

Parent Line NSW Annual Impact Report



FY25-26

Parent Line
NSW







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About Parent Line NSW

For over 32 years, Parent Line NSW has provided free professional support to parents and carers of children across New South Wales (NSW). The program is funded by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice, and managed by CatholicCare Sydney.

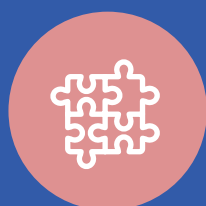
Parent Line NSW offers telephone counselling, information and referral services to callers and professionals seven days a week (except public holidays). Our team is made up of experienced counsellors, with qualifications ranging from psychologists, social workers and practitioners specialised in working with children and young adults.

Parent Line's work is underpinned by strength-based and child-centred approaches, keeping child wellbeing at the centre of decision making. Every caller receives support tailored to their unique situation, guided by their individual values, culture and needs.

Our Service Offerings



Telephone counselling



Parenting or child-related information



Referral support



Community engagement



Online support via email



Message from Parent Line NSW

Every contact represents a parent or carer reaching out at a particular point in their family's journey, sometimes looking for practical parenting strategies, needing help to understand their child's behaviour or development, or at other times, seeking support through significant family, emotional or safety concerns.

Over the past year, Parent Line NSW has continued to provide a trusted and compassionate space for parents and carers across New South Wales seeking support when family life feels challenging, overwhelming or uncertain. Our aim is to ensure parents and caregivers know that they aren't alone.

The range of presented concerns reflects the complexity of contemporary parenting and the many pressures experienced within families. Callers contacted the service about a wide range of issues including managing challenging behaviour, infant and toddler care, children's mental health and development, disability, education, technology use and relationships. Conversations also included concerns about children's safety and wellbeing, including physical, psychological and sexual harm, neglect, care arrangements and children at risk of harm to themselves or others. Parents and carers also frequently sought support for their own mental health, stress and experiences of addiction, as well as relationship and family stress.

The past year reinforced the importance of early support and meaningful connection. Parents do not always contact a service when a situation has reached crisis point. Often, they reach out because something has changed, they are questioning whether they are getting it right, or they simply need someone to listen and help them think through what is happening.

These conversations can be an important opportunity to strengthen family relationships, build parenting capability and connect families with additional supports before concerns escalate. Our role is to meet parents and carers where they are, listen without judgement and create a space where they can safely explore their concerns.

Parent Line NSW has continued to deepen its understanding of the diverse experiences of parents and carers across metropolitan, regional, rural and remote NSW. The service remains committed to providing culturally responsive, child-safe and trauma-informed support that recognises the different circumstances, strengths and needs of families.

At the heart of Parent Line NSW is a simple but important belief: supporting parents and carers is supporting children. By creating a space for parents to feel heard, understood and supported, we contribute to stronger relationships, increased parenting confidence and safer, more connected families.

"The stories behind our data are therefore, not simply numbers and statistics. They represent thousands of moments in which a parent or carer chose to reach out, reflect and seek support."



Shristi Singh
Practice Manager,
Parent Line NSW

Year in Review



Council of Catholic School Parents
2025 Conference at Parramatta, Sydney



Council of Catholic School Parents
Council and Committee Meeting



Redfern Community Expo



Playgroups in the Park
Committee and Council Meeting

Who We Supported

In 2025/2026, Parent Line NSW delivered 7,025 counselling sessions to parents and carers of children across New South Wales. Calls for support came from families living across metro, regional, rural and remote communities, highlighting our wide reach and capabilities in helping families in need.

The largest proportion of support was provided to families in the South Eastern, Northern and Sydney Districts (37.8%), followed by the Hunter New England and Central Coast (14.7%), Murrumbidgee, Far West and Western NSW (12.1%), and Western Sydney and Nepean Blue Mountains (11.9%). Additional support was provided across South Western Sydney (8.4%), Illawarra Shoalhaven and Southern NSW (6.4%), and the Mid North Coast and Northern NSW (5.1%), with a small number of sessions delivered interstate, overseas or to callers with an unspecified location.

