

Caller Feedback Survey 2011

Key Points

- A telephone, email and SMS survey of callers to Runaway Helpline™ and Message Home was conducted over two weeks in March 2011. During the period of the fieldwork, 9 callers were invited to participate in the survey, 8 of whom agreed to take part.
- The positive reactions to the survey, by service users as well as staff and volunteers, suggest similar methods should be used in the future to offer service users more opportunities to give feedback on the services Missing People offer.

Project synopsis

A telephone, email and SMS survey of callers to Runaway Helpline and Message Home over two weeks in March 2011.

The questionnaires were developed by the Research Manager in conjunction with the Director of Services and the Services Operations Manager. The development process also took into account information shared about similar surveys conducted by ChildLine (NSPCC Evaluation Team) and the US National Runaway Switchboard.

The fieldwork

- Telephone questionnaire comprised four questions and an additional comments field (see Appendix). Callers were invited to take part at the end of a call, if appropriate.
- SMS responses requested by sending an outgoing text asking for feedback (see Appendix).
- Email responses requested via a signature on outgoing email auto-responses, containing a link to an online survey comprising eight questions and an additional comments field (see Appendix).
- Fieldwork started on Monday 14 March and concluded on Friday 25 March, conducted by the Research Manager and the Research and Evaluation Officer.
- All days (Monday to Sunday) and shifts (morning, afternoon and night) were covered at least once.
- Fieldwork lasted for 100 hours, of an available 327 hours that the helplines were open.
- During fieldwork hours, the phone system registered around 600 calls to Runaway Helpline™ and Message Home. 39 of these (7%) were substantial dialogue calls and suitable for inclusion.
- During the fieldwork period, Runaway Helpline™ and Message Home worked on 12 email cases, of which four were suitable for inclusion (the remainder were excluded for being spam or for being redirected to an alternative service).
- During the fieldwork period, Runaway Helpline™ and Message Home worked on 15 text message cases. None were invited to take part.

Findings: the results

- Nine telephone callers were invited to take part, of whom eight agreed and completed the questionnaire. The caller who declined was with small children and in a hurry to follow the helpline's advice.
- The remaining callers were not invited to take part because it was not appropriate to ask (e.g. because they were distressed, waiting for a call back, or because they hung up before they could be asked). A number of calls were by vulnerable regular callers, and it was not appropriate to invite them to take part.
- No callers responded to text message or email feedback routes.
- Of the eight who responded, four were young females, three were adult males and one was an adult female. Seven said they better understood their options after calling, four felt they could cope better, and six felt better on a scale of 1 to 5 after calling.

Findings: staff and volunteers

- Staff and volunteers who worked shifts during fieldwork hours responded very favourably to the survey, and were keen to invite callers to participate.
- Processes for inviting participation, and transferring calls, were acceptable.

Conclusions

- The questions were clear and understandable, and the telephone questionnaire was about the right length.
- Callers were happy to take part when invited, if they were able to.
- Staff and volunteers bought into the process and were keen to invite callers to participate whenever appropriate.
- Call volumes over the period were low, meaning that the available pool of callers to sample was too small to make analysis viable.
- The feedback that was received was positive.

Recommendations

- The telephone survey method should be considered for a regular or ongoing caller survey to measure impact on callers' well-being and coping ability. The success of this would depend on an increase in call volumes to Runaway Helpline™ and Message Home.
- In line with the Service User Involvement Strategy, there should also be more opportunities for callers to provide feedback should they wish.
- A form on the Missing People website should be provided year-round, and a link appended to outgoing emails.
- The telephone survey method should be considered for callers to 0500, excluding only those families who have an ongoing case as they are included in the Family Feedback Survey.

Appendix: Questionnaires

Telephone questionnaire

- Q1. Do you better understand the options available to you? (Yes/No)
- Q2. Do you feel better able to cope with your problem or worry? (Yes/No)
- Q3. On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being really bad and 5 being really good, how did you feel before you called?
- Q4. And on that scale of 1 to 5, how do you feel afterwards?
- Q5. Any other comments? (Free text)

Online questionnaire

If you would like to provide us with feedback about our service, you can click on this link to go to a short questionnaire. It will take around 2 minutes to complete and is completely confidential. [\[link provided\]](#)

- Q1. On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being really bad and 5 being really good, how did you feel before you sent your email?
- Q2. And on that scale of 1 to 5, how do you feel after receiving a reply?
- Q3: Did you think the reply was very helpful, a bit helpful, neither helpful nor unhelpful, a bit unhelpful or very unhelpful?
- Q4: Did you think the reply was reassuring?
- Q5: Do you feel calmer, less calm, or the same as before?
- Q6. Do you better understand the options available to you?
- Q7. Do you feel better able to cope with your problem or worry?
- Q8: Overall, how much did the reply help you? A lot, a bit, not helped at all, made things worse or don't know.
- Q9. Any other comments? *Unlimited free text*

SMS text message invitation

At the end of a text message conversation (as per guidance, to be provided) you will be asked to send a message requesting feedback:

Hope we could help. Text us again if you need us. If you would like to text us any feedback about our service we'd be very grateful.

Glad we could help. Text us again if you need us. If you would like to text us any feedback about our service we'd be very grateful.

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