

OPTUS



Introduction

Optus' Community mission is to connect vulnerable young people to their potential.

Since establishing a partnership with Kids Helpline (KHL), the Australian child helpline more than 22 years ago more than 7 million counselling, information and referral support sessions have been provided to Australian youth aged from 5 to 25.

Optus has supported the relationship through digital technologies, products, services, innovation and partnership. Optus has played a key role in supporting KHL to promote and provide its services via telephone and digital media – the channels children and young people use most when seeking help.

Where have we come from?

The Optus and KHL partnership may well be the longest Telco and child helpline partnership in the world. A brief chronology of Optus' achievements with KHL over these many years highlights the company's enduring commitment to its Corporate Social Responsibility and assisting young people in need.

In collaboration with KHL, Optus has taken a proactive role in educating Australian youth about the safe use of technology and positive digital citizenship, via the use of contemporary technology.

1994

Improves Landline Telephone Access to KHL

Optus provides subsidised rates for telecommunications services to KHL. This enables the KHL counselling service to be offered free to children and young people across Australia

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2000

Improves mobile telephone access to KHL

Optus offers free mobile calls to children and young people who call the KHL 1800 55 1800 number

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2000

Raises awareness of Digital Access to KHL at National & International Level

Optus provides financial and in-kind support to KHL in developing the world's first free web-chat counselling service for children and young people

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2005

Improves the quality of KHL services and contributes to sustainability

Via initiatives such as Workplace Giving, Radiothons, Golf Days and other corporate networking events, Optus creates awareness and generates additional fundraising for KHL

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2008

Strengthens KHL's position in Australia's Child Protection system

Optus launches **Talk To Your Kids** – a campaign and website aimed at providing important tips and information, designed to help parents improve the way they talk to, and interact with their children.

Additionally, this campaign raises awareness of KHL as a support resource

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2011

Improves promotion of KHL's value to the broader community

Beyond the partnership, Optus further supports KHL by funding a collaboration with Netbalance, to deliver capability building in evaluation methodology

This enables KHL to utilise innovative evaluation tools to determine social return on investment (SROI) – improving KHL's services and value to the broader community

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2011

Raises awareness of the child helpline at a national level

Data analysis shows a growing percentage of calls to KHL are about cyber bullying and related issues

In response, and in collaboration with the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA), Optus and KHL develop the cyber-safety campaign Make Cyberspace A Better Place

This multi-award winning campaign provides primary and high school teachers with ready-made lesson plans, tools and resources to educate students about cyber-bullying, sexting and the safe use of technology

[FIND OUT MORE: LINK 1](#)

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[WATCH VIDEO](#)

2016

Promotes KHL value to wider community

Optus funds training for KHL Research staff to attend training developed by the London Benchmarking Group (LBG)

This up-skilling instructs how to effectively utilise tools and mechanisms which measure outputs and performance of corporate and community partnership

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2013

Improves access to KHL

Optus and KHL create and launch the Kids Helpline @ School program (KAS)

This innovative program brings a trained KHL counsellor into primary school classrooms across Australia via digital video technology (Skype, video conferencing)

In a safe environment, counsellors can discuss the key issues children struggle with, e.g. emotional wellbeing, respectful relationships, building resilience and other related topics

Counsellors encourage help-seeking behaviours, and provide information and awareness about the KHL telephone and online counselling services

Over time this program has expanded its scope, to focus on educating children to have a safe online presence, display positive online behaviours and become responsible digital citizens now and in the future

Since the program began in 2013, Optus and KHL have reached over 33,000 primary school students across Australia

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2016

Strengthens KHL's national position as online child safety experts

Optus and KHL launch their newest partnership initiative – Kids Helpline @ School Digital (KAS Digital)

Funded by Optus, and continuing with the current successful model of using technology to bring counsellors into classrooms, the sessions are focussed on topics relating to online safety, digital literacy and positive online identity

This further strengthens Optus' commitment to helping kids stay safe online and become our positive digital citizens of the future

The LBG tool will be used to measure the success rate of KAS Digital, in line with the overall efficacy of the Optus and KHL partnership

2015

Strengthens KHL's position in the Australian Child Protection system

The Optus and KHL partnership receive the national Play Your Part Award

This prestigious recognition was part of the National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN) awards during Child Protection Week

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2016

Raises awareness of KHL at a national level

The Australian Federal Government Office of the Children's eSafety Commission outsources its online counselling services to Kids Helpline

This provides children who access their eSafety website, with an avenue to report cyber-bullying or other cyber related concerns

The Optus and KAS program receives a Certified Provider status by the Children's eSafety Commissioner, listing KHL as a provider of certified, online eSafety learning programs

2016

Improves access to KHL

Optus launches Future Makers – an initiative which awards funds for projects focussed on supporting vulnerable youth in education, employment, wellbeing and cyber safety

KHL successfully entered a submission, and were matched with key mentors who provided assistance in developing and delivering an entrepreneurial 'pitch' presentation

As a result, KHL was one of 6 recipients of the Optus Future Makers seed funding grants

KHL will use this funding to develop a new App providing therapeutic interventions for high-risk children and young people receiving case management services

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Into the Future

Since the days prior to mass internet and mobile phone usage, Optus and Kids Helpline's strong partnership has progressed through innovation and adaptation.

As children's lives have moved into the digital and online world, the Optus and Kids Helpline partnership has responded to the associated risks of children's increasing time online.

Optus and Kids Helpline service are committed to investing in effective outcomes that help vulnerable young people. Optus constantly seeks new and innovative ways to help protect and empower young people to stay safe online and be the positive digital citizens of the future.