

Vancouver Island Crisis Society

# IN CONNECTION

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February 2015

## Crisis Text Now Available!



**250-800-3806**

**6 to 10 pm every night**

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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](mailto:info@vicrisis.ca)  
 Webpage: [www.vicrisis.ca](http://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](http://www.vicrisis.ca)

Crisis Text  
 6pm to 10pm every night  
 Call 800-250-3806

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](http://www.vicrisis.ca) for details

## Vancouver Island Crisis Line Statistics

January 1, 2014 to December 31, 2014

	Crisis Line	%	Crisis Chat/Text (Text Oct-Dec)
<b>Total Calls</b>	<b>29,450</b>		<b>830</b>
<b>Victoria &amp; area</b>	<b>11,573</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>177</b>
<b>Nanaimo/Ladysmith</b>	<b>7,446</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>297</b>
<b>Unknown</b>	<b>3,094</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Cowichan Valley &amp; area</b>	<b>1,901</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>Comox Valley &amp; area</b>	<b>1,594</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Campbell River &amp; area</b>	<b>1,236</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>126</b>
<b>BC Off Island</b>	<b>1,167</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Parksville/Qualicum</b>	<b>791</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Pt Alberni/West Coast</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Mt. Waddington &amp; area</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>&lt;1</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Rest of Canada</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>&lt;1</b>	<b>19</b>

### Reasons Why People Call the Crisis Line

Mental Health	46%
Suicide	15%
Individual/Family Life	13%
Information & Resources	11%
Addiction	4%
Physical Health Issues	4%
Abuse & Family Violence	4%
Financial & Homelessness	3%

### Mental Health & Substance Use

#### Crisis Response Interventions - by team

	# of Calls
Campbell River Crisis Nurse	4
Courtenay Crisis Intervention Nurse	191
Duncan Crisis Response Team	138
Nanaimo Crisis Response Team	1,384
Parksville Mental Health	8
Port Alberni Community Response Team	11
Mt. Waddington Mental Health Daytime	0
Victoria Integrated Mobile Crisis Response Team	1,473

Note: Lower access communities - clients access MH directly

### Calls by Line

#### 1800SUICIDE

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

#### 310Mental Health Support

310-6789 (provincial)  
 1,292 calls - 4%

#### VI Crisis Line

1-888-494-3888  
 27,363 calls - 93%

### Crisis Call & Chat Interventions

911	190
Police non-emergency	45
MCFD	85
Other	37
MH Crisis Response	3,209
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,566</b>

Represents 12% of Total  
 Calls/Chats/Texts

# Words Like Weapons: The Story

Once there was a young man who lived in extreme poverty and therefore did not have the name brand or cool clothes that some of the other kids did. He was often picked on because of what he and his brother wore. They were called the scrubby kids. The bullies at the school even decided that they should make a remix to a popular song that included words about how poor these kids were and how they were “caught with a really bad pair of shoes”. Needless to say they picked on the boys relentlessly. Another young man in the class noticed that this was happening and decided to give the younger boy a pair of his name brand shoes so that the other kids would stop picking on him. Eventually, as bullies often do, they found something new to pick on him about, but for that couple of months it was like a reprieve

from the harassment for this young man. The student who gave the young boy his shoes has since passed away.

When the Crisis Society asked Sirreal to create a song for the school programs that would relate to the kids about one out of a handful of subjects, Sirreal chose bullying. He wrote a song called *Words Like Weapons* about his own experience with getting bullied. The young man who I am referring to at the start of this story was Sirreal. He now shares this song with audiences all over the place and has found that many people of all ages can relate to the words and the message it brings. He hopes to use this song to inspire other young people to speak out about their experiences and in turn, find their own healing.



