

# 1993-1997

## Statistic Report on the Four Year Work of the SOS Telephone for Children and Youngsters at the First Children's Embassy in the World (November 1993- November 1997)

**Table No 3** Total number of calls and talk every year considering the caller's age and sex.

Year	Number of calls	Number of talks	Sex		<12 years old	13-18 years old	>18 years old
			m	f			
1993- '94	3769	3033	537	2496	471	2192	370
1994- '95	4609	2610	136	2474	339	2088	183
1995- '96	990	416	88	328	22	279	115
1996- '97	1294	706	108	598	46	469	191
<b>Total</b>	<b>10662</b>	<b>6765</b>	<b>869</b>	<b>5896</b>	<b>878</b>	<b>5028</b>	<b>859</b>

From the table it can be easily seen that during the four years work a total number of 6765 talks have been made out of which 87% were talks with children and young females and 13% with children and young males. Most of the callers were aged between 13 and 18- 74%, while the callers aged under twelve and over 18 were present with 13% each.

During the four years work of the SOS telephone in the period of 1993 -1994 there were the most talks with children aged under 12 - 15,5%. The period 1994 -1995 is characterized by the least percent of talks with children and young females (95%) and talks with children and youngsters aged 13-18 (80%). During 1995-1996 we had had the highest percent of talks with children and young males (21%) and highest percent of callers aged over 18 (28%). During 1996-1997 there were the least talks with children and youngsters aged 13-18 compared to any other period- 66%.

**Table No 4**

Reasons for calling in percents.

Reason	1994-1995	1995-1996	1996-1997
Relation with the opposite sex	54,7%	46,1%	40%
Personal problems	14%	16%	17%
Family problems	8,7%	10,2%	13%
Violence	3,5%	8,8%	2%
Combined problems	6%	6,9%	10,5%
School	4,9%	4,5%	3,7%
Addiction	1,2%		
Health	2,6%		
Friendship			5%
Other	8,2%	7,5%	5%

It can be seen from the table that the calls considering problems in the relationship with the opposite sex dominate with 40%. There is an increase in the number of calls considering personal, family and combined problems.

During 1995-1996 there was an increase in the number of talks about personal problems for 2%, family problems for 1,5%, violence for 5,3% compared to the period of 1994-1995. In 1996-1997 compared to the 1995-

1996 there was an increase in the number of calls considering personal problems for 1%, family problems for 2% and combined problems for 3,6%.

From the combined problems most common were the combinations of family, love and personal problems, problems with friends and school.

The talks marked as other were those from people who didn't ask for help, from people who were just asking for information and suggestions or wanted to thank for the given help.

#### Summary

From the work of the SOS telephone up to this point it can be concluded that:

- The female callers dominate - 87%
- The callers aged 13-18 dominate the others- 74%
- The most of the callers are from Skopje
- On the first place are callers having problems in the relationship with the opposite sex
- There has been an increase in the number of calls considering personal and family problems

#### Conclusion

From the four years work of the SOS telephone for children and youngsters we have learnt that those who are calling (the children) need help to solve their problems faster. The increased number of calls considering combined problem is a result of not solving one problem on time which makes other problems appear. We do our best to protect the children. Therefore we address the public, the media, the teachers and the parents to give the children more attention. We should all try together to make children's life healthier and happier, we should give them more love, attention understanding and care.

#### **The report was prepared by:**

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#### **Translated into English**

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### REPORT ABOUT SPECIAL TYPES OF PROBLEMS NOTICED BY VOLUNTEERS WHO ARE WORKING ON .SOS TELEPHONE FOR THE CHILDREN AND THE YOUTH

The First Children's Embassy, Skopje.

From 01.06. till 01.09. there were many calls from all over Macedonia. The girls are calling more often.. Children from the secondary schools are calling the most. The problems are very different. The most of them are Eveready's problems:

GAP BETWEEN GENERATIONS:

Misunderstanding between children and parents: they can't stay out as long as they think they should or the parents don't let them to be with the boys or girls they want to. Those problems had 6 boys and 50 girls.

