

Vancouver Island Crisis Society

IN CONNECTION



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June 2014

VOLUNTEER: GIVE THE GIFT OF TIME



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Contacts

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 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

Crisis Chat Online Emotional Support
 6pm to 10pm every night
 Accessed through our website at
www.vicrisis.ca

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



NOW AVAILABLE

Community Resource Directory
 Central Vancouver Island

\$25.00 per copy plus shipping
www.vicrisis.ca for details

Vancouver Island Crisis Line Statistics

April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014

	Crisis Line		Crisis Chat
		%	Jun-Mar
Total Calls	27,067		473
Victoria & area	10,616	39	117
Nanaimo/Ladysmith	7,039	26	140
Unknown	2,525	9	0
Comox Valley & area	1,508	6	12
Cowichan Valley & area	1,484	6	30
Campbell River & area	1,326	4	83
BC Off Island	1,058	4	15
Parksville/Qualicum	899	3	7
Pt Alberni/West Coast	375	2	40
Mt. Waddington & area	127	<1	9
Rest of Canada	73	<1	20

Reasons Why People Call the Crisis Line

Mental Health	47%
Information & Resources	12%
Individual/Family Life	11%
Suicide	10%
Addiction	5%
Physical Health Issues	5%
Financial & Homelessness	3%
Abuse & Family Violence	2%
<i>Note: 4,573 suicide risk reviews were completed</i>	

Mental Health & Substance Use

Crisis Response Interventions - by team

	# of Calls
Campbell River Crisis Nurse	5
Courtenay Crisis Intervention Nurse	138
Duncan Crisis Response Team	217
Nanaimo Crisis Response Team	1,111
Parksville Mental Health	7
Port Alberni Community Response Team	17
Mt. Waddington Mental Health Daytime	1
Victoria Integrated Mobile Crisis Response Team	1,121

Note: Lower access communities - clients access MH directly

Calls by Line

1800SUICIDE

1-800-784-2433 (provincial)
 850 calls - 3%

310Mental Health Support

310-6789 (provincial)
 1,001 calls - 4%

VI Crisis Line

1-888-494-3888
 25,216 calls - 93%

Crisis Call & Chat Interventions

911	172
Police non-emergency	73
MCFD	75
Other	22
MH Crisis Response	2,621
Total	2,963

Represents 10% of Total Calls/Chats

Erasing the Stigma of Men Not Asking For Help

One of the barriers that exist for an organization like ours is the culturally prevalent and often times imposed image of the “strong man”. This is a man who can take care of himself, is emotionally cold and sometimes without realizing it, takes part in self-destructive behaviour. West Coast Men operates with the intent that men will connect with us and each other during challenging times to be healthier men for themselves and the community.

Think of Rambo, here we have a buff war veteran who in the face of adversity, goes on a violent killing spree. Think of how modern pop stars act, look, and talk. The profile that comes across is that men need to be muscular, brash, over confident, shallow and extremely sexual. This picture we see of how men should act is a negative image of man. Youth are particularly affected, and will often go to extreme lengths to achieve the look and personality of these cultural icons. As a result of not achieving this, men and boys may feel isolated and act out in a negative way.

Seeking help and support is seen as a weakness or as soft. Men are often called: “pussies” or “soft” if they express their feelings. The reality is: men benefit from peer support in all stages of life and West Coast Men is here to offer that support. Men DO have feelings and

have EVERY right to express them. Men are VERY important to their children. Without a father in their lives both daughters and sons suffer in ways that will show up in their relationships and their sense of self. The result for these children without Dads is often have low self worth with no life direction. Fathers need to stand behind their children and provide them with the direction and support they need for their careers. Fathers are also there when their children fall down – to help them to get back on their feet and reassure them that they have experienced failure too; that they need to get back on their path and keep moving forward.

Men need to teach their children and grand children that it's ok to ask for help because that is a reality since we do not have all the answers.



**Helping Men, Families & Community
to Create Full, Healthier Lives!**

80 Station Street - Suite 213, Duncan, V9L 1M4
 (250) 597-2801 Fax (888) 845-3405
 TOLL FREE (855) MEN WORK (636-9675)



Clara Hughes in Nanaimo!

Clara Hughes a six-time Olympic speed-skating and cycling medalist is cycling across Canada, 12,000 km in 110 days to encourage all Canadians to be part of the conversation about mental health and to help end the stigma surrounding mental illness. Clara's journey started on March 14, 2014 in Toronto and is finishing in Ottawa on July 1, 2014. On her ride Clara is visiting 95 communities with Nanaimo being one of them! A social event to welcome Clara was held on May 16th at Beban Park Social Centre from 5:30pm-8:30pm. The evening included a short mix & mingle with a cash bar, community resource tables, musical entertainment, and a light dinner. Clara Hughes delivered the keynote address and shared her own experience living with mental illness. To follow Clara's journey visit <http://clarasbigride.bell.ca/en/>

Clara Hughes speaks to a sold out house of 400 at Beban Park, shown here with emcee Shelagh Rogers, host of CBC Radio's, The Next Chapter.



Connecting with Canadians

Clara's Big Ride is reaching into communities large and small in every province and territory, to encourage all Canadians to be part of the conversation about mental health and help end the stigma around mental illness.

Connecting with youth

Clara will share her personal experience with mental health issues with youth at schools and community organizations across Canada. The goal? To empower youth to understand what mental health means to them and how they can support others who may be suffering. Our hope is that the next generation of Canadians will grow up in a society where there is no stigma associated with mental illness.

Connecting with communities

Community events will create meaningful opportunities for community building or fundraising in support of local mental health initiatives. Bell and other leading Canadian corporations are covering all costs for Clara's Big Ride. Every dollar raised will stay in the community to benefit local mental health programs.



CLARA HUGHES IS CALLING
ON YOU TO SUPPORT MENTAL
HEALTH IN YOUR COMMUNITY.

Clara Hughes

12,000 km
110 days
95 community stops



Clara's
Big Ride
 Bell
Let's Talk

BC Coroners Service Warning

Deaths Related to Illicit Fentanyl Use

The BC Coroners Service is warning illicit drug users of the dangers of fentanyl being ingested unknowingly along with other substances. The danger appears particularly acute in the area covered by the Fraser Health Authority, such as Surrey, Langley, Coquitlam and Maple Ridge.