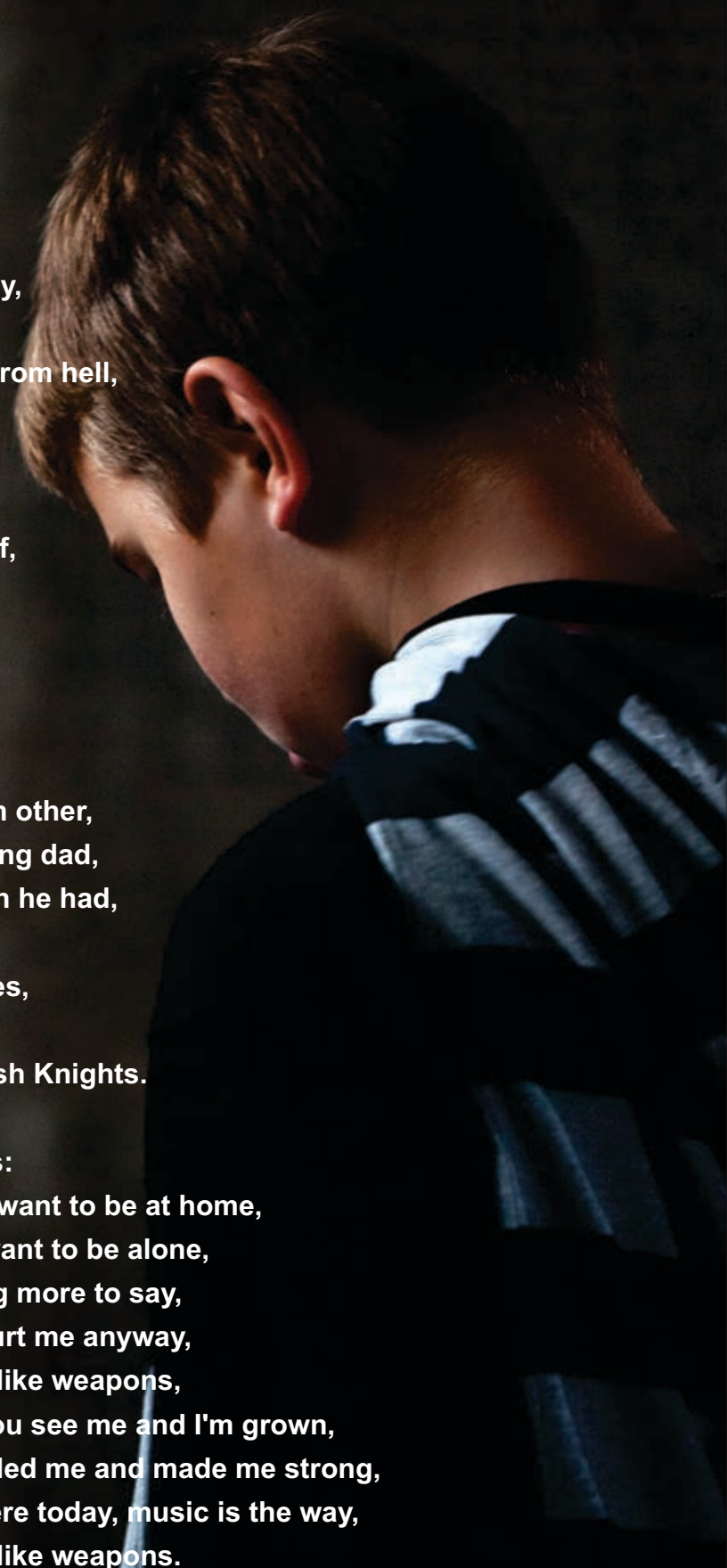
## Words Like Weapons

*Written by Matt Sirreal Dunae and Jona Kristinsson*

Even though nobody knows his position,  
that doesn't stop em from talking a lot  
and using words as ammunition,  
it's the new guy , look at him he smells funny,  
and at the break we sticking him up for lunch money,  
teachers see it , know the situation well,  
but that song they always sing is like a symphony from hell,  
not knowing what he's going through at home,  
in a room full of people you can still feel so alone,  
they say the rhyme and the damage is dealt,  
rides the bus with the other kids, but sits by himself,  
they gonna miss me when I'm gone man  
I'm outta here, out of fear,  
catch me in the afterlife,  
your words have no power here,  
but then he thinks about the love from his brother,  
he's got his back matter of fact, they look after each other,  
they always have from drug addicted mom to missing dad,  
and these bullies at school gotta family that he wish he had,  
there's a reason he ain't sleeping at night,  
so he grabs a piece of paper and a pen and he writes,  
please don't let 'em tease me I'm sick of the fights,  
I don't need Nikes, I'd settle for a pair of those British Knights.

### Chorus:

I don't want to be at home,  
I just want to be alone,  
nothing more to say,  
they hurt me anyway,  
words like weapons,  
Now you see me and I'm grown,  
hate filled me and made me strong,  
I am here today, music is the way,  
words like weapons.

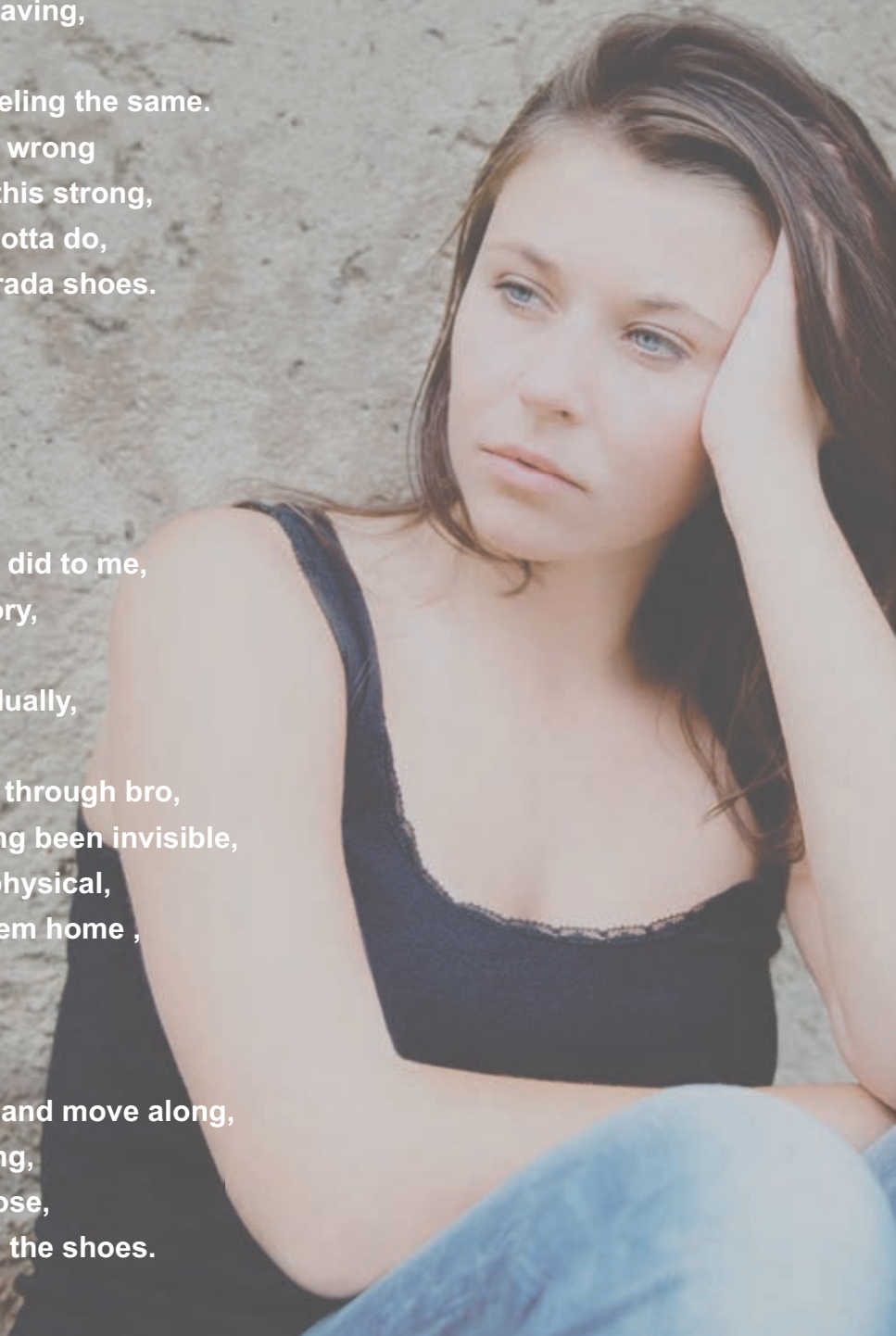


It wasn't the status that mattered to her  
but the shoes seem to matter to them cuz they at it again,  
another door slammed, poor from a broken home  
so she sits alone working on her vocal tones,  
she sent a picture to him while she was a bit tipsy,  
it spread quickly, now her names up in black jiffy,  
glory to shame, more of the same,  
now they only call her whore and other horrible names,  
so she, uses her inner voice to kill the outer demons,  
all the doubts and how she thinks about leaving,  
it's a quick way to end my pain  
but I would never want any of my family feeling the same.  
Spit on and picked on and hit on, the shits wrong  
if this song can lift one we show them we this strong,  
and in this life you've gotta do what you gotta do,  
she hides her tears and her scars under Prada shoes.

