



*Helping People
Find Their Way*

56th Anniversary
Annual Report
2026

The board, volunteers, and staff of Vancouver Island Crisis Society gratefully acknowledge that we provide our services on the unceded and traditional territories of the Coast Salish, Nuu-chah-nulth, and Kwakiutl Peoples.



Our Community Education Department was contracted by the **North Vancouver Island Aboriginal Training Society** to provide a month-long, comprehensive training experience for selected participants from North Island Member Nations in 2025.

We trained three groups: one in **Campbell River**, another in **Port Hardy** (above photo at **Storey's Beach**), and a third in **Courtenay** (cover photo taken at **Wachiy Friendship Centre**).

It was a wonderful experience and we look forward to training with a fourth group in the Fall of 2026.

Lyndsay Wells and Neil Cutler, Facilitators

Vancouver Island Crisis Society in 2025-2026

1970 – 2026

The provincial **BC Crisis Line Network** and the Canada's **9-8-8 Suicide Crisis Helpline** were supported by the VICS team once again this year. We answered a total of **46,187** interactions, keeping our Crisis Line Responders very busy.

Our **Community Education** team delivers **Customizable Workshops** and **School Programs**, and provides **Suicide Grief Support** services, continued travelling to many communities on Vancouver Island.

We completed the **Year One goals** of our **Five-Year Strategic Plan**. These included:

- Increasing our volunteer involvement;
- Maintaining our provincial and national goals in answering Crisis Line interactions;
- Beginning the process of **American Association of Suicidology (AAS)** re-accreditation;
- Nine employees completing the **AAS Crisis Specialist** certification and one supervisor completing the four modules of the **AAS supervisors training**;
- Completing a review of staff wages and benefits, including capacity on the crisis line and our **Community Education** program delivery
- Strengthening our **community partnerships**, especially with Indigenous communities, by collaborating in the development of customized training;
- **Succession planning** in place for the Executive Director and key supervisory personnel;
- **Reviewing HR policies** and creating a draft of new governance and finance policies;
- Installing and customizing a new HR software platform;
- Developing and compiling the data of a detailed **Employee Wellness Survey**, and implementing resulting recommendations;
- Reviewing local Crisis Chat and Crisis Text services, and presenting recommendations to the **Provincial Health Services Authority**.

This will be my last Annual General Meeting report as the **VICS Executive Director**. Our search begins in the fall of 2026 for my replacement. This position has been **more than a job this past 34 years**, and it has been my sincere pleasure to work with such a compassionate, dedicated group of staff and volunteers. I am grateful for all of you who have contributed to my positive career experience and been part of our suicide prevention team!


John Jordan, President


Elizabeth Newcombe, Executive Director

The Crisis Society continues to be part of the **BC Crisis Line Network** and to be a partner of the **9-8-8 Suicide Crisis Helpline**, sharing calls and texts across British Columbia and across Canada.

Efforts by members of communities throughout Vancouver Island, to support **Crisis Chat**, **Crisis Text**, and other suicide prevention programs, including **School Programs**, resulted in over \$87,000 raised through private donations.

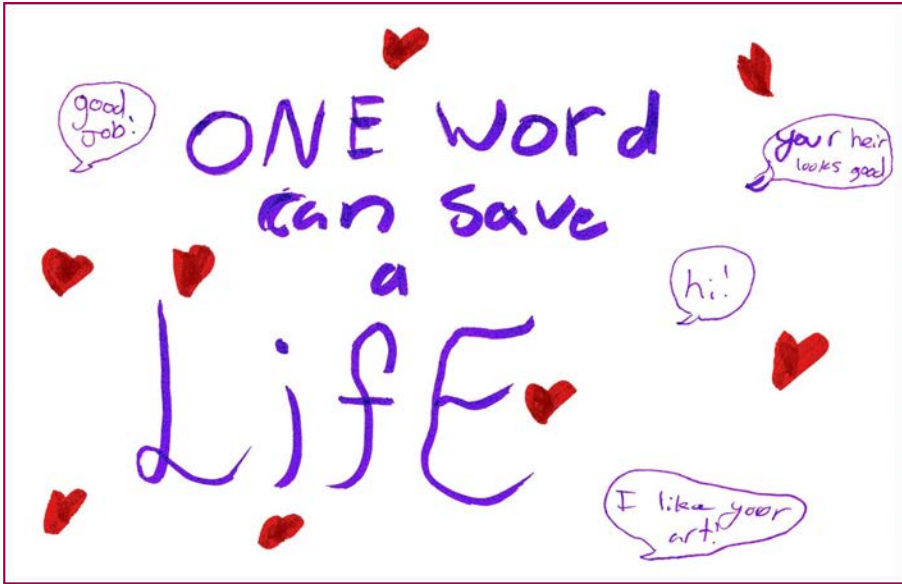
Our greatest asset continues to be our dedicated team:

