

# Volunteer Nanaimo



December 2020

3148 Barons Road, Nanaimo. BC V9T 4B5

## Dates to Remember

**OFFICE CLOSED**  
December 23 to January 8  
*Re-opening Mon. Jan 11 at 9 a.m.*

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## Contact Us

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**Facebook:** 'Volunteer Nanaimo'  
**Website:**

<http://www.volunteernanaimo.ca>  
**Hours of Business:** Mon. to Thurs.  
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.



## Member of the Month

### Vancouver Island Crisis Line

The Vancouver Island Crisis Society is a registered non-profit organization that provides **Vancouver Island Crisis Line** service to the entire island, the islands of the Georgia Strait, and the mainland communities between Powell River and Rivers Inlet.

The Vancouver Island Crisis Line has adapted and grown over the years. Founded in the 1970s as a volunteer-run local crisis line, it grew to become the Vancouver Island Crisis Line in 2010 thanks to a partnership with Island Health.

In addition to the Vancouver Island Crisis Line, we also partner in answering for 310Mental Health Support and 1800SUICIDE provincially, and Canada Suicide Prevention Service nationally. As well, we provide **Crisis Chat** and **Text** services from 6-10pm nightly. Through such services we provide 24/7 emotional support for callers in need, connection to community resources, and public access to crisis response teams across Vancouver Island. All services are confidential and anonymous. We strive to offer kind, non-judgmental support to anyone who is struggling personally or needing support regarding a loved one.

All crisis line workers are trained in suicide awareness and prevention and can offer third-party call-out services to those at risk.

In response to COVID-19, the Vancouver Island Crisis Line has continued to be operational 24/7. We have noticed a 4% increase of interactions from March to September 2020 compared to the same period in 2019. In March and April 2020 we recorded the highest rate of COVID-19-related interactions with 21% of interactions being related to the pandemic.

Slowly, this percentage declined to 5% in the month of September, 2020.



Cont. over

Vancouver Island Crisis Line *continued*

We have adapted our community support services and education programs to digital platforms to accommodate social distancing with respect to COVID-19. Our youth mental health education program, COPE (Communicate, Options, Perspective, Enjoy Life) is now fully available online.

Recently, our new Suicide Bereavement Support Services has been offered to Vancouver Island survivors of suicide loss via the Zoom platform and through phone support. We offer a two-tiered, flexible support system that considers that longer-term help is beneficial to the healing process. Supports available include a monthly online Suicide Bereavement Support Group, and ongoing individual support calls and meetings. We are privileged to be in our 50<sup>th</sup> year of “helping people find their way” through these uncertain times.

**For more information, please email us at [info@vicrisis.ca](mailto:info@vicrisis.ca) or visit us online at [www.vicrisis.ca](http://www.vicrisis.ca).**

## Volunteer Voices



“It is a challenging feat to pick just one thing that I love most about volunteering at Vancouver Island Crisis Society. Being in a position to provide support to those going through difficult times is a truly remarkable honour and privilege. It has also been a great opportunity to learn about all of the resources available to the public.

Volunteering here has also been a wonderful experience in regards to the incredibly supportive work environment and the amazing and dedicated group of people that I get to work with. I was motivated to begin volunteering at VICS, because it is a chance to positively impact the lives of others and has been a good tool to clarify that helping others is the right path for me.

This volunteer opportunity has given me the confidence and skills to move forward in pursuing a helping career in the future. Nothing has given me a stronger sense of pride than being someone people can turn to for help, and it has been an irreplaceable experience in my life that has opened me up to a variety of perspectives.

Nothing brings me greater joy than knowing that I have been able to make a difference”.

*University student, volunteer for one-and-a-half years*

## Volunteer Voices

“I spent most of my adult life so busy that making enough money to survive was the main priority. In my late 30’s life took a turn and I found that there was time for me to spare. I began searching for ways to deepen my life experience.

When I came across the Vancouver Island Crisis Society, I just knew it would be the right fit. My personal journey has been filled with tragedy and heartache and as a result has taught me to be a very compassionate, kind and empathetic person.

Supporting those in crisis is my way of giving back. It allows me to feel connected to others and provides me with a sense of purpose. It reminds me of just how precious each and every life is.

I volunteer in memory of my sweet sister, Jules.”

