

Vancouver Island Crisis Society

IN CONNECTION



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Connecting our Island Community

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Contacts

Vancouver Island Crisis Society
 P.O. Box 1118
 Nanaimo, BC V9R 6E7

Toll Free: 1-877-753-2495
 Phone: (250) 753-2495
 Fax: (250) 753-2475
 Email: info@vicrisis.ca
 Webpage: www.vicrisis.ca

The Vancouver Island Crisis Line is also the public access to Mental Health Crisis Response Services
 1-888-494-3888

Suicide Bereavement Support Group:
 Support for surviving the loss of a loved one to suicide. For information call 250-753-2495 or 1-877-753-2495.

Volunteer Training on the Crisis Line in Nanaimo, Suicide Prevention & Intervention Training and other customized workshops for your business or group Island wide call (250) 753-2495 or 1-877-753-2495.



Cowichan
 Central and
 Northern Vancouver Island



Vancouver Island Crisis Line Statistics

January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2011

Total Calls	30,372	%
Victoria & area	11,342	37.3
Nanaimo/Ladysmith	6,649	22.0
BC Off Island	3,833	12.6
Unknown	2,709	9.0
Campbell River & area	1,704	6.0
Cowichan Valley & area	1,609	5.2
Comox Valley & area	1,275	4.1
Parksville/Qualicum	499	1.6
Pt Alberni/West Coast	388	1.2
Rest of Canada/USA	244	0.8
Mt. Waddington & area	84	0.2

Calls by Incoming Line

1-800-SUICIDE

(provincial line)
 735 calls
 2.4%

310-6789

Mental Health Support
 (provincial line)
 2,374 calls
 7.8%

1-888-494-3888

VI Crisis Line
 27,263 calls
 89.8%

Reasons Why People Call the Crisis Line

Mental Health Issues	49%
Information & Resources	16%
Individual/Family Life	13%
Suicide	7%
Addiction	5%
Physical Health Issues	4%
Abuse & Family Violence	2%
Financial & Homelessness	3%
Legal Issues	1%

Note: 1911 suicide risk reviews were completed

Crisis Call Interventions

911	125
Police non-emergency	17
MCFD	56
Hospital	2
Poison Control	10
Other	23
MH Crisis Response	2,203
Total	2,436

Mental Health & Addictions Crisis Response Interventions - by team

	# of Calls
Campbell River Crisis Nurse	12
Courtenay Crisis Intervention Nurse	171
Duncan Crisis Response Team	196
Nanaimo Crisis Response Team	959
Parksville Mental Health	12
Port Alberni Community Response Team	35
Mt. Waddington Mental Health & other	3
Victoria Integrated Mobile Crisis Response Team	815

Mental Health & Addictions Crisis Response Breakdown by Type of Intervention

	# of Calls
Crisis Response Teams	1,566
Consult Only	117
Message Relay	489
Conference call:	30
Caller & Crisis Team	

Suicide Prevention Legislation Passes

The House of Commons passed Bill C300, an Act respecting a Federal Framework for Suicide Prevention, at Second Reading, by a vote of 285 in favour, and 3 opposed.



Harold Albrecht, MP

The bill, tabled last September, would require the federal government to: recognize suicide as a public health issue, provide guidelines to improve public awareness of suicide, disseminate information about suicide and suicide prevention, make available to the public statistics about suicide and related risk factors, promote collaboration and knowledge exchange across Canada, define best practices for the prevention of suicide, promote the use of evidence-based practices for the prevention of suicide; and report back to Parliament at defined intervals regarding its progress.

Harold Albrecht, MP responsible for spearheading Bill C-300, remains hopeful that the next stage – study by Committee – will be concluded without delay. “I say promptly, because lives are lost every delay. C300 was last debated last Thursday. Since then, there have likely been 5000 suicide attempts, 600 Emergency Room visits, 250 hospitalizations, and 50 deaths – all due to suicide – most of them preventable.”

According to Statistics Canada, suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the country, with approximately 3,600 Canadians dying by suicide every year. According to the Canadian Psychiatric Association, suicide is the second leading cause of death in our youth aged 15 to 24.