#### Chorus repeated:

So I , use everything little bit of what they did to me,  
archeologist making meaning out of history,  
jot it down make a video for kids to see  
that you can get to victory doing it individually,  
so I gotta stay committed to the pinnacle,  
I know a little bit of what it is you've been through bro,  
they start to see what they've been missing been invisible,  
his mind no longer under control by the physical,  
finally convinces them and then he gets 'em home ,  
laces 'em up they feel invincible,  
putting them into a magazine,  
shootin' 'em down, no casualties,  
there comes a time when you gotta leave and move along,  
rest in peace to Bon here's a peaceful song,  
now I live life without a single minute to lose,  
I've come to find it had nothing to do with the shoes.

This song is dedicated  
to Brendan Bon Garnish  
for giving a scrubby kid  
a pair of shoes  
when every one else  
was just quick to judge,  
salute homie.



# TRANSGENDER CRISIS LINE LAUNCHES

A crisis hotline for transgender people has expanded to Canada, offering counselling from transgender volunteers. Trans Lifeline was launched in San Francisco by Greta Martela, who is a transgender woman. She told Rick Cluff of CBC Radio Vancouver's The Early Edition the idea began while she was working for another non-profit organization.

"We were just a social organization, but we did have a 1-800 number and I would get calls from all over the country for people who were in crisis," she said. "The fact that that phone number would be the best choice for anyone — I found really upsetting."

Greta Martela started Trans Lifeline, because she said there were no existing help lines that catered specifically to the needs of transgender people. The hotline had a soft launch in the United States in September, with its official launch on the Transgender Day of Remembrance on November 20. Martela was approached by Toronto-based transgender activist Sophia Banks, who asked what it would take for the service to expand to Canada.

"We looked into it, and it didn't look like it would require much, so we went ahead and did it." The Canadian number has been active for about two weeks, and in that time Martela said it has received more than 100 calls.

The service is run by volunteers, all of whom are trans-identified. "It's hard for somebody who is not trans

to understand all of the things that transgender people go through," said Martela. She said the nature of the calls are different from those that would normally be received on another crisis line. "One of the things that's different about what trans people are having is that a lot of times they're external," she said. "If we were a traditional suicide hotline, you'd be seeing things like the end of a relationship or a mental health crisis triggering the call. For us, a lot of the time it's concrete things — somebody is being harassed at work or ... they're having trouble accessing health care."

In the month of December operators talked to people calling both the Canadian and U.S. lines for a total of 672 hours. Martela says there has been no shortage of volunteers. "We're having the opposite problem. We can't train our volunteers as quickly as they're volunteering. We've got at the moment about 70 trained operators, but we have something like 400 operators waiting to be trained," Martela said.

"2014 was a wonderful year for trans rights, but it's still pretty hard to be a trans person really no matter where you are. It seems like societal acceptance is slowly coming, but it's slow."

To reach the Trans Lifeline toll-free from anywhere in Canada, dial 1-877-330-6366.

The Early Edition [CBC News](#) Jan 05, 2015 10:39 AM PT



# Vancouver Island Community Resource Update

*Note: We have listed here the resources that were distinctly designated by the agency as “LGBTQ Services” 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:

### **Synergia Counselling**

#6-1921 Fernwood Rd, Victoria  
1-888-316-0819

Synergia provides ethical, masters-level counselling and consulting services. Our services are available in-person as well as through telephone and video formats.

Our services include: Individual, Couples and Family Counselling - Therapeutic Case Consultation - Conflict Resolution - Facilitation - Consulting

Our counselling services can assist you with: Depression, anxiety, panic, phobias - Obsessive and compulsive thoughts and behaviours - Disassociative tendencies - Eating disorders - Co-dependency - Sexual abuse and trauma - Post-traumatic stress and complex/developmental trauma - Substance and process addictions - Relationship conflict, divorce, separation - Sexual identity and addictions - Parenting and family issues - Communication skills, assertiveness, anger management - Self harming behaviours - Grief, loss and mourning - Self-esteem - Crisis and stress management - Life transitions (e.g., losing or starting a job, changing careers or marital or relationship status, having a baby, or dealing with a serious illness or accident) - Personality disorders - How to deal with loved ones with mental illness.

[www.synergiacounselling.com/](http://www.synergiacounselling.com/)

email: [office@synergiacounselling.com](mailto:office@synergiacounselling.com)

### **Island Sexual Health Society**

250-592-3479

Island Sexual Health Society offers sexual health clinics and sex education programs for all genders, orientations, identities, and ages in Greater Victoria. The Society provides information and methods of birth control, emergency contraception (morning after pills), infection tests, pregnancy options, routine exams, community education, and online resources.

## This month highlighting **“LGBTQ Services”**

Sexual Health Clinics in Greater Victoria:

**Camosun College Clinic** (open to the public) - Lansdowne Campus, Top Floor, Richmond House. Ph: 250-592-3449. Fax: 250-592-3473. Hours: Thur 11:30am - 3:30pm. Drop-ins welcome.

**Victoria Clinic** - #101 - 3960 Quadra Street, Victoria. Ph: 250-592-3479. Appointment Hours: Mon 9:00am - 3:45pm, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday 9:00am - 7:45pm, Fri 9:00am - 3:45pm, Sat 11:00am - 2:00pm. Closed from 12-1pm Mon-Fri for lunch. IUD insertion clinic: held twice a week. Call for appt times. Product Sales (including birth control pick up): Mon 9am-4pm, Tues, Wed, Thurs 9am-8pm, Fri 9am-4pm, Sat 11am-2pm.

**Belmont High School Clinic** - Drop in clinic. No cost. Provides birth control, condoms, pregnancy testing, sexually transmitted infection screening and treatment. All services are private. Community Resource room between room #115 and the Counselling suites. Ph: 250-888-6814 (during clinic hours) or Ph: 250-592-3479 outside clinic hours. We offer a sexual health clinic at Belmont High School for students currently enrolled in SD62. Hours: Wed 11:00 am to 4:00 pm during the school year.

**Tsawout First Nations Clinic** - Tsawout health building. Open to all first nations. Wednesdays 5-8pm on a drop-in basis with a nurse. All services free and confidential.

