



43 YEARS OF SERVICE TO ERIE COUNTY



WINTER 2012

The Hotline Comes of Age

Forty-three years ago, Crisis Services opened its doors and began taking phone calls from those individuals in emotional crisis. The phones were staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. During that first year, 7300 calls came in. Over the next several years, the calls kept coming and the agency grew. New programs were added: the Advocate Program in 1978, the Outreach Program and the Homeless Program in 1980. By 2011 the number of calls coming in to Crisis Services had increased to over 130,000 per year.

In 2008, Crisis Services began using a web-based database program specifically designed for crisis centers. This software allows us to log every call received and track the status and progress of each call. It allowed us to implement a paperless referral system from our hotline to our other agency programs. It puts information and referrals at every counselor's fingertips and enables us to generate data-rich reports and statistics with the touch of a key.

In 2009, Crisis Services began the planning and development process required to update our phone system, which was installed one year ago. This state-of-the-art telephone system has streamlined the method in which calls are received and answered, and has greatly increased the capacity for incoming calls. There are also many enhanced components, including automatic call distribution, updated call recording and expanded data collection.

In addition to the leaps in technology, there have also been changes in the make-up of our staff and volunteers. We have hired a number of Masters Level counselors for our overnight shifts. And our volunteer base continues to impress, in terms of education, employment background and diversity (as reported in our Summer 2011 Newsletter).

As a result of all of these factors, Crisis Services has introduced a new program, **Clinic After Hours**. Offered to licensed mental health clinics who are now responsible for their clients 24 hours a day, this program provides after hours crisis response to the clinic's clients during non-business hours. All calls are answered by a Masters Level, NYS Licensed Counselor or Social Worker, and the clinics get a full reporting of all of their client's calls the next morning.

Another outcrop of these enhancements was the awarding of the **New York State Domestic and Sexual Violence Hotline** contract to the Crisis Services' Advocate Program, by the New York State Office of the Prevention of Domestic Violence. This Hotline, which provides 24 hour crisis intervention, emotional support and linkage to local resources for the entire state of New York, received over 16,000 calls during the first year of operation under the agency's management. Additionally,


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Upcoming Events

Tuesday, April 3, 2012
Girls Night Out 
 Transit Valley Country Club • 6 pm
 Fashion Show provided by TJ Maxx

Saturday, April 28, 2012
Walk A Mile in Her Shoes 
 12 - 3 pm
 The international men's march to stop rape, sexual assault and gender violence begins at Crisis Services' parking lot and goes 1 mile down Hertel Avenue ending at the North Park Theatre.

Tuesday, October 2, 2012
6th Annual MEN Who COOK 
This year, our signature event returns to the Statler!

For more information on any of these events, call 834-2310 ext. 4467. You can also visit our website at www.crisisservices.org

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THE **SAFETY NET**

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*Douglas B. Fabian,
Executive Director*

Technology: Keeping Pace with Quality

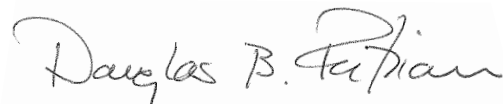
In 2005, a member of our Board of Directors, Jeff Bagel, said to me in the most sincere manner possible, *"Crisis Services' greatest claim is that you offer a live voice in real time 24 hours a day. And, while many companies are creating call centers in other lands and in other cities, you are a local resource which guarantees a live and real time response."*

At the time, I thought I understood and appreciated the dimension of his claim but it is only today that I truly find full value in what he told me six years ago. Indeed, technology is having a profound impact on our personal and professional lives. There isn't a meeting that goes by in which I do not hear the drumming of the latest technology which is bringing medical records to our fingertips (EMR), the retention of data in "dashboard" fashion and the instantaneous communication via Twitter, Facebook, Skype and blogs. While at times invasive, and at other times questionable in its accuracy, the instant sharing of information via today's technology is truly mindboggling, and changing at the speed of light.