- 10 VICS volunteers and trainees;
- 20 staff Crisis Line Responders;
- 9 members on our Board of Directors;
- a professional staff of 16 (an Executive Director of 34 years and Trainers with over 26 years' experience with the Crisis Society); and
- our generous donors.

Here are highlights from the various program areas:

Crisis Line Operations

We responded to a total of 29,255 calls for the **BC Crisis Line Network**, which includes the provincial **1800SUICIDE** and **310Mental Health Support** lines, and the **Vancouver Island Crisis Line**. We answered 10,510 calls and 5,870 text interactions that were taken on the national **9-8-8 Suicide Crisis Helpline**.



Our Crisis Lines were covered:

- 58% of the time remotely (a 35% increase from last year);
- 42% by staff at the Crisis Centre site.

A total of 861 volunteer hours were donated. These services equalled \$12,915 in value.

A total of 781 hours were donated to our Crisis Line operation and 80 were donated to our Community Education programming.

VICS Crisis Chat and Crisis Text: Online Emotional Support Services

Crisis Line Responders answered 552 Chat and Text interactions this year (available 6 to 10 pm, nightly). The two crisis services continued to be supported in part by individual and corporate donations.

Crisis Line Training

Two Crisis Line Responder volunteer training courses were delivered, with 14 trainees out of 20 candidates completing the program.

Staff Crisis Line Responders attended 12 monthly training sessions.



Our **School Programs** provided the opportunity for talented youth artists to illustrate what they felt represented certain feelings. These included **HOPE** (upper left), **CONNECTION** (lower left), **SELF-COMPASSION** (above and lower right), and **STRENGTH** (upper right).



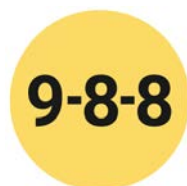
Vancouver Island Crisis Line Promotion

We remain very grateful to **Pattison Media** for donating yet another year-long, Island-wide radio campaign promoting Crisis Line, Crisis Chat, and Crisis Text services, as well as volunteering and employment opportunities.

In-person meetings continued to increase, along with our participation in numerous virtual meetings, as we remained strongly connected with community partners across the Island.

Mass emails were circulated to promote programs Island-wide, including presentations and events affiliated with World Suicide Prevention Day, community partnerships, and the recruitment of staff and volunteers.

We continued updating our **Community Resource Database**, with 920 resources being revised during the fiscal year.



Funding

Public Health Agency of Canada
via Centre for Addiction and Mental Health



Vancouver Island Crisis Line
1800SUICIDE
310Mental Health Support



Gaming Grant
Community Education



[The Wolf 106.9 FM](#) [The WAVE 102.3 FM](#)
[The Lounge 99.9 FM](#) [The Beach 88.5 FM](#)
[The Peak 93.3 FM](#) [The Eagle 97.3 FM](#)
[100.3 The Q](#) [The Zone@91.3](#)



Odd Fellows Columbia Lodge No. 2,
Victoria
Friendship Love Truth

Ivanyi Investments Inc.



Fundraising

Our Crisis Line, Crisis Chat and Crisis Text services, as well as our youth suicide prevention programs, were supported financially by community fundraising events such as the **Odd Fellows Columbia Lodge No. 2's Disc Golf Jamboree**, in addition to many generous donations by individuals.

While our Crisis Line operations were primarily funded by **Provincial Health Services Authority** and **9-8-8**, we continued to rely on **BC Gaming and donors** to support our Community Education and School Programs.

Thank You!

This list represents all those who supported the Crisis Society financially or with in-kind donations during the 2025-2025 fiscal year.

Visionaries (\$5000+)

9-8-8 Funding
Provincial Health Services Authority
BC Gaming Grant
Pattison Media
Oddfellows Columbia Lodge No.2
Ivanyi Investments Inc.
Intraworks I.T. Management

North Stars (\$2500 – \$4999)

Lighthouse Keepers (\$1000 – \$2499)

Benevity Canadian Community Impact Fund
PayPal Giving Fund Canada
Royal Canadian Legion Bowser Br #211
Western Financial Group

Our Heartfelt Thanks to Our Generous Funders and Donors!