Example: D. 17, She is in love with the boy of the other religion. Her mother forbade her to come out or see him any more, but in answer the girl begun to lie her. She has to hide the relation with the boy from relatives as well, because she is under their pressure as well. There does not understand in family, so there is no possibility for any kind of conversation about the problem.

Fortunately, there are not many calls because of violence, but it couldn't be said that the violence is not the problems to be very seriously treated in Macedonia. There are a few types of violence:

a) Between couples (2)

Example: C. 10, Her father is alcoholic and he molests the entire family, specially her mother. He beats her because of, as girl said, the jealousy without reason, he doesn't let her go to work, hide her clothes, locks her in the house, burns his children's books.

b) Mother molests children-1 boy and 5 girls.

Example: M., 17, with her two sisters. Their mother is divorced, with bad morals, with no feelings for family life. She is asking her daughters to leave home when her lovers are coming. On the other side they don't let them go out with their friends (they are grown up girls) because " something could happen to them". She insults M. the most, tells her very ugly words and especially when strangers are there.

c) Between brothers and sisters: boys and 7 girls

Example: M., 9, Her brother is beating her without any reason and when ever he can, specially when the parents are not home. The parents don't believe her because they are prejudiced.

d) Threats of ex friends and in other occasions out of home: 1 boy and 5 girls

Example: Z., 17, She went out in one cafe with her friend (girl) who invited her. A musician who played in cafe tried to rape her. When he didn't succeed he beat her thoroughly. Her girl friend was his accessory. Girl Z. rejected help and run away from Skopje, so that her parents couldn't realize what happened.

e) Molesting old members of family (grandmothers and grandfathers) by the younger members- one case

Example: D. (grandmother). She told us about his son's wife bad treatment of entire family. She took one child with her and went to her family (the son's daughter) Her family didn't want her in their home, so she came back. Now she is breaking the furniture, beating the children and old members of family; she is out of home late, doesn't care for children, family or home; often she is late to work, etc.

There are another types of problems:

The problems when the health and mind of the child is changed: one boy and 5 girls

Example: Parents asked for help because they noticed that the child suddenly had the problems with the speech, development, writing and reading, bad pupil and even the child begun nervous and aggressive.

Rape problems: 2 girls

Rape attempt: one boy (a child)

Example: N., 16, The girl reported raping by her ex boy friend. So depressed, lonely, she was told that he would do it again together with his ten friends. She can't tell it to her mother because she is ill woman, socially handicapped, and her husband died a few months ago. N. Has no brother or sister or relatives, or friends.

Drugs problems- 4 cases

Example: A., 19, He called us but he didn't ask for any help, because " with the drugs he at last has friends, girl-friend, and his place in society". He doesn't want to stop with drugs because " he is happy at last".

Violence problems are complex and very present on almost every place. But, we think that number of calls is far less than the real number of violence cases. Our work shows that violence is present everywhere and almost every moment. It is, we would say, in our mentality: to molest and to endure because it is "the meter of the marriage and the married couple, friends, or family and not the problem of society". That's why there is no coordinated action by social service, police and the health service. It mustn't be forgotten that the preventive work is the very first action in the struggle against the violence.

**PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS REGARDING THE WORK OF THE SOS HOTLINE  
(AUTHOR: VERA GLATKOVA, PSYCHOLOGIST)**

**I learnt about working with children from children, including myself at that stage of my personal development. Children can be the best teachers, they know how to grow how to evolve how to learn, feel, discover, laugh and cry, seethe with anger. They know what's good for them, what they need ... They are full of energy and strength blesses with the capacity to love. What they need is space ... if that space is not available they keep things inside, get blocked and paralyzed ... in this case it's hard for them to grow and feel confident.**

**It seems to be that they are right when complaining that adults don't understand them, ignore them, don't accept them or respect them; they don't tolerate them, they reject them or refuse to take them seriously. Throughout my talks with them I've discovered that they are much more reasonable and wiser than we give them credit for. Many young people are confused by contradictory messages they receive from adults - and all this blocks them and decrease their capabilities.**