The Coroners Service preliminary numbers for 2014 suggest that fentanyl has been involved in drug-toxicity deaths of at least 13 persons in the Fraser Region in the first four months (Jan. 1 - April 30) of 2014. In all of 2013, there were 12 fentanyl-related deaths in the Fraser region, and only six in 2012.

There is concern that people may be taking

Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid which is significantly more toxic than morphine. This makes it a particularly high risk to naive opiate users who can be in danger of dying even on their first use of fentanyl. Even handling fentanyl can be risky as it can be absorbed through the skin or mucous membranes.

All persons using drugs are urged to exercise extreme caution. While we always advise against using illicit drugs, people who do use illicit drugs should be sure not to use alone, and, if injecting, should inject slowly. Ideally, illicit drugs should be administered at a site where medical assistance is readily available.

Early signs of a fentanyl overdose include: severe

sleepiness, slow heartbeat, trouble breathing or slow, shallow breathing or snoring; cold, clammy skin; and trouble with walking or talking. If any of these signs are observed in someone who is known to, or suspected of, taking opioid or illicit drugs, 911 should be called immediately. Immediate use of an opioid antagonist, such as naxolone (Narcan), can reverse the effects of fentanyl, but higher doses than usual may be needed.

According to Sarah Sullivan, AIDS Vancouver Island Manager for Courtenay



fentanyl under the impression they are taking either heroin or oxycodone. The purchaser is unlikely to recognize the presence of fentanyl as it most often does not appear any different to other opioids visually, and can be sold in similar packaging.

In all other regions of the province, deaths related to fentanyl appear to be stabilizing or decreasing since last year.

and Campbell River offices and Positive Wellness Worker, "There have been several overdoses in Campbell River and we are getting reports from service users that this is definitely around in our community."

There are Naloxone kits available through Aids Vancouver Island in Courtenay, Campbell River and Victoria. If you would like more information on Naloxone kits for your area call your local Aids Vancouver Island outlet.

How could I say no? (I couldn't)



Here I am walking around downtown Nanaimo looking for anything going on in Diana Krall square on a beautiful sunny day. I had lost my brother just a year prior to suicide and inside I was looking for a reason why. Why had so many of my family and friends been taken so young?. Why was I left here to face this alone?. Why did my brother die that way?. The answers to those questions and more would become very clear in the next few years.

As I was walking through Diana Krall square I came across what appeared to be a vigil or remembrance ceremony of sorts called "Souls Remembering Souls". Here was a bunch of people who had gotten together to honour the loved ones that they lost to suicide by placing a pair of new or gently worn shoes on the stage. I was intrigued to say the least. The crowd formed and started walking around the seawall, all together, with a first nations woman beautifully playing her drum as we walked. Little did I know just where this walk would take me. We ended up back at Diana Krall Square and I watched everyone go up and place shoes in honour of the loved one who they were there to honour. It was such a moving experience that I decided to find out when the next one would be and attended that one as well. This time I brought shoes with me and had sent some pictures of my brother Nick to the Crisis Society ahead of time. I knew that it would be difficult to see that picture up there but I felt it needed to

happen to help with the beginning of my healing journey. Afterwards I was standing in the lobby looking at the pictures they had put up and making a neon paint T-shirt with my loved ones initials on it, when I began to cry. It was really the first time I had been able to cry since Nick had passed because I was so stretched thin in the aftermath of it all, trying to raise funds for his funeral through music and trying to be the rock for what was left of my family. I remember as I was crying a woman with the most lovely smile walked up to me and asked if I was o.k. I could have never known that she would become one of my on-earth angels. I felt like I couldn't say yes and I couldn't say no after seeing all the pain other people had been through as well. She stayed there and talked with me for about 15-20 minutes while I just poured my heart out to her about my brother. She said some very kind words and we discussed how I like to make hip hop music as a way to express the things that I've been through. I handed her one of my cd's and we parted ways. I left feeling a lot better for being able to finally break the dam of strength and get to the sorrow underneath. Later that month Heather from the Crisis Society sent me an email asking if I would perform at the next Souls Remembering Souls event and I said of course! I mean, how could I say no? I performed a few of my songs at the event and even brought my mom along this time.

From there, I went back to work in the kitchen and

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Vancouver Island Community Resource Update

Note: We have listed here the resources that were distinctly designated by the agency as “Friendship Centres” in our database. 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/> that also includes additional Aboriginal resources.



Victoria:

Victoria Friendship Centre

231 Regina Ave, Victoria

Phone: 250-384-3211

Hours: Mon - Fri: 8:30 am - 4:30 pm

Intake: Mon - Fri 9:00 am - 10:45am & 2:30pm - 3:45pm;

Youth Drop-In: Tues - Fri 4:00pm - 9:00pm.

The Victoria Native Friendship Centre (VNFC) is dedicated to improving the quality of life for Aboriginal people in the Greater Victoria area. The VNFC has many programs and services available including an Aboriginal Early Intervention Team, services for at-risk youth, career, employment, and education resources, family services, and health services.

- Aboriginal Early Intervention Team
- At Risk Youth & Families
- Awakening The Warrior Within (Men's group)
- Career, Employment & Education Resources (CEER)
- Culture & Community Relations
- Family Services
- Health Services
- Little Paws Preschool
- Slaheena & Aboriginal Parenting
- Youth Department

www.vnfc.ca

email: admin@vnfc.ca

Cowichan Valley:

Hiiye'yu Lelum Society

106 - 5462 Trans Canada Hwy, Duncan

Phone: 250-748-2242

Provides health, social, recreational and cultural services to promote individual, family and community self-reliance. These services address the needs and aspirations of aboriginal people and focus on well-being within a cross-

This month highlighting “Friendship Centres”

cultural context.