Social science researcher Jack Hicks told CBC News that the bill is a step in the right direction for the country since Canada is one of the only developed countries without a national suicide prevention strategy

in place. “My hope is that everything this bill mentions will be done as quickly as possible, as effectively as possible, and Canada goes into catch-up mode,” he said.

Hicks said the highest suicide rates are found in Aboriginal communities and the bill misses key elements.

“There's no specific mention to the rate of suicide in some aboriginal communities. And among the organizations to be consulted, aboriginal groups are not mentioned as a category,” he said. However, Hicks said the bill is a step in the right direction.

Your Life Counts founder Rory Butler called the bill's passage a “victory” for the people and organizations over the years who have “worked tirelessly across Canada towards establishing a national framework for suicide prevention.”

“Let us not forget the immense human cost and suffering that continues each and every second as families devastated by their loss of a loved one seek to find hope and meaning for their future. May they find hope and know that they are not alone and that this victory is also theirs – as hollow as the victory may seem for them, let this new and exciting step forward be a good thing that has come out of the pain and the suffering.” Albrecht presented to the House of Commons just before the vote the Canadian Mental Health Association commercial made in honor of the former Saskatchewan MP Dave Batters, 39, who lost his life to suicide on June 30, 2009. **Please see the YouTube video.**



Dave Batters, MP

Bill C-300 will now move to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health for further debate. It is expected to return to parliament for its final reading sometime later this year.

Excerpts taken from articles by CBC News, Feb 16/12, by Peter Baklinski of LifeSiteNews.com and from a news release by Harold Albrecht, MP

A Three Tiered Approach to Youth Suicide Prevention

Submitted by Lyndsay Wells, Public Education Program Coordinator

In 2003 a tragic cluster of suicides took place in School District 68 and prompted the creation of a multi-disciplinary team comprised of the Crisis Society, Child and Youth Mental Health, the RCMP, VIHA, and school district 68 to re-look at the district's protocols for suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention. Out of those meetings, a protocols training day for counsellors and administrative staff was developed and is delivered yearly by the same multi-disciplinary team.

On December 2, 2008 the Child Death Review Unit of the BC Coroners Service released a special report on child and youth suicide. The report, *"Looking for Something to Look Forward To..." A Five-Year Retrospective Review of Child and Youth Suicide in B.C.* looked at the 81 children and youth who died by suicide in B.C. between January 1, 2003, and December 31, 2007. The full report is accompanied by a companion document, *Child and Youth Suicide in B.C.: A Summary of a Five-Year Retrospective Review*.

Based on recommendations made in the report, Vancouver Island Crisis Society developed **The Three Tiered Approach to Suicide Prevention** - designed to provide information and tools to caregivers at every

counsellors, administrators, resource staff, teachers, and students.

As a result, in 2007 VI Crisis Society was invited to be a part of a provincial collaborative enquiry team regarding youth suicide in BC and our unique, life promoting programs GRASP and Speak Out Reach Out Help Out have been the focus of research by Dr. Jennifer White at the University of Victoria and were presented at the 2011 conference for the Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention.



Speak Out, Reach Out, Help Out is a life affirming, positive, and inclusive youth suicide prevention program that blends a mixture of current media, participatory activities, and messaging that encourages youth to seek out life protecting factors "Safe Plan" and reach out for help. This includes words from school counseling staff about what to expect if a student visits counseling for emotional support, a live call, to Vancouver Island Crisis Line and a crisis line card for every student so that young people can hear and feel what it is to reach out for help.



youth creating change



GRASP is a 12 hour workshop for select students. GRASP stands for Growth, Resilience, Acknowledgement, Suicide Awareness, Preparation and Planning for Safety.

The aim of GRASP is to provide youth with self-awareness, communication, and coping skills that will aid them in their personal and professional growth as well as contribute peer gatekeepers that will compliment an overall plan for ongoing youth suicide prevention programs within the school district.