[www.islandsexualhealth.org](http://www.islandsexualhealth.org)

email: [info@islandsexualhealth.org](mailto:info@islandsexualhealth.org)

### **Gays and Lesbians of Salt Spring Island (GLOSSI)**

250-537-7773 Offers a social and educational society for gays, lesbians, and allies on Salt Spring Island.

Services include: Educational outreach services on LGBTQ issues for the community, Opportunities for fun and socializing, Referral services to individuals who need support and comfort, Encourages a positive and visible LGBTQ presence in community, Celebrates a Pride weekend festival; second weekend of September

[www.glossi.org](http://www.glossi.org)

email: [info@glossi.org](mailto:info@glossi.org)

## Gay Straight Alliance, Duncan

The Community Options Society GSA is a safe, peer support and discussion group for GLBTQ youth and their friends. Our primary focus is supporting GLBTQ youth from the Cowichan Valley in feeling connected to the community and to other GLBTQ youth and to just have fun. GSA is ongoing and meets weekly with youth aged 14-19. If you think yourself or someone else might be a good fit for this group please contact COS.

554 Trunk Road, Duncan P h: 250-748-0232

[www.coscowichan.ca](http://www.coscowichan.ca)

## AIDS Vancouver Island

AIDS Vancouver Island (AVI) is a community-based AIDS Service Organization that provides education, support, and advocacy for people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C, tuberculosis, and other communicable diseases. AVI operates a mobile needle exchange service in the Cowichan Valley and in the Port Hardy area and the agency's catchment area includes all of the Gulf Islands.

### Programs and Services:

The Positive Wellness Program: offers programming including counselling, advocacy, referrals, and social opportunities for HIV+ and co-infected (HIV+ and Hepatitis C) clients, their families and friends; covers topics such as coping with HIV, grief and loss, enhancing self-esteem, stress and relaxation, and goal setting and attainment; income security, housing, legal, and family issues.

Street Outreach Services (SOS): offers needle exchange and health promotion/harm reduction information in addition to relevant programming, a drop-in, and anonymous testing (HIV, Hep C, Pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections), vaccinations, referrals, and other services.

Men's Wellness Program: an initiative aimed at promoting men's wellness and to reducing HIV and sexually transmitted infections on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands among men who have sex with men, regardless of sexual orientation.

Health Promotion and Community Development: Information and education regarding HIV/AIDS, safer sex, HIV testing or transmission, sexually transmitted infections, harm reduction, and more.

### Victoria

Access Health Centre, 3rd Floor, 713 Johnson St., Victoria  
 Phone: 250-384-2366 | Fax: 250-380-9411

Toll free Infoline: 1-800-665-2437

Hours: Monday - Thursday 9am to 5pm, Friday 9am - 1pm

### Nanaimo

AIDS Vancouver Island 201-55 Victoria Road, Nanaimo  
 Phone: 250-753-2437

AVI Health Centre 216 - 55 Victoria Road, Nanaimo BC  
 Phone: 250-754-9111

### Courtenay/Comox

355 6th St., Courtenay

Phone: 250-338-7400 Toll free Infoline: 1-877-311-7400

### Campbell River

1371 c. Cedar Street Campbell River

Phone: 250-830-0787 Toll free Infoline: 1-877-650-8787

Port Hardy - PO Box 52, Port Hardy Ph: 250-949-0432

## Provincial:

### Transgender Health Program Vancouver Coastal Health Authority

Three Bridges Community Health Centre,

301 - 1290 Hornby Street, Vancouver

1-866-999-1514 toll free 604-734-1514

The Transgender Health Program brings together transgender people and loved ones, health care providers, health planners, and researchers to work on improving transgender health services in BC. The provincial program welcomes anyone who has a transgender health question or concern. Services are free, anonymous, and confidential. Services include: drop-in groups (available in Vancouver), educational materials through the website, and support, advocacy and information resources for anyone concerned about transgender issues (available in person, by phone and/or by email). - The Transgender Health Program is an anonymous and confidential free service for anyone living in BC who has a transgender health question. Most services are available throughout BC by phone/TTY, by email, or in person.

[www.vch.ca/transhealth](http://www.vch.ca/transhealth) email: [transhealth@vch.ca](mailto:transhealth@vch.ca)

### Centre for Gay, Lesbian, & Sexual/Transgender

1-800-566-1170 Pride Line 604-684-5307

Confidential peer support Prideline

Hours: 7:00pm to 10:00pm, Monday to Friday

The line provides information, referrals, and peer support to all lesbians, gay men, bisexual, & transgendered persons, their families, friends, and professionals throughout British Columbia.

[www.qmunity.ca](http://www.qmunity.ca)

email: [reception@qmunity.ca](mailto:reception@qmunity.ca)

### It Gets Better Project

Our mission is to communicate to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth around the world that it gets better. It is an interactive website that will encourage individuals to make active choices to benefit their own future.

[www.itgetsbetter.org](http://www.itgetsbetter.org)

## National:

### **PFLAG**

Phone: 1-888-530-6777

A national organization dedicated to helping all Canadians who are struggling with issues of sexual orientation and gender identity. Provides support, education, and resources to parents, families, friends, and colleagues with questions or concerns. For information/services on Vancouver Island please refer to website or call the toll-free number.

[www.pflag.ca](http://www.pflag.ca)

Email: [inquiries@pflagcanada.ca](mailto:inquiries@pflagcanada.ca)

### **Trans Lifeline (24/7)**

Phone: 1-877-330-6366

Trans Lifeline is a non-profit volunteer run crisis line. The line is primary for transgender people experiencing a crisis. This includes people who may be struggling with their gender identity and are not sure that they are transgender. While our goal is to prevent self harm, we welcome the call of any transgender person in need. We will do our very best to connect them with services that can help them meet that need.

[www.translifeline.org/](http://www.translifeline.org/)

# SUPPORT LGBT





## In Honour of **CRISIS LINE AWARENESS MONTH**

This two-day research based trauma informed workshop has been designed to teach a strengths-based approach to the communication, assessment, and suicide response skills essential for front line support staff. Learn how to diffuse difficult situations, how to recognize potential crisis, and boundaries, roles and responsibilities.

Registration cost is \$199.00 per person or \$135.00 for students.