These figures demonstrate Parent Line's ability to provide timely telephone counselling to families, regardless of whether they live in metropolitan, regional, rural or remote communities.

Reaching culturally diverse families across NSW

Last year, Parent Line NSW supported parents and carers from a diverse range of cultural backgrounds across the state. Based on country of birth data, 16.4% of callers (724 parents and carers) were born overseas, representing countries across Asia, Europe, Africa, the Middle East, the Pacific and the Americas.

The largest overseas-born groups were from China (91), India (82), England (44), Vietnam (19), New Zealand (17), Greece (16), the United States (16), the Philippines (15) and Lebanon (13).

While country of birth provides an indication of the cultural diversity of our callers, it does not fully capture the diversity of the communities Parent Line serves. Many callers who were born in Australia may come from migrant or refugee families and identify with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities as first, second - or later - generation Australians. As a result, the proportion of families from culturally diverse backgrounds accessing Parent Line is likely to be higher than country of birth data alone suggests.

These figures reflect Parent Line's accessibility to families from a diversity of communities, reinforcing the importance of providing inclusive, culturally responsive support.

A Culture of Learning

Parent Line NSW recognises that high-quality counselling practice is strengthened through continuous learning, critical reflection and continuous improvement. Throughout the year, our bi-monthly whole-team meetings prioritised professional development through specialist presentations on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, neurodiversity and digital health.

These learning opportunities were provided through ongoing consultation with staff to strengthen counsellors' knowledge, confidence and cultural capability.

As we look ahead, Parent Line NSW will continue to foster a culture of learning, collaboration and continuous improvement by creating opportunities for counsellors to share their knowledge, clinical expertise and practice wisdom. We are committed to strengthening our induction program to support new team members, while renewing our Team Charter to reflect our shared values, ways of working and commitment to high-quality practice. By capturing and sharing the expertise of our experienced counsellors through a collaborative team approach, Parent Line aims to build a lasting legacy of knowledge that strengthens practice, supports workforce sustainability, and enhances outcomes for the families we serve.

The numbers

7,025
counselling session

214,100+
social media views

65,000+
website views

16.4%
of callers were born
overseas

10-15 year olds
were the age group
whose parents called
most frequently.

Our Approach

The Power of Early Intervention

Our team provided over 7,000 service interactions across two key support types. Counselling and therapeutic support remained the core service, delivering over 6,278 sessions (89.4%). This is reflective of the ongoing need for compassionate, evidence-based parenting support.

Parent Line NSW also delivered 742 information, advice and referral sessions across the year, helping parents, carers and professionals working with families to connect with community resources, and specialist services that best met the needs of families and children.

These figures demonstrate Parent Line's role as a trusted early intervention service. By combining therapeutic counselling with practical advice and timely referrals, Parent Line helps strengthen parenting skills and strategies, reduce distress and improve overall family wellbeing and support positive outcomes for families.

Strengthening Community Connections

We recognise that some communities continue to face barriers in accessing support across NSW. Increasing awareness of the service and improving accessibility remain key priorities for Parent Line NSW.

Throughout the year, Parent Line strengthened its community engagement by building relationships with other parenting, children and adolescent services, hospitals, medical and health centres, schools, local police stations, community centres, preschools and early education centres, and other nonprofits organisations.

In alignment with our funding agreements, Parent Line NSW worked to expand reach amongst First Nations communities in 2025. Our team connected with Aboriginal Medical and Community Services across the Mid North Coast and Northern NSW, and send out promotional material and relevant parenting resources.

We also distributed to marketing material and engaged with local police stations increasing awareness of the service and encouraging parents and carers to access professional support in times of need.

Parent Line also engaged directly with communities local to our Sydney office. Through our attendance at events, such as Playgroups in the Park and council-run family and multicultural events, we created valuable opportunities to connect with parents and professionals, promote the importance and impact of early intervention, and strengthen partnerships with local organisations.

