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Good afternoon. It is an honour and a pleasure to be addressing this meeting on behalf of Child Helpline International, which I shall refer to as CHI for short. CHI is the global member network of child helplines, working to protect the rights of the child. We work in over 150 countries and were founded on the belief that children and young people not only have rights, but that they alone are the best individuals to identify their problems if they are equipped with the proper tools.

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My name is Grant Taylor and I currently chair the CHI Advocacy Taskforce. I also have the privilege of leading a child helpline in Aotearoa/New Zealand called 0800WHATSUP. Each year, 0800WHATSUP receives more than 500,000 calls from children.

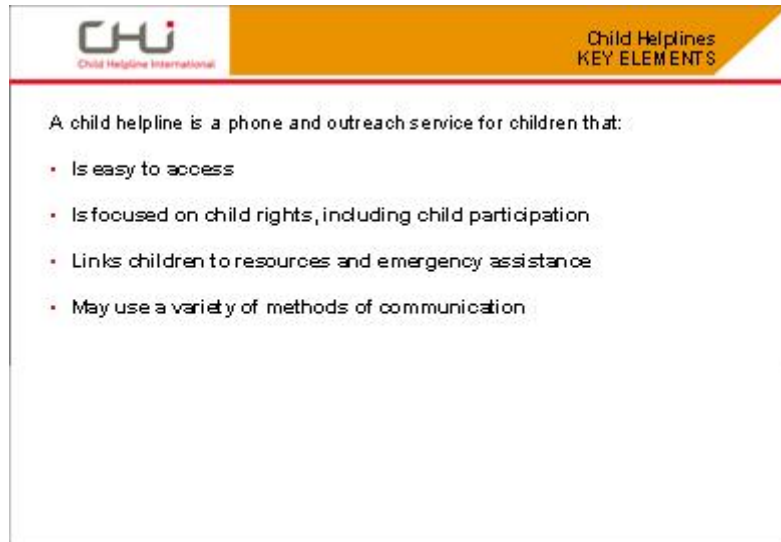
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All too often, adults who care about the welfare of children see children as being passive beneficiaries, or sufferers, of the actions of adults.

While there is no doubt that children are greatly affected by the actions of adults and dependent on adults in many ways, they are neither powerless nor inactive. They have a central role in shaping their own destinies. Child helplines help children and young people to help themselves by providing them with means to express their needs, access information and resources, and exercise their rights. A child who is being exploited or forced into labour will be the first to feel the pain and a child helpline can provide that child with the chance, possibly the only safe chance, to express that pain, raise the alarm, and get help and support.

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The slide features a header with the CHU logo (Child Helpline International) on the left and the text 'Child Helplines KEY ELEMENTS' on the right. The main content area contains a definition of a child helpline followed by a bulleted list of key elements.

Child Helpline International

Child Helplines  
KEY ELEMENTS

A child helpline is a phone and outreach service for children that:

- Is easy to access
- Is focused on child rights, including child participation
- Links children to resources and emergency assistance
- May use a variety of methods of communication

A child helpline is a phone and outreach service for children that:

Is easy to access via a toll-free, nationally accessible, easy to remember 3 or 4 digit number

Is focused on child rights, including child participation

Links children to resources and emergency assistance

Child helplines may use a variety of methods of communication, such as telephones, email, online chat, boxes, post, caravans, TV, and radio.

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Most child helplines have the following policies:

Recognition of children's rights and the primacy of the child's best interests are at the core of child helpline services.

The majority of child helplines aim to reach out to the children up to the age of 18 years of age. In some instances of helplines targeted at youth, this range is extended up to 25 years

Child helplines maintain information on children's legal, civil and humanitarian rights and on local resources that children can use to help ensure that their rights are met. This information is shared with children to raise their awareness and empower them to act on their own behalf.

- Child helplines are accessible to all children but the focus is generally on those children who are most denied their rights, for example street children, child labourers, abused children, or children whose families are in crisis. Helplines also often have contact with adults who have concerns about children.
- Child Protection: Child helplines create an infrastructure to meet children's right to protection. Some child helplines might intervene directly while others refer the case to a child protection agency, depending on the spectrum of services for children available in the community.
- Child Participation: A child calling a helpline is a child expressing his/her right to participate in his or her own life and future. The child knows that someone will be there to listen to his/her needs and actively involve the child in decisions concerning his/her welfare. Helplines also involve children in the design of the helpline service (e.g. logo design or

choosing the helpline name) and further involve them in the operations (e.g. some helplines provide peer-to-peer counselling) and the evaluation of the service.

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**CHI**  
Child Helpline International

Child Helpline International (CHI)  
ACROSS THE WORLD

- CHI global network
  - 78 countries with child helplines
  - 22 countries starting a child helpline
- We aim to have a child helpline in almost every country in the world by 2010
- CHI Structure –non-profit organisation incorporated in the Netherlands
  - CHI General Assembly: member child helplines
  - CHI General Board and Taskforces: includes regional representatives
  - CHI Secretariat: Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- Advocacy partnerships
  - UN Study of Violence Against Children
- Calls received by helplines  
**10.5 million** in the period Jan-Dec 2006

CHI is a global network that is operating in 150 countries around the world. Helplines are established in 78 countries and 22 more are in the process of starting. CHI aims to have a child helpline in almost every country in the world by 2010.

