

211 is Coming Soon

Joan Wright, Executive Director

What is 211?

211 is a highly visible, easily recalled number designed to help the public efficiently gain access to appropriate community, government, health and social services.

Why is it important to have 211?

211 will provide the 'first stop' for people who do not know where to go for information about important community services. The line will bring people and services together, empowering them to solve their problems and find solutions that address their needs. 211 is really an enhanced Information and Referral service like the one currently operating at The Support Network (482-INFO).

What is Information and Referral or 'I and R'?

Community Information and Referral is a critical component of the social service infrastructure in communities across Canada but is difficult to promote using seven-digit telephone numbers. Organizations like The Support Network collect and maintain a comprehensive database of available services, and through certified Information and Referral Specialists, help individuals and families connect with them.

What types of calls are received by Information and Referral?

- A senior citizen wanting home care support in order to live independently.
- A homeless person seeking a bed, a place to get out of the cold, and a hot meal.
- A family facing eviction that doesn't know where to turn for help.
- A recent immigrant needing language and employment training.
- A young mother worried about how to properly care for a newborn child.
- A laid-off worker wanting to find out about employment insurance.

- A family searching for child care services in their community or close to work.
- A union counsellor calling as part of an employee assistance program.
- A parent asking where to get food for her family.
- A concerned neighbor trying to help a friend in an abusive relationship.
- A family trying to find services for their son with a newly diagnosed illness.

Who is involved in the 211 project locally?

- The Support Network
- United Way of the Alberta Capital Region
- Community Services, City of Edmonton
- Edmonton Police Services, Communications
- Community Information & Volunteer Centre, St. Albert
- Ma'mowe Capital Region Children's Services
- Provincial Children's Services
- Capital Health Authority
- Information and Volunteer Centre for Strathcona County

When is it up and running?

The local advisory committee is awaiting a CRTC decision and the results of a feasibility study for the Edmonton and Calgary regions before further action.

We will keep you updated on these outcomes and the progress of 211.

Community Information and Referral is a critical component of the social service infrastructure in communities across Canada

The Support Network programs include:

HELP Lines

- Distress Line 482-HELP(4357)
- Community Service Referral Line 482-INFO(4636)

CONTACT THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMS AT 482-0198:

Publications

- *Directory of Community Services*
- *Self-Help & Support Group Directory*
- *Tough Times Handbook*

Suicide Bereavement Program

Suicide Prevention Program

Volunteer Program

Walk-In Counselling

youthone.com

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Walk-In Counselling

Solution-focused counselling is the primary model used by counsellors within the The Support Network's Walk-In Counselling Program.

In more traditional forms of therapy, the client approaches an expert (a social worker, psychologist, nurse, chaplain, teacher, etc.) to provide a solution to the problem at a time when they are in crisis and feel powerless. This process is based on the theory that the family is unable to develop a solution without professional expertise and assistance.

The solution-focused model assumes the family is the expert in their own lives. They can develop their own solutions. Clients have personal qualities and past experiences that, if drawn upon, can be of great use in resolving their present difficulties and create more satisfying lives. Examples of client strengths are resilience, sense of humor, an organized mind, a capacity for hard work, a sense of caring for others, the ability to see things from another's point of view, a willingness to listen to others.

We are interested in exploring positive changes clients want in their lives. By helping them identify goals and solutions based on their previous successes, their resolve is strengthened. In more challenging times, therapists can focus on helping the family discover the solution and apply it to their own particular case.

The program is available at no charge to anyone in need. Call 482-0198 for hours.

A shift in the life of a community counsellor - What's it like?

Victoria O., volunteer

To work as a volunteer counsellor at the walk-in clinic is a rare and privileged experience. We see a broad range of people, from all walks of life; different religions, races, ages, economic means. Generally, by the time they have taken the time to look us up in the phone book, write down our number from the advertisement

on a bus or from the newspaper, taken a car or bus downtown and shown up, they are highly motivated. In essence, what every client wants is to feel better. They have generally exhausted whatever resources they have and feel ready for some assistance. I enjoy working with these clients as they sincerely are looking for something more.

The questions that they bring to us are many. How do I become a good father? How do I let go of my past? How can I get over this betrayal? Can I have this relationship and not lose myself? And in most cases, the clients show us how they have begun to map out their own answers; how they hold the strengths and abilities to form their own solutions. What is needed at that moment is to have someone share in their pain and despair.

