

The Crisis Intervention & Suicide Prevention Centre of BC (Crisis Centre) has been providing emotional support to youth, adults and seniors in distress since 1969. As a safe place to turn to when there seems to be no hope, the Crisis Centre is operated by 260+ front line volunteers and a small team of professional staff who support and empower individuals to see their own strengths and options, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. As an award-winning organization, the Crisis Centre has been a pioneer in the industry, offering a comprehensive range of leading-edge programs that are evidence-based and utilize best practices.

In 2007, the Crisis Centre impacted more than 46,000 lives across BC through its:

24/7 Distress Phone Line
operating four crisis lines and two 1-800 SUICIDE lines which are connected to a network of crisis lines across BC.

YouthInBC.com
web-based hotline where youth can connect live, one-on-one with a crisis chat volunteer every day of the year, for ten hours each day

Community Education program
delivering more than 400 Youth suicide prevention and stress management workshops to teens in grades 8 to 12 throughout the Lower Mainland and Sea-to-Sky corridor

Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention Centre of BC

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Jessie's Story

At the age of 15, Jessie* had been through enough pain to last a lifetime. When he logged on to YouthInBC.com and chatted with a volunteer for the first time, the pain had become overwhelming.

Two weeks earlier, Jessie's best friend had died by suicide. Jessie was devastated, not only because he had lost the person he was closest to in the world, but because the two boys had been very much in love.



Jessie lived with his mother and her boyfriend. He had never told his family he was gay, but with the death of his first love, the true nature of the boys' relationship had become apparent.

Jessie opened up to the YouthInBC volunteer, and chatted about how his home life had become unbearable. Not only was he dealing with an immense amount of grief, but the abuse he had been enduring from his mother and her boyfriend had taken on a new level of viciousness.

Since finding out her son had been in love with another boy, Jessie's mother was assaulting him daily with verbal blows. She told him how ashamed she was of him, and forbade him to tell anyone else of the relationship between him and his best friend.

Jessie's mom's boyfriend didn't bother wasting time with verbal assaults. He showed Jessie what he thought by using his fists. This had become a daily occurrence, and Jessie was desperate to get away.

Jessie chatted regularly with volunteers on YouthInBC.com over the period of approximately one week. During this time, he shared his feelings of loss as well as his plans for suicide, which he saw as the only option.

Through the support of volunteers, Jessie slowly gained the confidence to seek out other means of help. He contacted a local support group for gay teens. He sent an email to a counsellor whose area of expertise was grief. Jessie was reaching out for help and fighting to keep himself alive.

The last time Jessie logged on to YouthInBC.com, he wanted to update volunteers about his situation. Suffering from newly broken ribs, he decided it was time to call the police about his mother's boyfriend. The authorities had come to his home and arrested the boyfriend and they had taken Jessie to a temporary foster home where he could be safe until other arrangements were made.

Jessie's words to the volunteer that night were "I just wanted to say thank you for not giving up on me." Thanks to the dedication and support he was given by YouthInBC volunteers, Jessie was able to get out of a potentially deadly situation and take the steps towards a safer future.

* For confidentiality reasons, some details such as name and age have edited to respect the privacy of the caller

YouthInBC Update



YouthInBC.com has recently celebrated its 4th anniversary!!! In honour of this momentous occasion, many plans are underway to make this service the best it has ever been. Over the next few months we'll be unveiling our new logo, distributing new awareness materials across the province and rolling out the new and improved version of YouthInBC.com.

Our focus for these changes has been to keep the YouthInBC "look" up-to-date and relevant while maintaining the quality of service youth have come to expect from us. We've teamed up with the creative geniuses at Blue Lime Media and Gravity Inc. to ensure our new look will be well-received by youth, while getting our message across in a clear and easily accessed format. Youth will also get a chance to have their voices heard through our

new blog and our "Tell Us What it's Like" postcard program.

YouthInBC.com has become an increasingly popular support service among youth from across BC. Youth continue to open up to our volunteers about the difficult issues they are facing, as well as how they've been managing these. Youth consistently demonstrate their resilience and their willingness to let us be a part of their action plan to enhance coping and an improved future.

Youth have also expressed an interest in becoming actively involved in YouthInBC.com. With this in mind, we're gearing up to create a Youth Advisory Council. This will include youth from across the province, coming together to give input on the website's content as well as creating a "for youth, by youth" presentation to increase awareness about the service.

While YouthInBC.com has gone through growth spurts, changes and bumps along the way, we're confident in the value our service has for youth. With a fresh new look, increased programming support and more volunteers signing up every day, we are confident 2008 will be a very good year for Youth In BC!