Register at [www.vicrisis.ca/cist/](http://www.vicrisis.ca/cist/)

**March 17 & 18**  
**Nanaimo**

**March 23 & 24**  
**Courtenay**

**April 2 & 3**  
**Victoria**

**April 29 & 30**  
**Port McNeill**

# Our Popular Crisis Intervention Skills Training has been Re-developed!



©Vancouver Island Crisis Society

Our popular Crisis Intervention Skills Training was developed in 2006 in response to community requests for a research based, experiential workshop that would give community caregivers the skills and tools needed for helping people in crisis. Since then, it has been upgraded to reflect the most current research in crisis and suicide intervention, trauma, anger, and communication.

This best practices program was created to assist those who interact with people in crisis, such as front line staff, street outreach workers, receptionists, customer service representatives, managers, supervisors, union representatives, teachers, service providers and others. Crisis Intervention Skills Training provides participants with an understanding of non-violent communication, the effects of being in crisis and outlines the goals of crisis

intervention. Participants will also learn how to help a person in crisis develop a short-term plan and draw on the resources available in the community.

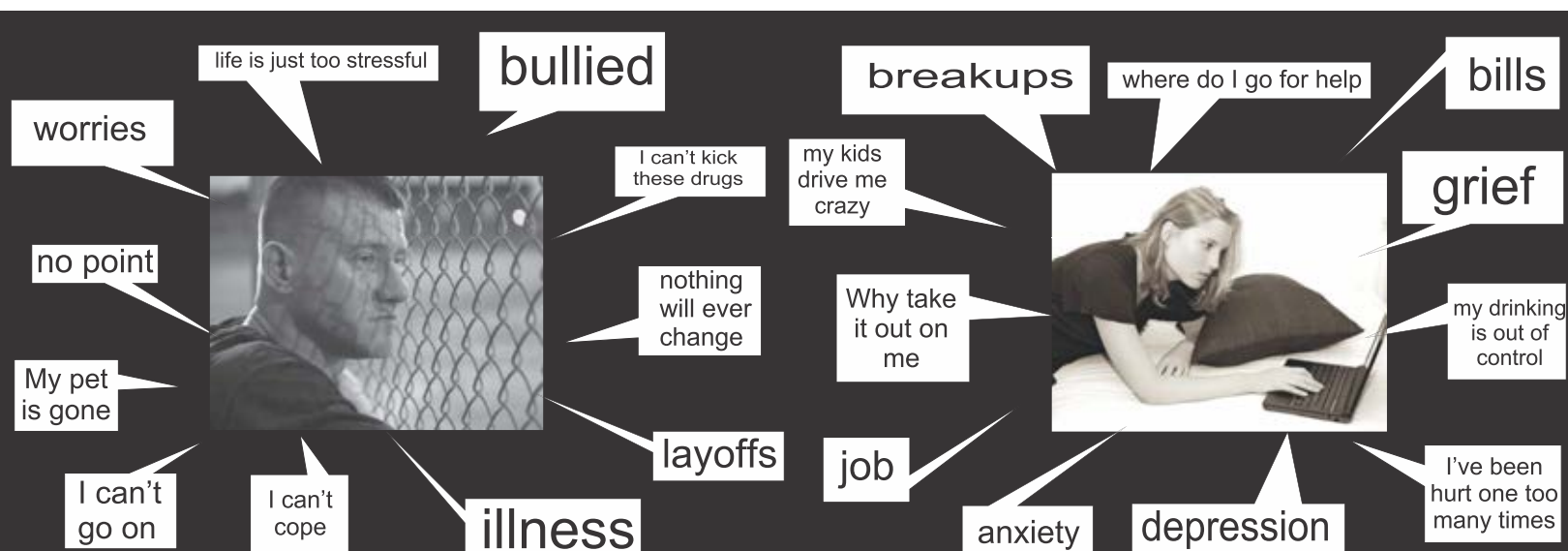
Through interactive presentations, discussion, exploration and practice, participants will learn:


- The goals and history of crisis intervention
- How to apply a helping model to support a person in crisis
- How to assess a crisis situation
- How to facilitate the development of a short-term plan for a person in crisis
- The communication, listening and boundary skills essential for crisis intervention
- Trauma informed approaches to crisis and suicide intervention
- Communicating with men
- How to help someone experiencing suicidal ideation
- Identify planning strategies and referral options
- Listening and boundary skills

Our next Crisis Intervention Skills Training workshop is happening March 17th and 18th in Nanaimo and this spring in Courtenay, Victoria and Port McNeill.

For more information or to register, please visit our website at [www.vicrisis.ca](http://www.vicrisis.ca)

or call our Administrative Office: 1-877-753-2495



A close-up, profile view of a woman with long, wavy brown hair, smiling warmly. She is wearing a black headset with a microphone positioned near her mouth. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

**V**olunteering for the Vancouver Island Crisis Line has been an incredibly enriching experience for me.

When I started working in Nanaimo, I was looking for a way to get involved in my community and give back to it in some way. The Crisis Line ended up being exactly what I was looking for. I am able to be there for the people in my community when they are going through something that they just can't manage on their own, however big or small that may be.

The team of staff and volunteers at the Crisis Line are so supportive, and the training that they provided has helped me in so many aspects of my life - both professional and personal.

I have volunteered with some organizations in the past where I felt that my time was not used in the most productive way, or that the organization just didn't know what to do with me. Here, because of the comprehensive training, I have a clear understanding of my role and I feel empowered to help people.

It is only four hours out of my week, but together as a team, we are able to be here 24/7 to help people in our community get through some of their darkest hours.

It has been truly humbling to be a part of that. It might sound overwhelming at first, maybe you're worried that you wouldn't know what to do in a crisis? But believe me when I say that I had those same concerns, and that I now understand when and where I can help, what my limits are, and how to connect callers to resources that can provide the help that they need.

I can honestly say that I am so proud to be a part of the fantastic team that is the Vancouver Island Crisis Line.

*Jaime*

# CRISIS LINE VOLUNTEERING

Community involvement matters on grad school applications  
Gain crisis intervention skills for future front line jobs.



**VANCOUVER ISLAND  
CRISIS LINE**

**APPLY NOW**

**Next training session  
in Nanaimo  
starts April 30th**

**[www.vicrisis.ca](http://www.vicrisis.ca)**





# Speak Out Reach Out Help Out

**T**he Community Education Team from Vancouver Island Crisis Society (re-dubbed and re-branded "Team Crisis" by our newest facilitator Matt Dunae), has been excited by the positive response our program Speak Out, Reach Out, Help Out has had in schools all over the Island this year.

