CONNECTING TO THE FUTURE...

408 HELPLINE
82,000+ CALLS ANSWERED

24 HOURS
7 DAYS A WEEK

SURVIVOR SUPPORT PROGRAM

ONTX COLLABORATIVE
13,000+ CHATS/TEXTS

NEW TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

CREATING NEW ACCESS

100,000+ UNITS OF SERVICE

ONTX CONNECTING TO YOUTH

HI, THIS IS DISTRESS CENTRES...

2016 ANNUAL REPORT
The Distress Centres of Toronto owes a deep debt of gratitude to Karen Letofsky. It all started in 1979 when Karen, as a staff member of the Distress Centre, created the Survivor Support Program, a face-to-face support program for those bereaved by the suicide of a loved one. (In 2010 this program identified the needs of those bereaved by homicide and the program was expanded to include them.) This was the beginning of almost 40 years Karen has dedicated to innovating the help-line sector and truly making Distress Centres the gold standard to which other distress centres across North America aspire.

In 1995 Karen became the Executive Director of the Distress Centre and among a myriad of other things over the years, in 2001 spearheaded the amalgamation of the Toronto call centres into one volunteer-based organization.

In addition to being a leader in developing DC programs and processes, Karen has been the primary driver behind many of our fundraising efforts, including our single largest event, the B.A.D Ride (Bikers Against Despair). This is a motorcycle ride held the last Sunday in May and since its inception 20 years ago, Karen and her team have raised almost $3,000,000 to support the services of the Distress Centre.

In December of 2007, in recognition of her contribution to suicide prevention in Canada, Karen was named a Member of the Order of Canada. Karen’s long career developing community-based assistance programs for people in emotional distress or at risk of suicide earned her the country’s highest honour that “recognizes a lifetime of outstanding achievement, dedication to the community and service to the nation.”

Karen is truly a leader in the help-line sector through her involvement in the Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention, Distress Centres of Ontario, the National Collaborative for Suicide Prevention, the Canadian Distress Line Network, and many other varied organizations that are dedicated to bettering the lives of those who live with mental health concerns.

As Chair of the Board of Directors, it fell to me to accept Karen’s letter of resignation and I did so with a heavy heart. In the 11 years I have been involved with the Distress Centres, first as a volunteer on the phone lines and then on the Board, I have come to know Karen well. My respect and admiration for Karen’s skills and abilities is deep, and the professionalism with which she undertakes her duties as our Executive Director knows no bounds. Personally, I am honoured to call Karen a friend. She is someone I will always look up to with the greatest respect and admiration.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I cannot thank Karen enough for her tireless and incredible contributions to the Distress Centres of Toronto. We all wish her the greatest of successes in her coming endeavours but will miss her terribly.

Helen Dixon, President

Board of Directors:

Helen Dixon, President
Lisa Swartzman, Treasurer
Julia Smith, Secretary
Judy Dankey
Andrea Louis Ng
Mark Sklar
Stephanie Kersta
Helga Schnider
Alain Thibault
Ahmeed Meer
Heather Simpson
Jasmine Wong
MESSAGE FROM BOARD CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we enter into our 50th year of continuous service, Distress Centres is well positioned to renew and re-invigorate its commitment to the community. As Canada’s oldest and largest crisis helpline, the cusp of a significant anniversary provides both a reflection moment for assessing the past and heightened energy in anticipation of the future. 2016 was just such a year for our organization: strengthening the existing foundation; and, innovating and adapting to address emerging needs.

Distress Centres, the agency that pioneered national attention to the issue of suicide prevention, continues to participate today at the local, provincial and national levels, creating awareness, fighting stigma and providing support to those who are at risk. The original value propositions that provided the guiding principles for our organization’s initial outreach to the community still define a model of service that is relevant and inclusive. Distress Centres works within a framework of collaboration, partnership, beliefs in the empowerment of both service user and provider, and the assurance of universal access.

During this past year, technology continued to play a central role in the revitalization of our infrastructure. Thanks to the generous support of the RBC Capital Markets and the Toronto Rotary Club Foundation, we were able to design and install a state of the art telecommunications system that significantly increased capacity and flexibility. This technology enabled us to enter into new service partnerships and to continue to fully participate in expanding our online presence and our involvement with the soon-to-be launched pioneering National Suicide Prevention Service. In an environment that is focussed on integration, streamlining and the elimination of duplication of services, we are well prepared to play important leadership roles in both existing and newly configured suicide prevention, mental health support and crisis response systems. It will also allow us to provide an enhanced volunteer experience through enriched service opportunities and additional feedback and learning. As well, we are now able to provide the community with more comprehensive social reporting on the emotional well-being of its citizens, including the robust analysis of outcome measures.