Here is what a previous student had to say about the program:

“This course was one of the best things I have ever done. It has helped me not only help others but to help myself. I always put other people before me and I have always felt guilty and responsible for others people's problems that I shouldn't. It has also taught me to be a better listener and to listen for warning signs. Fabulous course! I would absolutely recommend it to not only other students but everyone else I know! “

(Candace, 2009)



Vancouver Island Community Resource Update



Note: For any further information on a specific program listed please contact the resource directly and if you are needing other resource information please refer to our online resource database at <http://www.vicrisis.ca/community-resource-database/>

This month highlighting “Transition Houses”

Victoria:

Cridge Transition House for Women

(formerly Hill House) Cridge Transition House for Women is for women, with or without children, who are escaping violent or abusive relationships. Abuse can include emotional as well as physical abuse. Cridge Transition House for Women provides safe, emergency accommodation for up to 30 days, supportive counselling, information about the dynamics of relationship violence and referrals to community supports.

Crisis Line 24 hr: 250 - 479-3963

Cowichan Valley:

Somenos House

Hours: 24 hours a day Temporary shelter and support for women and their children who are experiencing or at risk of violence or abuse.

Direct Support Line 24 hr: 250 - 748-8544
 Business Line: 250 - 748-8543

Nanaimo:

Haven Society

Safe shelter for women offering these programs - Women's Counselling Program, Children Who Witness Abuse, Transition House, Outreach

Crisis Line 24 hr - 250 - 756-0616
 Business Line - 250 - 756-2452

Port Alberni:

Port Alberni Transition House

Port Alberni Transition House is an emergency and safe shelter for women and children at risk of abuse, threats or violence. House provides · accommodation · meals · support, services (offering options and respecting choices) · counseling for women and children · referrals and information on community services · client advocacy · information, referrals and support on: financial aid, family court, legal procedures, restraining orders, etc.

Crisis Line 24 hr: 250 - 724-2223

Connecting Resources Island Wide

West Coast:

West Coast Transition House

What the Transition House Offers:

Safe, short term transitional accommodation, Crisis support and safety planning, Information and advocacy, Emergency food, clothing and essential hygiene items, referrals to community agencies and resources, a safe place to talk, explore and discover your options towards obtaining a healthier and safer life for you and your children.

Toll Free 24 hr: 1-877 - 726-2080

Local 24 hr: 250 - 726-2020

Business Line: 250 - 726-2020

Comox Valley:

Lilli House - Comox Valley Transition Society

Emergency shelter for abused women and their children, In house counselling for children in the shelter. Emergency crisis counselling, Individual and group counselling (by appointment), Educational presentations and workshops, Legal, medical and financial advocacy in-person or over the phone. All programs are free of charge.

24 hour Crisis Line 250 - 338-1227

Business Line: 250 - 897-0511

Campbell River: **Ann Elmore House**

A short-term emergency shelter that provides food, some clothing and basic personal necessities. Referral and advocacy services are also available: Counselling and support for women who are resident and community-based programs for women who do not come into the shelter. In person or by phone, Children's In-House Counseling Program, Supported Recovery, 24 hour Telephone Help Line, Gold River and Cortes Island Safe Home Program, Stopping the Violence Counselling in Gold River, Support Groups.

Crisis Line 24 hr: 250 - 286-3666

Toll Free 24 hr: 1-800 - 667-2188

Business Line: 250 - 287-7384

North Island:

North Island Crisis and Counselling Centre Society

Temporary shelter, food and other necessities, support in getting financial, medical or legal help, parenting support, information on community and provincial resources, emotional help and counselling, transportation. The "Stopping the Violence" Program, Womens Outreach, Child & Youth Mental Health Services, Sexual Abuse Intervention Program, Children Who Witness Abuse, Crisis Stabilization program, FASD Key Worker Program, Strong Start Program, Infant Development Program, Supported Child Development,.

Crisis Line 24 hr: 250 - 949-6033

Alert Bay/Kingcome 24 hr: 250 - 974-5326

Business Line 250 - 949-8333

by Iris Bolton

I don't know why.

I'll never know why.

I don't have to know why.

I don't like it.

I don't have to like it.

What I do have to do is to make a choice about my living.

The choice is mine.

I can go on living, valuing every moment in a way I never did before

or I can be destroyed by it and, in turn, destroy others.

I thought I was immortal. That my family and children were also.

That tragedy only happened to others.