- Healthiest Babies Possible - for pregnant mothers, confidential, vouchers available, at your place or ours
- Family Support Worker Program
- Homelessness Program
- Youth Inclusion Project
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Key Work Program
- BC Housing Aboriginal Homeless Outreach Program
- Kwam Kwam Suli
- Moving Towards Wellness
- Youth Families Project
- Clan Project
- Nobodys' Perfect - for parent of children aged 0 to 5 years; information regarding child health, safety, behaviour, coping with parental stress
- Healthy Children Healthy Futures - parenting education. Participants meet for a block of sessions or participate in drop-in sessions. Relates to parenting 0 to 6 years old.
- Treasure Box - a free and fun way to help you and your children (0-5) get ready for school.

www.hiiyeyu.shawbiz.ca

email: debbiewilliams@hofduncan.org

Nanaimo:

Tillicum Lelum Friendship Centre

602 Haliburton Street, Nanaimo

Phone: 250-753-6578

Tillicum Lelum Aboriginal Friendship centre offers educational and training programs, health and counselling services and social services programs as well as a wide variety of support groups and special events and activities for children, youth, women, men, families and the community. Programs include:

- Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Program
- Aboriginal Youth and Leadership Training Program/Youth Employment Counsellor
- Adult Basic Education Level Two & Three, GED Classes
- After School Program
- Aboriginal Sexual Abuse Intervention Program (ASAIP)

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- Building Better Babies Program
- Career and Employment Training Program
- Children's Wellness Program
- Child and Youth Therapist
- Christmas Hamper Fund
- Community Health Nursing
- Creating Healthy Families Program
- Culture and Recreation Programs
- Diabetes Program
- Early Language and Literacy Program
- Family Support and Social Worker Program
- Father's Circle of Friends
- Friendship Lelum – Aboriginal Youth Safe House
- Into the Circle- HIV/AIDS & STD Support Program
- Island Treasure Box Early Literacy Program
- Men's Wellness Program
- Neutral Zone – Aboriginal Youth Drop-In Centre
- Prison Liaison Worker Program
- Summer Camp Program
- Salish Lelum Youth & Elders Housing
- Aboriginal Sexual Abuse Intervention Program
- Young Aboriginal Mother's Transitional Housing

www.tillicumlelum.caemail: healthcentre@tillicumlelum.ca

Port Alberni:

Port Alberni Friendship Center

3555 4th Ave, Port Alberni

Phone: 250-723-8281

Health Building: 778-421-2901

Knee Waas House: 250-723-8281

Hours: Mon - Fri 8:30 am 4:30 pm

All programs at the Friendship Center are available to all people, not strictly aboriginal (except medical travel expense). The PAFC is centrally located, providing many services for off and on reserve residents. Primarily for Aboriginals and Metis but anyone is welcome to attend and learn more about the Native culture.

Programs/Services:

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Counselling: provides individual, couples, and family counselling.
- Brighter Futures Parenting Program: Peer facilitation for parents of children 0 to 6 years old.
- Childhood Development: information and support for families with children of all developmental ages.
- Family Support Program: assists families in maintaining a healthy and positive environment at home.

- Family Literacy Program: activities to promote literacy including a readers group, lending library, photography club, and more.
- Early Intervention Program: opportunity to connect with early year's programs and services in the community such as speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, behaviour support, nutrition, dental, ect.
- Outreach Legal Advocate: provides legal advocacy, legal information, and assistance with completing LegalAid applications.
- Youth Program - CCAY: strives to create a network of urban Aboriginal youth centres to support and assist urban Aboriginal youth in enhancing their cultural, economic, social, educational and personal prospects.
- Aboriginal Training to Employment: Must identify as an Aboriginal, non-status, Metis or Inuit person. Must not be receiving employment insurance benefits or have received EI in the past 3 or 5 years. Please call to determine eligibility.
- Connecting the Dots: this program seeks to promote the mental health of urban Aboriginal youth and families by mobilizing the community to address risk and protective factors influencing mental health.

www.pafriendshipcenter.com

Comox Valley:

Wachiay Friendship Centre

1625B McPhee Avenue, Courtenay

Phone: 250-338-7793; Hot Line: 1-877-762-6664

The Friendship Centre's mandate is to meet the needs and promote the best interests of Aboriginal people who are making the move to urban communities by providing information, education, guidance and referrals to programs and services designed to promote healthy families and traditional Aboriginal values and culture. For more information call the Wachiay Friendship Centre.

Programs & Services:

- Dry Foods Program: provides foods to 31 schools in School District 71 for children who arrive at school with empty bellies and no lunch. It provides food to approximately 500 students. This program is run by volunteers.
- Aboriginal Employment Readiness Program: Provides pre-employment training and skills training such as Foodsafe, WHMIS, First Aid and computer training; introduction to different workplaces; and cultural components for Aboriginal participants. We will be able to utilize existing programs & services at Wachiay to support participants to stay with the project.

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- **Advocacy:** Assistance and support for people living in poverty with welfare, debt, tenancy and other issues.
- **Blueprint for Success: Women in Business:** Series of 12 workshops designed for all levels of businesswomen, covers all facets of business, including the kind of advice you just can't learn from a book. Insight from people who have tried and succeeded. Ongoing, one-on-one mentoring. Open to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women of all ages.
- **Community Access Program:** Limited public computer access. Adult computer time: 10am-noon & 1-3pm. Youth computer time: 3pm-4:15pm.
- **Community Services Referrals:** Assessment and referral to other agencies as required.
- **Elder Support:** provides support to elders in the community - travel to and from appointments, for groceries, to community dinners and luncheons or to cultural events.
- **Helping Hands:** emergency assistance, typically food bags, assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- **Youth Legacy FAS/FAE Awareness Program:** FAS/FAE (Fetal Alcohol Syndrome /Fetal Alcohol Effects) education, awareness and prevention services for three Youth Groups each week. Focus on learning about FAS/FAE and making healthy life choices in a youth friendly, safe environment. Program offers Youth Outreach worker and FASD Key worker.
- **Raven Back Youth Drop-In Centre:** This program is designed by youth to meet the needs of youth in the Comox Valley. Provides a safe, youth friendly, culturally sensitive environment for youth to gather, share ideas, participate in activities and workshops, benefit from peer support and receive mentoring from elders and community members.
- **Homeless Street Outreach Program:** Support to individuals who are homeless or are at risk of homelessness. The program offers rental subsidies, support to find housing and referrals to appropriate agencies.
- **Island J.A.D.E. Society:** J.A.D.E.'s purpose is to promote the well being of people in crisis and improve the quality of life for those living in poverty.
- **Local Agent for Legal Aid:** Tuesday 9 to 11am and 1 to 3pm and Thursday 1 to 3pm.
- **FASD Keyworker:** working with families living with FASD providing supports & referrals to community organizations.
- **Probono Lawyer Program:** For those who do not otherwise have the financial ability to pay for a lawyer (1-877-762-6664).

www.wachiay.org

Port Hardy:

Sacred Wolf Friendship Centre

145A 8950 Granville, Port Hardy

Phone: 250-902-0552

For First Nations families living off reserve. Education and support with parenting, child development, communication and stress management skills. Aboriginal, First Nations, native, off-reserve, parenting, education, child development, communication, stress management.

email: edswfc@telus.net

www.northislandresource.ca/call-to-action-menu/find-a-company/companies/sacred-wolf-friendship-centre

BC Assoc. of Aboriginal Friendship Centres:

551 Chatham Street

Victoria, V8T 1E1

www.bcaafc.com

An umbrella association for 25 Friendship Centres throughout the Province of BC. Works to promote the betterment of Aboriginal Friendship Centres in BC. Establishes and maintains communications between Aboriginal Friendship Centres, other Provincial Associations and the National Association of Friendship Centres. Acts as a unifying body for Aboriginal Friendship Centres; providing an Association for Government Agencies to communicate.