But, the true strength in our service and the true measure of our effectiveness is in the personal touch between caller and phone counselor at any time of the day or night. Technology will bring us together faster and more often with our callers but it will not replace the caring touch, the supportive voice or the purposeful guidance which drives many of our callers to our hotlines.

It is difficult to imagine what our "hotline" services will look like in the years ahead. Unless the human spirit changes remarkably, I am confident in guaranteeing that technology, while a necessary ingredient in order to be competitive in today's marketplace, will never replace a confident and reassuring voice at the other end of our hotline saying, "How can I help you?"

My many thanks to those on staff, in management and on our board of directors who listen closely to the necessity of technological invention. But I would like to offer a very special "thank you" to those who answer the hotline calls and rise above the tensions of the day to address a caller's most personal and pressing concerns, right at that moment, in real time and with real compassion. My guess is that the agency's future success will be grounded in a blend of appreciating and utilizing technological advances while remaining true to the mission of ensuring the best, most caring connection between caller and hotline counselor.



Douglas B. Fabian,
Executive Director



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Benefitting from the Generosity of the Community and the Kindness of Strangers

Crisis Services has been the recipient of many recent community fundraisers for which we are very grateful.

Last fall, the Youth Ministry Program at St. Anthony's Parish in the Town of Farnham raised \$950 for Crisis Services. Their 2nd Annual fundraising dance, held on October 29, 2011 was organized and put on by grades 6-11. Crisis Services was chosen to be the recipient of the proceeds to remember a classmate who completed suicide last year.

Following that, Villa Maria College raised over \$100 at a concert called "Make Music, Stop H8 - Rise Against Bullying" which was both an awareness and fundraising event for the college community.

On January 28, the UB Men's Group put on a 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament called "Hoops for Hope 2012" that raised over \$700 for the Advocate Program at Crisis Services. This is the same group that has sponsored "Walk A Mile in Her Shoes" for the past several years, always raising money and awareness for the issue of Sexual Violence. Walk A Mile 2012 will take place on April 28th beginning here at Crisis Services.



"UB Men's Group 3 on 3 Hoops Tournament, Jan. 28, 2012"



Walk A Mile 2011

For more information on this event, go to our website at www.crisisservices.org or to <http://www.facebook.com/TheMensGroup>. This year promises to be the biggest walk yet, with Jimmy Janowski serving as Celebrity Chair. Jimmy is no stranger to walking in high heels and Crisis Services is thrilled to have him join the Walk A Mile team.

Other upcoming fundraisers include a Praxair Jean's Day for the month of February, and a percentage of the proceeds coming from the release of an upcoming DVD from the Extreme Drum and Guitar School. The DVD highlights anti-bullying assemblies at local schools.

There has also been a marked increase in the number of memorial gifts we are receiving. As people become more aware of the work that we do, they are more inclined to remember Crisis Services when a loved one dies, and request that donations come to Crisis Services.

This has been a very welcome development for Crisis Services and we are humbled by the outpouring of support we are receiving from the community. If your group is interested in holding an event to benefit Crisis Services, call Judy Caraotta at 831-4467 or email jcaraotta@crisservices.org.



John Bell advocated for survivors of domestic and family violence and sexual assault.

John Bell Retires After 12-Year Career as Advocate for Crisis Services

John Bell, one of Crisis Services' most well-known and beloved Advocates, cleared off his desk for the final time on January 26, 2012. He retired after twelve years on the job as the Hotline Counselor for the Advocate Program. Discussing his feelings on his last day, John said, "I'm feeling OK, though change is always difficult. It's tough leaving friends and the work that we do, but I'm comfortable knowing that the staff is very capable of carrying on.

After walking these halls for the past twelve years, I look forward to doing something different."

Boredom should not be a problem for John in retirement. He sits on the Board of Directors of the Joan A. Male Family Support Center as well as the chaplain for The Warrior Club, a group of male community activists in Buffalo. He serves as the Associate Chaplain at the Evangelistic Temple Community Church and is a member of the Interfaith Task Force Against Domestic Violence.