*Mother, small business owner,  
volunteer for two years.*

### Vancouver Island Crisis Line

**Phone: 1-888-494-3888**

**(24 hours)**

**Text: 250-800-3806**

**(6:00pm to 10:00pm)**



to our members, funders, donors  
volunteers, supporters and friends  
**from everyone at  
Volunteer Nanaimo.**



Brooklyn, Paige and Hannah were three of our youngest Christmas Angels last year.

### **At this time of year, we at Volunteer Nanaimo have good reason to believe in angels!**

Last year, our Christmas Angels program helped make the holiday a little brighter for 397 households, reaching 1,190 individuals.

That's a lot of Christmas cheer!

This year we expect the need to be even greater.

#### **We invite families, individuals and local businesses to join our Angel Brigade.**

With your family members, neighbours, friends and co-workers, you might choose to:

- ★ **Adopt a family** - of two or more people.
- ★ **Adopt a vulnerable youth** who is attending school, but in foster care, group housing, etc.
- ★ **Adopt an individual senior or adult.**
- ★ **Donate grocery store, restaurant or movie gift cards – even \$10 would help.**  
(E.g. Tim Horton's, Subway, Thrifty Foods, Cineplex, Marks, etc.)
- ★ **Contribute small items such as tea towels, gloves, hats and socks, umbrellas, colouring books and markers, cosmetics** such as shampoo and hand cream.
- ★ **Make a cash donation** – which we will use to buy gifts for clients for whom we have not found an Angel.  
*We accept donations in cash, by cheque, or through the 'Please Donate' link on our website at [www.volunteernanaimo.ca](http://www.volunteernanaimo.ca).*

**To learn more about this program, or to offer to join this year's Angel Brigade, please contact Rita at [vnaimo@gmail.com](mailto:vnaimo@gmail.com) or 250-758-7121.**

#### **We offer particular thanks to**

Brad Bailey of Colliers International for providing us with a site for sorting, storing and distributing Christmas Angel donations this year.

*Individuals and families who benefit from the Christmas Angels program are referred to us by many agencies and support staff in our community.*

***If you need a hamper through this program, please contact your social service agency or support worker to learn more.***



## Volunteer Nanaimo Youth Making a Difference!



**Youth 20/20 Can & YouthNetWork members are busy making a difference in our community, one project at a time!**

We invite youth between 11-29 years old to join us. Come share your ideas and passion, get connected and have fun while helping to shape our community.

We had an exciting November. Our biggest projects were handing out care packages on Wesley St. in downtown Nanaimo to community members who are homeless, and making a video for Remembrance Day.

Our members interviewed three local veterans, then created a short film to honour Remembrance Day, (available at "*Honouring Veterans | Youth 20/20 Can Nanaimo*" on YouTube). They also painted poppies onto rocks and distributed them around the Waterfront prior to Remembrance Day.

We completed the Island-wide Youth 20/20 Can Anti Racism workshops, learning how to stop being silent bystanders, instead becoming active responders by disrupting racism and helping build a safer, and more inclusive community.

In December we are continuing our Pen Pal letter project for seniors at the Kiwanis Lodge and Eden Gardens care homes, along with brainstorming ideas on how we can spread the Christmas cheer from home during these Covid-19 times. We decided to create a video to celebrate the 12 Days of Christmas, with a funny twist. Be sure to check it out on our Facebook page Youth 2020 Can Nanaimo. We are also putting together a Youth 20/20 Can Random

Acts of Kindness calendar, which we will be sharing with the public. We hope you will join with us in spreading kindness.

The calendar will be posted on our Facebook page and on the Volunteer Nanaimo website under Youth Programs.



### Coats for Christmas

Sadly, our second annual Coats for Christmas event had to be cancelled due to the recent restrictions with the recent outbreaks of COVID-19.

At last year's event, we collected over 600 items including coats, hats, gloves and socks for community members who are homeless.

We hope that when restrictions end we will be able to have the event in the New Year.

**For more information on Volunteer Nanaimo Youth Programs, call Gwen & Kamilla at Volunteer Nanaimo, 250-758-7121.**



This newsletter is published monthly by Volunteer Nanaimo, which is solely responsible for its content.

[www.volunteernanaimo.com](http://www.volunteernanaimo.com)

Editor Lois Peterson

If you'd like to know more about anything you read here, or would like to contribute material, please email us at [vn3148@volunteernanaimo.ca](mailto:vn3148@volunteernanaimo.ca) with 'Newsletter' in the subject line.

*We gratefully acknowledge the support of the Province of British Columbia – Gaming Commission*