This unique suicide prevention program for youth was re-imagined in 2011 as a conversation about life, making healthy choices, and helping students navigate the sometimes choppy waters of adolescence. Because this messaging is so crucial, Crisis Society staff have worked hard to create a program that is not only full of life affirming information, but one that is engaging and encourages young people to Speak Out about their Worries and Struggles, Reach Out for Help and Support, and Help Out if they notice someone else is struggling.

The program combines a blend of personal story telling, media, and live hip hop music by facilitator (and lyricist) Matt Dunae – aka SirReal – and equips students with the tools and knowledge of where to reach out, when to reach out, and how to reach out. Even more exciting, it's the first suicide prevention presentation we've ever been part of that students want to crash the party and join! To that we say: "The more the merrier!" This is important information that we know has the potential to save lives.

We are also thrilled that Patrick Aleck, a motivational speaker and VIU student from Chemainus First Nation and Penalakut Nation, often joins us as a presenter. Patrick is the past recipient of the Aboriginal Youth Champion Award and is a powerful role model of resilience and healing. We are proud to include him as an honorary member of Team Crisis!

## The Program is Re-developed for Younger Students

Originally created as a program for students grades 8-12, the Crisis Society developed a version of Speak Out, Reach Out, Help Out that is suitable for a grade 5,6,7 audience that has been piloted to enthusiastic success in sd 68 and at Ditidhat and Stz'uminus Community Schools, thanks to the City of Nanaimo funding grant.

So far this school year, we have presented Speak Out, Reach Out, Help Out to over 800 students grades 5-12 IN SD 68 (Nanaimo) SD 69 (Parksville Qualicum) SD 79, Cowichan, SD 85 (Port McNeill), Ditidaht Community School, and Stz'uminus Community School and are booked solid until April 2015!

If you are interested in bringing this popular, life affirming program to your school, contact our Community Education Program Coordinator Lyndsay Wells (1-877-752-2495 ext 109) and get yourself booked before the school year ends!



Shown in picture: Heather Owen, VIU International student, Matt Dunae, Patrick Aleck and Lyndsay Wells.



# BoosterBuddy

BoosterBuddy is a free app designed to help teens and young adults improve their mental health. It is a free download available on the Apple App Store and for the Android App you can find it on Google Play.

This app assists people to manage their personal wellness journey and earn achievements as the BoosterBuddy sidekick guides you through a series of daily quests designed to establish and sustain positive habits. Such as:

- Check-in with how you are feeling each day
- Use coping skills
- Keep track of appointments and medications
- Get started on tasks
- Follow self-care routines
- Increase real-life socialization

Booster Buddy was created by Island Health in collaboration with teens and young adults with lived experience. This app was made possible thanks to the generous support of Coast Capital Savings and the Victoria Hospitals Foundation.



**A little boost can make a big difference.**

Introducing BoosterBuddy, a free app to help young people improve their mental health.



**BoosterBuddy**



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# Crisis Text



# 250-800-3806

Text this number  
7 nights a week 6 to 10 pm  
from anywhere on Vancouver Island



Another service provided by  
**The Vancouver Island Crisis Line**  
**1-888-494-3888**



# Crisis Text: Another Access to Support

The Vancouver Island Crisis Line receives approximately 29,000 calls a year which breaks down to about 75 calls a day. It is a very busy call room but The Vancouver Island Crisis Line (VICL) is committed to making sure that crisis line support services are available to all community members out there who may be struggling.

Last year in June 2013 access to crisis line support services increased by adding *Crisis Chat* which meant people could get connected to online emotional support through their computer. The numbers using the chat to access support doubled almost every month as the word spread. Obviously there was a need, especially for those that had transportation troubles, babysitting concerns or social anxiety. This way of accessing support seemed to make it easier for some.

This year VICL decided to launch *Crisis Text* in order to make the service accessible in another way that may be more comfortable to people who may be struggling on their own.

Here are supporting facts that confirmed this would be a necessary next step to increasing accessibility to crisis line support services:

- 63% of all teens say they communicate by texting every day with people in their lives (as compared to the 39% of teens who report communicating by phone and 35% face-to-face) – Contact USA
- Many teens report they use it to have awkward conversations that would be difficult to have in person (asking out or breaking up).
- “Americans ages 18-29 send and receive an average of nearly 88 text messages per day, compared to 17 phone calls. The numbers change as we get older, with the overall frequency of all communication declining, but even in the 65 and over group, daily texting still edges calling 4.7 to 3.8. In the TIME mobility poll, 32% of all respondents said they'd rather communicate by text than phone, even with people they know very well.” - Time.com
- According to a Pew Institute survey, the number of text messages sent monthly in the U.S. exploded from 14 billion in 2000 to 188 billion in 2010.
- Internet usage has been increasing in ALL age groups- even with seniors. Cell phone usage has also gone up and many people are not using landlines anymore.
- Online disinhibition effect: online communications are characterized by more personal disclosure sooner in the interaction. We seem to get a lot more

personal information from the visitor early on in the conversation.

- There is a lot less need to build a rapport with visitors using chat or text. The barriers are lowered with these mediums because it isn't as personal as talking on the phone. This of course can have its disadvantage for crisis workers, but it helps the visitor reach out.
- Many visitors prefer text because it is silent (there is no tone of voice), it is anonymous (no need to give a name).
- Some people are too distraught to have a conversation over the phone, so texting comes in handy.
- Since texting and chatting are slower medium, needing more time for people to type back and forth, it gives crisis workers some time to reflect on an answer for the visitor.



Taking into consideration these supporting facts, VICL launched *Crisis Text* in October 2014 and has sent out promotional materials to every school on Vancouver Island. It is the hope of the society that this method of accessing crisis line support services will reach some unique populations such as: youth, the deaf, and people with speech disabilities.

The response has been favorable and we expect the numbers to grow each month as it did with *Crisis Chat*.

If you are needing support and would like to access crisis line support services through *Crisis Text* simply text 250-800-3806 on your mobile device, available every night from 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm, seven nights a week.



# Fundraising Campaign

## Apr 1, 2014- Mar 31, 2015

The Vancouver Island Crisis Society conducts a fundraising campaign every year by way of a request letter to Vancouver Island businesses, associations, and individuals for their support of our Public Education Suicide Awareness and Prevention programs.

The Vancouver Island Crisis Line is primarily funded by Island Health. Grants and donations to Public Education and Youth Programs make it possible for us to provide suicide awareness and prevention programs to the public.

