

**Distress
Centre**
HALTON

Annual Report 2018/19

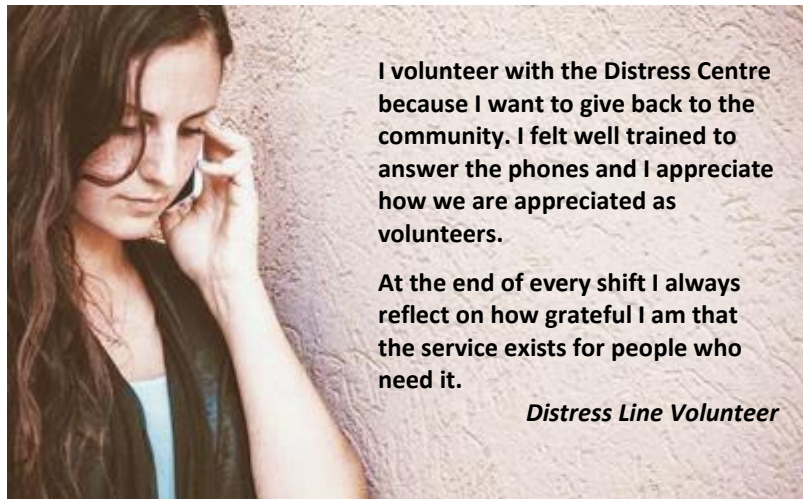
Annual General Meeting
Tuesday, October 22, 2019



United Way
Halton & Hamilton

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I volunteer with the Distress Centre because I want to give back to the community. I felt well trained to answer the phones and I appreciate how we are appreciated as volunteers.

At the end of every shift I always reflect on how grateful I am that the service exists for people who need it.

Distress Line Volunteer

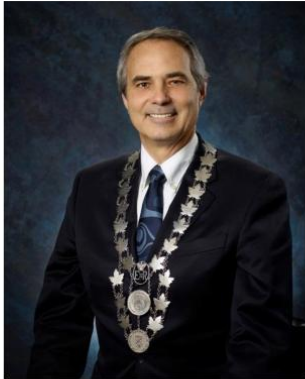


Message from Regional Chair Gary Carr

On behalf of Regional Council, I would like to extend my support and best wishes to everyone attending the Distress Centre Halton Annual General Meeting.

Since 1970, Distress Centre Halton has been providing support to members in our community to better cope with crises, loneliness and emotional stress. The services provided by the Centre has helped to foster a strong community where people can make meaningful connections and find help in a safe place.

Today's meeting is also an opportunity to mark the financial contribution made by Bell Let's Talk. This \$20,000 donation will ensure the Centre is able to provide telephone and online support to people in our community 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Thank you.



Whether through the Distress Centre, or through any of the local supports available across the region, I encourage everyone to continue to have conversations about mental health with family, friends and colleagues. On behalf of Regional Council, I would like to thank Distress Centre Halton for listening and caring for members of our community. Your contributions and commitments to mental health and wellness keep Halton a great place to live, work, raise a family and retire.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Carr".

Gary Carr
Regional Chair

Regional Municipality of Halton
HEAD OFFICE: 1151 Bronte Rd, Oakville, ON L6M 3L1
905-825-6000 | Toll free: 1-866-442-5866

Executive Summary

Message from the Executive Director



We are proudly celebrating our 45th anniversary this year! And it has been a year of exciting and progressive change on nearly every single level!

I joined as the Executive Director on December 17, 2018 – an exhilarating start to the position! Our amalgamation was finalized with North Halton, and our name legally became Distress Centre Halton. We created a new board with both Oakville and Georgetown directors. We launched our TeleCheck Program in partnership with CMHA, and we put in a new phone system, and quickly identified and eliminated phone glitches in internal measurement of data. We made the deadline and submitted a successful proposal to Bell Let's Talk in March!

And yet – we still responded to 16,200 calls between the Distress Line and TeleCheck!

It takes a village to be able to do this and we would like to send out a huge thank you to all of our incredible volunteers! Your time and energy keeps our Centre vibrant and growing!

A heartfelt thank you to our Distress Line volunteers who provide empathy and emotional support to our callers coping with loneliness, crisis, and mental health issues; to our bingo volunteers who show up tirelessly to help out at Delta Bingo to raise funds and awareness for our Centre; to our dynamic and knowledgeable outreach volunteers who staff Display Tables at community events, raising awareness of our services and volunteer opportunities.