**Many of their parents don't accept the fact that their "baby" is growing up, they are afraid to let go - though they are aware of the fact that this is inevitable. It's even harder for them to deal with setbacks/successes in their children's lives, their choice of friends, and their plans for their future. It's impossible for them to keep track of their children's love lives, or whether they drink, smoke, take drugs, etc. The only thing they can do is tell their child their own viewpoint, they can ask for their help in running the household, they can set down rules they consider important, they can show their child that they are here to love and support, that they are here to help it grow up - but not by being over-protective, by sheltering it from all evil - but by teaching it how to look after itself. They can react to positive changes and act accordingly. Parents need to start seeing their children as what they are: equal human beings.**

**All of us together, the entire community, owe our children support to make them feel stronger, so that they can see the world around them the way it is, so that they obtain enough strength to make the choice they like - and so that they can see when they can achieve the desired objective and when not.**

**CONSULTATION  
OR WHY THE VOLUNTEERS AT SOS TELEPHONE  
DO NOT OFFER ADVICE**

One of the basic principles of the work of the SOS telephone service is avoiding offering advice. Although this principal may not make any sense to the inexperienced reader, it does have its justification and explanation in psychological theory and the experiences in working with

people who looking for help. Without intent to go into the theoretical elaboration of the problem, I will mention several principles that make consultation inappropriate.

First of all, consultation is impractical because seldom will someone act upon the offered advice. The person who gives the advice may be and quite often is experienced as a parental authority, which results in the frequent rejection of this advice, regardless of its content. There is an old saying "A mature man is a man who acts according to his beliefs, even when his behavior is in concordance with the advice of his parents.

Consultation has one more characteristic and due to which it is not practiced. Namely, offering advice relieves the receiver of this advice of any responsibility, whereby the whole responsibility falls upon the adviser, something that goes against the objective of the SOS telephone conversation.

Due to these key principles, the volunteer of SOS telephone service, instead of giving advice, are required to emphasize with the problems of callers, to point out choices for solving these problems and offer support.

Dejan Atanasov

As a coordinator and supervisor, I had to put a lot of thought regarding the question: what to write for the handbook about the work of SOS telephone services which is to be published in December 1998. I understood my duty through the obligations that I have. Unfortunately, I needed more time to realize that there should not be any dilemma as to what the subject of my writing would be. Or, I had forgotten of the volunteer. The person who comes in the premises of the First Children's Embassy in the World dedicating four hours to the problems of other people. I therefore decided to dedicate this text to them, describing one working day of a volunteer.

The volunteer comes to work at 4 PM. He/She takes over the shift of the secretary of the Children's Embassy and takes his/her place beside the phone. He/She then takes out the notebook from the drawer and signs up. And... Waits for someone to call. Someone who is not feeling well and needs a good listener, someone who would simply like to talk about what happened to him/her that day, or someone who has a problem and does not know how to solve it. During breaks, between conversation the volunteer has a cup of coffee, listens to music or explains the job to the new volunteer who is in training. The volunteer receives about 4 or 5 telephone calls per day. At 8 PM he/she signs off and goes home. At this point they are exhausted from these activities, being absorbed in the world of the callers often looking for help. Sometimes, however the volunteer goes home happy, relieved, with a smile on his/her face.

Then I know that this must be because someone called to say, "You helped me very much." So the volunteer continues to listen and help with hoping that while the number of callers with problems will gradually decrease, the number of those calling to say "You helped me very much." will grow.

Valentina Curlinovska

(Coordinator & Supervisor/1998y/ at SOS telephone for children and youth)

I already have volunteered at SOS-telephone 3 years. Usually everything goes in normal course, but sometimes I think about anonymity and how to protect it and how to maintain the safety of volunteers at SOS-telephone. It happened many times someone to telephone on SOS-telephone to threaten and terrify us without any particularly reason.

Because our service works at public institution-primary school I would like to take in consideration this problem, because I think it has influence on SOS-telephone work.

Iskra

(volunteer at SOS-telephone)