City of Nanaimo Bolsters Suicide Prevention Programs

Donates \$50,000 In Total

In January 2014, a City of Nanaimo committee asked for applications from community groups to access \$50,000 in city funding to raise awareness of suicide prevention and social isolation in the city.

The purpose of the funds is to build community capacity to help with these issues and develop partnerships with other organizations. Because of the Crisis Society's ongoing interest in providing suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention in the community, we are appreciative that the city recognizes suicide as an issue deserving attention and submitted an application asking for funding to help support four exciting new initiatives:

1. Expansion of our existing suicide prevention programs to Vancouver Island University.
2. A fourth tier added to our "Three Tiered Approach for Suicide Prevention" in school district 68 - suicide awareness and prevention information for parents.
3. Adapting our resilience based suicide prevention program "Speak Out, Reach Out, Help Out" for students grades 6 and 7.
4. Increase capacity to meet the demand by hiring a third facilitator in our community education department.

We are happy and appreciative that the city honoured our request and we are now actively working toward development and implementation of these initiatives for the 2014/15 school year!

We will also be working with the Nanaimo Brain Injury Society in the fall. They received funding from the City of Nanaimo to provide preventative workshops focussing on depression and suicide awareness that will encourage empowerment and resiliency for caregivers and those who suffer traumatic brain injuries.



*The Crisis Society
is excited
to welcome Matt
to the
training team!*

Connected to that, we were excited to extend a successful pilot project we began in the fall of 2013. The project was created to enhance connection and relational engagement in our suicide prevention programs for youth and the funding has helped make it possible to bring local hip-hop artist Matt Dunae onboard as a third facilitator for the community education department as well as purchase a speaker so that we can bring our life saving message to larger groups.



SHOPPERS
DRUG MART




ride don't hide

Supporting Women's Mental Health

a community bike ride for women and their families

The Canadian Mental Health Association Mid Island is hosting the second annual Shoppers Drug Mart Ride Don't Hide community bike ride on June 22, 2014. This year there will be two bike routes, one for family/beginners at 14.9km and one for more experienced riders at 29km. The fundraiser event will include food, music and fun. You can register as an individual or create a team with friends.

To register to ride for mental health please go to www.ridedonthide.com



In my time at the crisis line, I've been continually surprised at the wide variety of coping skills out there. I've come to appreciate the strength of the human spirit and the extent to which we don't appreciate that in ourselves when we're in the middle of a crisis. I find I learn so much from callers; about the variety of experiences in life and about myself.

The people at the Vancouver Island Crisis Society are amazing individuals. I've often thought that large corporations could take a page from the Crisis Society's book on communication and respect.

What I get from volunteering is the good feeling that I've contributed to the community and that I may, in some small way, helped someone push through the hard place they're in, to give them a chance at a better life."

Chris

I started volunteering in my 2nd year of university, working toward a BA in Psychology. Volunteering on the crisis line has given me a new confidence I didn't know I had.

I have had the opportunity of going through the training program twice now, and it has been a new experience for me each time I have done it.

The crisis line training gives you all the tools one would need to be on the crisis line and the staff are always there to help and support one if and when they need it.

Being on the crisis line has increased my knowledge for what others are going through and has made me aware of the resources we have in our community. I feel more like a community member now, then I have ever felt in the past.

For me volunteering on the crisis lines has increased my patience and empathy for those around me and has helped me better support my family and be a better friend and will take me far in my career as well.

Farah

How could I say no? (I couldn't)

Continued from page 6

never really gave it too much thought. Fast forward I want to say 3-4 years later and I'm working in a cedar mill. I get a phone call from Lyndsay from the Crisis Society asking if I would be willing to go to a high school and tell a little bit of my story and perform a couple of my songs. I said where and when. How could I say no?

I arrived at the school and I was, to be honest, more nervous than I had even been in my life. I didn't know if these kids would like me, like my music, or just chew me up and spit me out, like I had done to so many facilitators and teachers in the past. Coming from performing in front of 2-500 intoxicated adults to 12 intently listening and staring kids was a huge adjustment for me. I had also never performed my music at 8 am, being used to rocking shows around midnight. I changed swear words on the fly to make songs more appropriate and just went with it. At first it was really scary but I noticed an instant connection with the kids. I could see a bunch of awesome humans just waiting for someone to talk to them. I performed 4 songs and talked a little bit about the struggles that I had gone through in my life. A lot of the kids seems to relate and identify with my story, It was crazy to me because I would never have thought that it would resonate so well.

Apparently the facilitators Heather and Lyndsay also noticed this connection as they called me back a week later and asked if I would be willing to do a little pilot project with them, 5 sessions of a workshop Lyndsay had developed called "Speak Out, Reach Out, Help Out". I would perform some of my songs, tell a bit of my story and also help facilitate. Well that just took off like wildfire, once the schools heard about what we were doing they started booking us for more workshops. Five turned to

eight which turned to fifteen sessions. Needless to say the newly dubbed "Team Crisis" was a hit.

Lyndsay called me and said that they would like to have a meeting with me about how it had been going. Naturally since I was so used to the bottom always falling out of things where I came from I was nervous about the meeting thinking that maybe I had done something wrong. I was totally wrong. Elizabeth, the Executive Director of the Crisis Society was there as was Lyndsay, they had a bunch of paperwork with them and gave it to me. They were offering me a full time position as a Community Education Training Assistant at the Crisis Society!!! I couldn't believe it. I said absolutely I would like to work there and signed the lines before the pages could light on fire. How could I say no?

