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*If Veterans don't help Veterans, who will?*

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## Appendix G: Safe Helpline Data



# Appendix G: Safe Helpline Usage and User Satisfaction Data

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The Department established Safe Helpline to offer survivors a confidential, anonymous, and secure place to get the help and reporting information that they need, by providing live, one-on-one tailored crisis support and assistance to the worldwide DoD community. Since launching in 2011, the Safe Helpline has served over 59,000 people through online, phone, and texting services, and nearly 700,000 people—both mobile and desktop visitors—have obtained information from SafeHelpline.org.<sup>1</sup>

## Website Usage

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The Safe Helpline website (safehelpline.org) saw a 95% increase in unique users during fiscal year (FY) 2015. The website saw 282,032 unique users in FY15 compared to a total of 144,826 users in FY14. Over 500,000 (580,841) people have visited safehelpline.org since the website was launched in 2011.

Visitors to the website may request to engage in an online chat with Safe Helpline staff. Safe Helpline logged 4,120 online chat sessions this year. For chat sessions in which a sexual assault or a related event was discussed, 75% of users identified as victims. Other website users may include friends, family members, and intimate partners of the victim. Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARC) seeking information about services also use the Safe Helpline. Users accepted military referrals in nearly half of all sessions, and referrals directly to SARCs were frequently provided.

Users can access Safe Helpline and other self-help resources through the Safe Helpline app. The number of app users continued to increase this year. Mobile application

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<sup>1</sup> Not everyone who contacts or obtains information from Safe Helpline is a victim of sexual assault.

analytics logged 3,900 new Safe Helpline app users during FY15. This marked a 17.6% increase in new users from FY14. New users are distinct from downloads obtained via the Apple App Store and Google Play, as the app may be downloaded but never used. There were 4,933 app downloads in FY15.

## Safe Helpline Online Sessions

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Safe Helpline Online sessions saw a significant increase (65%) in usage from 2,513 sessions in FY14 to 4,120 sessions during FY15. Since the online sessions launched, there have been 10,449 sessions.

## Safe Helpline Phone Sessions

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Safe Helpline staff responded to 6,023 calls on the telephone helpline in FY15, representing only a slight increase over the 5,984 calls taken during FY14 (0.65% increase). Since the Safe Helpline launched in 2011, there have been 19,158 live phone sessions.

While women are the most frequent users of the Safe Helpline, over one-third of phone users (38%) are men.

## Safe HelpRoom

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The Safe HelpRoom was designed to be a secure place for survivors to meet, talk, and support each other. This moderated service provides survivors with an important opportunity to connect with others and share their experiences. Since launching in April 2013, there have been over 1,400 participant visits to the Safe HelpRoom.

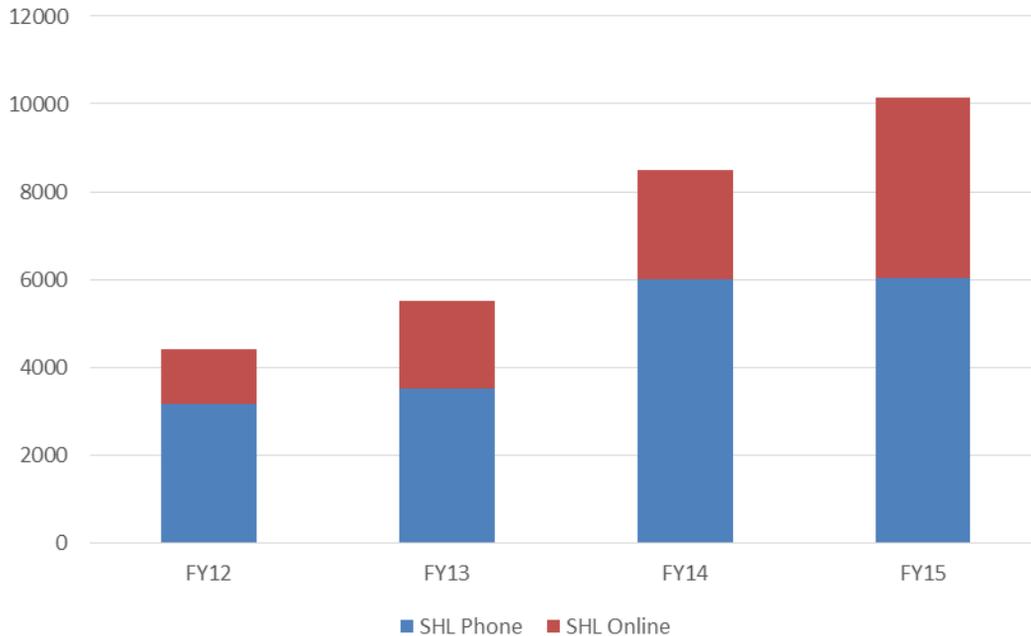


Figure 1: Safe Helpline Online and Telephone User Sessions Increased 19%

Safe Helpline staff and the Department of Defense (DoD) Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) began holding virtual web-conferences using the Safe HelpRoom. Attendees this year consisted of base/installation level stakeholders and allied professionals who work with survivors of sexual assault (i.e.: SARCs, Victim Advocates, Chaplains, Judge Advocate Generals (JAGs), mental health professionals on base, etc.). This practice will continue in FY16.