As a volunteer counsellor, it is an honor to be allowed into the vulnerabilities and privacy of a person's inner life. It is not often one is offered such an unvarnished look at human nature. And every time I leave a shift I am touched, amazed or awed, by the courage, the frailties, the anger, the love... the sheer depth and variety of emotion that we all share, client and counsellor alike.

If you are looking for a great opportunity to learn and practice solution-focused counselling techniques in a team approach, please contact Colette at 482-0198.

I & R

When you call our Community Services Information Line at 482-INFO(4636), you are calling our I & R Specialists!

Congratulations go out to Vanessa Bowman, Lily Mah, and Cindy Melton, recently certified as Information & Referral Specialists by the Alliance of Information & Referral Systems.

Volunteer Voice

It is not enough merely to exist. It's not enough to say, "I'm earning enough to support my family. I do my work well. I'm a good father, husband, churchgoer." That's all very well. But you must do something more. Seek always to do some good, somewhere. Every man has to seek in his own way to realize his true worth. You must give some time to your fellow man. Even if it's a little thing, do something for those who need help, something for which you get no pay but the privilege of doing it. For remember, you don't live in the world on your own. Your brothers are here too."

Albert Schweitzer

A bit of fragrance always clings to the hand that gives roses.

Chinese proverb

Live as if you were to die tomorrow.

Learn as if you were to live forever.

Mahatma Gandhi

Distress Line Volunteer Training

Edmonton's only 24 Hour Distress Line answers over 2,000 calls each month from people in need, and we need your help to ensure those calls are answered.

We offer volunteers:

- ❖ excellent training in communication skills
- ❖ crisis and suicide intervention training
- ❖ an opportunity for a rewarding and satisfying experience.

**Next training starts
September 18, 2001**

Call Colette at 482-0198 or visit us online at www.thesupportnetwork.com under Volunteer Program for more information and/or a volunteer application.

Good Grief!

adapted from: *SIEC ALERT*, newsletter for the Suicide Information and Education Centre

Supporting Suicide Survivors

More than 3,600 Canadian complete suicide each year. Compounding this critical loss of life is the profound and often debilitating despair and grief experienced by surviving families and friends. Using a modest estimate of six survivors for each suicidal death, 21,600 Canadians are survivors of suicide.

Stigma

Survivors may find that their social network, perhaps even their clergy or caregivers, have judgmental or condemning attitudes or beliefs about suicide. Cultural and religious taboos combine with our tendency to avoid death and bereavement issues and can serve to isolate and stigmatize suicide survivors. A lack of social support can increase a survivor's risk of complicated grieving, depression, and suicide.

Some Common Survivor Responses:

- ❖ a struggle to make sense of the suicide
- ❖ anger
- ❖ guilt over failed responsibilities, real or imagined
- ❖ isolation caused by a sense of self-imposed shame
- ❖ aloneness when others keep their distance
- ❖ blame towards those perceived to have contributed to the suicide
- ❖ awkwardness when others don't know how to respond
- ❖ having to face the traumatic and sometimes unexpected nature of the death
- ❖ difficulty accepting that the death was by suicide
- ❖ fear that powerful grief reactions may not be normal
- ❖ remorse over lost opportunity

- ❖ feelings of being abandoned
- ❖ low self-esteem

What Helps and Heals Us as Survivors?

- ❖ acknowledge that the death is a suicide
- ❖ learn more about suicide and grief
- ❖ acknowledge our loss and our feelings
- ❖ find normal and informal rituals to honour our loved one's life
- ❖ call upon our personal strengths and ways of coping from other difficult times
- ❖ read, write, express our grief in a way and at a time and place that is comfortable for us
- ❖ find other suicide survivors, share our stories and build mutual support
- ❖ understanding and thoughtful offers of support, "I'm here if you need someone to talk to."

Being there is important. Let the bereaved know they are not alone. Offer oneself, and expect that your invitations may be refused. Have patience, and continue to offer oneself over time.

Learn more about suicide and grief at:

Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention

www.suicideprevention.ca

Suicide Information and Education Center

www.siec.ca

www.suicideinfo.ca

If you, your family or friends have experienced a loss to suicide, we at The Support Network invite you to talk about your loss with us. We may be able to help you come to terms with your feelings, either through supportive conversations, participation in our Bereavement Group or through referrals to other helping agencies in the community. Please call 482-0198.

