%, n=41) reported getting the information they needed from the session with the hotline as reported by A lot or A little (see Figure 15).

**Figure 15**

*Callers: Did you get the information you needed from this call session?*



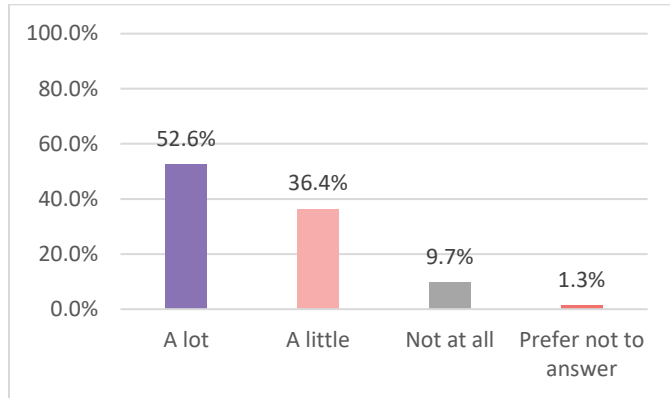


## CHAT AND TEXT

The majority of chat and text help seekers, ages 13-24 (89.0%, n=137) reported getting the information they needed from the session with the hotline as reported by A lot or A little (see Figure 16).

**Figure 16**

*Chatters and Texters: Did you get the information you needed from this call session?*



**More call help seekers, ages 13-24, reported getting the information they needed from the session with the hotline when compared to chat and text help seekers (i.e., 97.6% and 89.0%, respectively). Fewer call help seekers reported not getting the information needed following contact with the hotline when compared to chat and text help seekers (i.e., 2.4% and 9.7%, respectively, Not at all).**

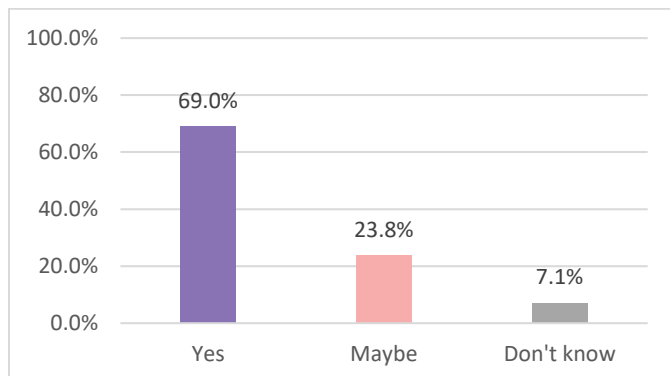
## COUNSELOR PERCEPTIONS OF HELP SEEKER STRESS

### CALL

Counselors reported that the majority (92.8%, n=39) of call help seekers, ages 13-24, felt less stress after the session (i.e., Yes or Maybe response; see Figure 17).

**Figure 17**

*Counselor: Does counselor feel help seeker decreased their stress after this call session?*

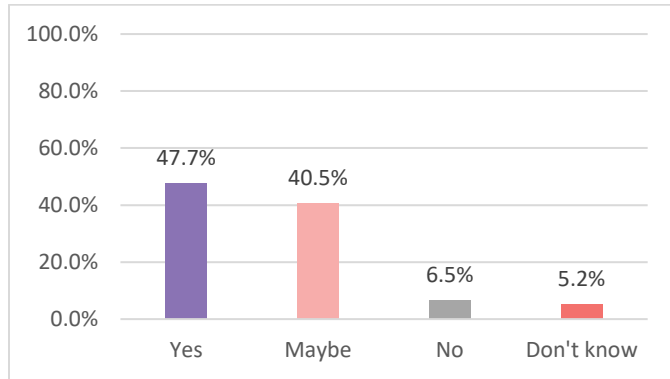


### CHAT AND TEXT

Counselors reported that the majority (88.2%, n=135) of chat and text help seekers, ages 13-24, felt less stress after the session (Yes or Maybe response; see Figure 18).

**Figure 18**

*Counselor: Does counselor feel help seeker decreased their stress after this chat/text session?*



Counselors reported that most call, chat and text help seekers, ages 13-24, reported less stress after the session (92.8% and 88.2%, respectively).

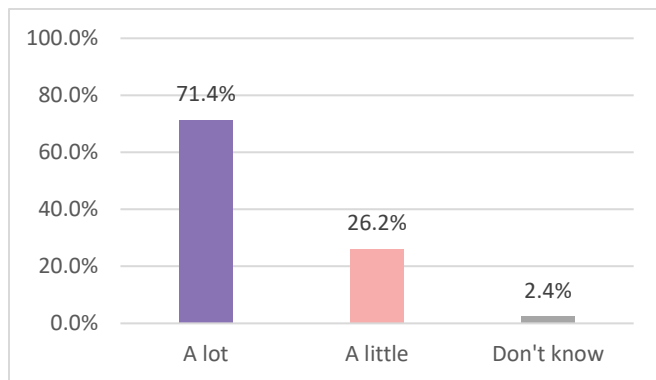
### COUNSELOR PERCEPTIONS OF HELP SEEKER HOPEFULNESS

#### CALL

Counselors reported that almost all call help seekers, ages 13-24, increased hopefulness after the session (97.6%, n=41, A lot or A little; see Figure 19).

**Figure 19**

*Counselor: Does counselor feel help seeker increased their hopefulness/more positive after this call session?*

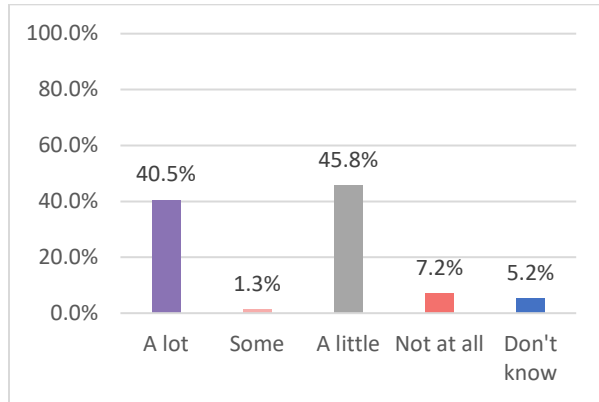


## CHAT AND TEXT

Counselors reported that most of the chat and text help seekers, ages 13-24, increased hopefulness after the session (87.6%, n=134, A lot, Some, A little; see Figure 20).

**Figure 20**

*Counselor: Does counselor feel help seeker increased their hopefulness/more positive after this chat/text session?*



**Counselors reported that most call, chat and text help seekers, ages 13-24, reported increased hopefulness after the session (97.6% and 87.6%, respectively). Interestingly, counselors reported many more call help seekers, ages 13-24, had A lot of increased hopefulness than did chat and text help seekers, ages 13-24, following the session (71.4% and 40.5%, respectively).**

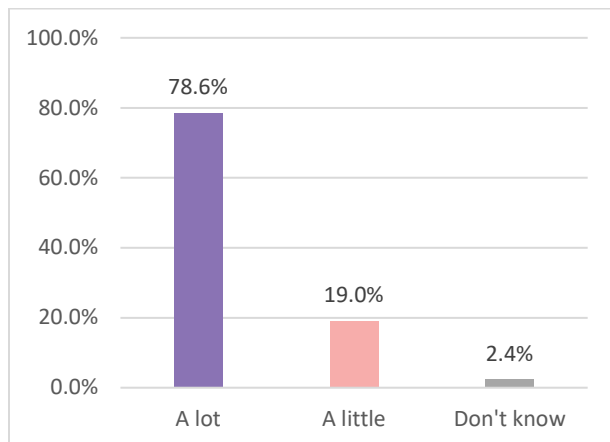
## COUNSELOR PERCEPTIONS OF HELP SEEKER PREPAREDNESS

### CALL

Counselors reported almost all call help seekers, ages 13-24, reported being better prepared to deal with their situation following the session (97.6%, n=41, A lot and A little; see Figure 21).