Life Preservers (\$500 to \$999)

1832 Asset Management L.P.
Blossoming at The Farm Society
Kim Pirie
Knights of Columbus Ascension 7991

Order of the Eastern Star #10 DES
Robin Clysdale
Sean McCulloch

Anchors (under \$499)

Alley Smith
Benevity UK Online Giving Foundation
Bev Tancon
Bill MacGougan
Carol Stanley
Caroline Bailey
Charles Morin
Cynthia Riera
Debra Nealy
Fay Wilkinson
Heather Barron
Jason Treit
June Schuurman
Kaitlyn Michaelis
Kim Peters
Lesley Washington
Lyn Makepeace
Malcolm Wyeth
Mark Shellard
Mary's Farm and Sanctuary Ltd.
Meghan Hall
Min Zhou
Prov Employees Community Service Fund
Roxanne Aquino
Sage Aaron
Tamara Kronis
United Way British Columbia
United Way East Ontario



*A seemingly endless supply of discs await for disc golf enthusiasts on the occasion of the 9th annual **Disc Golf Jamboree** fundraising event, presented by **Odd Fellows Columbia Lodge No.2**. The participants had a wonderful time once again in the lovely setting of **Mary's Farm and Sanctuary**.*



Suicide Grief Support Services

Twelve **group support** meetings were held online, with an average group size of six participants.

A total of 17 lay counselling **one-on-one support** sessions were made either online or by telephone to support those grieving the loss of a loved one to suicide.

Community Education

Our Community Education workshop presentations continued to be in high demand.

With our facilitators consisting of four ASIST Trainers and two safeTALK Trainers, and three trainers experienced in presenting VICS customizable workshops, we facilitated a total of:

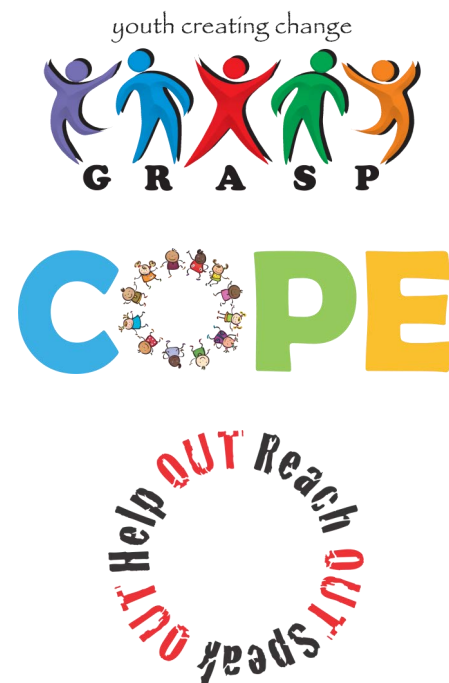
- 7 **ASIST** (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) courses to 131 participants;
- 4 **safeTALK** workshops to 41 participants;
- 2 **CIST** (Crisis Intervention Skills Training) courses to 44 participants; and
- 16 customized workshops, delivered to 180 participants.

Workshops developed by VICS are delivered in person and online. *LivingWorks' ASIST and safeTALK are only delivered in person.*



School Suicide Prevention Programs

- The **GRASP** (Growth, Resilience, Acknowledgement, Suicide Awareness, and Personal Safe Planning) 12-hour gatekeeper training workshop was provided 14 times to 132 secondary school students.
- A total of 3 **COPE** (Communication, Options, Perspective, Enjoy life) workshops were delivered to 247 elementary school students.
- **Speak Out, Reach Out, Help Out** in-person presentations were made five times to a total of 1,059+ students.



*Facilitating was a lot of fun on Day 4 of **GRASP** at the Alberni District Secondary School.*



Proud partner in



Provincial and National initiatives

We continued to answer Vancouver Island Crisis Line, **1800SUICIDE**, and **310Mental Health Support** calls, as part of the **BC Crisis Line Network**.

We continued to answer calls and texts, as a partner in the **9-8-8 Suicide Crisis Helpline**.