Upcoming Events

19th Annual Spirit Lifter Breakfast

Thursday, October 25, 2001
7:30am

Empire Ballroom ❖ Hotel Macdonald
Guest Speaker: *Dr. Michael Percy*

Dr. Michael Percy is an active member of the University and the community at large. He joined the University of Alberta Department of Economics in 1979. Currently the Dean of the School of Business, he is the author and co-author of four books and numerous articles on public policy, international trade, and economic development.

Dr. Percy serves on the boards of Epcor, the Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, Matrikon, Tolko Forest Products, and Alberta Science & Research Authority.

A native of Banff, Alberta, Dr. Percy has also served as a provincial MLA and as Liberal Finance Critic.

Please join us for a morning that lifts your spirit.

For breakfast tickets call
Laurie Hearn at 482-0198

Information and Referral Network Meetings

The Support Network is offering monthly information meetings. Individuals, staff or agencies are invited to attend and listen to presentations by agencies that provide services on a particular topic. Examples of previous topics include: Low-Cost Summer Recreation, Financial Resources and Employment Agencies. Please join us every 3rd Wednesday of the month at 9:00 am. This is an opportunity to connect with other professionals in the helping field. Our website will give you the latest information about upcoming meetings or you can call Lily, Vanessa or Cindy at 482-0198.

Suicide Prevention Program

Workshops in the Works

(adapted from the Dec. 2000 Report from the Medical Officer of Health)

We might not talk about it, but suicide is a leading cause of death.

Suicide is the 12th leading cause of death worldwide. Every 33 seconds, a person somewhere in the world dies as a result of suicide. Closer to home, suicide is the 11th leading cause of death in Canada.

Since 1954, Alberta's suicide rate has typically ranked above the national rate.

More people die as a result of suicide than from motor vehicle collisions. Each year, suicide attempts are among the leading cause of injury-related inpatient hospitalizations.

Should we talk about it?

You can always talk to us.

If you or a friend or family member suffer from depression or have thoughts of suicide, get help. Don't assume you or your loved one can just 'snap out of it'.

Call the Distress Line (482-HELP) for information or help.

Introduction to Suicide Prevention

a one-day introductory seminar for anyone working in the helping professions

The aim is to increase the understanding and knowledge of suicide for those in a helping relationship with people who might be at risk for suicide. Some factors that put people at risk include:

- experiencing significant losses
- facing multiple stressors
- isolation
- having few resources

Content addresses attitudes, warning signs, risk assessment, intervention techniques, and resources.

Choose from these dates

Wednesday, September 5, 2001
Thursday, October 25, 2001
Friday, November 2, 2001
Thursday, December 6, 2001

8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
#301 - 11456 Jasper Avenue
Cost: \$20 per person

**Call 482-0198 for further information
or to register with Visa or MasterCard**

youthone.com

edmonton's online youth community

Internet Crisis Intervention for Youth

For some of us, it seems like an obvious choice to use the Internet to reach out to youth; for others it is a very scary concept. Can you really do crisis support over the Internet that is safe and effective? Yes - The Support Network is now doing it at youthone.com! It is important for us to provide a service that is safe, accessible, and comfortable for youth. What better way to do it then to go where they hang out?

Youth One is a program developed to create a community for youth online. It will help them get active, get connected and get support. Ways that Youth One provides support online are through: the Crisis Chat Room, the Peer Support Forum, Web

Forums and the Youth One articles.

The Crisis Chat room is a real time conversation with someone who can help. Here youth chat with a volunteer trained in crisis intervention and support. On Peer Support Forums, users can post and/or reply to messages that are personal in nature. Users also may read or write articles on Youth One. To read some of these stories go to youthone.com and click on "Collaboration" and then "Peer Support".

The Support Network has taken several measures to deal with issues of safety and privacy. Users provide minimal information when they register on the interactive components of the site. Information is not provided to other users online.

To get connected, contact
krista@youthone.com.

Congratulations Youth One!

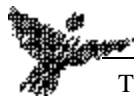
... on receiving the City of Edmonton Youth Council Youth Investment Award for Youth Empowering Spirit (Y.E.S.) and recognizing youth based efforts to help youth.

Congratulations Leo Wong, Coordinator of Youth One

... on receiving the Edmonton Youth Award from the City of Edmonton Youth Council.



The Support Network is proud to be a member of the Alliance of Information & Referral Systems, Inc.



The Support Network Listener
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Member of the Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention

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