**Figure 21**

*Counselor: Does counselor feel help seeker is better prepared to deal with the situation after this call session?*

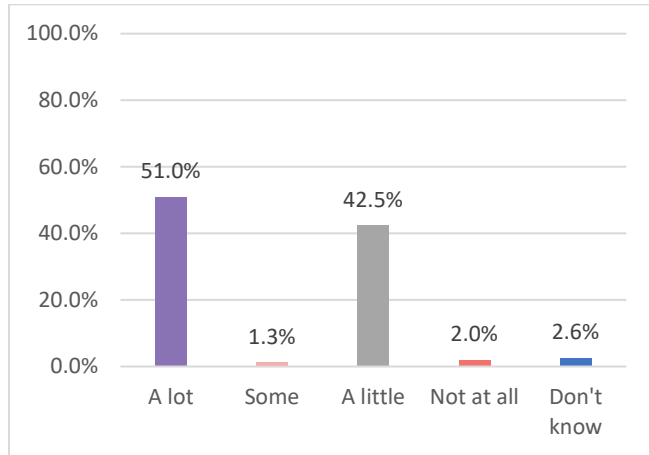


**CHAT AND TEXT**

Counselors reported most chat and text help seekers, ages 13-24, reported being better prepared following the session (94.8%, n=145, A lot, Some, or A little; see Figure 22).

**Figure 22**

*Counselor: Does counselor feel help seeker is better prepared to deal with the situation after this chat/text session?*



**Counselors reported that most call, chat and text help seekers, ages 13-24, reported they were better prepared to deal with the situation after the session (97.6% and 94.8%, respectively). Again, counselors reported that more callers, ages 13-24, had gained A lot of preparedness compared to chat and text help seekers, ages 13-24 (78.6% and 51.0%, respectively).**

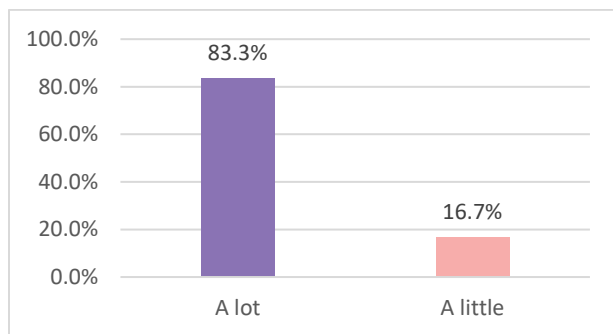
**COUNSELOR PERCEPTIONS OF HELP SEEKER GAINED INFORMATION**

**CALL**

Counselors reported that all call help seekers, ages 13-24, got the information they needed to deal with the situation during the session (100.0%, n=42, A lot or A little; see Figure 23).

**Figure 23**

*Counselor: Does counselor feel help seeker got the information they needed to deal with the situation during this call?*

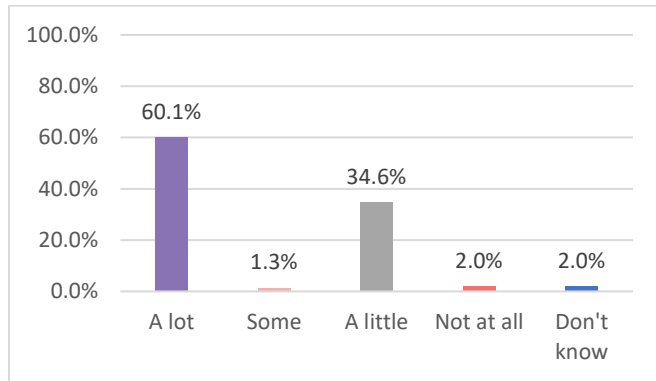


**CHAT AND TEXT**

Counselors reported most chat and text help seekers, ages 13-24, got the information they needed to deal with the situation during the session (96.0%, n=147, A lot, Some, or A little; see Figure 24).

**Figure 24**

*Counselor: Does counselor feel help seeker got the information they needed to deal with the situation during this chat/text?*



**Counselors reported that most call, chat and text help seekers, ages 13-24, reported they got the information to deal with the situation after the session (100% and 96.0%, respectively). Counselors reported that more call help seekers, ages 13-24, had gained A lot of information to deal with the situation than chat and text help seekers, ages 13-24 (83.3% and 60.1%, respectively).**

**RESEARCH QUESTION 4: WHAT ARE THE DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS AND PRESENTING ISSUES OF HELP SEEKERS THAT USE A TEXT AND CHAT FEATURE OF A CHILD MALTREATMENT HOTLINE?**

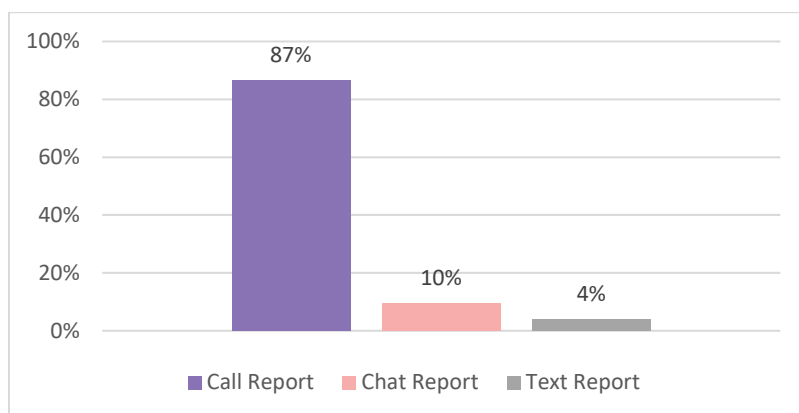
Research Question 4 pertained to gaining an understanding of help seekers demographics and primary needs. The data were collected from help seeker self-reported pre- and post-surveys for each of the three modes of contact (call, chat, and text) in addition to counselor observations. Data were examined and reported for only those help seekers designated as Level 2 or Level 3. Data included items such as mode of contact, level of intervention, length of contact, age, gender, race, presenting issues, referral source and post-survey response rate. Data were collected from both help seeker self-report during pre and post-surveys and counselor observations from call, chat and text contacts.

**DEMOGRAPHICS FOR ALL HELP SEEKERS**

There were **7,076 total** contacts initiated with the Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline during the one-month Call Comparison PACTECH Pilot period of February 2020. There were **6,121 call** contacts of which 2,685 were intervention level 1; 2,458 call contacts were level 2, and 103 call contacts were level 3. Also, 875 call contacts did not have a level of intervention specified due to hang-up, no response, wrong number, donation-volunteer, prank or obscene. There were **677 chat** sessions with 69 level 1 contacts, 438 level 2 contacts and 23 level 3 contacts. In addition, 147 chat contacts did not have a level of intervention specified due to no response, hang-up, prank or wrong number. There were **278 text** sessions with 40 level 1 text contacts, 196 level 2 contacts and 10 level 3 text contacts. Also, 32 text contacts were not specified due to no response, hang-up, prank, or wrong number (see Figure 25).