~ Andrea Staples, YouthInBC.com Program Coordinator

CHOICES2: Reaching Out DVD on Tour

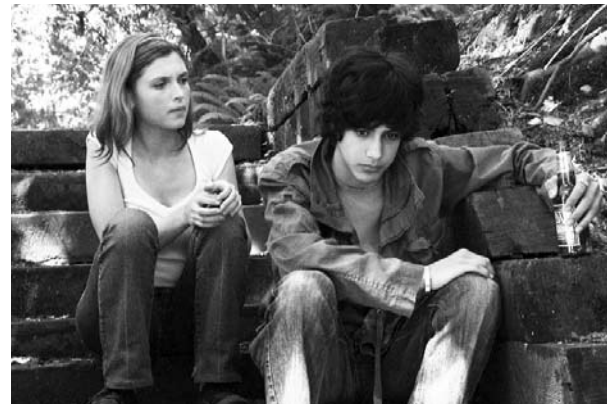
Right on schedule, our new youth suicide prevention videos arrived in time to accompany the Crisis Centre's delegation to the 2007 Canadian Association for the Prevention of Suicide's (CASP) annual conference in Yellowknife. More than 40 delegates participated in the premier of our classroom workshop. Workshop evaluations were filled with praise for all of the new presentation content; delegates lined up at the stage to enquire about purchasing the Reaching Out video and workshop package. Within two weeks of the CASP conference, our new video became core content in the provinces of Alberta and PEI's school-based programs.

Our professional risk assessment training video premiered immediately upon our return from Yellowknife. It joined the second and third presentation of the classroom video to delegates of the BC Crisis Line Association and BC School Counsellors' annual conferences. Dr. Brian Mashira, board member for the International Association of Suicide Prevention (IASP), praised the peer modeling in the classroom video, as well as its emphasis on helping and help seeking behaviours. He joined half the conference delegates in taking home a copy of the new DVD.

While the response from the 45 school counsellors was also overwhelmingly enthusiastic for both the new classroom workshop and the two films, for at least one delegate, the impact was perhaps greater. Over the next few weeks we collaborated with him to design and deliver workshops to school personnel and counselling staff determined to stem the high rate of aboriginal youth suicide in their rural community. Both presentations were evaluated as exceeding expectations.

The CHOICES2: Reaching Out DVD tour will continue into the spring. The Crisis Centre has accepted an invitation to present both of our films at three Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) Family Violence Prevention Program Regional Conferences being held in Vancouver, Courtney, and Prince George. We expect to wrap up the tour in mid-April at the American Association of Suicidology's annual conference in Boston, where we have been asked to make two presentations.

~ Susan Sorrell, MSW, Director of Community Education



SAVE THE DATE!

Upcoming Events at the Crisis Centre

April 2nd 2008: Annual General Meeting

April 25th 2008: Volunteer Appreciation Night

Why I Volunteer with the Crisis Centre



“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.” – Mahatma Gandhi

I originally wanted to volunteer (like so many reference-seeking post-secondary students) to help my chances of getting further in school. I thought, “I’m already volunteering with two other organizations, so what’s one more?” My lovely girlfriend (now wife) was looking for volunteer opportunities, so I figured I would accompany her through the process. That was late 1999.

So things changed, as they always do. The skills I developed at the Crisis Centre began to affect my relationships and day-to-day experiences. I enjoyed the perspective I gained working with people in difficult situations.

Over the years, it’s been very uplifting to hear people find hope in even the direst situations. And in many ways, we have acted as conduits for hope and positive change in people’s lives. I believe that the volunteers are able to support our callers as they grow.

The skills I have gained have changed every aspect of my life, and have influenced every relationship and opportunity I have had since I began volunteering. It has allowed me to be flexible and open-minded in any situation. My Crisis Centre skills have deepened my relationships with family and friends and have given me the experience of connecting with people on another level. I have also had the chance to get to know myself better and reflect on my life as I work with others.

While I had my own dealings with suicidal behaviour as an adolescent, it was humbling to hear friends and family opening up to me about their experiences with suicide when they found out that I was volunteering at the Crisis Centre. This reinforced my commitment and has kept me coming back for over 8 years.

~ Scott A. is a youth addictions counsellor at the Vancouver Matrix Program (Vancouver Coastal Health) where he works with youth struggling with crystal methamphetamine addiction.

