



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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CRISIS LINE AWARENESS WEEK SEAMLESS TRANSITION OF ISLAND CRISIS LINE SERVICE

March 21st to March 27th is Crisis Line Awareness Week. This is an opportunity to raise awareness about the important role that the Crisis Line plays on Vancouver Island and the transition of service delivery to one service provider.

Effective March 1, 2010, crisis line services on Vancouver Island began transitioning to a single provider. Transition is taking place gradually over the coming months working with the existing crisis line providers. During this transition period you can continue to call your local crisis line number that can be found in your telephone book along with other emergency numbers and you will reach a caring non-judgmental extensively trained crisis line worker. For more information, please visit our website at www.cvics.ca

You can also contact the two provincial crisis line services 1-800-SUICIDE (784-2433) for support around suicide, or 310-6789 for support, information and referrals relating to mental health.

The Vancouver Island Crisis Line has a pool of seventy Crisis line workers who are there to provide immediate, free, confidential telephone support, crisis intervention, suicide prevention and intervention and information and referral 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to callers of all ages across the island through the Vancouver Island Crisis Line and across British Columbia through two provincial crisis line networks.

Next crisis line worker training in Nanaimo for volunteers starts May 1st. This may be the opportunity for you.

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Facts about the Central Vancouver Island Crisis Society who will now be providing the Vancouver Island Crisis Line service

Did you know?

- The Central Vancouver Island Crisis Society (CVICS) has been providing crisis line service for 40 years and taking calls from across the province since 2006.
- Rigorously trained volunteer and staff crisis line workers answered approximately 17,000 calls last year and with the expansion to taking all island calls the estimated call volume is 45,000
- CVICS is an accredited crisis centre with the (AAS) American Association of Suicidology. Individual crisis line workers are also AAS certified.
- Provided training re: suicide prevention and intervention to several first nation communities (Cowichan Tribes, Snuneymuxw and Stz'uminus First Nations).

Why would someone call a crisis line?

- Crisis Lines are recognized as the suicide 'experts' in BC. They are most often the first place people call who are considering suicide and crisis line workers are trained in the most recent suicide assessment and intervention strategies.
- 8-12% of callers have suicidal thoughts
- 35-45% of callers have a mental health or addiction issue
- Calls range from emotional support, information and referral to suicide in progress calls where emergency intervention is required. Other calls include relationship conflicts, homelessness, family violence, grief, isolation & loneliness calls
- Every call is life changing ... whether a woman leaving an abusive relationship and calling for support and information on the local shelter; a family facing a housing crisis and imminent homelessness in need of resources, support and information; someone calling the line to help them cope with their mental health or addiction issue in between appointments with their case worker; or someone thinking that there is no way out except suicide and in desperate need of a compassionate, empowering, trained and skilled crisis line worker to support them or initiate emergency intervention if needed

Who are the crisis line workers and what training do they receive?

- Crisis Line workers are a combination of 70 staff and volunteers but all are dedicated and have a passion for helping others
- They come from all walks of life – retired individuals, students, professionals, individuals seeking a career change, male and female....
- Crisis Line workers received a minimum of 70 hours of initial intensive crisis line training, one on one support, and ongoing training. Subjects range from but are not limited to basic listening skills, mental health, addictions, grief and loneliness, resources awareness, suicide assessment, and emergency intervention.
- Those who work or volunteer for a crisis line will tell you that they get as much or more out of the experience than they feel they give others. It is life changing for many.