**Figure 25**

*Mode of Contact*



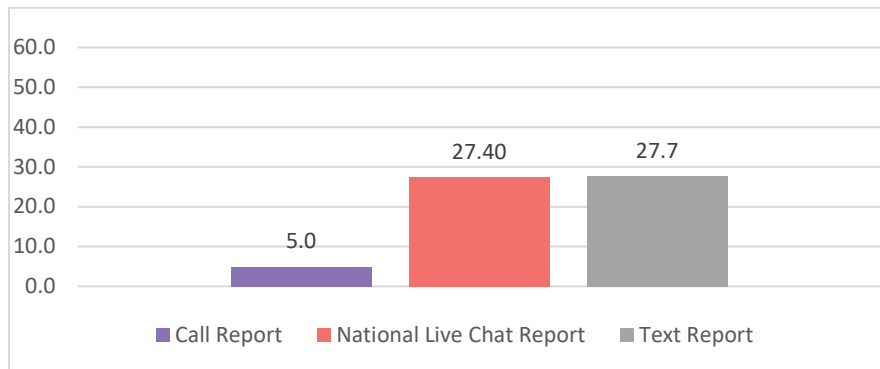
## CONTACT TIME

Contact time was calculated for each session for help seekers (see Figure 26):

- Call average contact time was 4.97 minutes (SD=6.78; median=3.00 minutes; range 0 to 89 minutes)
- Chat average contact time was 27.40 minutes (SD=20.38; median=22.00 minutes; range 0 to 130 minutes)
- Text average contact time was 27.69 minutes (SD=18.56; median=24.00 minutes; range 0 to 97 minutes).

**Figure 26**

*Average Length of Contact in Minutes*



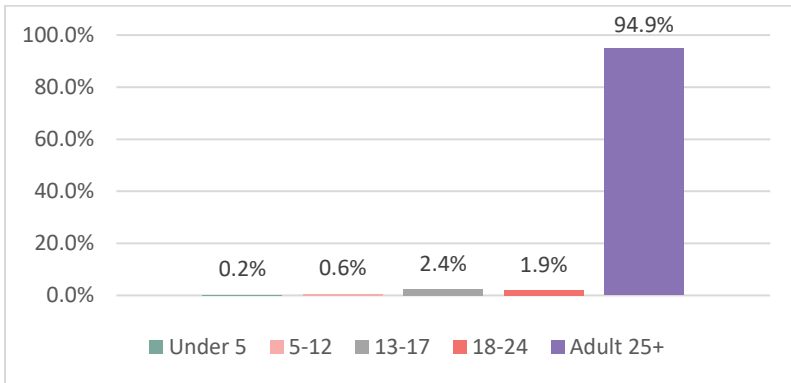
## AGE

Age of help seekers was collected in two formats. Caller age was collected by counselors during call sessions and coded into categories: Under 5 years, 5-12 years, 13-17 years, 18-24 years and 65+ years (see Figure 27). Chat and text help seeker age was reported by help seekers in an open-ended pre-survey age item that captured raw age (see Figures 28 and 29). The following is a breakout of ages by contact mode for all help seekers reporting age during the one-month call comparison pilot period:

- Call ages (as coded by counselors): Adult 25+ (94.9%, n= 5,004), 18-24 (1.9%, n=100), 13-17 (2.4%, n=126), 5-12 (.6%, n=34), and Under 5 (.2%, n=10)
  - Per counselors, 847 call contacts did not report age
    - *No call pre-survey was administered; thus, raw ages were not collected for call contacts*
- Chat ages (as coded by counselors): Adult 25+ (19.6%, n=128), 18-24 (12.3%, n=80), 13-17 (50.8%, n=332), 5-12 (11.2%, n=73), Unknown (6.1%, n=40)
  - Per counselors, 24 chat contacts did not report age
  - Chat pre-survey self-reported ages: mean 19.78 (SD=10.24), range of 9-71, most common (mode) 15, and median age of chat help seekers was 16 years, 83 chat contacts reported no age
- Text ages (as coded by counselors): Adult 25+ (24.2%, n=66), 18-24 (13.6%, n=37), 13-17 (47.6%, n=130), 5-12 (9.2%, n=25), Unknown (5.5%, n=15)
  - Per counselors, 5 text contacts did not report age
  - Text pre-survey self-reported ages: mean 21.30 (SD=12.30), range of 5-78, most common (mode) 15, and median age of text help seekers was 16 years, 37 text contacts reported no age

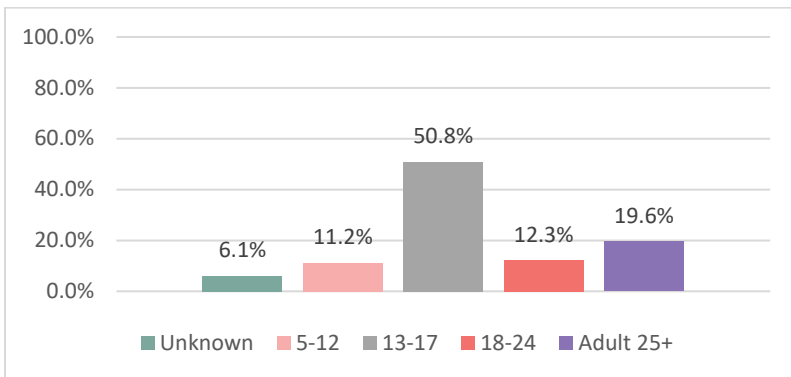
CALL

**Figure 27**  
*Call Age, per counselor*



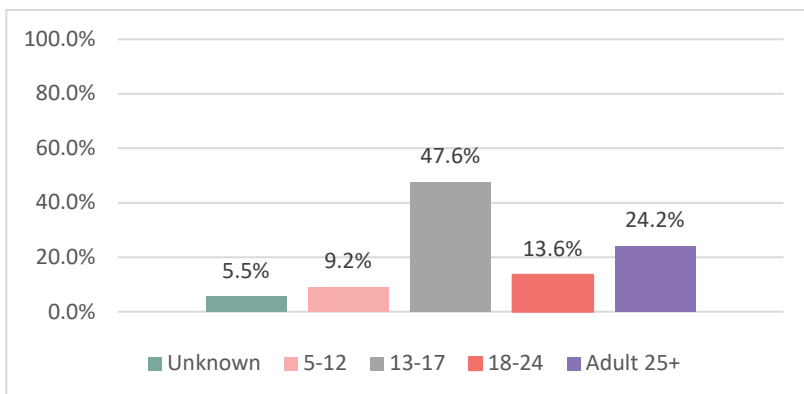
CHAT

**Figure 28**  
*Chat Age, per counselor*



TEXT

**Figure 29**  
*Text Age, per counselor*





## GENDER

Gender of help seekers was collected in two formats. Caller gender was collected by counselors during call sessions and coded into categories: Female, Male, Non-Binary and Unknown (see Figure 30). Chat and text help seeker gender was self-reported by help seekers in an open-ended pre-survey gender item. See Figures 31, 32. Gender based on contact mode for all help seekers reporting gender during the one-month call comparison pilot period was summarized.