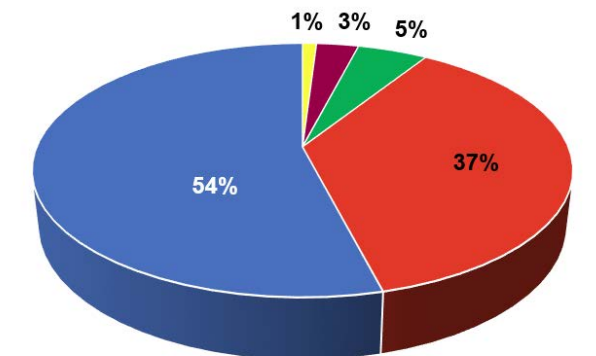
Our Executive Director continued to serve on the **BC Crisis Line Network** and the **9-8-8 Advisory Committee** as a proud network partner.

Members of our Supervisory Team participated in meetings, as part of various working groups and committees.



2025-2026 Financials

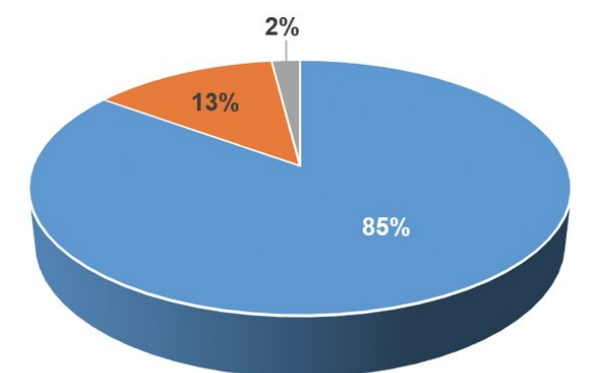
Revenue: \$2,910,538



- 1% BC Gaming Policy & Enforcement Branch
- 3% Donations, Membership, Fundraising, Other
- 5% Community Education
- 37% PHSA Provincial Funding
- 54% Public Health Agency of Canada (9-8-8)

Note: Deferred Revenue totalled \$253,192

Expenses: \$2,723,069



- 85% Crisis Services
- 13% Community Education
- 2% Administration

Meet our 2025 COPE & Community Education Characters:

- Raven – Voice, expression, communication
- Owl – Listening, wisdom, paying attention
- Bear – Protection, grounding, safety
- Orca – Feelings, emotional waves, connection
- Illuma the Rainbow Deer – Diversity, identity, inclusion
- Milo Moss, our science guide – Curiosity, learning, gentle noticing
- Jumpy the grasshopper – Anxiety, bravery, small steps forward



In November, our **Community Education Department** shared a first look at a new cast of characters—our companions and guides who will accompany learners through every stage of life, from upper elementary school through to older adulthood. These characters begin their journey as 11-year-olds in our Grades 5 to 7 programs, grow into teens for our high school workshops, become adults in our workplace trainings, and eventually become Elders—reflecting our commitment to lifelong learning and community connection.

Our refreshed imagery and curriculum honour the lands and cultures of Vancouver Island, guided by values of respect, relationship, and belonging. While not representing any specific Nation or Nation’s stories, these characters were created with deep care for place, land, and community—reflecting the forests, waters, and living beings that make this Island home. These characters will appear throughout all of our elementary, youth, adult, and

professional programs—helping us bring trauma-informed, culturally-aware mental health education to classrooms, workplaces, community agencies, first responders, the Department of National Defence, and more.

What makes our Community Education team unique is our ability to adapt our programs for every community we serve—rural, urban, Indigenous, military, nonprofit, and beyond. These characters help us create consistency while still meeting people where they are.

With gratitude to the communities of Vancouver Island for welcoming us into your schools, workplaces, and gathering places.

- Community belongs to all of us.
- Learning is lifelong.
- And around our campfire, there is room for everyone.

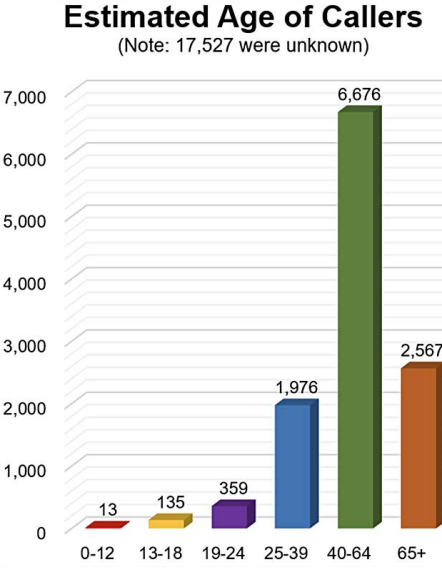
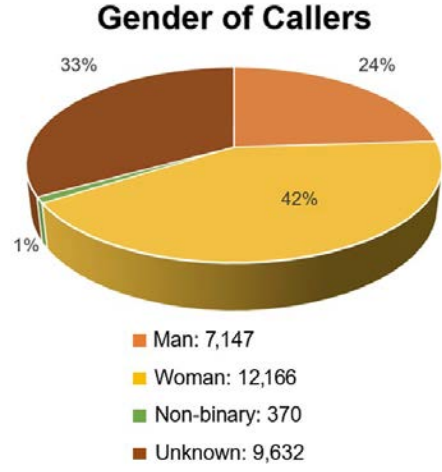