Distress Centres, through its life-sustaining programs, remains firmly embedded in community, working to inform and engage those in need. In 2016, we were proud to participate in two international events that brought our mission to an even wider audience. During the month of September, our agency partnered with Toronto Public Health, as part of World Suicide Prevention Day, in a city-wide poster campaign targeting high needs, under-served middle aged males. And, we were tremendously moved in November at the first-ever full day Survivor Conference that marked International Survivor of Suicide Loss Day. Almost 150 individuals trying to manage in the aftermath of their traumatic losses gathered to share and learn together.

The socio-political environment for our sector remains challenging as it adapts to changing economic, social and technological factors. Our resiliency remains rooted in our deep connection to the community and our responsiveness to service gaps, changing priorities and newly identified needs. This would not be possible without our deeply committed and skilled staff team who do whatever it takes to keep the lifelines open. We are grateful to them for their leadership and passion. As we are to our incredible volunteer corps, working 24/7 to create a meaningful connection with our service users. It is your ears, voices and hearts that make the difference. Distress Centres is also most appreciative to our Board of Directors who have enabled us to create a vision and the path to achieve it with their able oversight and strategic input. Thank you as well to our core funders, United Way of Toronto and York Region and the City of Toronto. You have provided us with organizational stability, the foundation from which we grow.

Distress Centres’ historic record of leadership and impactful services was just the beginning. We look forward to continuing to partner and innovate as we move into the next generation of services for those who are emotionally vulnerable and at risk.
408-HELP LINE

82,000+ CALLS ANSWERED

FEMALE
65%

MALE
33%

OF CALLERS EXPERIENCED POSITIVE OUTCOMES
93%

AGE

under 24 25-44 45-64 65+ unsure
4% 34% 28% 20% 14%

PHYSICAL HEALTH

WORK/FINANCES

ABUSE/VIOLENCE

SUICIDE

MENTAL HEALTH

INTERPERSONAL

REASON FOR CALL

100% 100% 34% 22% 17% 8%

CRISIS LINK
(Partnership with TTC and Bell Canada)

338 CALLS
174 IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE

EMS WARM-TRANSFER LINE

562 CALLS 9% INCREASE

PARO HELPLINE
(Professional Association of Residents of Ontario)

600 CALLS 31% INCREASE
CALLER REASSURANCE PROGRAM

4573 OUTBOUND CALLS

28% 68% 4%

AGE 45-64 AGE 65-84 AGE 85+

ONTX - ONLINE TEXT/CHAT SERVICES

13,461 COLLABORATIVE CHATS/TEXTS (QUADRUPLED)

26 NEW VOLUNTEERS

5 TRAINING SESSIONS

567 SHIFTS

80% UNDER AGE 24

SURVIVOR SUPPORT PROGRAM

561 SURVIVORS SUPPORTED

135 PARTICIPANTS AT 1ST SUICIDE SURVIVOR CONFERENCE

86% SUPPORT WILL HAVE LONG TERM IMPACT

73 VOLUNTEERS

HOMICIDE SURVIVORS SUPPORTED (31% increase)

ONTX

615 VOLUNTEERS

867 APPLICATIONS RECEIVED TO VOLUNTEER

284 APPROVED FOR TRAINING

187 GRADUATED INTO PHONE ROOM

15% INCREASE IN VOLUNTEER BASE
REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT AUDITOR ON THE SUMMARY STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

To The Members of Distress Centres

The accompanying summary statement of operations (the "summary statement") for the year ended December 31, 2016 is derived from the audited financial statements of Distress Centres for the year ended December 31, 2016. We expressed a qualified audit opinion on those financial statements in our report dated March 27, 2017 (see below).

The summary statement does not contain all the disclosures required by Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations. Reading the summary statement therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial statements of the Centres.

Management’s Responsibility for the Summary Statement of Operations

Management is responsible for the preparation of a summary of the audited financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Auditor’s Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the summary statement based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Canadian Auditing Standard (CAS) 810, "Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements". However, the summary statement may be misstated to the equivalent extent as the audited financial statements of the Centres for the year ended December 31, 2016.

Opinion

In our opinion, the summary statement derived from the audited financial statements of Distress Centres for the year ended December 31, 2016 is a fair summary of those financial statements, in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

In our report dated March 27, 2017 on the audited financial statements, we expressed a qualified opinion. Our qualified opinion is based on the fact that in common with many similar organizations, the Centres derives revenues from fund-raising events and donations, the completeness of which is not susceptible to satisfactory audit verification. Accordingly, our verification of these revenues was limited to the amounts recorded in the records of the Centres. Therefore, we were not able to determine whether, as at and for the years ended December 31, 2016 and 2015, any adjustments might be necessary to revenues, deficiency of revenues over expenses reported in the statement of operations and assets and net assets reported in the balance sheets. Our qualified opinion states that except for the possible effects of described matter, if any, those financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Centres as at December 31, 2016, and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Toronto, Ontario  CHARtered ACCOUNTANTS
March 27, 2017  Licensed Public Accountants
## SUMMARY STATEMENTS OF OPERATIONS

**YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenues</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United Way Toronto and York Region</td>
<td>$395,581</td>
<td>$319,712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants - City of Toronto</td>
<td>114,050</td>
<td>111,605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTC Crisis Link</td>
<td>109,931</td>
<td>109,931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporations, foundations and church groups</td>
<td>126,398</td>
<td>135,965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donations - individuals</td>
<td>131,074</td>
<td>128,144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund-raising events (net of expenses)</td>
<td>218,915</td>
<td>180,671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Medical Services</td>
<td>22,338</td>
<td>22,338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Professional Association of Residents of Ontario (PARO) grant</td>
<td>63,345</td>
<td>63,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amortization of deferred capital grants</td>
<td>11,622</td>
<td>10,192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest and miscellaneous</td>
<td>14,178</td>
<td>5,853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,207,432</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,087,756</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenses</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salaries and employee benefits</td>
<td>805,990</td>
<td>768,243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building occupancy</td>
<td>115,418</td>
<td>113,476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office - telephone, supplies, postage, etc.</td>
<td>175,419</td>
<td>171,139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer recruitment, training and resources</td>
<td>66,498</td>
<td>69,277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting and audit</td>
<td>8,419</td>
<td>8,159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation</td>
<td>13,953</td>
<td>10,467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General and administration</td>
<td>46,110</td>
<td>29,124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,231,807</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,169,885</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Deficiency of revenues over expenses for the year                        | $ (24,375) | $ (82,129) |
ONTX
An Ontario-wide collaborative, partnering with 4 like-minded organizations, to deliver online chat and text crisis support. Targeting the in-between generation of older youth and young adults, currently available from 2 p.m. to 2 a.m. with plans to expand reach, access and hours of operation in 2017.

408-HELP LINE
Canada’s oldest and largest 24/7 crisis line, offering emotional support to marginalized and socially isolated individuals with mental health concerns as well as to those experiencing acute emotional distress and risk due to family violence and suicide vulnerability. The service is delivered by more than 600 screened, trained and supervised lay responders.

SURVIVOR SUPPORT PROGRAM
Survivors of suicide and homicide loss are themselves vulnerable to premature death from violence/suicide, family breakdown and the downward emotional spiral in the aftermath of sudden violent death. This program, including a peer component, provides individual and group support to address and contain the impact of these trauma-based grief events, using bereavement support as a means of suicide prevention with this high risk population.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES WARM TRANSFER LINE
In partnership with Emergency Medical Services, suicidal individuals waiting for assistance to hospital, once dispatch information has been obtained, are emotionally supported by our responders until EMS personnel arrive on the scene.

CALLER REASSURANCE PROGRAM
Working with a network of senior-serving community agencies, this callout program to the isolated and vulnerable elderly, living independently, is intended to provide emotional support and crisis/suicide prevention in order to reduce the risk of premature institutionalization and early traumatic death.

CRISIS LINK
In partnership with the Toronto Transit Commission and Bell Canada, the first in the world subway suicide hotline, with a direct link to Distress Centres from every subway platform. The program is supported by a system-wide suicide awareness campaign.

PARO
Distress Centres provides an arms-length crisis line for medical residents, students and their families throughout Ontario. Partnering with the Professional Association of Residents of Ontario, this anonymous and confidential service reduces barriers to help-seeking for those who are emotionally vulnerable and at risk.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EDUCATION PROGRAM
With expertise in the areas of suicide, crisis response, emotional first aid and volunteer management, this program engages with community for knowledge transfer, networking and collaborative endeavours. In addition to providing training and consultation, it supports community development through its social reporting on gaps in service and emerging mental health needs.
THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS AND SPONSORS

**INDIVIDUAL DONORS - $1,000+**

Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous
Alain Thibault
Cindy and Robert Blakely
Liz and John Breen
Esme Hurst
Isberg Charitable Trust
James & Barbara Stewart
Janet E. Dewan
Anne, Jim and Marion Garner
Joan Wright
John and Josie Watson
Judith R. Wilder
Julia Kane
Lisa Swartzman
Margarita Citron
Perry & Cheryl Mercer
Rap Foundation
Bob and Gayle Cronin
Sandra Simpson
Shelagh Wilson
William and Martha McDonald
William & Gail Szego