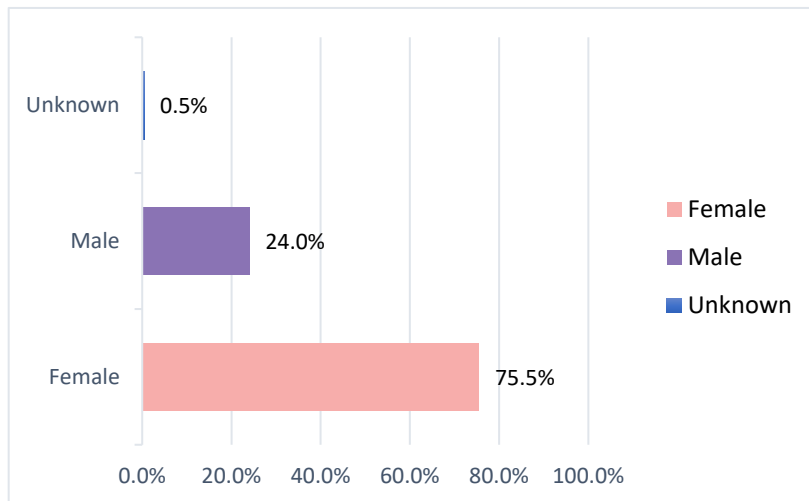
- Call gender: Female (75.5%, n=3,986), Male (24.0%, n=1,268), or Unknown (.5%, n=24)
  - 843 call contacts did not report gender
- Chat gender: Female (72.4%, n=490), Male (15.4%, n=104), Prefer not to answer (6.6%, n=45), Non-Binary (2.2%, n=15), Transgender Male (1.3%, n=9), Gender Fluid (.9%, n=6), Unknown (.9%, n=6), or Transgender Female (.3%, n=2)
- Text gender: Female (72.3%, n=201), Male (14.4%, n=40), Prefer not to answer (7.6%, n=21), Unknown (3.2%, n=9), Non-Binary (1.8%, n=5) Gender Fluid (.4%, n=1), or Transgender Female (.4%, n=1)

---

## CALL

**Figure 30**

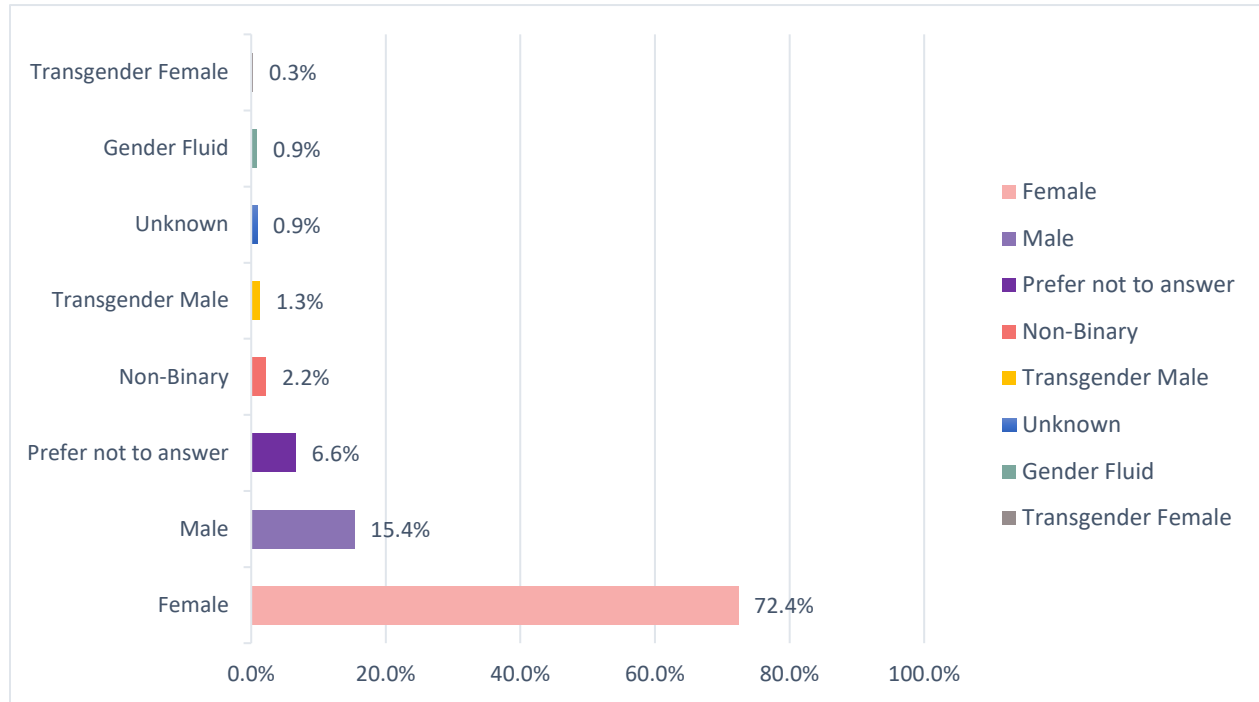
*Call Gender*



CHAT

Figure 31

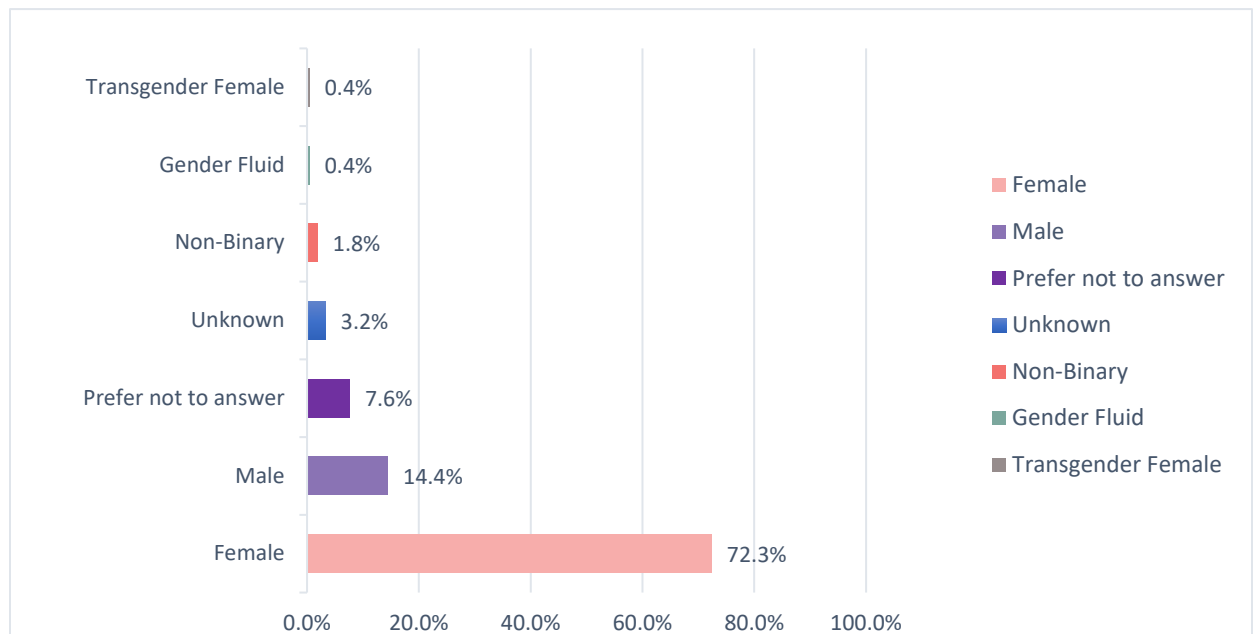
Chat Gender



TEXT

Figure 32

Text Gender



**CATEGORY OF HELP SEEKER**

Information about the category of help seeker was coded by counselors. For the **total of all types of contacts**, these categories had the most responses: Unknown (1,591), Parent (1,173), Relative (417), Friend (409), Abused Child (406), Neighbor (368), Grandparent (293) and Other (277).