Thank you to our Distress Line Trainers who consistently train superior volunteers ready to be on the lines with confidence, empathy, and acceptance. You are growing Halton's citizens on so many levels!

And thank you to our volunteer Board of Directors for their time and commitment as we blended our two boards. Together we look forward to expanding our partnerships both in the community and in the business sector.

It is because all of these many layers of volunteers who selflessly commit their time, expertise and energy that we continue to be a solid contributor to the Halton community.

We also thank our generous funders, the United Way of Halton and Hamilton, Halton Region Community Investment Fund, and Bell Let's Talk for your support of our Centre and our community. We thank our many service clubs, foundations, churches, businesses, and individual donors for their kind and substantial support of our Centre.

And finally thank you to our small but mighty staff, who are very motivated as we look ahead to reinventing the Centre to broaden our messaging and position within the community!

Dara Eisner Clancy
Executive Director

Message from North Halton



2018/19 was our last year as North Halton Distress Centre. We began in 1973 as a small grassroots organization completely run by volunteers and individual donations. Members of the community recognized a need for a free telephone line to provide a caring ear for people in distress or crisis.

Throughout the years, hundreds of volunteers have listened to thousands of calls, helping people that had the courage to reach out for help. However, North Halton along with Oakville recognized the need to increase visibility and accessibility of our services, so we decided to amalgamate our Centres.

During the past year, through the efforts of staff and our Boards of Directors, we legally became Distress Centre Halton as of April 1st, 2019. As if that wasn't exciting enough, after 40 plus years, we are moving locations! In this past year, I have participated on a committee to form a community hub of social services, called "Halton Hills Social Commons." Our moving day is November 15th and we are all so excited to begin this new chapter.

Together, we will continue to provide our services and make a difference in the communities of Halton. We will strengthen the knowledge and skills to build capacity in our communities to recognize signs of suicide and also help eliminate the stigma associated with suicide and mental health.

Gail Cartwright
Operations Director
(Former Executive Director, Distress Centre North Halton)

Message from the Chair



What to say about this past year? The Centre has seen many changes over the past several years but I think I can say without a doubt that this year had the most changes packed into one year in the history of the Centre.

We started the year in April of 2018 still trying to put together all the documentation for the amalgamation. We were looking forward to our second Walk2Talk fundraiser in June, which was still a learning process. Then in August we learned that our Executive Director was resigning.

I was blessed to have the time and the support of my family so that I could step in and serve as the Acting Executive Director in September while the board searched for the right candidate through the Fall. At our AGM in October 2018 we were able to complete the legally required steps toward our amalgamation with Distress Centre North Halton which occurred on April 1, 2019. And best of all, Dara Eisner Clancy came forward to apply for, and become our Executive Director in December 2018.

Dara is a true force of nature who accomplished many great things in those last three months of our past fiscal year. You can ask her about the new phone system, the TeleCheck program, changes in the phone room, and many more activities that took so much of her time, which she willingly gave.

We are closing the book on the 2018-2019 year but with the knowledge that we are poised to do great things. We have great volunteers, great staff, and a great board of directors, all of whom are committed to the mission of Distress Centre Halton.

Richard Darjes
Chair, Board of Directors

About Us

Distress Centre Halton is a non-profit charitable organization that provides telephone and online support to people 365 days of the year. We are a unique service in that we train volunteers for front-line work providing emotional support, befriending, and suicide risk assessment to people in distress or crisis.

Our service improves the health and wellness of people in our community and the quality of life of those who are feeling alone, isolated, and vulnerable.

Our Mission

Distress Centre Halton supports people in our community to better cope with crisis, loneliness, and emotional stress.

History

Distress Centre Halton is an amalgamation of 3 small Centres that originated in the 1970s – Distress Centre Oakville, Distress Centre North Halton, and Telecare Burlington. In April 2019 the Centres legally amalgamated and officially became Distress Centre Halton.

Originally volunteers answered the phone lines on Friday and Saturday nights only. As the demand for the service grew, the hours were extended to 24/7, 365 days of the year. In 2018/19 we responded to 16,200 conversations.