*But I know now that life is tenuous and valuable, so I am choosing to go on living,
making the most of the time I have, valuing my family and friends in a way never possible before.*

For Those Bereaved by Suicide

Losing someone we love to suicide is one of the most painful things a human being will ever experience. Because of its tragic and complex nature, suicide bereavement is a process of hills and valleys that will be as individual as the person grieving and around which there can be no time lines. As much as incorporating healthy patterns of coping, and plans for healing have a place in suicide bereavement, it's important the survivors be aware that grief takes time, and that the feeling of "three steps forward, two steps back," is normal.

Sometimes it may feel like the sadness will never end. While these feelings can be frightening and overwhelming, they are normal reactions to loss. Accepting them as part of the grieving process and allowing yourself to feel what you feel is necessary for healing.

There is no right or wrong way to grieve. Grieving is a personal and highly individual experience. How you grieve depends on many factors, including your personality and coping style, your life experience, your faith, and the nature of the loss. Healing happens gradually; it can't be forced or hurried – and there is no "normal" timetable for grieving, for some feel better in weeks or months, for others, it is measured in years. It's important to be patient with yourself and allow the process to naturally unfold.

Many survivors have shared that being part of a suicide bereavement support group is an extremely helpful part of their healing. In Nanaimo, the 1st Wednesday of the month, call us first at 1-877-753-2495 or Campbell River Hospice holds their group every 3rd Monday of the month, from 7 to 9pm.

- ☛ Know you can survive. You may not think so, but you can.
- ☛ Struggle with "why" it happened until you no longer need to know "why" or until you are satisfied with partial answers.
- ☛ Know you may feel overwhelmed by the intensity of your feelings but all your feelings are normal.
- ☛ Anger, guilt, confusion, forgetfulness are common responses. You are not crazy - you are in mourning.
- ☛ Be aware you may feel angry. This is also normal.
- ☛ You may feel guilty for what you think you did or did not do.
- ☛ Having suicidal thoughts is common. It does not mean that you will act on those thoughts. Find a safe place to talk about your feelings.
- ☛ Don't be afraid to cry. Tears are healing.
- ☛ Give yourself time to heal.
- ☛ Expect setbacks. Don't panic if emotions return like a tidal wave. You may only be experiencing a remnant of grief, an unfinished piece.
- ☛ Try to put off major decisions.
- ☛ Give yourself permission to get professional help.
- ☛ Be patient with yourself and with others who may not understand.
- ☛ Steer clear of people who want to tell you what or how to feel.
- ☛ It is common to experience physical reactions to your grief; i.e. headaches, loss of appetite, inability to sleep, etc.
- ☛ The willingness to laugh with others and at yourself is healing.
- ☛ Know that you will never be the same again, but you can survive and go beyond just surviving.



Gathering Our Voices 2012

On March 20-23, 2012, the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres & Tillicum Lelum Aboriginal Friendship Centre hosted the 10th Annual Aboriginal Youth Conference, *Gathering our Voices* in Nanaimo on the traditional territory of the Snuneymuxw peoples. This year's theme, "A Generation on the Move" saw over 1400 Aboriginal youth from across the country enthusiastically focussing on important issues in workshops and activities at the conference centre in Nanaimo, the Coast Bastion Inn, and the Port Theatre.

In collaboration with Intertribal Health Authority, community member Patrick Aleck, and Penelakut Elder Marguerit James, Vancouver Island Crisis Line was honoured to be invited to present our youth suicide prevention program *Speak Out, Reach Out, Help Out* in two workshops during the week.