**Table 1**

*Most Frequently Reported Categories In Call, Text, And Chat*

<b>Most frequently reported categories</b>		
<b>CALL</b>	<b>CHAT</b>	<b>TEXT</b>
<b>Unknown, 1,535</b>	<b>Abused Child, 227</b>	<b>Abused Child, 92</b>
Parent, 1,173	Distressed Child (NOT abused child), 75	Friend, 46
Relative, 387	Parent, 47	Distressed Child (NOT abused child), 21
Neighbor, 349	Friend, 40	Unknown, 21
Friend, 323	Unknown, 35	Adult Survivor, 14
Grandparent, 284	Other, 27	Parent, 13
Other, 244	Adult Survivor, 23	Relative, 13

**PRESENTING ISSUE**

Counselors coded into the system the presenting issue for which all types of help seekers reached out to the hotline. Help seekers were able to report more than one presenting issue. The top seven categories most frequently reported by help seekers included:

**Table 2**

*Presenting Issue Categories Most Frequently Reported By Help Seekers*

<b>1. CPS Report Abuse</b>	<b>3,758</b>
<b>2. CPS Questions/Information</b>	<b>2,100</b>
<b>3. Abuse-Neglect</b>	<b>1,057</b>
<b>4. Abuse-Physical</b>	<b>770</b>
<b>5. Abuse-Emotional</b>	<b>651</b>
<b>6. Other</b>	<b>402</b>
<b>7. Abuse-Sexual</b>	<b>393</b>

## TEXT EXCHANGES

Data regarding the number of text exchanges for text contacts were captured in iCarol. A text exchange is counted as one message between a counselor and help seeker, and most text interactive conversations have multiple text exchanges. There were **8,828 text exchanges** in February 2020.

## POST-SURVEY RESPONSE RATE

Post-survey response rates were calculated to determine of all the help seekers, how many chose to complete a post-survey when offered following contact. Post-survey response rates of help seekers ranged from 23.0% to 30.0%. The following is a breakout of post-survey response rates by mode of contact:

- 30.0% Post-call survey response rate
  - 48 of 161 Call post-surveys completed
- 27.0% Post-chat survey response rate
  - 183 of 677 Chat post-surveys completed
- 23.0% Post-text survey response rate
  - 64 of 278 Text post-surveys completed

**Call help seekers had a higher post-survey response rate (30.0%) compared to chat or text help seekers (27.0% and 23.0%, respectively).**

## DEMOGRAPHICS FOR LEVEL 2 AND LEVEL 3 HELP SEEKERS IN TARGET POPULATION (AGES 13-24) WITH POST-SURVEY PARTICIPATION

There were 196 total post-surveys with intervention level 2 or 3 from help seekers in the target population, ages 13-24, that were initiated with the Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline during the one-month Call Comparison PACTECH Pilot period of February 2020. There were 42 call sessions with a level of intervention of 2 (no level 3 call sessions with a post-survey). There were 114 chat sessions with 108 level 2 contacts and 6 level 3 contacts. There were 40 text sessions with 36 level 2 contacts and 4 level 3 contacts.

---

### CONTACT TIME

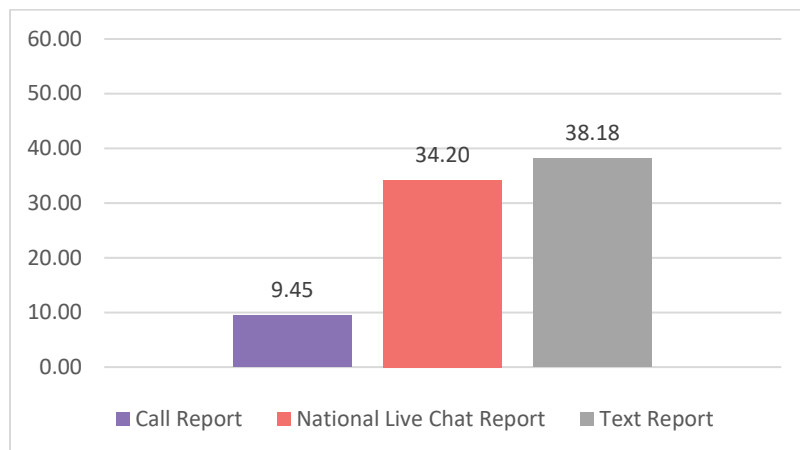
Contact time was calculated for each session for help seekers, ages 13-24 (see Figure 33):

- Call average contact time was 9.45 minutes (SD=8.23; median=8.00 minutes; range 2 to 52 minutes).
- Chat average contact time was 34.20 minutes (SD=20.58; median=30.00 minutes; range 3 to 99 minutes).
- Text average contact time was 38.18 minutes (SD=18.58; median=33.00 minutes; range 13 to 83 minutes).

**Chat and text sessions averaged more than three times longer than call sessions.**

**Figure 33**

*Average Length of Contact in Minutes*



## AGE

For help seekers ages 13-24, age was collected in two formats. Caller age was collected by counselors during call sessions and reported in categories (see Figure 34). Chat and text help seeker age was reported by help seekers in an open-ended pre-survey age item, and also categorized for ease of comparison (see Figures 35 and 36). The target age range for the project was ages 13-24 years. The following is a breakout of ages by contact mode:

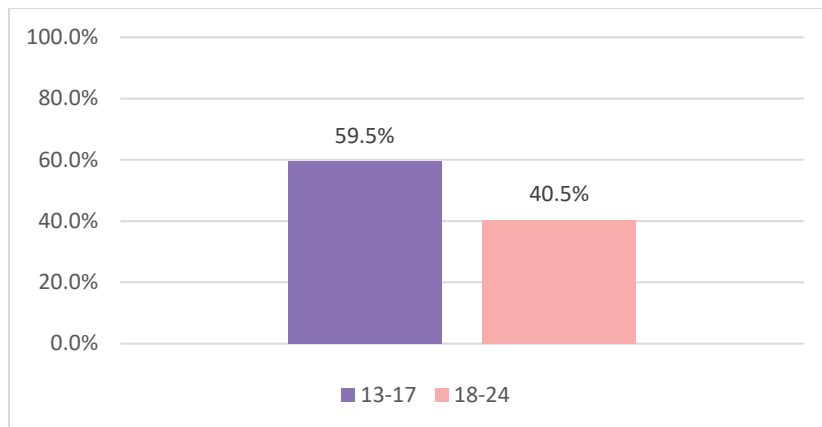
- Call ages: 13-17 (59.5%, n=25) and 18-24 (40.5%, n=17)
  - *No call pre-survey was administered; thus, raw ages were not collected for call contacts*
- Chat ages: 13-17 (86.8%, n=99) and 18-24 (13.2%, n=15), mean 15.73 (SD=2.21), range 13-24, most common (mode) 17, median 16 years
- Text ages: 13-17 (80.0%, n=32) and 18-24 (20.0%, n=8), mean 15.92 (SD=2.17), range 13-24, most common (mode) 16, median 16 years