CHI itself is strongly driven by the active participation of the child helplines in its network. Their delegates meet biennially at a general assembly and nominees of the general assembly constitute a significant proportion of the CHI Board. A professional secretariat is maintained in Amsterdam that works with close reference to both the Board and its standing committees, called Taskforces within CHI, made up by personnel from child helplines all over the world.

CHI enables the collective knowledge of the global network of child helplines to work for children internationally as well as locally. For example, CHI made important submissions to the UN Study of Violence Against Children. The valuable role of child helplines was emphasised in the Study's recommendations.

The network is widely accessed by children and young people, with 10.5 million calls received during 2006.

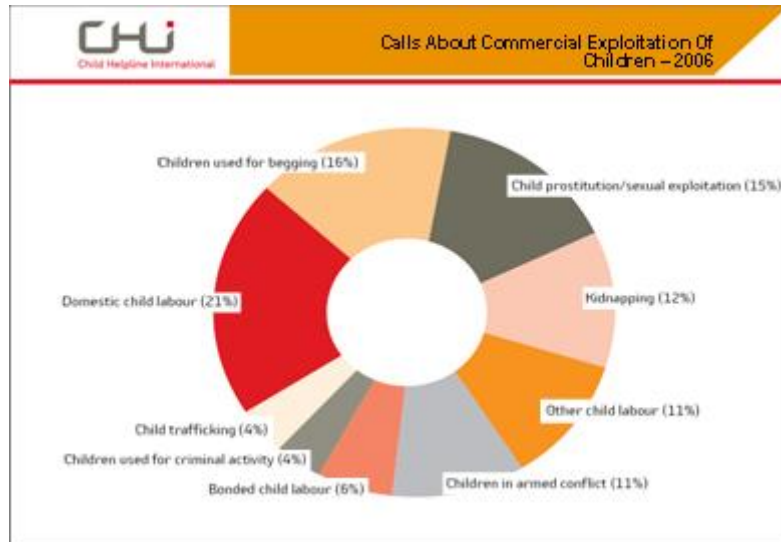
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I would now like to play you a short video about some of the work that child helplines are doing to reach children no matter where they might be.

{ This video can be played on the CHI website at <http://www.childhelplineinternational.org/> }

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Calls to child helplines about the commercial exploitation of children make up about 1% of all issues presented internationally. This chart categorises all calls during 2006 about commercial exploitation. The largest category was calls related to domestic child labour, with 21%, followed by children used for begging, which accounted for 16%.

Interestingly, child trafficking, to which more global attention is given, was reported as only 4% of these calls – lowest equal with the category of children used for criminal activity. Child helplines often find that the most commonly reported problems faced by children are not those given the highest priority by adults, particularly in the news media.

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I know that I do not need to tell this audience today about the horrifying reality of child labour and exploitation. Given the time constraints we have, I have included just a couple of examples of how child helplines in two very different situations have assisted children being exploited by others.

The first of these is a research report that Childline India has published on children working in limestone quarries in Gujarat. Entitled *Living With Stones*, this report is part of a series of publications by Childline India on specific communities of vulnerable children. Large numbers of children in the age group of 6-14 were found working and involved in several activities relating to mining such as, preparing kilns, arranging material, breaking and crushing stones, collecting broken stones, sand and dust, blasting and loading stones in trucks. A short video documentary from which these stills were taken can be viewed on YouTube or the Childline India website

The slide features a header with the CHU logo (Child Helpline International) on the left and 'CASE STUDY' on the right. A dark banner on the right side contains the text 'NINELINE 1-800-999-9999'. The main content area includes a bullet point for 'United States – Ninline', followed by a paragraph describing a 17-year-old Mexican female's experience with human trafficking, her escape, and contact with Ninline. The final paragraph details the support provided, including counseling, a safe house, and legal assistance. The website 'www.ninline.org' is listed at the bottom.

**CHU**  
Child Helpline International

CASE STUDY

**NINELINE**  
1-800-999-9999

- **United States – Ninline**

17-year-old Mexican female crossed illegally into USA.  
Trafficker raped her and forced her to work at his home; extorted money from her family by threatening to harm her.  
She escaped after several months of captivity and contacted Ninline.  
Ninline contacted a counselling service dedicated to human trafficking victims and the young woman was taken to a safe house and also given legal support.

[www.ninline.org](http://www.ninline.org)

On the other side of the world, in the United States, Ninline in New York was contacted by a 17 year old Mexican girl who had entered the United States illegally seeking work but was captured by her trafficker, raped and enslaved. Ninline obtained support for her and assisted her to obtain protection under US law.

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You can find out more about the work of CHI and the child helplines that are part of its network from the CHI website, [www.childhelplineinternational.org](http://www.childhelplineinternational.org) and I have some printed information that you can take away with you as well. Thank you for your attention.