We offer our heartfelt thanks to the numerous generous contributors who have responded to date and to those considering donating to support these programs.



### Vancouver Island Crisis Society

#### 2014-2015 Fundraising Goals

**\$25000**

**CURRENT  
TOTAL**  
**\$14631**



**As of Jan 31, 2015**



The Vancouver Island Crisis Society would like to thank all supporters for their kind donations toward this year's goal of \$25,000 to fund our community education suicide prevention programs.

To the left: Elizabeth Newcombe, Executive Director for the Vancouver Island Crisis Society accepts a donation from Mid Island Co-op represented by Barb Peters, Director Chair - Funds Allocation Committee.



## **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 June 2014. The donations listed are from June 11, 2014 to January 16, 2015. We would especially like to thank those organizations that contributed to keep our Youth Suicide Prevention Programs in our schools.

### **Anchors (under \$499)**

Alysia Miller  
 Bent Tree Wellness  
 Coastal Community Credit Union  
 Country club  
 Cowichan Hospitality Group Ltd  
 CUPE LOCAL 3376  
 Donald & M. Ball  
 Elise Cote  
 Fairwinds  
 Jeannine & Richard Banks  
 Joanne Hogan  
 Jordan Buxton  
 Kim & Brenda Pirie  
 Longwood Pub  
 Mila Czemerys  
 Nanaimo Clippers  
 Parksville Newcomer's Club  
 Port Theatre  
 Provincial Employees Community Services Fund  
 Steven Barre  
 Theresa Slater  
 Tigh-na-mara  
 Timberwest

Travel Hotel & Conference Centre (Duncan)  
 Woodgrove Centre

### **Life Preservers (\$500-\$999)**

Board of School Trustees, District No. 68  
 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith)  
 Fairway Gorge Paddling Club (March 2014)  
 Maximum Yield Publications Inc.  
 Nanaimo Harbor Lites Lioness

### **Lighthouse Keepers (\$1000 - \$2499)**

Mambo Gourmet Pizza  
 Mid-Island Co-op  
 Rotary Club Lantzville  
 Rotary Club Qualicum Beach (May 2014)  
 TLC Entertainment

### **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 **April 9 & 10 8:30 - 4:30 both days** #30, 1708 Bowen Rd, Nanaimo.

In honour of Crisis Line Awareness Month, Crisis Intervention Skills Training will be held in Nanaimo **March 17 & 18**, Courtenay **March 23 & 24**, Victoria **April 2 & 3**, from **9 to 4 both days**, and Port McNeill **April 29 & 30**, from **9:30 to 4:30 both days**. For information or registration, please see our website at [www.vicrisis.ca](http://www.vicrisis.ca)

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](http://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

## 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 Society Launches ASIST 11!

**A**ppplied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) recently underwent a major upgrade making this version even more helpful and user friendly than ever before. All of the Crisis Society ASIST Training Team have completed the upgrade and have already facilitated 3 workshops using the new version to great feedback from participants.

ASIST is for everyone 16 or older—regardless of prior experience—who wants to be able to provide suicide first aid. Shown by major studies to significantly reduce suicidality, the ASIST model teaches effective intervention skills while helping to build suicide prevention networks in the community.

Virtually anyone age 16 or older, regardless of prior experience or training, can become an ASIST-trained caregiver. Developed in 1983 and regularly updated to reflect improvements in knowledge and practice, ASIST is the world's leading suicide intervention workshop. During the two-day interactive session, participants learn to intervene and help prevent the immediate risk of suicide. Over 1,000,000 people have taken the workshop, and studies have proven that the ASIST method helps reduce suicidal feelings for those at risk.

Workshop features:

- Presentations and guidance from two Crisis Society Living Works registered trainers

- A scientifically proven intervention model
- Powerful audiovisual learning aids
- Group discussions
- Skills practice and development
- A balance of challenge and safety

ASIST has saved and changed hundreds of thousands of lives around the world. Book yourself for the next workshop and become a part of this worldwide life saving movement!

The next ASIST workshop is scheduled to take place April 9th and 10th 2015.

Visit the Crisis Society website to register

[www.vicrisis.ca](http://www.vicrisis.ca)

or call our Administrative Office: 1-877-753-2495



The Virtual Hope Box (VHB) is a smartphone application designed for use by patients and their behavioral health providers as an accessory to treatment.

The VHB contains simple tools to help patients with coping, relaxation, distraction, and positive thinking. Patients and providers can work together to personalize the VHB content on the patient's own smartphone according to the patient's specific needs. The patient can then use the VHB away from clinic, continuing to add or change content as needed.

The VHB provides help with emotional regulation and coping with stress via personalized supportive audio, video, pictures, games, mindfulness exercises, positive messages and activity planning, inspirational quotes, coping statements, and other tools.



# HELPING struggling children and teens just got easier...



**ARE YOU** a young person who is struggling with mental health or substance use issues or do you know someone who is?

**A NEW ONLINE SERVICE** map will help you find the supports and services needed to improve health and wellbeing.

## THE MAP ALLOWS YOU TO:

- ▶ **SEARCH** for services in your community.
- ▶ **FIND** an intake clinic.
- ▶ **LOOK UP** contact information for service providers.
- ▶ **ENTER** a keyword search to locate the service provider that offers a program to meet your specific needs.



 **THE MAP** provides information on services that are provided directly through the Ministry of Children and Family Development, health authorities and ministry-funded community agencies across the province.

If you require immediate crisis assistance, please dial **310-6789** (no area code is required) to connect to the B.C. mental health crisis line, which operates 24 hours a day. For medical emergencies: **CALL 911**



**FINDING CHILD AND YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH OR SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES IS NOW JUST A CLICK AWAY:**

<http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/healthy-minds/cymhsu-servicesmap.html>

## The Connection Between Suicide & Brain Injury

**R**esearch tells us that suicidal thinking, or ideation, is often connected to feelings of loss, hopelessness, or of being a burden on others. There has also been a well established link between suicide and psychological trauma. What may not be as widely known or understood is that the trauma of a Brain Injury can also lead to suicidal thoughts and feelings. Brain Injury can cause a change in a person's thinking processes, how they react to certain situations, and how they relate to others. People who have experienced a Brain Injury might have increased stress, greater difficulty with relationships, difficulty managing their own emotions, and depleted skills for dealing with these problems.