---

## CALL

**Figure 34**

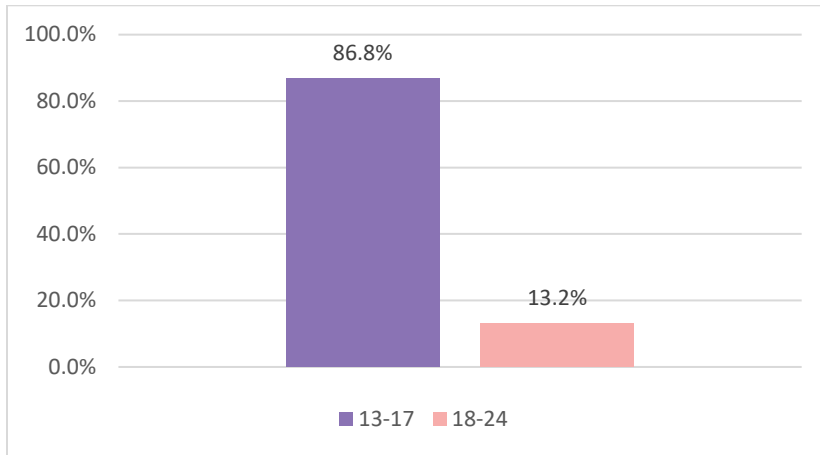
*Call Age Category*



**CHAT**

**Figure 35**

*Chat Age Category*

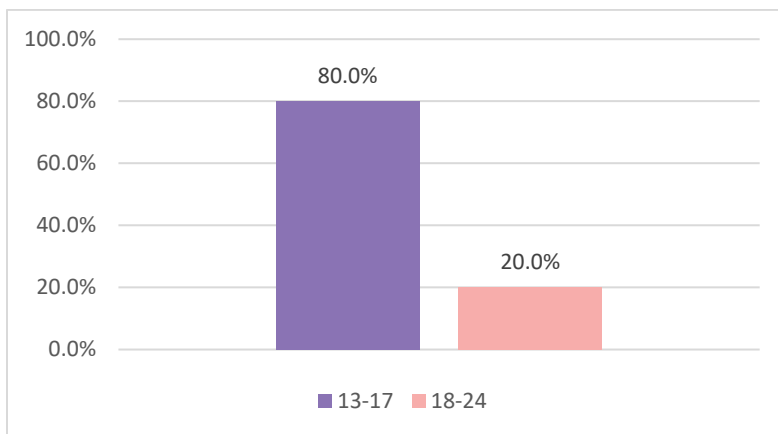


---

**TEXT**

**Figure 36**

*Text Age Category*



**Chat (86.8%) and text (80.0%) help seekers appeared to be younger than call (59.5%) help seekers (i.e., ages 13-17 years).**

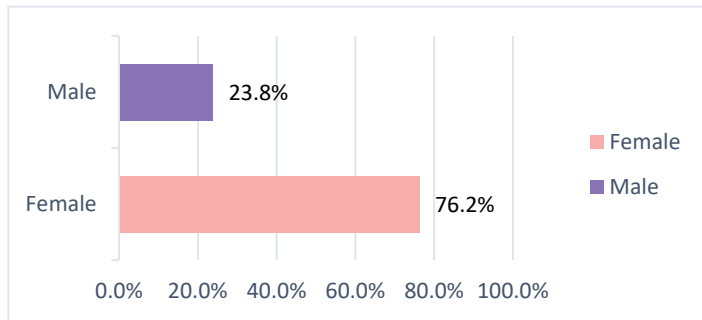
**GENDER**

For help seekers ages 13-24, gender was collected in two formats. Caller gender was collected by counselors during call sessions and coded into categories: Female, Male, Non-Binary and Unknown (see Figure 37). Chat and Text help seeker gender was reported by help seekers in an open-ended pre-survey gender item (see Figure 38-39). The following is a breakout of gender based on contact mode.

- Call gender: Female (76.2%, n=32) or Male (23.8%, n=10)
- Chat gender: Female (69.3%, n=79), Male (16.7%, n=19), Transgender Male (5.3%, n=6), Non-Binary (4.4%, n=5), Gender Fluid (1.8%, n=2), Transgender Female (1.8%, n=2), or Prefer not to answer (.9%, n=1)
- Text gender: Female (72.5%, n=29), Male (17.5%, n=7), Prefer not to answer (7.5%, n=3), Non-Binary (2.5%, n=1)

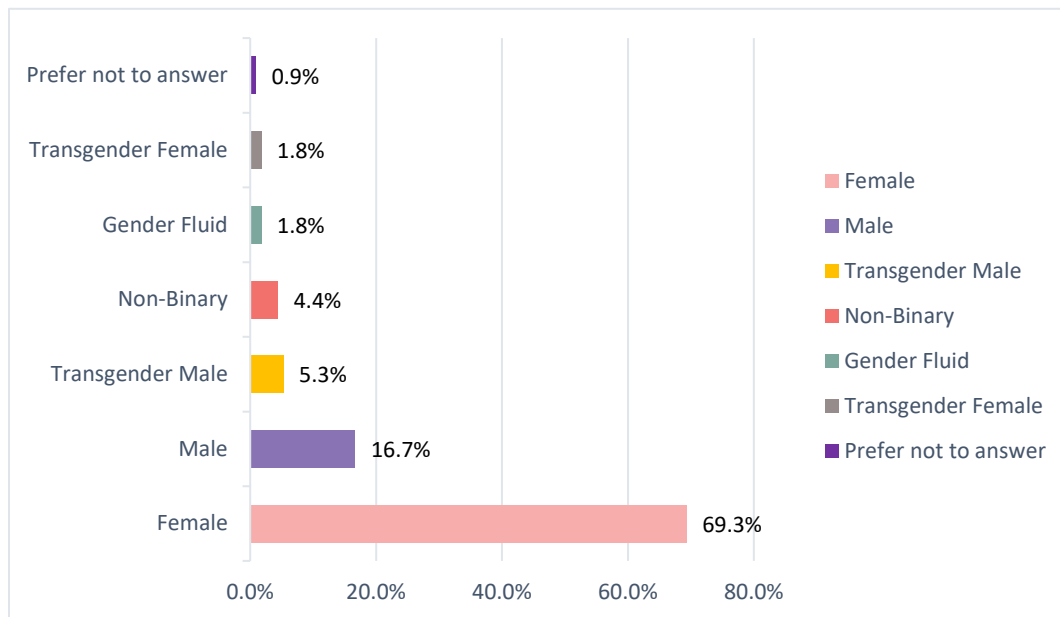
**Figure 37**

*Call Gender*



**Figure 38**

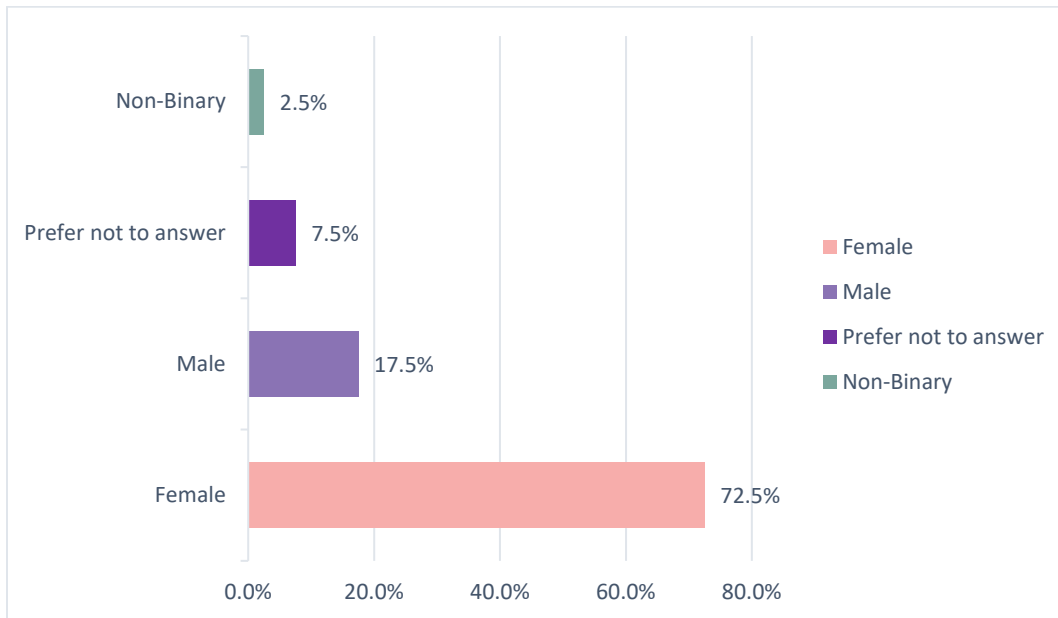
*Chat Gender*





**Figure 39**

*Text Gender*



**Gender of call, chat and text help seekers was similar in that most of the help seekers were female (76.2%, 69.3%, 72.5%, respectively).**

