"When you're in need, we're only a moment away"



CRISIS CENTER

218 S.E. 24th Street Gainesville, Florida 32641

Crisis Line.....264-6789

Business Line......264-6785

Rumor Control......264-6557

• 24 Hours A Day •

(A certified Center of the American Association of Suicidology)

CRISIS CENTER

PHILOSOPHY

Personal crises are part of living. Each person experiences important crises during his/her life and, in general, deals effectively with them. There are times, however, when a crisis seems so intense and overwhelming that normal efforts to deal with it do not work. The Crisis Center is available to help in such situations.

The policy of the Crisis Center is simple: to respond to every request to participate in the solution of any human problem whenever and wherever it occurs.

Sometimes that help may mean the difference between living and dying; more often it means listening to someone's problems and participating in their solution. The Crisis Center mobilizes other community resources when this is appropriate to the helping process.

All services provided by the Crisis Center are offered without charge to those who use them. However, contributions or donations to assist our volunteers are gladly accepted. For more information, please contact the Crisis Center.



HISTORY

The Suicide and Crisis Intervention Service was opened in 1969. The Information & Referral Service (I&R) was founded in 1972. These services merged in 1975 to form the Alachua County Crisis Center. In 1983, I&R became a separate program under United Way. The Rape and Crime Victim Advocate Programs were added to the Center in 1979 and 1981 respectively. In 1984, the Rape/Crime Victim Advocate Program became a separate program under the Department of Volunteer Services. In October 1982, the Retired & Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) became conjoined with the Center to form the Department of Volunteer Services.

Since 1991, the Crisis Center has functioned as an office of the Department of Community Support Services, which is administered by the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners.

VOLUNTEERS

The Crisis Center utilizes trained volunteers and graduate counseling students to provide most of its services to the community. Volunteers at the Crisis Center come from all sectors of the Alachua County population. They have in common a genuine concern for persons in distress.

All volunteers must complete a comprehensive training program before serving on the Crisis Line. The training program teaches the philosophy, theory, and practice of suicide and crisis intervention. Emphasis is placed on the practical aspects of listening and responding as well as the process of engaging in helping relationships.

SERVICES

CRISIS LINE

The Crisis Line is a 24-hour telephone crisis intervention and counseling service offered by trained volunteers under the supervision of the Crisis Center Staff. Phone counselors are always available to listen to your problems and participate in their solution.

CARE TEAM

The CARE Team is an emergency mobile outreach team composed of experienced, carefully selected volunteers who respond to people in crisis whenever face-to-face contact is essential. The CARE Team also supports the phone counselors during emergency situations. The role of the CARE Team is especially critical when suicide and life-threatening situations occur.

CRISIS COUNSELING

During regular business hours (8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m., Monday - Friday), the Center offers short-term crisis counseling by appointment or on an emergency walk-in basis.

COMMUNITY TRAUMA RESPONSE

In recent years, our community has experienced numerous traumatic events (multiple homicides, industrial accidents, vehicular tragedies, etc.) that have impacted entire segments of our population. In response, the Alachua County Crisis Center has coordinated and/or participated in community wide interventions including CARE Teams, debriefings, group crisis counseling sessions, rumor control hotlines, and education programs.

RUMOR CONTROL

The Center's Rumor Control has now become an established, highly publicized number (264-6557), available 24 hrs/day to respond to concerns arising from any type of actual or potential tragedy or disaster that might impact our community. Working with other local organizations and agencies (law enforcement, Emergency Management, the Alachua County School Board, the University of Florida, etc) the Center's Rumor Control is able to convey up-to-date information and resources pertinent to citizens impacted by community traumas as well as immediate crisis intervention services.

AFTER-HOURS INFORMATION & REFERRAL

After business hours, and during weekends and holidays, the Crisis Center answers calls for United Way Information & Referral. In exchange, United Way Information & Referral provides the Crisis Center with upto-date community resource directories. This service links people with the community resources available to help solve their problems or answer questions.

AFTER-HOURS VICTIM ADVOCACY

After business hours, and during weekends and holidays, the Office of Victim Services calls are answered by the Crisis Center. In addition to offering phone counseling, the volunteer has contact with an Advocate-On-Call. Advocates may provide immediate response to victims as well as offer support and assistance in the hospital, during law enforcement interviews and during any legal proceedings. The Office of Victim Services is a program within the Department of Community Support Services.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

The Center's commitment to the community extends beyond its direct service to individuals in need. Each year the Center also conducts hundreds of workshops, lectures, and other educational programs which typically focus on topics such as suicide and crisis. Presentations can be arranged by calling 264-6785.

OTHER SERVICES

The Alachua County Crisis Center is committed to responding whenever possible to the emotional needs of individuals in our community. Specialized service programs for survivors of suicide, survivors of homicide, families, couples, children, Vietnam veterans, and groups or individuals experiencing various post trauma stress reactions have been offered. For further information on these or any other possible service areas for the Center, please call 264-6789.

SUICIDE

Once each minute an American consciously tries to kill him/herself. It is estimated that more than 50,000 persons in the United States commit suicide each year and that at least eight times that many attempt to take their own lives.

Suicide is still a major taboo in our society and many myths are attached to it. A fact common to nearly all suicide deaths, however, is the incalculable personal loss suffered by the bereaved family and friends.

If you or someone special to you is considering suicide, please call us. We'd like to help.

FACTS AND FABLES ON SUICIDE

Myths and fallacies tend to arise and circulate about the subjects our society has deemed taboo. Present knowledge refutes the following myths:

FABLE: Suicidal people just want to die.

FACT: Most of the time, suicidal people are torn between wanting to die and wanting to live. Most suicidal individuals don't want death; they just want the pain to stop.

FABLE: People who commit suicide do not warn others.

FACT: Out of 10 people who kill themselves, eight give definite clues to their intentions. They leave numerous clues and warnings to others, although clues may be nonverbal or difficult to detect.

FABLE: People who talk about suicide are only trying to get attention. They won't really do it.

FACT: WRONG! Few commit suicide without first letting someone else know how they feel. Those who are considering suicide give clues and warnings as a cry for help. In fact, most seek out someone to rescue them.

FABLE: After a person has attempted suicide, it is unlikely they will try again.

FACT: People who have attempted suicide are very likely to try again. 80 percent of people who commit suicide have made at least one previous attempt.

FABLE: Don't mention suicide to someone who's showing signs of severe depression. It will plant the idea in their minds and they will act on it.

FACT: Many depressed people have already considered suicide as an option. Discussing it openly helps the suicidal person sort through the problems and generally provides a sense of relief and understanding. It is one of the most helpful things you can do.

FABLE: Suicide strikes much more often among the rich — or, conversely, it occurs almost exclusively among the poor.

FACT: Suicide is neither the rich man's disease nor the poor man's curse. Suicide is very "democratic" and is represented proportionately among all levels of society.

FABLE: Once a person is suicidal, he/she is suicidal forever.

FACT: Individuals who wish to kill themselves are "suicidal" only for a limited period of time.

