

World Suicide Prevention Day

200 people gathered on World Suicide Prevention Day in Vancouver to remember those who have died by suicide, support those who grieve, and raise public awareness that reducing the risk of suicide requires community participation.

As an aboriginal drumming group played in the background, people began to gather, placing shoes on the steps of the Vancouver Art Gallery to commemorate loved ones they have lost to suicide. 220 pairs of shoes stood together, watching over the event, and were later donated to the Lookout Emergency Society.

"Each pair of these shoes is here to remind us of how many lives have been lost but also how many lives can be

saved," said Hilda Fernandez, the organizing committee Chair and event emcee, as the ceremonies began.

Many families stood together in the crowd, holding on to photos of those they have lost, and holding on to each other:

Jude Platzer shared her family's loss, and their continuing pain. "It's been 11 years since we lost our precious 15-year-old, Josh, to the ravages of depression and eventual suicide, but you know the tears are always sitting there ready to roll silently down my face," said Platzer. She knows she is not alone in her grief. "Every day in Canada, ten families' lives are forever changed," she said.

Platzer advocates for education and awareness as the base for preventing suicide. "If we arm ourselves with knowledge, lives can be saved," she said, before marking a moment of silence.

In a ceremony of remembrance, ten people shared the message "Suicide is preventable – together we are stronger" in ten different languages. In pairs, they lit five candles in memory of the 500 people who die by suicide every year in British Columbia.

"We want to remember those loved ones that are gone, hoping that their struggle left a lesson that makes us more aware of the importance of working together to bring light to this issue," said Fernandez as the last candle was lit. "Together we are stronger!" ●

478 British Columbians died by suicide in 2008.

12% of high school students in BC reported seriously considering suicide, and 5% reported making a suicide attempt in the past year.

81 youth in BC took their own lives between 2003 and 2007.

1 in 5 people will experience depression at some point in their lives.



Mindfulness-based stress management pilot

“The exercises really will help me, I hope. I have an anxiety disorder and rarely ever have a sure way to calm myself down when I’m in an anxiety attack...The exercises, especially the body scan, was very useful and I’m going to use them every time I have a panic attack.”

Grade 10 Student



“The exercises we did stood out for me. How we had to close our eyes and just sit and relax. It helped me feel less tensed and my body felt more relaxed.”

Grade 9 student



“The de-stress activities really worked. The ways that we can cope with stress on our own were useful and I will be using them in the future.”

Grade 10 student

In keeping with recent research supporting mindfulness curricula and practices in education settings, the Crisis Centre’s Community Education Department piloted a new stress management workshop last school year that introduces “mindfulness” practices. Experiential exercises are introduced, such as breathing exercises that support youth to notice and reduce the stress in their life, as well as cope with and resolve day-to-day challenges. Research is increasingly showing the power of

mindfulness practices to help build social emotional learning, such as acquiring competencies to recognize and manage emotions, develop caring for others, establish positive relationships, and handle challenging situations effectively.

We are pleased to report that youth have overwhelmingly pointed out the value of these exercises in their everyday lives. See the sidebar callout for a sample of some of what youth had to say about this new workshop. ●

Gold Star from the Child Death Review Unit

The Child Death Review Unit of the BC Coroners Service has awarded the Crisis Centre a Gold Star for its leadership of the Suicide Prevention, Intervention and Postvention (PIP) Initiative for BC. Each year, the Child Death Review Unit awards Gold Stars to agencies or initiatives that have demonstrated excellence and leadership in the area of child health and injury prevention. The full CDRU report can be downloaded at: <http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/coroners/child-death-review/docs/cdru-2009annualreport.pdf>

The Suicide PIP Initiative for BC was developed as a framework and planning template for local, regional and provincial initiatives addressing suicide prevention, intervention and postvention across the lifespan. The Framework and Planning Template is based on the results of a stakeholder snapshot survey and evidence-informed practice review. It was developed to provide guidance on developing, improving, implementing and evaluating PIP supports, services and programs in six priority areas. Learn more about the Suicide PIP initiative and download the Framework and Planning template at: <http://suicidepipinitiative.wordpress.com> ●

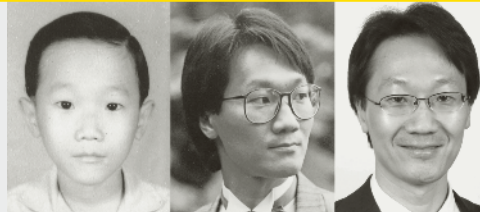
RETIREMENT

Carol Williams

After 26 years, Carol Williams will be retiring from her position as Office Manager at the Crisis Centre in December. She began her work with the Centre as a volunteer, and was hired on as staff in 1984. Carol is the heart and soul of the Centre. Her knowledge of the organization's history, passion for the cause, and strength of spirit will be greatly missed. We wish all the best to "one of the best", in her well-deserved retirement.