## ETHNICITY

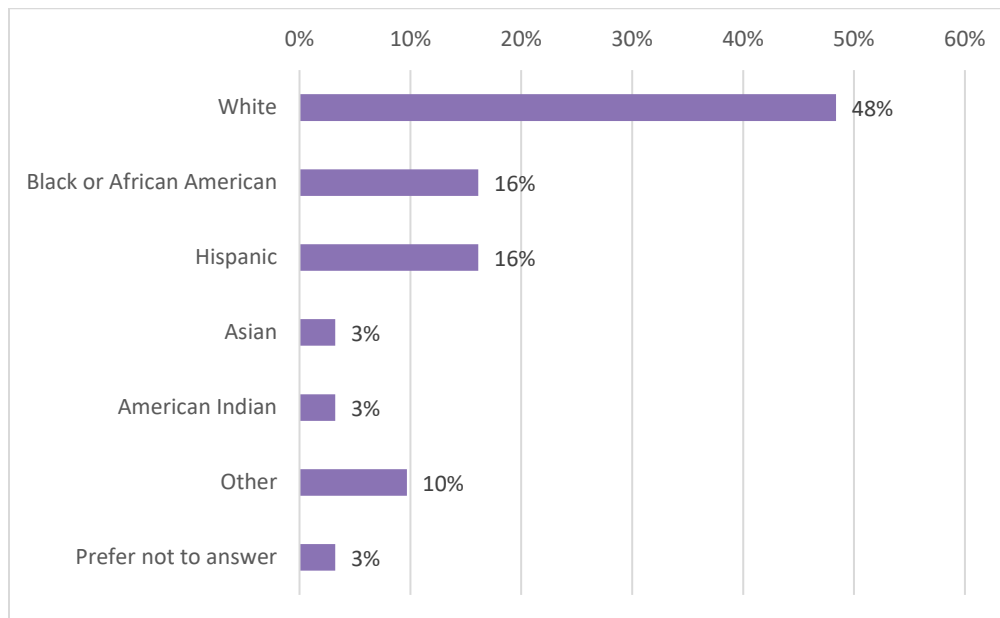
For help seekers ages 13-24, ethnicity was collected from a post-survey item where a list of race and ethnicity categories was presented to help seekers. Call post-survey categories were White, Black or African American, Hispanic, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Other, Don't Know or Prefer not to answer. Chat and Text Post-survey categories were White, Black or African American, Hispanic, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Asian, Other, Multi-Racial, or Prefer not to answer. The following is a breakout of self-reported ethnicity by contact mode:

- **Call** ethnicity: 31 of 42 call contacts with post-surveys reported ethnicity (see Figure 40): White (48.4%, n=15), Black or African American (5 or 16.1%), Hispanic (5 or 16.1%), American Indian or Alaska Native (3.2%, n=1), Asian (3.2%, n=1) Other (9.7%, n=3), or Prefer not to answer (3.2%, n=1)
  - 11 call contacts did not report ethnicity
- **Chat** ethnicity: 109 of 114 chat contacts with post-surveys reported ethnicity (see Figure 41): White (53.2%, n=58), Black or African American (10.1%, n=11), Hispanic (9.2%, n=10), Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (.9%, n=1), Asian (10.1%, n=11), Other (.9%, n=1), Multi-Racial (6.4%, n=7), or Prefer not to answer (4.6%, n=5)
  - 5 chat contacts did not report ethnicity; 4 reported Don't know; 1 reported I don't understand the question
- **Text** ethnicity: 37 of 40 text contacts with post-surveys reported ethnicity (see Figure 42): White (51.4%, n=19), Black or African American (2.7%, n=1), Hispanic (18.9%, n=7), Asian (5.4%, n=2), Multi-Racial (13.5%, n=5), or Prefer not to answer (8.1%, n=3)
  - 3 text contacts did not report ethnicity