We went on to do those 15 workshops and many more. Heather and Lyndsay are truly my earth angels and I feel like they were put in my path by someone for a reason. I have been now working for the Society for 4 months and I've never been so happy. I feel fulfilled in knowing that we help make a difference in these kids lives every time we step into one of those schools. I really truly feel like I'm giving back to the community that has given me so much over the years.

I now work doing what I love to do and it never feels like work when I do this kind of stuff. If I can help change one persons life for the better, than to me it's all been worth it, all the struggle, all the hardships and the sacrifices I've had to make have all led up to this moment, Someone asked me recently if I love what I do, I can tell you that without a doubt this has been the most rewarding thing I've ever been a part of , (besides my son) haha. I can live with that. I mean, How could I say no?

Matt Dunae Aka *Sirreal*

Crisis Line Training Welcomes A New Assistant

Shawna Gibbs found out about the Crisis Line while attending VIU. Though, volunteering on the Crisis Line was something that had always interested her, after receiving her degree in Psychology and diploma in Criminology, she went off to St. Stephen NB. In hopes of finding a better career. Shawna ended up bartending at the local pool lounge. After getting a small taste of an East Coast winter, Shawna ran back to beautiful BC where she belonged. Before flying home, she connected to the Crisis Line in Courtenay, her home town, in hopes of starting to volunteer there. But in

the winter of 2010, the Crisis Line had consolidated to an Island wide service based out of Nanaimo. After back packing across Europe, she started bartending again. Realizing that was not fulfilling her hopes and dreams- she decided to give back to the world, and volunteer on the Crisis Line. Six months after volunteering, she applied for a job as a Crisis Line worker. After two years Shawna was offered a position as a new training assistant for the crisis line training.

The Crisis Society is excited to have Shawna as part of the training team.





A.S.I.S.T. Launches Updated Version 11

Appplied Suicide Intervention Skills Training 11 (ASIST) will become the official version of ASIST starting in June of 2013. ASIST 11 uses a three phase model with six tasks and has a similar appearance to the Suicide Intervention Model. However, ASIST 11's model is so different that it has a new name, Pathways for Assisting Life or PAL for short. Helpers using PAL will seem to have an ease with letting a person at risk talk about suicide, a knack for helping a person at risk discover life connections and a talent for turning those connections into reasons for working on safety-for-now. You might be surprised at how easily they seem to do these things.

PAL uses a Safety Framework that integrates the literature on risk with the emerging literature on safety. You will see some similarities in the things being considered but some differences. Most of all, you will see a positive, transparent focus upon creating safety for now along with both more clarity and more flexibility in how to achieve it. You may discover them extolling the virtues of a safety perspective much like you might talk about the value of the invitations perspective, which by the way, remains very much a part of ASIST 11.

Two of the new helping tools featured in ASIST 11 are related to helper guidance and helper roles. Expect ASIST 11 helpers to typically have a good understanding of the value of flexible guidance as well as a good understanding of the implications of the relationship they have with the person at risk. You might expect them to say things that cause you to think about your understanding of guidance and role.

These improvements might cause confusion in organizations that use protocols based upon older versions of ASIST. The best solution to these potential problems is to train participants of these older versions in ASIST 11. Protocols may need to be amended to reduce confusion during the interim period.

ASIST is an evidence-based suicide intervention training program developed from within the gatekeeper tradition which builds on its often forgotten core principles and has progressively added new dimensions to caregivers' understanding and practice of how they can help persons at risk of suicide. The latest edition of ASIST (A11) invites caregivers to engage persons at risk

in a personalized, collaborative helping process described as a life assisting pathway that discovers practical ways of increasing their safety for now.

ASIST's rationale, found in the Pathway for Assisting Life (PAL) model, is based upon a collaborative model of person-at-risk and caregiver working together to move towards safety. Unlike other gatekeeper training programs, PAL does not require direct referral to a mental health professional, but rather seeks to find the best solution to meet the unique needs of the person-at-risk, which always considers but does not require referral. Essential steps along this pathway include exploring invitations, asking directly about suicide, hearing a person-at-risk's story, supporting turning towards safety, developing a SafePlan and confirming actions. And instead of focusing on the assessment of suicide risk, ASIST focuses on the assessment of safety and ensuring the immediate and short-term safety of the person-at-risk. Overall, ASIST provides a personalized, life-assisting, first-aid intervention that reinforces help-seeking by those at risk for suicide.

ASIST also incorporates evidence-based training methods that recognize learners as active participants in the training process. ASIST training is experiential with high levels of participation and interaction amongst participants. Participation and interaction is promoted through the use of socratic questioning and structured practice with feedback. Evaluations of ASIST have consistently demonstrated gains in the knowledge,

See page 21 for
information and
dates on our
upcoming ASIST 11
workshop





Suicide Attempt Survivors Join the Conversation

The suicide attempt survivor task force wants to change the conversation around suicide. Its only just recently that suicide prevention has included the voices of attempt survivors as stakeholders and key informants into suicide prevention policy.

This shift may indicate that the suicide prevention community is more accepting of people who have attempted suicide as having an unique perspective toward suicide prevention.

'Lived expertise' has long been missing. At the heart of everything we do are the people who are struggling every day with suicide ideation and pain. We are on the verge of creating a very different conversation about suicide.

No more conversations about us - without us!

As quoted from an attempt survivors; "when I found out that we now have a voice, that a 6th division has been added to the conferences to include us, a knot in my throat just went away. From now on there will not be conversation about us without us, we will all be in this together. There is such a relief in being able to talk about it as we can hopefully start eliminating stigma, stereotypes, discrimination, and preserve dignity."

Attempt survivors talked about how often they have not been asked 'what do you need to get better?' or

'what kind of help do you want?' as oppose to being told what to do. They feel that they would have a completely different experience if they weren't told at the hospital that they aren't sick enough. Attempt survivors want to help; they want others out there to not feel alone.

The fear divide:

1. On the attempter's side the fear is - "if I talk about my thoughts, my suicide ideation, my pain, they are going to be scared, they might lock me up or cuff me."
2. On the supporter's side - "if we talk about this, it is my responsibility to help. If they die, it will be my fault; I don't know what to do."