Message from the Executive Director

For the first time in our 38 year history, the Crisis Intervention and Suicide Centre of BC’s revenues and expenditures for 2007 reached the \$1 million mark. Thanks to many generous donors, 260+ front line volunteers, our dedicated Board of Directors and a small team of talented staff, the Crisis Centre was able to provide specialized 24/7 Distress Line support and Community Education - suicide prevention, to tens of thousands of individuals across BC.

As outlined in our Two Year Rolling Plan for 2008-2009, the Crisis Centre’s programs will focus on improving our services to youth, adults and seniors. The following highlight our future plans:

- Expanding YouthInBC.com online chat hours from 10 hours a day to 24/7
- Pilot YouthInBC.com technology across BC, while utilizing and creating best practices
- Evaluate & expand our new youth suicide prevention ‘Choices2 – Reaching Out’ program
- Adapt lessons learned from the 1-800 SUICIDE Network into a new 310-6789 # across BC
- Explore youth ‘Suicide Prevention’ initiatives with First Nations’ communities across BC
- Operationalize a ‘Connecting Seniors in Crisis’ program at the Crisis Centre.

For more details, please check out our website or contact me at 604-872-1811. We are here to listen. Here to help.

~ Ian Ross, Executive Director

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteering at the Crisis Centre is a great way to make a contribution to the community. You will receive extensive, high-quality training and obtain practical experience.

Distress Line volunteers provide emotional support to individuals in distress over the phone. A portion of our volunteers’ time is dedicated to YouthInBC.com (web-based hotline for youth) by conducting one-on-one chats with youth requesting support.

Community Education volunteers facilitate stress management and suicide prevention workshops to high school students.

For more information or to apply to become a Crisis Centre volunteer, please visit our website at: <http://www.crisiscentre.bc.ca/volunteer> or email us at info@crisiscentre.bc.ca



Fund Development Update

I am delighted to introduce myself as the new Director of Development & Communications. The Crisis Centre's commitment to provide immediate, caring support to individuals in distress is one that I truly admire and believe in. In sustaining its vision and continued growth, solid support is required in both human capital and funding. Without the support of our donors and volunteers, the Crisis Centre would not be the exceptional place it is today.

Every gift we receive makes a difference, regardless of the amount. When you donate to the Crisis Centre, you are providing hope for those who feel there is no one they can turn to; you are educating vulnerable youth on how to manage stress and crisis; and last but not least, you are contributing to the long-term wellness of your community.

We truly appreciate and cherish our donors, past, present and future. Donors have played an essential role in the Crisis Centre's success and have a stake in its future. We hope you will consider some of the many ways to partner with us. To learn more about how you can help continue our life-saving work, please contact me at 604-872-1811. I look forward to providing you with exciting fund development updates in months to come!

~ Kaman Ng, Director of Development & Communications

Board of Directors

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Tracy Tjaden

Facts You Should Know

- It is estimated that one in five adults will experience mental illness during a 1-year period. In Vancouver, this translates to more than 75,000 people. (Source: Vancouver Coastal Health)
- Aboriginal youth suicide rate in Canada is 5 to 6 times the national average (Source: McCreary Centre Society)
- Gay and lesbian youth suicide rates are 6 times the national average. (Source: McCreary Centre Society)
- Neuropsychiatric disorders (such as depression and bipolar disorder) make up the largest proportion of health conditions (28%), followed by cardiovascular disease (22%) and cancer (11%). (Source: Allan Young, Associate Director of the UBC Institute of Mental Health)

Your Donation at Work

\$50 provides 3 adult callers the lifesaving and immediate support they need.

\$1,000 empowers 30 high school students to break the silence that typically surrounds the subject of suicide.

\$5,000 provides hope to 290 youth through the online support of YouthInBC.com.

Wish List

- New or gently used Windows XP Computers (5)
- Roll-up Banner Systems (2)
- SLR digital camera
- Quality Office Chairs (12)
- Love Seat, Easy Chair & Ottoman
- Futon Covers
- TTY Machine
- Refrigerator
- Dishwasher
- Coffee Grinder



Here to listen. Here to help. **Please join us.**

YES! Life is precious and I want to help save lives. Here is my tax-creditable gift of:

\$50 \$75 \$100 Other \$ _____ I prefer to make my gift by: Visa Mastercard Cheque

Name	City	Province	Postal Code
Address	Phone	Email	
Credit Card Number	Expiry	Signature	

I want to join the Circle of Life! I authorize the Crisis Centre to receive a monthly gift of:

\$50/mo \$25/mo \$10/mo Other \$ _____ / mo

I prefer to make my monthly gift by: Visa Mastercard Chequing account

(Credit Card details above)

(Please enclose a cheque marked VOID.)