## CALL

**Figure 40**

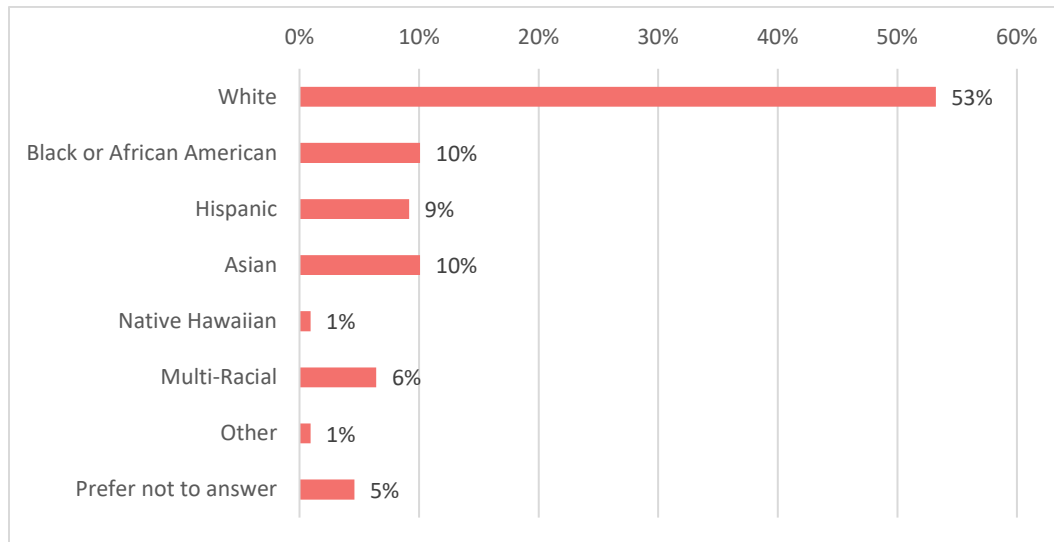
### Call Ethnicity



CHAT

Figure 41

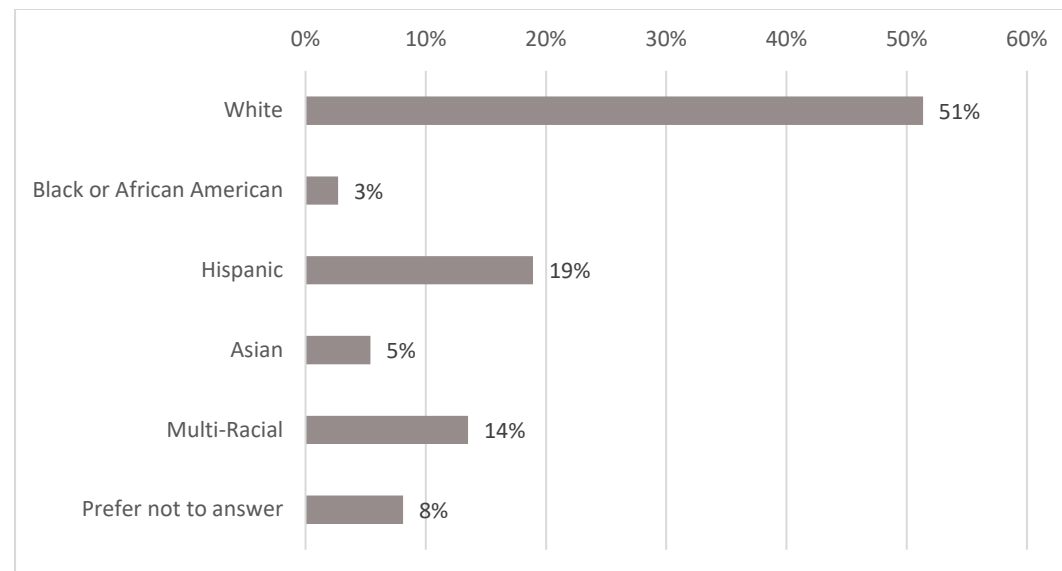
Chat Ethnicity



TEXT

Figure 42

Text Ethnicity



Call, chat and text help seekers ages 13-24 had similar percentages (48.4%, 53.5%, 51.4%, respectively) of White ethnicity reported. Call and text help seekers ages 13-24 had similar percentages (16.1%, 18.9%) of Hispanic ethnicity reported. Chat help seekers ages 13-24 had a lower percentage (9.2%) of Hispanic ethnicity reported than call and text help seekers.

CATEGORY OF HELP SEEKER

For help seekers ages 13-24, information about the type of help seeker was collected and coded by counselors for all modes of contact.

**Table 3**

*Most Frequently Reported Categories of Help Seekers for Call, Chat, and Text*

Most frequently reported categories		
CALL	CHAT	TEXT
<b>Abused Child, 13</b>	<b>Abused Child, 75</b>	<b>Abused Child, 20</b>
Friend, 13	Distressed Child (NOT abused child), 17	Friend, 14
Distressed Child (NOT abused child), 5	Friend, 13	Adult Survivor, 3
Parent, 2	Other, 3	Parent, 1
Relative, 2	Adult Survivor, 2	Relative, 1
Unknown, 2	Sibling, 1	Distressed Child (NOT abused child), 1
Sibling, 1	Relative, 1	
Healthcare worker, 1	Bystander, 1	
Property manager Landlord, 1	Property manager Landlord, 1	
Neighbor, 1		
Other, 1		

**Abused Child was the category reported most frequently for call, chat and text.**

**PRESENTING ISSUE**

Counselors coded into the system the presenting issue for which help seekers, ages 13-24, reached out to the hotline. Help seekers were able to report more than one presenting issue. Help seekers were able to report more than one presenting issue. The most frequently reported categories included:

The top seven categories most frequently reported for call, chat and text help seekers, ages 13-24, were:

**Table 4**

*Presenting Issue Categories Most Frequently Reported By Call, Chat and Text Help Seekers, Ages 13-24*

<b>1. Abuse-Emotional</b>	91
<b>2. Abuse-Physical</b>	83
<b>3. CPS Questions/Information</b>	91
<b>4. CPS Report Abuse</b>	75
<b>5. Abuse-Neglect</b>	37
<b>6. Parent-Teen Relationships</b>	43
<b>7. Teen Issues</b>	36

**Table 5**

*Most Frequently Reported Categories of Help Seekers for Call, Chat, and Text, Ages 13-24*

<b>Most frequently reported categories</b>		
<b>CALL</b>	<b>CHAT</b>	<b>TEXT</b>
<b>CPS Questions/Information, 24</b>	<b>Abuse-Emotional, 61</b>	<b>Abuse-Emotional, 20</b>
CPS Report Abuse, 23	CPS Questions/Information, 49	Abuse-Physical, 19
Abuse-Physical, 20	Abuse-Physical, 44	CPS Questions/Information, 18
Abuse-Emotional, 10	CPS Report Abuse, 36	CPS Report Abuse, 16
Abuse-Neglect, 10	Parent-Teen Relationships, 34	Abuse-Neglect, 9
Teen Issues, 9	Teen Issues, 21	Parent-Teen Relationships, 8
Mental Health Issues, 8	Mental Health Issues, 20	Teen Issues, 6

**Call help seekers reported CPS Question/Information most frequently whereas chat and text help seekers reported Abuse-Emotional most frequently. The most frequently reported presenting issues were similar for all types of help seekers, ages 13-24.**

## HEARD ABOUT THE HOTLINE

Additionally, for Research Question 4, there was one outcome objective for PACTECH regarding assessment of how help seekers learned about PACTECH through online sources. The target outcome objective was: 50% of text/chat/call users will state they learned about PACTECH through online sources.

**Outcome objective exceeded with more than 50% of help seekers reported having learned about PACTECH through online sources.**

- **81.0%** (n=34) of **call** help seekers ages 13-24, reported hearing about the hotline through a website or internet source.
- **53.5%** (n=61) of **chat** help seekers ages 13-24, reported hearing about the hotline through a website or internet source.
- **65.0%** (n=26) of **text** help seekers ages 13-24, reported hearing about the hotline through a website or internet source.

**Callers (81.0%) reported hearing about the hotline through a website or internet source more frequently than chat (53.5%) or text (65.0%) help seeker.**

## NEXT STEPS

The findings from this report will now be used to make improvements to the questions and protocols used for hotline calls, texts and chats and data collection. Then during the next phase, the evaluation compares one-year (June 1, 2020 to May 30, 2021) of help-seeker responses based on their type of contact (call, chat, or text). These outcomes will help determine best practices and protocols pertaining to the use of chat and text in the context of crisis helplines. The utilization of these technologies by adolescents may well mitigate risk factors, increase protective factors such as stress reduction, increase hopefulness, and connect youth to crisis support information and services. Since there is minimal research on evaluating text and/or chat capabilities within hotlines, examining the decisions and processes involved in implementation helps to determine best practices and protocols that are of particular interest to hotline staff, volunteers, evaluators, researchers, policymakers and child abuse prevention advocates.

In May 2020 prior to implementation of Phase 2 data collection, additional print and social media will be utilized with a focus on young parents targeting additional agencies that work specifically with this population including healthcare facilities. Parents often need access to support services in between visits to ongoing providers, as moments of stress can occur any time. The Year 3 PACTECH plans reach out to parents to let them know that PACTECH is an option for support to help prevent child maltreatment as well as assist in strengthening the family unit. Marketing strategies will increase with a focus specifically on young parents, and informing them that there is a safe and confidential line to reach out to any time of the day or night. Exploring relationships with hospitals and other agencies that focus specifically on young parents will occur in Year 3.

Help seekers access text and chat services utilizing the same call number (1-800-4-A-CHILD). Support is provided to help seekers based on the situation they present, as is the case with all contacts to the hotline. In this target population, counselors will be able to assist with understanding developmental norms and milestones, providing strategies for assisting parents who are feeling overwhelmed, identifying support systems, and referring to local agencies as necessary for ongoing support

The Hotline added two full-time staff and one part-time staff in fall of 2019 to help with the increased volume of text and chats. The hotline staffing is currently 50% focused on text and chat and 50% focused on calls. If volume continues to grow, the need for additional staffing will be assessed. Training materials were modified after the initial pilot period to focus on two distinct areas: mechanics & protocols of text/chat and the counselor-help seeker interaction. These training materials will continue to be adapted to more accurately capture and collect data. To assist in assessing best practices in regards to the direct counseling interaction, a qualitative research component is being added to the PACTECH study during its next implementation phase. At the end of Year 3, the quantitative and qualitative data will be analyzed and recommendations made to answer the 5 Research Questions that address effectiveness and best practices by which hotlines should operate.