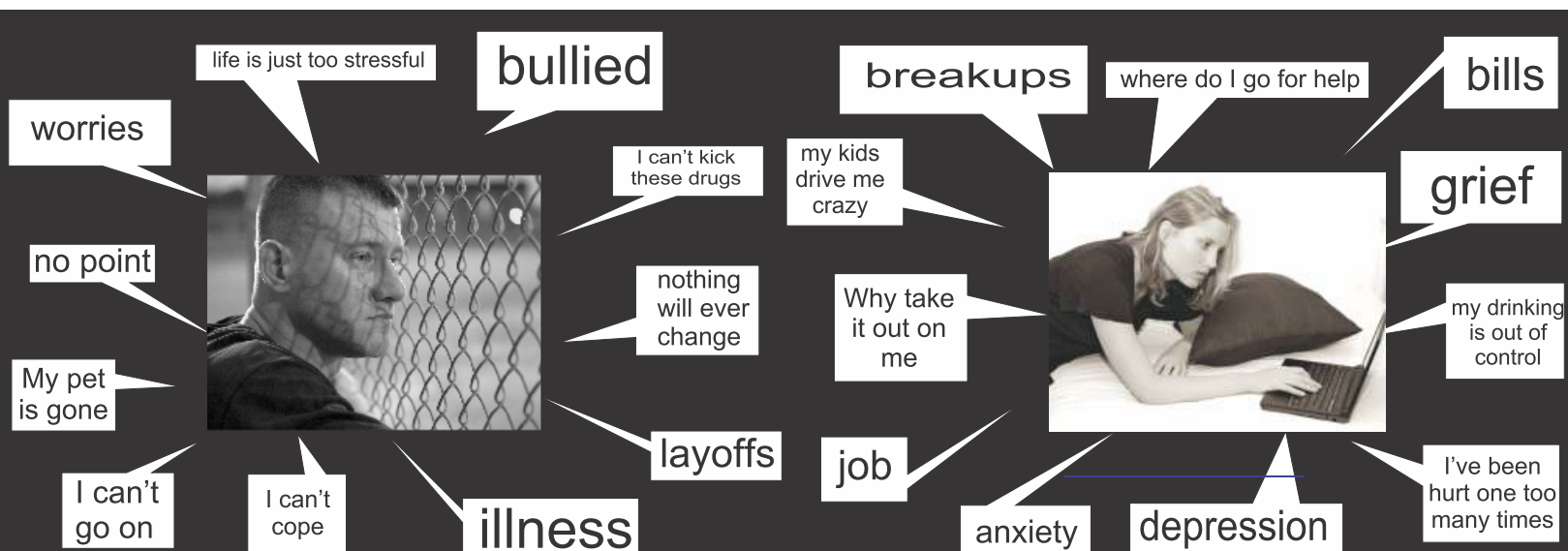
BUT.....what if we saw suicidability as a transformative moment? What if that suicidal moment transformed the person? What if that person found meaning in a way that they never had before? What if we could see that individual moment as a gift or an opportunity for transformation. Would that change the conversation?

Listed below are websites that are looking at this very conversation. If you would like more information take a look here:

www.attemptsurvivors.com

www.talkingaboutsuicide.com

www.livethroughthis.org



Quotes from Attempt Survivors

"I want society to see these struggles in the same way they see any other health struggle."

"When I say that I am an attempt survivor I do it for those that are in the grips of isolation, I do it for me because I live in a society that says that I am flawed and I refuse to live in that dark place anymore."

"Telling my story empowers me. Breaking the silence lets me step free of my history and not feel trapped by it."

"I remember how shameful it felt. I know there had to be other people out there like me. But there were no resources."

"We are so much more than a label; we're like a gold mine of information for those working in suicide"

"Suicide isn't only in the mind; it is also in the heart. Research focuses on the mind but not as much on the broken heart."



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www.vicrisis.ca

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or 1 (877) 753-2495



A Trauma Informed Practice

The Vancouver Island Crisis Society's training team visited 9 communities throughout Vancouver Island the last week of March and presented their 3 hour workshop titled "Trauma Informed Approaches to Suicide Prevention" to 484 service providers..

The concepts presented were information and new research brought back from the Canadian Association of Suicidology conference held in Manitoba and the American Association of Suicidology conference held in Texas. It was exciting to realize that the Vancouver Island Crisis Line had been practicing trauma informed approaches in our agency for many years, as were many of the attendees that were at the workshops.

There has long been a well established link between suicide and psychological trauma. More recently, however, there has been a global movement to help organizations and systems across domains, use the existing, new, and emerging knowledge on trauma to inform program design, service delivery, and put this knowledge into policy and practice. When the Crisis Society attended the conference, which was themed around new pathways and trauma informed approaches to suicide prevention, our core belief that building relationships based on - and that promote - trust, safety, and compassionate relationships were not only validated, they were highlighted as the cornerstones of suicide prevention. This is not to take away from what we already know about the vulnerabilities mental health concerns bring to suicide, but to add another layer to our blanket of knowledge and the support we might give someone who is suffering because, what research is telling us, is that trauma informed practices and promoting recovery from trauma are critical components in suicide prevention. It is only recently that this issue has begun to receive the attention it requires: that every person seeking services should expect that the service provider has a basic understanding of the physical,



mental, emotional, relational, and spiritual aspects of psychological trauma. This knowledge helps us in our efforts to be not only more compassionate; it helps us, and even requires us, to be self compassionate. We hoped that this year's presentation would provide a better understanding of how we can all support trauma informed care and recovery - or at least peak your interest in how you as an individual, your organization, or whatever system you might represent can embark on the process of becoming trauma informed.

Many of those who attended forwarded amazing comments about their experience at the workshop:

- One man who works at a homeless centre said he connected with the information and that our stories helped him understand his own trauma.
- Another participant, a First Nation's woman stated that the workshop felt safe enough for an aboriginal woman to share her perspective on genocide of First Nation people. Afterward she said she felt validated and thankful we had addressed First Nations issues.
- A couple who are currently foster parents said they found the workshop incredible helpful.
- A psychiatric nurse who attended said he would like to shake our hand as he felt the presentation was informative and helpful.
- Yet another woman from adult mental health said that she attends workshops constantly and that this was the best workshop she's ever been to. She thought it was engaging with the use of all the media and stories that brought it to a human place.

We want to thank everyone for sending us their comments. We truly hope that there was something in the information for everyone.

