

SPECTRUM

CHIMO

Just what is CHIMO anyway?

Information line. Friendship line. Crisis line. Suicide Intervention line. All aptly describe Chimo, a helpline initiated in 1971 by UNB and STU students and established by the Clergy Council, social workers, and concerned citizens, in addition to students.

1971. The era was characterized by Led Zeppelin, the Stones, and bell-bottom pants. Canada was divided and still reeling over the October Crisis of the previous year. The Crisis Centre movement, conceived in California — where else? — swept to Canada. Determining a need for a confidential helping agency, STU and UNB students elicited support from the community via flyers hand delivered to residents of Fredericton inviting them to an organizational meeting.

Fast forward twenty-one years later and Chimo remains very much a community and university agency.

An Inuit word meaning "I am your friend", Chimo is currently open 24 hours per day, every day of the week. (Commencing Dec. 25, Chimo will return to its regular operating hours — Sunday through Thursday 9 am to 1 am and 24 hours on weekends.)

Fredericton and Oromocto residents can receive help by calling 450-HELP (450-4357) while residents of rural communities in the capital region can call Chimo's toll-free number: 1-800-667-5005

Funded by United Way Centraide Fredericton, Oromocto and Area United Way, and until recently, the provincial government, Chimo offers several other programs in addition to the helpline, acting as an answering service to seven other community agencies, publishing an Annual Directory of Community Resources, and providing Workshops in Suicide Intervention

throughout the province. In addition, special Awareness campaigns are targeted to adolescents, seniors and residents of rural areas.

Chimo Recruiting Volunteers

Who are volunteers and what attracts them to volunteer work for which they can receive no public recognition? What are the rewards of such work?

Chimo volunteers — ranging in age from 18 to 80 — are nurses, teachers, homemakers, bankers, accountants, social workers, secretaries, engineers, military personnel and students ... In short, Chimo volunteers are your neighbours, relatives, friends and fellow students.

Some volunteer as thanks from past help received; others volunteer to contribute to the community. Some students volunteer as a means of gaining valuable experience in preparing for a chosen career. Stu-

dents have come from the faculties of Arts, Science, Law, and Engineering. Students comprise about half of Chimo's volunteer contingent every year. Without students, Chimo simply couldn't exist.

Regardless of motivation, volunteers care, and are good listeners who realize the value of "just being there" (much as a friend is) for someone in need — whether isolated by loneliness or troubled by a crisis. In fact, the Inuit word Chimo is a fitting description of a Chimo volunteer.

A comprehensive training program is provided to all volunteers; the Fall Program is due to commence Sept. 26. Training, a combination of theory and practice, includes lectures pertaining to: Communication Skills; Crisis Intervention; Addictions; Family violence; Incest; Problem-Solving; Mental Illness; and, Suicide Intervention.

Upon completion of the Training Program volunteers are required to do three 4-hour shifts per month, for a period of one year, or, in the case of students, until April. Volunteers have the flexibility of choosing their own shifts. If you're interested in volunteering please call Chimo at 450-HELP.

The Rewards ... "Just Being There"

The rewards like the calls are many and varied:

A single parent calls seeking affordable housing. Can Chimo recommend anything?

Just being there helps people help themselves.

A young man with AIDS reaches out to a stranger because his friends and family have abandoned him.

Just being there for someone alone and lonely is friendship.

A teenage girl phones, looking for a safe place to which to run from her father's beatings.

Just being there for someone alone in crisis can be a turning point.

Feeling extremely depressed, the caller reveals that the pressure of exams, coupled with the ending a serious relationship leads him to think more and more of suicide.

Just being there for someone suicidal can be the difference between life and death.

Commencing in two weeks, this publication will feature a weekly Chimo column, describing in greater detail the kinds of calls which Chimo receives, and listing community resources available.

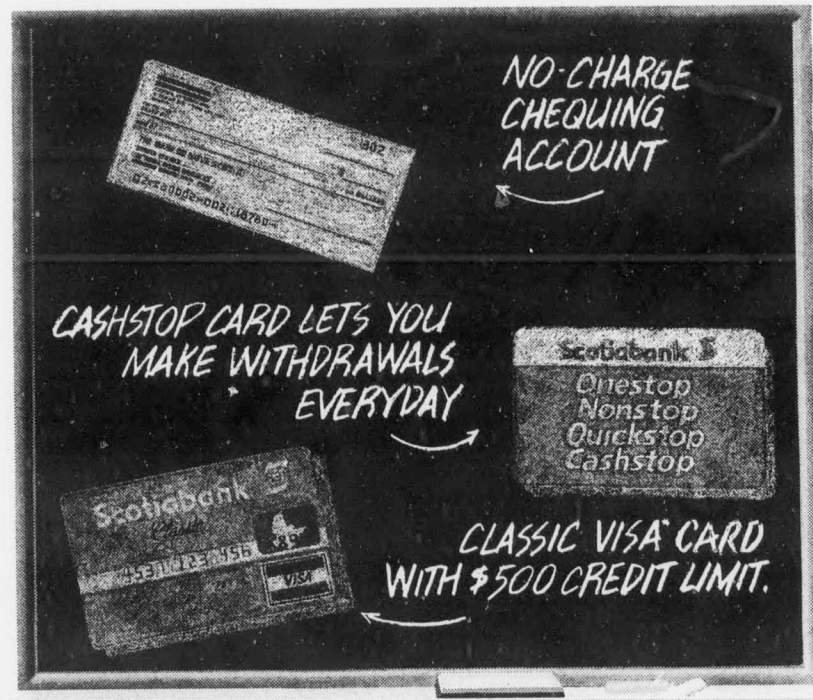
Loonie For Life

In 1991 Chimo received 116 suicide calls.

Many suicides go unreported. It is estimated that under-reporting ranges from 10-50%. For every completed suicide there are 100 attempts. Suicide is a serious social issue, affecting 1 in 10 New Brunswickers.

Help Chimo continue its suicide education and intervention work. Donate a loonie during Chimo's "Loonie for Life" Campaign Sept. 28-30. Look for Chimo donation boxes at various locations on campus: in campus stores, cafeterias, residences and faculty offices.

Save a life — give a loonie.



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