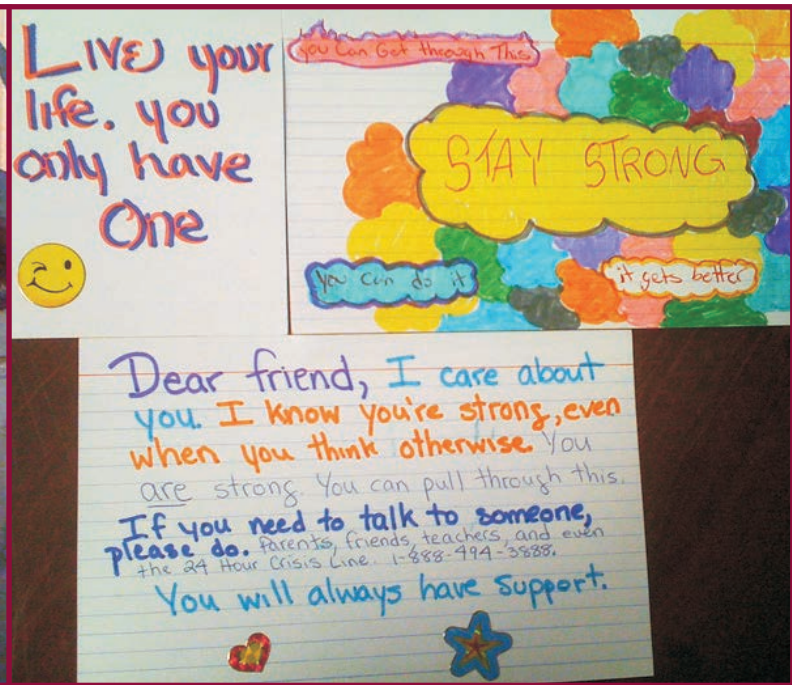
As part of the program, youth are invited to create "feel better cards" for their peers that offer words of encouragement and hope to those who may be struggling. The heartfelt messages of love and support that were shared give voice to the fact that this is not only a generation on the move but one that cares and is committed to being a part of lasting and life affirming change.

The feel better cards were presented to Aboriginal Suicide Critical Incident Response Team (ASCIRT) Coordinator Lee Wittmann from Intertribal Health Authority to be given to the youth they serve.

Congratulations to Patrick for being honoured at the closing ceremony with an award for his exemplary work in community.



Presenters Heather Owen, Patrick Aleck and Lyndsay Wells



DIAGNOSTIC & STATISTICAL MANUAL OF MENTAL DISORDERS

DSM-IV 4TH Edition Introduces New Disorders

The new edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition (DSM-IV); will be released in spring 2012. There are many new disorders being integrated into the manual, but three in particular that we would like to highlight: Non-Suicidal Self Injury (NSSI), Prolonged Grief Disorder (PGD) and Suicidal Behavior Disorder (SBD). There is hope that with these new disorders represented in the DSM –IV there will be more awareness and help for individuals who are suffering in these particular areas.

Non Suicidal Self Injury is defined as intentional self-inflicted damage to the surface of the body, deliberate but with no desire to die. In many cases where teens exhibited traits of self harm they had previously been treated as an intentional attempt of suicide.

Next, looking at Prolonged Grief Disorder, the DSM-IV are concerned for individuals who appear to be stuck in their grief and protest the reality of their loss;

this affects 10 to 20 percent of the general population. Individuals stuck in the grief will show signs of distressing yearning, intense intrusive thoughts and are not able to begin to accept the death and are unable to resume functioning within six months. Introducing a new disorder concerning grief is intended to help those who are experiencing debilitating impacts on their life and give them encouragement to access support.

Lastly there is Suicidal Behavior Disorder, also another disorder that is currently embedded in other diagnosis. Suicide is listed, as a symptom of depression, yet there is not a direct correlation between the two. The DSM-IV defines an attempt as being self initiated behavior intended at the time to result in an individual's death. To be diagnosed with SBD the person would need to have had an attempt within the last 12 months.

With these three new disorders being placed in the DSM-IV it will mean an evolution with assessments and treatment methods.

Thank you to all our Donors

This list represents all those who supported the Crisis Society financially or with in-kind donations since our last newsletter was published in April 2011. The donations listed are from April 2011 to March 15, 2012.