We will be doing these kinds of workshops twice a year, once in September in honour of World Suicide Prevention Day and once in March in honour of Crisis Line Awareness Week. Each time we come we will have a new workshop to present with new information taken from the most recent research and information presented at the latest conferences on suicide prevention, intervention and post-vention.

Our next workshop in September is "Creating New Conversations." Hope to see you all there!

(See page 23 for details)



The Vancouver Island Crisis Society would like to thank the following groups for their kind donations toward the society's suicide prevention programs. To the left: Elizabeth Newcombe, accepts a cheque from Mike Beggs, President of the Chemainus Royal Canadian Legion. Bottom left: Elizabeth Newcombe (left) and Heather Owen (right) accept a cheque from the Coastal Community Credit Union represented by Carol Mahedy and Heather Percival from the Bowen Branch. Bottom right: Heather Owen accepts a cheque from Zonta Club members Marg Fraser, Donya Sutherland Baker and Lorraine Markin.



The Vancouver Island Crisis Society, represented by Elizabeth Newcombe, Executive Director, and Heather Owen, Promotions & Community Relations Coordinator, presented a plaque to Superintendent Mark Fisher, the new RCMP Nanaimo Detachment Commander and A.F. "Al" O'Donnell A/Officer In-Charge, Nanaimo Detachment, as a thank you for the ongoing partnership the organizations share. The Crisis Society held a RCMP Appreciation Dinner for four years with all proceeds going to the Society's suicide prevention programs. Plaques were sent to RCMP detachments throughout Central Vancouver Island including Shawnigan Lake, Lake Cowichan, Duncan, Ladysmith, Nanaimo & Oceanside, as a thank you for the participation of their members in the events.



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 January 2014. The donations listed are from January 16, 2013 to June 10, 2014. We would especially like to thank those organizations that contributed to keep our Youth Suicide Prevention Programs in our schools.

Anchors (under \$499)

Coastal Community Credit Union
 Community Options Society
 Curious Comics - Rob McKee
 Dave Newcombe
 Fraternal Order of Eagles No. 2546 Duncan
 Joy Vikstrom
 Kinsmen Club of Lake Cowichan
 Knights of Columbus #3842
 Ladysmith Lions Club
 Mambos Pizza
 Milanos Restaurant
 Nanaimo Daily News
 Provincial Employees Community Services Fund
 Theatre One

Life Preservers (\$500-\$999)

Chemainus Royal Canadian Legion #191
 Fraternal Order of Eagles Ladysmith No. 2101
 Fraternal Order of Eagles Chemainus No. 4400
 Gabriola Island Lions Club
 Malahat Lions Club

Qualicum Bay Lions Club
 Rotary Club of Nanaimo North
 Royal Canadian Legion #76 Qualicum Beach
 Royal Canadian Legion #171 Ladysmith
 Town of Ladysmith
 Zonta Club of Nanaimo

Lighthouse Keepers (\$1000 - \$2499)

Altrusa International of Nanaimo
 Women of the Moose

Northstars (\$2500 - \$4999)

Visionaries (\$5000 +)

CHMZ - FM Radio
 City of Nanaimo
 Intraworks I.T. Management – Phil Stiller
 Island Health
 Island Radio – Jim Patterson Group
 MacIsaac & Co. - John Jordan
 Province of BC – Gaming
 United Way Central & Northern Vancouver Island
 United Way Cowichan



Training Opportunities



Next workshop, employing ASIST Version 11, to be held on **October 9 & 10 8:30 - 4:30 both days** #30, 1708 Bowen Rd, Nanaimo.

ASIST is research based, two-day intensive, participatory course designed to help caregivers recognize and assess persons at risk, and master a model for effective suicide intervention. ASIST has been highly evaluated, and remains the most widely used suicide intervention training program in the world. Participants will:

- ➔ Clarify their values & beliefs about suicide
- ➔ Enhance their understanding of suicidal behaviour
- ➔ Recognize, &, assess the risk of suicide
- ➔ Develop the working knowledge & skills for effective suicide intervention (model presented)
- ➔ Talk about suicide and cooperate in sharing info and resources

For more information and registration forms please visit our website at : www.vicrisis.ca



This two-day research based workshop has been designed to teach a strengths-based approach to the communication, assessment, and suicide response skills essential for crisis intervention.

During this two-day interactive program participants will learn:

- ➔ The definitions of crisis
- ➔ Trauma informed practice: How to shift focus from "At Risk" to an "At Promise" perspective
- ➔ How to apply a crisis intervention model in crisis situations
- ➔ How to effectively assess crisis situations
- ➔ How to facilitate the development of a short term coping plan for a person in crisis
- ➔ How to spot the warning signs for suicide and effectively intervene
- ➔ New Approaches for helping men
- ➔ Effective ways to find the "keys" to unlock hope in a person in crisis
- ➔ Community resource information

The next Crisis Intervention Skills Training workshop is **October 21st & 22nd, 2014 from 9 to 4 both days**. For information or registration see our website @ www.vicrisis.ca

BOOK THE CRISIS SOCIETY
 to come to your organization with one of our
CUSTOMIZED TRAINING PROGRAMS:

ManTherapy

"Man Therapy" is an interactive presentation featuring the latest research coming from the American Association of Suicidology:

Participants will learn new approaches regarding:

- ➔ Gender differences and the role they can play in help seeking
- ➔ Red flag behaviours in men
- ➔ Engaging male clients to reach out for support services
- ➔ Questioning accepted practice standards regarding language and our approaches to helping men
- ➔ Acquiring research-based tools for strengthening protective factors and building "safety nets"

Trauma Informed Approaches to Suicide Prevention

There has long been a well-established link between suicide and psychological trauma. This was highlighted at the 2013 national conference for the Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention where existing, new, and emerging knowledge on trauma was shared. Vancouver Island Crisis Society has created this workshop based on content gleaned at the conference. In this workshop participants will learn:

- ➔ The relationship between trauma and suicide
- ➔ Elements of trauma
- ➔ Effects of trauma
- ➔ Effects of childhood and intergenerational trauma
- ➔ Tools for helping

Other Workshop Titles:

Check out our website for other workshop titles: Communication In The Workshop; Suicide Awareness & Response, Suicide Bereavement, or give us a call to arrange a custom workshop for your group.

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. In addition, anti-spam laws come into effect July 1, 2014, so ensure you have confirmed your consent for us to continue to keep in touch. Enjoy reading this issue of "In Connection," the Vancouver Island Crisis Society's E-newsletter.