Parent Line established a partnership with the **Council of Catholic School Parents (CCSP)**, creating new opportunities to connect with families through school communities. This collaboration included attending their annual conference held at Parramatta, having Parent Line feature during online information sessions as additional support, website and social media presence, and distributing our marketing material at committee meetings and events.

Together, these initiatives reflect Parent Line's commitment to ensure that every family across NSW knows where to turn for trusted, accessible and compassionate parenting support when they need it most.





Trends Across the Year

Parent Line NSW's team of counsellors identified several consistent themes that appeared across calls, alongside an emerging pattern of increasingly complex and interconnected family circumstances.

No matter the time of year, common concerns for families continue to include domestic and family violence, school-related issues (such as bullying, friendship issues, issues with education etc.), parental or adolescent mental health, neurodiversity or concerns related to a child with a disability, and parental separation, with many calls presenting with a combination of these factors.

Over the past few years, Parent Line is identifying the trend of callers increasingly present with more complex and layered needs. Examples of these complexities include adolescent risk-taking behaviour, complex post-separation issues, school bullying, chronic illness, and difficulties managing technology use and boundaries.

Technology-related concerns include access to inappropriate content, online bullying and inappropriate posting. Technology-related concerns have become increasingly prominent over time, particularly in relation to managing technology use, online safety, inappropriate content and bullying.

It's too early to identify whether these concerns have decreased specifically since the introduction of the social media ban. However, we speak to many parents and carers whose children have managed to work around the limitations of the ban, suggesting that this issue is complex and requires multi-faceted approaches to reduce the harms of social media on children.

Parent Line identified that call volumes were consistently highest during school terms and lowest during school holiday periods. Calls relating to difficulties with the handover of children were more prominent during school holidays and periods of school closure, and were often associated with family conflict, history of domestic and family violence and post separation abuse.

In contrast, calls relating to school concerns or school-based anxiety tended to spike during school terms, reflecting increased pressures and issues arising in the school environment.

Parents of pre-teens and teens required the most support.

This past year, children aged 10-15 years had the highest proportion of calls from parents and carers. The minimum age range dropped in comparison to the previous year, where most parents and carers were calling about their children aged between 13-15 years. This is suggestive that parental concern has shifted to the later years of primary school, when in previous years, this concern has not been seen until the transition to high school and later adolescence.

Our findings also align with our data — showing concerns for child/adolescent mental health is the second most common reason parents of children aged 10-18 years old have contacted Parent Line.

Top caller concerns from FY25/26:



Parenting skills and confidence



Supporting a child with a disability



Navigating separation or conflict



Child and adolescent mental health



Parent or carer mental wellbeing



Understanding children's development

Measuring Our Impact

Parent Line NSW's core focus is delivering evidence-informed, strengths-based support, to improve parenting knowledge, skills and confidence, promote positive child development and family wellbeing.

Strong outcomes through evidence-based approaches

Aligned with the NSW Department of Communities and Justice's 'Effective Parenting Interventions', key components that are evident in our approach to counselling and therapeutic care include:

- Meaningful engagement
- Coordinated support and referrals
- Tailored parenting education and coaching
- Promoting parental wellbeing
- Strengthening family and social support networks.

Parent Line uses outcomes data to ensure our service is making a positive difference to the people who call. Callers consistently report **feeling significantly less distressed** by the end of their counselling session.

Parents and carers also consistently reported **increased confidence** in their parenting knowledge and strategies, and a greater understanding of available services and supports. Overall satisfaction with Parent Line remained exceptionally high, with the majority of callers reporting that they were 'very satisfied' with the service they had received, reflecting the trust, compassion, and practical support experienced by families.

Many parents and carers initially contact Parent Line for practical information and strategies, but many callers also contact us seeking emotional support, reassurance and a safe, non-judgemental space to discuss their concerns. The opportunity to feel heard, understood and supported by an experienced parenting counsellor is likely to have contributed to the high satisfaction rating.