Board of Directors

Richard Darjes, Chair
Allison Boyd, Secretary
Florence Fiorino, Treasurer
Kimberley Calderbank
Jeff Campbell
Jodi Dwyer
Eric Hotson
Michelle Lee
Kristin Madarasz
Brandi Stevenson

Staff

Dara Eisner Clancy, Executive Director
Gail Cartwright, Operations Director
Brenda Buchanan, Manager, Volunteer & Client Services
Kathleen Bontigao-Legaspi, Coordinator, TeleCheck & Community Outreach

Volunteer Trainers

Marlene Beitz
Janis Bellman
Brenda Buchanan
Tim Dixon
Jodi Dwyer
Linda Jaklich
Michael Miu
Feeroza Suchak
Michael Thornton
Kathie Tourangeau
Susan Vandenberg

Our Services

DISTRESS LINE – Call Us Anytime

People call us for lots of reasons, including:

- Feelings of loneliness
- Relationship issues
- Bullying
- Bereavement
- Thoughts of suicide
- School or work issues
- Addictions
- And many more ... no issue is too big or too small

Call us. We listen. We care.

Oakville: 905-849-4541

Burlington: 905-681-1488

North Halton: 905-877-1211

Our Distress Line is available 365 days of the year, 24/7.



TELECHECK – We Call You

- Safety & Well-Being check
- Medication or Appointment reminders
- Calls can be once a week, several times a week, or daily
- Cancel anytime, or stop and restart as needed

Calls are weekdays 9am-4pm, you choose a time that's best for you. For more information contact us at 905-849-4559 x 104.



TEXT & CHAT – Connect Online

Like the Distress Line, people contact us for many reasons, but prefer to do so online.

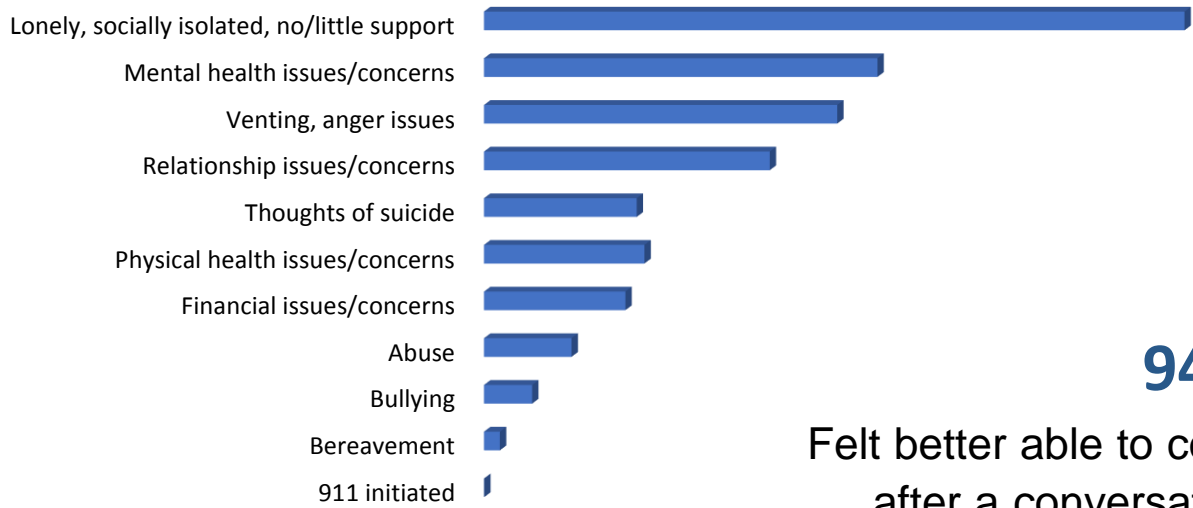
Text: 647-557-6250

Chat: www.dchalton.ca/get-help

Text & Chat is offered throughout the week, check our website for available times.



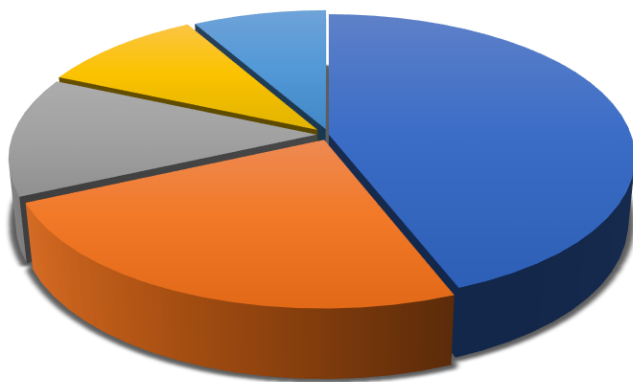
Impact



94%

Felt better able to cope after a conversation with our volunteers

Supports Offered



- Listened, befriended, provided emotional support
- Let caller vent, get things off their chest
- De-escalated the situation, ensured client safety
- Discussed self-care, coping strategies
- Explored options, next steps

