



Distress Centre Oakville supports people in the community to better cope with crisis, loneliness, and emotional stress.

They provide free, confidential, inbound and outbound phone, text and chat services staffed by highly trained volunteers.

Anyone can contact the Distress Centre, about anything, at any time. Caring, compassionate volunteers will listen without judgment to provide emotional support, befriend or intervene in times of crisis, when callers may be having thoughts of suicide. Volunteers help people explore options to find hope. They also provide referrals to services in the community if requested.

The Distress Centre is an integral part of the continuum of care for mental health and well-being and an active contributor to suicide prevention.

Since 2010, the Distress Centre has raised between \$5,000 to \$15,000 annually, through OLG together with Delta Gaming Centre Oakville. Funds raised through charitable gaming are used for:

1. Software Licenses and Support - The iCarol system is integral to the Distress Centre. It is used to log call data, access information, and manage scheduling. It provides reporting to understand trends in call volumes, types, and demographics. This system also supports the Text & Chat services.
2. Telephone, answering services and internet - Multiple Phone, Text and Chat lines are required to support over 1,200 conversations each month. Secure internet access is required to access the iCarol tool. The website is the main access portal for clients to contact volunteers by Chat.
3. Volunteer Training – Volunteer training is eight weeks, 24 hours total training time, and two mentoring shifts prior to volunteers engaging with clients. It involves certifications in CPR++, safeTALK and much more!
4. Brochures and Marketing Materials - Print materials provide the base for client outreach. They are distributed widely at speaking engagements, awareness events, fundraisers, community centres, hospitals and other health care facilities.

Charitable Gaming funds support functions that are critical in providing accessible, confidential, no cost, phone/text/chat services with caring and well trained volunteers for people who need to talk. Distress Centre Oakville facilitates over 1,200 conversations each month while operating on a 40:1 volunteer/staff ratio! In 201, Distress Centre Oakville participated in over 1,000 conversations that involved direct crisis and/or suicide.

In 2016-17, Distress Centre Oakville will collaborate with Distress Centre North Halton by linking their call centre technology. They will evolve with shared services, a combined website and market their services together to create synergy in their impact.

Charitable Gaming plays an integral role in fundraising efforts and is considered one of Distress Centre's most valuable partners.

For more information on the Distress Centre, please visit: www.dcoakville.com

"I spent so much time looking at the phone afraid to call. This call changed my life and I'm eternally grateful. One day I'm going to look back at this conversation and realize it's the day that I started to live."



"The volunteers at the Distress Centre are my lifeline."



"Volunteering at the Distress Centre has allowed me to touch the lives of others in a meaningful way."



"Talking to you on the line keeps me from feeling like I'm having panic attacks and it always helps get me out of my own head and process things better."