300 Irish Children Called ISPCC Childline Threatening Suicide in 2014

The ISPCC Childline Report 2014 was held in the European Public Space in Dublin today. Key data on the scale and nature of the demand for Childline was revealed. Childline also celebrated ambassadors Ryan Tubridy, Senator Jillian van Turnhout, Saoirse Ronan, David Coleman and Kate Brennan Harding, to recognise their tremendous support to ISPCC Childline.

The ISPCC announced today that over 300 children called Childline at urgent risk of suicide throughout 2014. The national child protection and welfare charity, which runs Childline, unveiled annual statistics which showed that over a thousand children contacted the organisation in relation to suicide. Over 300 had already acted on or made plans to take their own lives, in advance of making the call.

ISPCC CEO Grainia Long said, ‘Childline is a 24-hour service that is there for all children. While the vast majority of calls are not from children at urgent risk, we are extremely concerned about the level of risk that some children are under, when they call us. In some instances, children have gone beyond threatening to take their own lives, and have acted on this. In those cases, we immediately work with the child to ensure their safety, and as a matter of priority seek to ensure contact with the authorities.’

In 2014, children’s mental health remained a key feature of calls to Childline and demand for online services to discuss mental health issues also increased. ‘An increasing number of young people are choosing the online option to talk about their mental health’, said Ms. Long. ‘Our Online Service was extended into night-time thanks to funding from the National Office for Suicide Prevention, and demand for these services remains high.’

In late 2014, the ISPCC announced its Childline service was under threat due to funding pressures. Its emergency campaign generated over €1,000,000 in public and corporate donations and contribution from the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. The ISPCC is putting plans in place to further fund Childline into the future. ‘The annual report confirms that children need regular and sustained support when dealing with complex issues affecting them. In turn, Childline needs regular and sustained support to ensure the future of this essential service to children.'
Today we are launching a campaign to encourage regular supporters to #InvestInChildhood.'