178

Total Volunteers

7,678

Volunteer Hours

1,350

Average Conversations Per Month

Financials – Fiscal 2018/19

Fiscal 2018/19

Revenue

Donation and Funding Income	\$ 139,995	61%
Fundraising Revenue	89,451	39%
Interest Income	<u>18</u>	0%
	\$229,464	

Expense

Administrative Expenses	\$ 179,165	72%
Communication Expenses	20,684	8%
Contract Services	5,244	2%
Fundraising Expenses	5,272	2%
Program Expenses	15,265	6%
Occupancy Costs	23,013	9%
HST Rebate and Adjustments	<u>1,539</u>	1%
	\$ 250,182	

Complete audited financial statements are available through our office.

Client Feedback

My best support is calling the Distress Line. It really helps me cope with my thoughts of suicide. Thanks for being there tonight.

You calmed me down, you are saving me and you are giving me hope. Thank you for taking my call tonight.

You're the only people that have really helped me and have cared and listened to me. People getting paid don't listen as well as you guys do.

Just remember that you've really helped me tonight, and I don't think I could have done it without you. Whenever you're done tonight, treat yourself to a nice meal, you've earned it.

I really want to thank you and everyone at the Distress Centre. You're all such wonderful people for volunteering your time to talk to others and provide them with help.

Not many people on this earth would do what you're doing. I don't know how to say thank you enough.

I'm so grateful for our conversation today. I love that I was able to feel so understood. I've called before and always feel so supported. Thank you for everything.

Talking to you has made me feel so much better, and I do not know what I might have done had I not talked to you tonight. Thank you.

The volunteers on the Distress Line have saved my life on multiple occasions. The work you do helps me so much and in turn I'm using the strength I get from these calls to go out and help other people in my life.

If I didn't have you guys, I wouldn't be here. Thank you - really thank you, you don't understand how much it helps to have someone to talk to in times like this.

I talked to you and I let it all out. It was like a balloon, it feels so good to just have it out. Thank you so much for taking my call, for listening, for being there and accepting me with all my differences.

Our Supporters

Distress Centre Halton is a United Way Funded Agency. We also receive donations from service clubs, churches, local businesses, and individuals.

Your donations allow us to support the people of Halton to better cope with crisis, loneliness, and emotional stress.

Thank you!

United Way Halton & Hamilton

Altruist of Oakville

Atlas Van Lines

Backman Family Foundation

Bell Let's Talk

Boehringer Ingelheim Canada Ltd.

Burlington Community Foundation

Canadian Mental Health Association

CCL Industries Inc.

CIBC Children's Foundation

compu-master

Crystal Homes

Delta Bingo Oakville

Distress & Crisis Ontario

Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce

Halton Regional Community Investment Fund

Halton Suicide Prevention Coalition

Johnson & Johnson

Knights of Columbus Oakville, Marian Council

Lions Club of Oakville

MacDonald Foundation (a fund held within the Oakville Community Foundation)

May Court Club of Oakville

Meridian Credit Union

Norval United Church Women

Panago Pizza

PV & V Insurance Ltd

Ramrock Electric

Sherwood Digital Copy & Print

St. Andrews United Church Springfest Committee, Georgetown

St. John's United Church Women, Georgetown

St. John's United Church, Oakville

The Georgetown Bridge Club

"VintageBeef" aka Daniel M

All Individual Donors

Call to Action

Donate: Donations make it possible for Distress Centre Halton to support people in our community to better cope with crisis, loneliness, and emotional stress. Donations over \$25 are tax deductible, a charitable receipt will be issued. Donations can be made online here: dchalton.ca/donate.

Volunteer: Volunteers are the lifeline of our service! No prior experience is needed, we provide the training. For more information about volunteer requirements and upcoming training dates, visit our website: dchalton.ca.

Walk2Talk: Watch our website and social media for more information about our 2020 Spring fundraiser! You can walk on your own or put together a team – ask friends, family, co-workers! Make it a challenge! This is a family & pet friendly event. We'll be posting more information soon or email us: info@dchalton.ca.

Distress Centre Halton

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