



Crisis Line Awareness Week March 23 to 27, 2020

Wow! Vancouver Island Crisis Society's 50-Year Milestone

Crisis Line Awareness Week is a time for all communities to recognize the vital role that crisis lines play in supporting those in need and to offer recognition for the volunteers and workers who make these services possible.

As a 24/7 service, we think of crisis line support as *emotional first-aid*, offering short-term support as well as a means of connecting those in need to crisis response teams and emergency services when needed. Our services include suicide prevention and support.

In 2019, we received 39,121 local, provincial, and national crisis interactions (by voice, chat and text). Community-specific statistics for local calls are provided in the attached document. A total of 47% of interactions dealt with mental health and 19% addressed suicide.

Our crisis line volunteers and workers are trained using cutting-edge, peer-reviewed research gleaned from the American Association of Suicidology and the Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention. According to Statistics Canada, suicide is the 9th leading cause of death in Canada. The latest statistics are from 2017: A total of 572 persons died by suicide in British Columbia; 4157 persons died in Canada. If you or someone you know is struggling with thoughts of suicide and/or needs emotional support, the Crisis Society provides many ways to connect:

- Vancouver Island Crisis Line: 1-888-494-3888, available 24/7
- Vancouver Island Crisis Chat: www.vicrisis.ca; available 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm daily
- Vancouver Island Crisis Text: 250-800-3806; available 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm daily
- 1800SUICIDE: 1-800-784-2433; provincial service available 24/7
- 310Mental Health Support: 310-6789; provincial service available 24/7
- Canada Suicide Prevention service: 1-833-456-4566; national service available 24/7

And to think it all began for us in 1970 when an outreach service known as *The Flying Squad* evolved into the Nanaimo Crisis Centre, which offered a way of reaching street kids using drugs. Wow! Have things changed since then! The Vancouver Island Crisis Society is now celebrating **50 years of Helping People Find Their Way!**

We invite you to read about our History at <https://www.vicrisis.ca/history/>. Stay tuned for announcements regarding our 50th anniversary activities.

For more information, please contact:

Emily Post, Community Awareness Coordinator
250-753-2495 ext 110

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Please visit our website at www.vicrisis.ca



2019 Interactions

	Calls	Chats	Texts	Total Interactions	Percentage of Total Local Calls	911	Other Interventions including Accessing Mental Health Crisis Response Teams	Opioid-Related
Greater Victoria	14,529	238	240	15,007	44	85	1,301	160
Cowichan Valley	1,551	17	43	1,611	5	11	30	15
Nanaimo/Ladysmith	7,422	182	107	7,711	23	49	469	56
Parksville/Qualicum	1,363	9	9	1,381	4	8	29	10
Port Alberni/West Coast	519	60	10	589	2	12	47	7
Comox Valley	1,534	30	60	1,624	5	9	58	24
Campbell River	938	13	24	975	3	7	11	12
Mount Waddington/ Northern Vancouver Island	213	9	1	223	1	0	2	1
Locations Unknown	4,497	100	36	4,633	13	0	0	31
All Communities	28,069	558	494	33,754	100%	181	1,947	316

The above statistics reflect interactions taken via our Society's Crisis Services, as well as those we answered as part of the **1800SUICIDE** and the **310Mental Health Support** provincial networks.

The Vancouver Island Crisis Society also answered calls and texts on the new national **Canada Suicide Prevention Service**. These interactions totalled 5,367.

Thus, the Vancouver Island Crisis Society's total interactions for the 2019 calendar year were 39,121.