During his 12-year stint at Crisis Services, John worked with and assisted thousands of survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, taking their calls on the hotline, supporting and advocating for them in the hospitals and assisting and advocating for them in the courts. We wish John, (and his wife Joyce) the best in his retirement.

Advocate Program Sponsors Statewide Conference

The Advocate Program was pleased to be a sponsor of a statewide conference held at Buffalo State College on Feb 9 & 10, 2012, "Moving Beyond Mandates: Adjudicating Sexual Violence on Campus". Over 25 colleges and university professionals from across the State attended to learn about best practices in implementing sound campus judicial board sexual assault hearings. The Advocate Program's very own Brandi Sutherland opened the conference with a powerful presentation.

The Hotline Comes of Age, continued from page 1.

the Advocate Program was chosen to provide the hotline as the single point of entry for the non-residential domestic violence system in Erie County as part of a consolidated, coordinated response by the Erie County Department of Social Services. The **Domestic Violence Helpline (862-HELP)** went live on January 1, 2012.

Throughout these forty-three years, along with the remarkable growth and evolution of the Crisis Services' Hotline, one thing has remained unchanged - that Crisis Services remains committed to serving those in crisis 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This is how we've become the most comprehensive crisis center in upstate New York.

Teen Suicide as Seen From the Eyes of an Expert



Effie Malley, Director of the National Center for the Prevention of Youth Suicide

2011 saw an increase, locally, in the number of reported suicides in Erie County, particularly in the 14-19 year age group. After the very high-profile suicide of Jamey Rodemeyer, many school districts and parents were looking for guidance and answers. Crisis Services, which is accredited by the American Association of Suicidology, turned to their National Center for the Prevention of Youth Suicide. Judy Caraotta, editor of the SafetyNet, interviewed Effie Malley, Center Director, in late 2011. Among many other points, Ms. Malley points out the strong link between depression and suicide, the demographics of the youth most at risk, and the critical need for a comprehensive plan in each and every school district. She also discusses the importance of a crisis hotline in the community and the role that it can play. To read this interview in it's entirety, go to our website www.crisisservice.org.



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Crisis Services Board of Directors

Crisis Services is guided by its Board of Directors. Presently, the Board is made up of 13 members from various walks of professional life. Crisis Services strives to have a diversified board so that many population groups of Erie County and Buffalo are well represented. Board members cycle on and off the board every two

to three years. Thus, the board is always active in its recruitment of prospective board members for future placement. Should you be interested in serving on the board of directors at Crisis Services, or know someone who might make a good fit, contact Douglas B. Fabian, Executive Director, at 834-2310, ext 121.



Scott Weber, President - Scott is a Vice President in M&T Bank's

Technology Business Services Group. Scott and his wife live in Amherst with their 2 daughters; are life-long Western New Yorkers who enjoy the winters as much as the summers.



Scott Atwater, Vice President - Scott is an attorney with Gross

Shuman Brizdle & Gilfillan in Buffalo. He and his wife, Janet reside in East Aurora and are the parents of 3 daughters, one in college in Virginia, one in law school in Albany and one working as an engineer in Richmond, VA.

Patricia Vorpahl, Treasurer - Vice President for Physician Services at Kaleida Health, responsible for directing all activities through which Kaleida Health employs physicians and contractually engages physicians and physician groups to perform clinical, administrative, or educational services on behalf of the organization. Patty is married with three children, a daughter in law and a granddaughter and lives in Pendleton NY. They spend their summers at their cottage at Long Beach, Canada.



Ryan Lucinski, Secretary - is an attorney at Hodgson Russ

LLP, where he concentrates his practice in the defense of complex products liability and personal injury actions. He has successfully handled major litigation matters on behalf of corporations, insurers, and individuals. An active member of the Buffalo community, he serves as a volunteer for Habitat for Humanity. He lives in Clarence Center with his wife and four children.