### Referrals to Military Resources

Safe Helpline maintains a robust referral database to provide appropriate referrals to survivors. The database includes contact information for each Service's SARCs, military police, legal personnel (e.g., JAG and Special Victims Counsel/Victims Legal Counsel), medical and mental health providers, and chaplains. It also contains referral information for civilian affiliate sexual assault service providers and Department of Veterans Affairs resources.

Almost half (43%) of the 2,460 individuals who accessed Safe Helpline services included in this year's analysis received a

referral to a military resource, illustrating that the Safe Helpline plays a crucial role in connecting users to help and support available through the Military Services.

### Transitioning Service Members Usage

There were 1,522 unique visitors to the Transitioning Service Member (TSM) sections of the Safe Helpline website in FY15. These 1,522 visitors join the more than 6,000 unique visitors that have accessed information in the TSM section, which contains 10 different topic areas, such as healthcare, mental healthcare, housing, and employment. Interestingly, website analytic data indicates there are visitors who come back repeatedly. Return visits reinforce how important it is for users to have a safe, secure, and reliable source of information during transition out of military service.

### Male Survivor Web Content

There were 2,209 unique visitors who accessed the newly updated male survivor content on Safe Helpline in FY15. This represents a 52% increase over FY14. Since

the section was launched, 3,725 unique visitors have reviewed information to address concerns specific to male survivors of sexual assault.

corrections facilities. Safe Helpline staff provides crisis response, information, and contact with a SARC for unrestricted reporting of prison sexual assaults. The Safe Helpline received 8 calls from military correctional facilities in FY15.

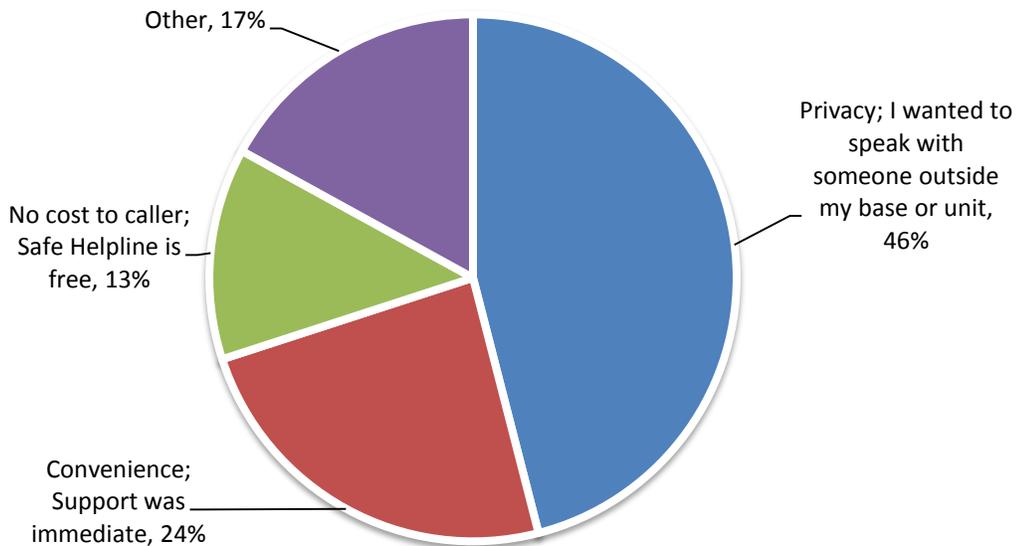


Figure 2: User Ratings for Most Important Feature of Safe Helpline

## Follow Up and Other Support Services

The Department expanded Safe Helpline services in FY15 to offer follow-up support to all users who have not yet reported their assault to a military authority. Safe Helpline staff connects these users to long-term care and treatment through on-base and civilian resources. Staff also follows up to discuss referrals recommended and help users overcome difficulties in accessing care.

The Department also expanded the Safe Helpline feedback form to include information related to retaliation in order to assist the inquirer with resolution of their complaint and inform program and policy improvements.

Additionally, Safe Helpline is the Prison Rape Elimination Act Hotline for military

## User Feedback

Telephone helpline users provide feedback through an interactive voice response system, while online users fill out a short form. Visitors using phone and online services are overall very satisfied with Safe Helpline support. Average ratings were high (over 4.0 on a scale of 1 to 5). Most users find the Safe Helpline easy to use, are satisfied with staff knowledge and skills, intend to use services suggested by staff, and would recommend the service.

Safe Helpline users are also asked to provide feedback on what they consider to be Safe Helpline's most important feature, as indicated in Figure 2. Most users indicated privacy (46%) as the feature they considered to be most important.

Users could also choose “other” as the most important feature of the Safe Helpline. When choosing this option, users were prompted with an open-ended follow up question to provide some explanation. The 17% of users that selected “other” indicated their most important features as follows:

- A combination of features (ex: Privacy and no cost to caller)
- The interaction with the staffer (e.g. staffer was empathetic, respectful, etc.)
- Information/resources provided