**CORPORATIONS, FOUNDATIONS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

Asbury and West United Church
Audrey S. Hellyer Charitable Foundation
Bedford Park United Church Women
CIBC Mellon Global Securities Services
Donald F. Hunter Charitable Foundation
Dylan French Hope Foundation
E.W. Bickle Foundation
Echo Foundation
Eva's Thanksgiving Fund at the Toronto Foundation
Gore Mutual Insurance Company Foundation
Humber Valley United Church Women
Hydro One Inc.
IBM Employees' Charitable Fund
Jackman Foundation
J.S. Cheng & Partners Inc.
Longo's Family Charitable Foundation
Martha Millon Foundation
Morningstar Air Express Inc.
Ontario Power Generation
Rogers Communications
Rosedale United Church
Sony Canada Charitable Foundation – Employee Program
TD Bank Group
The Andrew Ferrone Memorial Fund
The B & B Hamilton Foundation at the TCF
The BLG Foundation
The Caring Foundation
The Catherine & Maxwell Meighen Foundation
The Harry E. Foster Charitable Foundation
The Henry White Kinnear Foundation
The McLean Foundation
The Robert Campeau Family Foundation
The Rotary Club of Toronto
United Church Women, Group B at Lawrence Park Community Church

**BAD RIDE SPONSORS**

Artik
Beard Winter LLP
Bentall Kennedy
Cybility Studios
Dave and Buster’s
Davies Harley-Davidson
Hero Certified Burgers
Hooters
Incredible Printing
Jacox Harley-Davidson
Lake Simcoe Arms Pub & Restaurant
Lamorea Productions
Lettieri Espresso + Bar
Mackie Harley-Davidson
Mackie Moving Systems
Markham Fairgrounds
MotoLimo
Motorcycle Mojo Magazine
Motorcycle Supershow
Neal Brothers Foods
Percel Inc.
Petite Thuet
Q107 Classic Rock
Ralota Technologies Inc.
Ready Honda
Ready Powersports
Riders Plus Insurance
Rogers
Stitchy Lizard
Terraplan Landscape Architects
The Motorcycle Show Toronto
Yamaha Motor Canada
WE COULDN’T HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOU!

PEARL'S CHOICE HOTLINE SOCIAL
October 13th

THINKING OF SUICIDE?
Don't stay silent. Call for help.

CONNECT 2 HOPE CAMPAIGN

BALLS FOR CALLS
Young Professionals Charity Baseball Tournament
June 25th

TORONTO PUBLIC HEALTH CAMPAIGN
This holiday season, help us to help someone in need...

Help young people find their way out of the darkness

Your support will help make the difference between despair and hope

$50 helps train one volunteer responder

$125 provides tech support for 100 users

$250 provides a day of service

I prefer to give $  

This holiday season ONTX will help young people find their way out of the darkness to discover hope. Your support is helping us make the difference to provide a path for them. Thank you.

YES! I want to ensure that young people continue to text for help, when needed

I've enclosed my cheque payable to: Distress Centres

I'll use my Credit Card

Visa           Mastercard

Card Number
Expiry Date
Name on Card
Signature
Phone #
Email

Thank you!

In July 2015 Distress Centres launched ONTX, an online and text service for individuals in crisis. This is a partnership with four other Distress Centres in Ontario. The service is open from 5pm - 12am, 7 days a week. Since launching the service we have received an unprecedented response with over 10,000 users and 80% of them are under the age of 24. If you would like to learn more, the following is an ONTX story.

It is December 2015, a young girl is huddled alone in an abandoned warehouse. She is just 19. It is a very cold and dark night. She picks up her cell phone and sends a text:

Hi... is anyone there?

Yes, my name is Jane, what's going on?

Can you tell me what happened, is it something to do with the youth shelter?

Anne, I understand how difficult this must be for you. It sounds like you have had a lot of trauma in your life.

I'm having flashbacks, I just came from the youth shelter and I need to say goodbye.

Look I've got these pills and razor blades. I won't miss this time. I tried last week. I just wanted people to know that I at least tried. I've done therapy, meds, the hospital… I'm giving up.

Jane, a Distress Centres responder recognizes that this person is in crisis and then probes for more information. She wants to make her feel safe:

Anne, you are safe now. You do not have to take your own life. You are worth more than your life. I'm going to stay with you until you are safe.

Anne, I understand how difficult this must be for you. You have had a lot of trauma in your life. Can I help you to keep going? Can I help you to keep safe?

Yes, I've got these pills and razor blades. I'm not going to use them. I've got therapy and I'm going to go to the hospital. I'm going to keep going.

Anne, thank you for talking to me. I'm going to stay with you until you are safe.
MISSION
WE FOSTER HOPE AND RESILIENCE
ONE CONNECTION AT A TIME

VISION
TO ENSURE THAT EVERY INDIVIDUAL
IN NEED RECEIVES LIFE-SUSTAINING
EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Distress Centres
10 Trinity Square
Toronto, ON  M5G 1B1
416.598.0166
info@torontodistresscentre.com

WWW.TORONTODISTRESSCENTRE.COM

Charitable Registration Number:
10702 1016 RR0001