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

PROVINCIAL: 1800SUICIDE (1-800-785-2433) 310MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT (310-6789)



Crisis Line Association of BC Secures Funding for Provincial Networks

The Crisis Line Association of BC (CLABC) has received funding from the Provincial Health Services Authority that will ensure continued operation of 1800SUICIDE and 310Mental Health Support networks through March 31, 2015. The funding was announced during Crisis Line Awareness Week which is the last week of March.

1800SUICIDE (1.800.784.2433) and 310Mental Health Support (310.6789) are networks that enhance access to 24-hour BC crisis lines through easy to remember, toll-free numbers and routing technology that directs calls to the nearest crisis line network partner. This cost-effective service is not only life-saving, it decreases demand on overburdened police, ambulance and hospital resources. In fact, efforts to replicate the success of these networks are currently underway at a national level across Canada. Elizabeth Newcombe, the Executive Director of the Vancouver Island Crisis Line and Ian Ross, the Executive Director of the Greater Vancouver Coastal Distress Line are the two BC representatives on a working group for the development of a Canadian Distress Line Network.

During the past year, CLABC and BC Mental Health & Addiction Services collaborated in a review intended to develop recommendations for implementing a cost-effective, standardized solution for the delivery of mental health and substance use information and support and crisis line services in BC. A review was completed in the fall of 2013, and a report was submitted to the Ministry of Health early in 2014. Two of the key findings of the review were that 1) there is substantial evidence to support the efficacy of crisis and mental health & substance use information line services in improving the mental state of callers in the short-term and 2) B.C. is the only Canadian province which has established some degree of minimum standards for the delivery of mental health and substance use information and support via a provincial network made possible through the work of CLABC.

The implementation of the crisis line recommendations will begin with a working group being assembled by the Provincial Health Services Authority that will include crisis line and health authority representatives from across the province.



Vancouver Island Crisis Society

Suicide Prevention

Creating New Conversations

Based on the latest research coming from the 2014 American Association of Suicidology conference held in Los Angeles, we will share new information as well as explore the unique voices and life saving contributions suicide attempt survivors bring to the conversation.

Seats are limited. Please visit www.vicrisis.ca for information and registration.

Dates & Locations:

Wed, September 10, 9:00am- 12:00pm - Crown Isle Golf Club, 399 Clubhouse Drive, Courtenay
Thurs, September 11, 9:00am- 12:00pm - Community Centre, 401 - 11th Ave, Campbell River
Fri, September 12, 9:00am- 12:00pm - Oliver Woods, 6000 Oliver Road, Nanaimo
Tues, September 16, 9:30am- 12:30pm - Black Bear Resort, 1812 Campbell Way, Port McNeill
Thurs, September 18, 9:00am- 12:00pm - Silver Bridge Inn, 140 Trans Canada Hwy, Duncan
Fri, September 19, 9:00am- 12:00pm - Hospitality Inn, 3835 Redford Street, Port Alberni
Tues, September 23, 9:00am- 12:00pm - Tin Wis Resort, 1119 Pacific Rim Hwy, Tofino
Thurs, September 25, 9:00am- 12:00pm - WorkBC Employment Serv- 102-415 Gorge Rd E, Victoria
Fri, September 26, 9:00am- 12:00pm - WorkBC Employment Serv- 102-415 Gorge Rd E, Victoria
Tues, September 30, 9:00am- 12:00pm - Four Points Sheraton, 829 McCallum Road, Victoria
Trauma Informed Approaches To Suicide Prevention (rescheduled)
Mon, September 15, 1:00pm- 4:00 pm- Black Bear Resort, 1812 Campbell Way, Port McNeill



RCMP Suicides: A Mental Health Crisis

It was a devastating loss for Canada when 3 RCMP officers in Moncton, Ontario were killed in the line of duty this month. The memorial held was attended by thousands and the whole event was aired on tv so that it could be watched by the country.

Unfortunately when an officer loses their life to suicide there is no such memorial and often times there are few observers. The following is an excerpt taken from CBC News dated May 27th, 2014.

A Mountie with 25 years of service says the traumatizing effect of witnessing violent deaths and the pressures of the job drove him to attempt suicide.

"I put my gun in my mouth and tried to pull the trigger," said the officer, who fears he could lose his job by speaking out and asked that his identity be concealed. Believing his career would suffer if anyone knew he was depressed, he sought treatment in secret.

"I have worked with half a dozen guys who have taken their own life," he told CBC News. He says he knows first-hand why officers hit rock bottom.

"It's an accumulation of pride, things aren't going away," he says. "If you're isolated, you're bullied, you've already ignored your family — if they're still around. You only have cops as friends, you measure everything by success at the workplace; if that goes south, failure is not an option."

After the deaths of six of his friends, he says, RCMP bosses tried to blame their suicides on anything but work. An RCMP officer (who wishes to remain anonymous) told CBC News he attempted suicide after hitting rock bottom. "It's very easy for a supervisor to say there were problems at home or the marriage was breaking up." He's tired, he says, of being a pallbearer.

"I've lost too many. I've carried too many. We can't afford to have any more," he says. "There's a mental

health crisis."

And some experts agree. Dr. Greg Passey, a psychiatrist who works with both the military and police officers who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, says the RCMP is trailing behind on the issue. "To be quite frank, the RCMP at this moment in time does not have a program in place that is even close to approximating what the military has," says Passey.

But RCMP Assistant Commissioner Gilles Moreau says the force is working to get rid of the stigma associated with mental health issues. To aid in this, the force is about to launch a five-year mental health plan and hopes to encourage officers to seek help when they are suffering from depression.

Last year the RCMP told CBC they do not track employees suicides, but Moreau says that is changing. "We have to do better" "We will make it mandatory that every suicide that we have in the organization, a postmortem is done ... and that we review the cases to see if there is anything we can learn from that, and put in place anything we can do differently to assist our members. "One suicide is one too many," he says.

"Any reason that somebody may decide to end their life through that means is certainly tragic and we, as an organization, have to do better."

Moreau says the RCMP is determined to convince officers it's OK to talk about mental illness. "We're almost like Superman and Superwoman — and we have to be everything to everybody — but let's not forget we're all human beings and we don't wear a cape, and some of the stuff we see in our work will have an impact on us." <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/rcmp-suicide-levels-a-mental-health-crisis-says-mountie-1.2655931>



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