On top of that, there are the losses a person with Brain Injury might experience. Loss of job, loss of identity, loss of autonomy, loss of friendships or other important relationships are just some of the things a person with brain injury might have to cope with. Add to that the complexity of emotional trauma that can also accompany an injury and it becomes easier to understand why a person with Brain Injury is more vulnerable to thoughts of suicide and depression.

Although in many cases the person may seem the same as they were before, they may feel a disturbing sense of change in who they are. They may also be more impulsive and find it hard to consider other perspectives or think differently about things. Without appropriate support they may find themselves feeling isolated and helpless. For people who think about ending their lives, suicide may represent an answer to what they feel is an otherwise unsolvable problem. The choice may appear preferable to circumstances such as enduring emotional distress or disability, which the person may fear more than death.

It is particularly important for family members, friends and those who care about the person to know the warning signs their loved one might be danger and understand where to turn for help and support.

Working with, or being close to someone who is at high risk for suicide can be extremely stressful. It is very important that people receive their own support and take care of their own emotional well-being. Support for the person working with the distressed individual may come in the form of debriefing from other professionals. Relatives and friends may also benefit from seeking professional help in order to express their feelings and receive advice. Please remember, the 24 hour crisis line is available to everyone in our island communities for help and support.

### **If You are Considering Suicide**

If you are the person who has acquired a brain injury and you are considering suicide, please know that:

- You are not alone
- Most people think about suicide at one time or another. Thinking about suicide does not mean that things can't get better.
- There may be physical issues caused by your Brain Injury, and these physical issues may be causing you to feel as bad as you do. It is important to get professional or medical advice to help you deal with some of those physical problems.
- The crisis will pass
- Sometimes problems seem unbearable, but there are always things you or others can do. If you have a brain injury, it might be particularly hard to see your way through some problems. That is why it is essential that you talk about your problems with someone who can help.
- Others do care
- There are always people willing to help you work out your problems. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Let family members, friends, your local doctor or other professionals know how you feel.

There are 24 hour services available. You can call Vancouver Island Crisis Line 1-888-494-3888



# UNSUSPECTING BC SENIORS LOSE \$1.3 BILLION OR MORE

Statistics on seniors financial abuse are sketchy because most cases go unreported, but the indications are it is a serious and growing problem.

A startling number of B.C. seniors have lost a total of at least \$1.3 billion in assets — and, by some estimates, several times that — to thefts and financial frauds perpetrated most often by family, friends or caregivers.

This is the stark conclusion of a report on an extensive survey, done for Vancity Credit Union, that found not only widespread abuse of seniors, but also a widespread failure to recognize it for what it is.

“When presented with a list of scenarios, 41 per cent of seniors in the Lower Mainland and Victoria regions have experienced at least one situation that can be classified as financial abuse,” the report said. “However, only 6.4 per cent of respondents self-reported being victimized by financial abuse, indicating that many seniors do not understand all the ways in which they might be victims.”

The report identified three main types of financial abuse — monetary abuse (pressuring seniors for money, often an early bequest), property abuse (conniving to get control of or to steal a senior's assets), and legal abuse (manipulating seniors to sign documents to the benefit of someone other than the senior).

The study cites earlier data indicating that as many as one senior in 12 is a victim of financial abuse, but concludes from its own research that the number is probably much higher. And it notes that with the growing population of seniors in B.C. — the number will reach one of every four citizens by 2030 — the problem has the potential to become much worse.

The most common abuses, reported by 19 per cent and 18 per cent respectively, are loans taken without a senior's permission or not repaid, and pressure to loan a friend or family member money.

Next, in descending order, are: Offering to do a

job for a fixed fee, then not completing it or demanding more money (12 per cent); Taking things from a senior's home to keep or to sell (11 per cent); Pressuring a senior to buy a gift for or make a payment for a family member or friend (nine per cent); Forging a senior's signature (eight per cent); Misusing a senior's credit card, bank card or bank account (seven per cent); Fake prize scams (three per cent); Pressure to remortgage a home (two per cent) or to sell it (one per cent) to free up money for someone else; Pressure to change insurance beneficiaries (two per cent) or wills (one per cent).

As for solutions, the main one the report puts forward is better financial literacy for seniors so they know when they are at risk of financial abuse. The relative paucity of successful scams by outsiders indicates that, at some levels, this is already working; the much higher incidence of family frauds indicates that the education job is by no means complete.

As our population ages, elder mental health will become a priority for governments, communities and the police. It is anticipated that rates of dementia will double over the next 20 years, placing pressure on families and our health care system. Now is the time to plan for the future, and that includes community-based strategies in which we all play a role.

If you are concerned about an elderly person who may be a victim contact your local mental health office or The Public Guardian

and Trustee who can provide a range of services to adults who may need help managing their affairs, as well as their families, legal representatives, the courts and general public.

The Adult Guardianship Act ensures steps are taken when senior abuse, neglect or self-neglect is suspected.

Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia

Phone: 250 - 387-6121

Email: [mail@trustee.bc.ca](mailto:mail@trustee.bc.ca)

Website: [www.trustee.bc.ca](http://www.trustee.bc.ca)



# Make it yours!



**Guide to Resources  
in your community**

**GO HERE**

*Add this button  
to your  
website*

## Island Wide Online Community Resource Database

Check it out on our website @ [www.vicrisis.ca](http://www.vicrisis.ca) and then contact our office if you would like to participate.

We have created this icon for you to add to your website and have it hyperlinked to open up at the touch of the button. Search for resources for your clients easily without having to go to another website. This database is updated on a daily basis and dated with the last time the resource was confirmed to ensure the resource listings you are giving out are current.

Just hit print and give the information to your client to take with them. EASY!

After you have completed your search, take a look at the top left corner for "Select language".

The database is connected to google search and can translate your search findings into multiple languages.



### Why would I call?

addiction - anxiety - breakups - bullied  
depression - financial strain - grief  
losses - worries - problem solving  
thinking about suicide



*Helping People  
Find Their Way*



### Who will answer?

professional - empathetic - non-judgmental  
confidential - anonymous - respectful  
connect to Mental Health Professionals  
24 hours a day - 7 days a week



# 1-888-494-3888

**VANCOUVER ISLAND CRISIS LINE**

# CRISIS CHAT



**Chat Now**  
**[www.vicrisis.ca](http://www.vicrisis.ca)**

**7 nights a week 6 to 10 pm**



Another service provided by

**The Vancouver Island Crisis Line**  
**1-888-494-3888**