For many families, the therapeutic relationship, emotional validation and practical strategies provided during the call are just as important as gaining new parenting knowledge or information about support services.

One grandmother, who is the primary carer for her teenage granddaughter, shares the impact Parent Line has made on her,

"Parent Line has helped me through a long period of school refusal. On days when I feel extremely stressed, I've called them and they've provided immediate support. If I didn't have Parent Line's support, I would have felt even more isolated.

Having Parent Line support has helped me keep my sanity."

These outcomes demonstrate the value of early intervention, and confirms that helping parents and carers feel calmer, more confident and better connected to the support they need can significantly improve family wellbeing.



The Power of Connection

Case Study

Anna, a mother of two, contacted Parent Line NSW seeking support regarding her 13-year-old son, Riley. Riley had recently started high school and was experiencing sudden changes in attitude, frequent conflict at home, and experimenting with vaping and alcohol. Anne explained that Riley had been diagnosed with ADHD and was not taking medication, which she felt contributed to challenges with self-regulation and impulsivity.

Anna described their relationship as “toxic” and expressed feeling overwhelmed and unsure how to manage Riley’s behaviour without escalating conflict. She had also recently discovered that Riley was in a romantic relationship, adding to her concerns as she navigated his increasing independence.

During the call, the counsellor provided active listening and validation, acknowledging the mother’s stress and the complexities of parenting an adolescent with ADHD. The counsellor discussed age-appropriate neurodevelopment, and provided practical strategies informed by emotion coaching, including acknowledging and naming her son’s emotions, supporting self-regulation, and maintaining calm and consistent boundaries. Strategies were also discussed for establishing predictable consequences and reducing power struggles, particularly in relation to vaping and household expectations.

The counsellor also explored ways Anna could support her son’s growing autonomy while maintaining appropriate boundaries and safety. This included introducing structured routines, encouraging problem-solving skills, and identifying strategies to help him manage frustration and peer pressure. The counsellor also suggested engaging with school wellbeing staff to support consistency between home and school and to identify any academic or social stressors that may be contributing to his behaviour.

The conversation also provided the mother with an opportunity to reflect on her own wellbeing and the importance of self-care while navigating a challenging period of parenting. She was encouraged to draw on supportive family and friends and seek additional specialist support where needed.

At the conclusion of the call, the mother expressed her appreciation for the support and guidance she had received. She reported feeling heard and less overwhelmed, and was grateful to have practical strategies to approach her son’s behaviour with greater understanding, while maintaining appropriate boundaries and expectations. The call provided her with reassurance that she did not have to navigate these challenges alone and that support was available as her family continued to work through this period of change.





Acknowledgement of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation, Parent Line NSW acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Parent Line NSW operates on the lands of the Darug Country and the Eora Nation, and on lands that were also accessed by Tharawal and Gundungurra people.

Acknowledgement of Children, Young People and Families

Parent Line NSW acknowledge and deeply appreciate the children, young people, parents and carers who share their lived experience with us. It takes great courage and strength to tell their stories, helping to shape the way we work, inspire others with their experiences, and ensure that the voices of young people and individuals remain at the centre of all we do.



Thank you

Parent Line NSW would like to thank our partners, referrer networks, organisations, and individuals who contribute to the success of our ongoing work.

A special thank the NSW Department of Communities and Justice for enabling CatholicCare Sydney to do this important work as Parent Line NSW.

Get in touch

Parent Line NSW is open 7 days a week (except public holidays). Our counsellors are available Monday to Friday (9am to 9pm) and Saturday and Sundays (4pm to 9pm).

Call: 1300 1300 52 (free call)

Email: info@parentline.org

Visit: parentline.org.au

Parent Line NSW

Supporting parents and carers of children
(aged 0-18) to thrive across NSW.

 **1300 1300 52**

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 parentline.org.au

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