Vancouver Island
Crisis Society

Vancouver Island Crisis Line
1800SUICIDE and 310Mental Health Support

from April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026

Proud partner in



Geographic Location	Calls	%
Victoria and Area	6,934	24
Cowichan Valley and Area	1,030	3.5
Nanaimo and Area	2,972	10
Port Alberni and West Coast Area	226	1
Parksville/Qualicum Area	224	1
Comox Valley and Area	416	1
Campbell River and Area	219	1
Mount Waddington (Port Hardy, Port McNeill & Area)	39	—
Other BC (off Vancouver Island)	15,962	54.5
Other Canada/USA	1,175	4
Unknown	58	—
Total	29,255	100%

- Average calls/chat/texts per day were 127
- Note: 9-8-8 Suicide Crisis Helpline is not included in the breakdown below
- 72 follow-up calls were arranged for high-risk callers and third-party call-outs
- 124 calls related to COVID-19, which was 0.5% of our call volume
- 22,475 callers were asked about suicidal thoughts, which was 77% of total calls
- 3,961 (14% of call volume) suicide risk assessments, which included safety plans, were completed for callers
- Language Line was accessed on 36 occasions for callers who did not speak English

Incoming and Outgoing Calls	Mental Health Crisis Response	Interventions: 9-1-1, MCFD, Other	Total	Percentage of Interactions
1800SUICIDE	5	25	1,773	4%
310Mental Health Support	31	47	8,065	17%
VI Crisis Line & BC Network	1,337	256	19,417	42%
9-8-8 Suicide Crisis Helpline	—	545	10,510	23%
Total Calls	1,373	873	39,765	—
Vancouver Island Chats and Texts	0	8	552	1%
9-8-8 National Texts	—	Part of 9-8-8 Calls Total	5,870	13%
Total Call, Chat, Text Interactions	1,373	881	46,187	100%

Why People Call the Crisis Line
Mental Health & Substance Use 46%
Suicide 21%
Information/Resources 9%
Physical Health 4%
Basic Needs/Unhoused 3%
Abuse..... 3%
Individual & Family Life 2%
Other..... 12%

Mission Statement

The Vancouver Island Crisis Society is committed to providing an accessible voice, text and chat crisis intervention and suicide prevention services, including postvention programs. We endeavour to provide emotional support during times of crisis, information about community resources, education intended to promote community wellness, and reduce the incidence of suicide. We value the principles of confidentiality, non-judgmental acceptance, respect for diversity, personal empowerment and cooperation.

Board of Directors 2025-2026

John Jordan, President
David Reid, Vice President
Karen Love, Secretary
Elaine Layman, Treasurer

Directors:

John Heinrich
(started October 23, 2025)
Karen Karsten
Madison Taylor
(started January 22, 2026)
Bill MacGougan
Ellie Curry
(resigned October 2, 2025)
Kyle Ilett
Michael Tan
(resigned January 28, 2026)

www.vicrisis.ca

Vancouver Island Crisis Society

P.O. Box 1118, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 6E7
Business Line: 250-753-2495
Toll-Free (BC only): 1-877-753-2495
Email: info@vicrisis.ca
Website: www.vicrisis.ca
Registered Charity Number 107758831RR0001

Crisis Line Services

Vancouver Island Crisis Line 1-888-494-3888
1800SUICIDE (Provincial) 1-800-784-2433
310Mental Health Support (Provincial) 310-6789
9-8-8 Suicide Crisis Helpline (National)
Dial 9-8-8
for Voice or Text 24/7

Suicide Grief Support

grief@vicrisis.ca

Community Education and School Programs

communityeducation@vicrisis.ca

Affiliations

Accredited Crisis Centre by the
American Association of Suicidology (AAS)
BC Crisis Line Network
Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention (CASP)
Crisis Line Association of BC (CLABC)
Proud Partner of 9-8-8
Greater Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce
Volunteer Nanaimo