Anchors (under \$499)

Rich 1 Beauty Salon & School - Nanaimo
 Fraternal Order of Eagles – Ladysmith
 Malahat Lions Club – Cobble Hill
 Marilyn Marshall – Nanaimo
 X1 Delta PI – Parksville
 Paul Bowden – Victoria
 Murray Lawson – Victoria
 Neil Rawsley – Victoria
 Pat Meadows Personal Real Estate Corp. – Victoria
 Margaret Walker – Victoria
 David Lynn – Victoria
 Talesta Holdings Ltd. – Brentwood Bay
 Balvir Joshi – Nanaimo
 Donald & Margaret Ball – Parksville
 Kellie Elder – Victoria
 Josh Vincent – Nanaimo
 Joy Vikstrom – Nanaimo
 Elfriede Quay – Sidney
 Lesley Clint – Nelson, BC
 Anthea Piets – Victoria
 Geoff Ball – Qualicum Beach
 Jennifer Smith – Exsaw, AB
 Karen Salmon

Lazy Boy – David Younger – Nanaimo
 Ann Ishiguro

Josephine Dick – Exshaw, AB
 Michelle Hounslow – Exshaw, AB
 Roger Plamondon - Courtenay
 Provincial Employees Community Services

Life Preservers (\$500-\$999)

Trinity Church – North Saanich
 Town of Ladysmith

Lighthouse Keepers (\$1000 - \$2499)

Knights of Columbus Ascension Council 7991 –
 Qualicum Beach
 MacIsaac Law Firms – John Jordan - Nanaimo
 RBC Foundation

Northstars (\$2500 - \$4999)

Visionaries (\$5000 +)

United Way Central & Northern Vancouver Island
 Cowichan United Way
 Vancouver Island Health Authority
 Province of BC – Gaming
 Intraworks I.T. Management – Phil Stiller
 Island Radio – Jim Patterson Group
 Toskan Casale Foundation, Toronto



Staying in touch,

Bringing you the most recent Industry news, and

Keeping you connected with your Vancouver Island Community!

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Campbell River: Island Responsibility Adult Course, Certificate course put on by PacificCARE. Venue: TBA, March 29th, 30th & 31st. Contact 1-888-480-2273. **Nanaimo:** Stepparenting: Strategies for Success. March 31st 9:30 to 4:30 pm @ Nanaimo District Secondary School. Contact 250-591-8184. **Victoria:** Taking the Fall - Chapter One: Life on the Streets showing on March 31st @ The Vic Theatre 6:00 pm. Free/by donation **West Coast:** Here We Come - Interactive Early Years Event, 3 to 5 year olds & families, pirate theme. April 17th 5 to 8 pm @ Ucluelet

Elementary: April 18th 4 to 6 pm @ Wickaninnish Community School: April 18th 10 to 12 pm @ Ahousaht Headstart Room - Contact 250-720-2778. **Nanaimo:** Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) April 26 & 27th @ Vancouver Island Crisis Society 8:30 to 4:30 pm both days. Contact 1-877-753-2495.

Courtenay: Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) April 26 & 27th @ North Island College 8:30 to 4:30 pm both days. Contact 250-890-7599

UBC Conference: May 6 - 8th Child and Youth Mental Health Matters, First National Family Mental Health Conference, First International Young

Carers Congress, Third International World Congress on Children of Parents with Mental Illness. To register, **visit the conference website.**

Nanaimo: Crisis Intervention Skills Training, May 17th & 18th @ Vancouver Island Crisis Society, 8:30 to 4:30 pm both days. Contact 1-877-753-2495.

Campbell River: Nathan Ory Workshop FASD and Practical Approaches to Challenging Behaviors, May 11th, 8:45 - 4:15 Contact 250 - 286 - 0391.

Contact us if you would like your event listed. heather@vicrisis.ca



VANCOUVER ISLAND CRISIS LINE 1-888-494-3888

IMPORTANT - PRIVACY ACT

On January 1, 2004, the new privacy legislation came into effect. It is designed to protect individuals' personal information from being misused. As you know, we love to stay in touch, keeping you posted on what's happening in our Island Community. We now require your consent to do so. We also want to respect your privacy. So if you no longer wish to receive our newsletter please email us at info@vicrisis.ca...please let us know and we will delete your name from our database. If we don't hear from you, we shall assume we have your consent to stay in touch. Enjoy reading this issue of "In Connection," the Vancouver Island Crisis Society's newsletter.

VANCOUVER ISLAND CRISIS LINE: 1-888-494-3888

PROVINCIAL SUICIDE LINE: 1-800-SUICIDE (785-2433) PROVINCIAL MENTAL HEALTH LINE: 310-6789