IN MEMORY

Peter So,
1962-2010

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of Peter So, one of the Crisis Centre's most dedicated volunteers and donors.

Peter King-Sun So passed away peacefully on August 30, 2010, at the age of 51 (Chinese traditional years) after battling cancer. He was born October 2, 1962, in Hong Kong. He moved to Guyana with his family in 1966 and then to Vancouver in 1969. He said he had a carefree and joyous childhood. Peter studied finance at the BC Institute of Technology ("my best educational decision") and obtained his professional designation as a Certified Management Accountant in 1988. He worked as a Staff Accountant with MDS Metro Labs and BC Gas in the 80's and 90's and was especially proud of his highly rewarding eleven years (1999-2010) with the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of BC where he was Associate Director, Finance and Information Technology until the time of his death.

Peter was a volunteer with the Crisis Centre for eight years (1989-1997), and served as the Chair of our Board of Directors. Peter met his wife of twenty years, Dianne King, through their work here at the Crisis Centre. They have two wonderful children, Derek, 18 and Katharine, 15.

A memorial service was held on September 18, 2010. Condolences may be shared at www.legacy.com or privately at goodbyepeter@gmail.com. Peter's family would love to receive stories about Peter. ●

Support the Crisis Centre when you buy Blenz Coffee

When you buy bags of Blenz coffee online, over \$8.00/bag (sold for \$16.99 each) will come back to the Crisis Centre. That means that for every 6 bags purchased, approximately \$50 comes back to support our organization.

Blenz Coffee is a wholly owned Canadian company, established right here in Vancouver. Blenz Cares offers single origin Machu Picchu (Peru) whole bean coffee that uniquely meets three key certifications – Certified Organic, Certified Fair Trade, and Certified Bird Friendly.

This is a great place to put your coffee dollars – not only drinking world class ethical coffee, but also supporting our organization with every sip. You can order your coffee online at www.BlenzCares.com where you can indicate that you'd like your funds to go to the Crisis Centre.



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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. Volunteering at the Crisis Centre, either on the Distress Line or in the Community Education program, is a great way to make a contribution to the community. It is especially helpful for those planning a career in the fields of counselling, education, patient care, service delivery, or recreation.

We are always looking for interested professionals to volunteer for our Board of Directors.

Volunteers are the heart of the Crisis Centre. Without our team of more than 300 volunteers, our programs could not exist. Whether you have time to commit to four hours a week for a year on the Distress Line, or to commit to two workshops per month in high schools, the Crisis Centre welcomes your interest in becoming one of our valued front line volunteers.

Distress Services volunteers provide emotional support to individuals over the phone and YouthInBC.com (web-based hotline for youth). We offer training to approximately 25-30 new volunteers six times a year. ●

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Application Deadline:

Monday November 29, 2010

Training Session Beginning on:

Saturday January 8, 2011

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

Application Deadline:

November 5, 2010

Training Session Beginning in:

December 2010

The Crisis Centre is hoping to diversify its volunteer base, to best match the demographics of our callers. We are currently seeking to expand the number of volunteers 55+, to reflect the recent growth in calls from seniors.

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

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Charitable Registration # 10699-3322-RR001

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 350+ 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 2009, the Crisis Centre impacted more than 45,000 lives across BC through its:

24/7 DISTRESS PHONE SERVICES

operating four crisis lines and two 1-800 SUICIDE lines which are connected to a network of crisis lines across BC.

YouthInBC.com

innovative, online service where youth can connect live, one-on-one with a crisis chat volunteer, obtain email support from professional staff, locate timely & accurate information on different issues, and connect to referral services in their own community.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAM

delivering youth suicide prevention and stress management workshops to teens in grades 8 to 12 throughout the Lower Mainland and Sea-to-Sky corridor each year. The Crisis Centre also provides Professional Development workshops to a broad range of organizations across BC.