Cristine Adams - Board Certified in Emergency Medicine, Cristine is

Clinical Assistant Professor for the UB Emergency Medicine residency program and Attending Physician at Buffalo General, ECMC, and VA. She is married with 2 children. In her spare time she competes in triathlons. Cristine was an advocate volunteer when she was in medical school, roughly 13 years ago.



LaVonne Ansari - is currently the CEO/ Executive Director of Community Health

Center of Buffalo, Inc. Dr. Ansari is a member of various local and national boards. She is known for her advocacy work in the areas of health, education and human rights.

Kathleen Ballard - Executive Director at Erie 1 BOCES and the Executive Director/Supervisor of the Niagara Frontier Industry Education Council



Ryan Casullo - is a Small Business Banker and Assistant Vice

President at First Niagara Bank. Active in the community, Ryan serves on the Men Who Cook committee chairing the event in 2011 and coming up in 2012. He is also the Board Chair for Music is Art, as well as a 2011 graduate of the Leadership Buffalo Rising Leaders class. Ryan enjoys vacations with his wife Jill and two children Liam and Layla, as well as camping and anything else involving the outdoors. Ryan is a lover of music, local Buffalo sports and the City of Buffalo in general.

Rita Chase-Brown - Human Resource Manager of Total Facility Care, Inc, Rita and her husband, Christopher Brown, are the parents of 7 year old twins (a boy Michael and a girl Jordan), and reside in West Seneca. Michael was diagnosed with Autism when he was three and since then they have been very active in the local Autism community. In her limited free-time her hobbies include, bowling, bird watching, scrapbooking, photography, and cake decorating.



Cynthia Hammer - President of Premier Consulting Associates, of Amherst

New York. Cindy specializes in small and large group healthcare plan benefits consulting. She has chaired and been a board member of various local and national associations. Cindy enjoys spending her free time cooking and traveling with her family.



Brian LaPrade - Brian is a Director of Marketing at Greatbatch, Inc.

He and his wife and 3 daughters have called Amherst home for the last 13 years. Together, they enjoy all the great outdoor activities that Buffalo has to offer.



Theresa A. Vallone - Occupational Therapist, Clinical Associate Professor,

Academic Fieldwork Coordinator. Dr. Vallone is a registered occupational therapist (OTR) whose 25+ years of clinical experience has been in adult & geriatric sub-acute rehabilitation, long-term care, home-care, and consultant services to nursing homes in WNY. She is very involved in several on-campus events and committees at D'Youville College. She is a member of the "Men Who Cook" Steering Committee. She is a West Seneca resident, is married to Carm, and has two children, Marisa & Matthew, and a Jack Russell Terrier, Lucas.



Robert Zielinski - Audit Manager at M&T Bank. Robert

grew up in Cheektowaga, and has recently returned to Western New York, after spending twenty years in Boston, MA, to be closer to family and get involved in the community that has been near to his heart, for his whole life."

OUR MISSION

Crisis Services is dedicated to promoting the health, safety, and well being of the community through prevention, education, immediate intervention and access to community wide resources 24 hours a day.



Please consider donating your old cell phone(s) to Crisis Services to help survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. Call 834-2310, ext. 4467 for more information.

MEMORIAL & TRIBUTE GIFTS TO CRISIS SERVICES

Make a donation today in support of Crisis Services and those who depend on our critical services.

Remember a friend, loved one or family member for a birthday, anniversary or special celebration or to offer a meaningful expression of one's sympathy, love and respect at the time of death with a gift to the Crisis Services Foundation. Your gift today can help Crisis Services continue to provide excellent services and programs to individuals in need in our community, as it has since 1968. In order to treat and assist people in emotional crisis through a variety of therapeutic services, we need your ongoing generous support. Enclosed in this newsletter is a convenient envelope for your use, or you may charge (MasterCard, VISA or American Express) your donation online by visiting our secure website at:

www.crisisservices.org

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Read about the evolution of the Hotline, See "The Hotline Comes of Age" beginning on page 1.

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