



Distress Centres
of Greater Toronto

Annual Report



2022

REPORT FROM CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In an age where access to mental health supports is one of the most critical social issues on any political agenda, we are proud to have supported thousands of people in the GTA, with services that are free, accessible, and effective. In 2022 we engaged in over 160,000 helping interactions ranging from inbound crisis lines, outbound support to individual and group support for those who have experienced loss due to suicide or homicide.

Last year, we held our inaugural 4K Walk to End Suicide in High Park in line with World Suicide Prevention Day. What we were hoping would raise \$30,000 and be attended by 75 people turned out to be much more. In fact, we had over 200 people in attendance and raised approximately \$150,000 to support our critically needed and free mental health programs and services. More importantly we came together as a community, raised awareness about suicide and broke down stigma. Thank you to everyone that supported this event as a committee member, volunteer, sponsor, fundraiser, donor and/or walker.

Our efforts to build a diverse, inclusive, and equitable organization continue - in 2022 we deployed our first ever social identity survey that will eventually help us better understand the composition of our workforce and the makeup of our service users to ensure that DCGT is known by and helps all communities in the GTA. As well, we worked collaboratively with The 519, to create a Survivor Support Program tailored to members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community, the first program of its kind in Canada. We have provided community consultations and support sessions to folks who are connected to other programs within the 2SLGBTQ+ community and have developed training materials and other resources specifically for the suicide loss experience within this community.

In 2022 we completed an overhaul of our organizational branding with the aim of creating a contemporary look that was welcoming and calming. We have heard many positive comments on our new brand, including “it speaks to who DCGT is and what we stand for, “it is a beautiful metaphor” and “Birds evoke hope, freedom, peace, spring and sky.” Thank you to the many members of the DCGT community who shaped our new branding.

REPORT FROM CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CONTINUED

We also rebuilt our website to create stronger degree of clarity amongst our many programs as well as to achieve AODA compliance. We expect that our website will continue to grow as an important resource for suicide prevention, intervention and postvention.

In 2022, we joined a new community at the Centre for Social Innovation (CSI) in Toronto. Working alongside like-minded people, CSI affords us great choice and efficiency in meeting our various space needs in a manner that greatly supports stronger organizational agility and flexibility.

DCGT continues to be a pivotal partner in the national suicide prevention service known as Talk Suicide. In 2022, we managed over 14,000 text and call interactions, and we look forward to being a key player in the 988 Suicide hotline which will be implemented in late 2023.

A sincere thank you to the many volunteers who are the lifeblood of DCGT. Together with Staff and Board of Directors, your talent, time, energy, and passion to make a difference is making a difference in the lives of thousands of people across the GTA.

Our work is fueled by the support of numerous funders and donors, many of whom have been there for us for decades. Know that your support is greatly appreciated, and we work diligently to make sure it helps as many people as possible.



Mark Sklar, Chair



Robert Ridge, Executive Director



2022 PROGRAM RESULTS AND SUCCESSES

DCGT recorded over 160,000 helping interactions in 2022.

408 Helpline	Calls Answered	35,630
Multilingual Lines	Calls Answered	25,751
Partnership Lines	Calls Answered	1,787
Talk Suicide	Text & Voice Interactions	14,471
Elder Abuse	Number of Calls	51
Tele Check	Calls Placed	43,152
Touching Base	Calls Placed	22,777
Caller Reassurance Program (CRP)	Calls Placed	9,018

408 HELPLINE

Our 408-HELP (4357) line provides telephone support to individuals in the community who are at risk and their most vulnerable. Highly trained volunteer responders (with the support of professional staff) connect with callers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Our team provides callers with emotional support and crisis intervention when they are socially isolated, marginalized, struggling with chronic mental health problems, in distress, attempting to navigate family violence or in need of emergency response or suicide prevention + intervention + postvention.

55% of callers were provided with emotional support and distress management
 Approximately 12% of callers were provided with mental health support
 Approximately 25% of service users reported a decrease in isolation and loneliness
 Approximately 37% of service users reported reduced emotional intensity

2022 PROGRAM RESULTS AND SUCCESSES CONTINUED

MULTILINGUAL HELPLINE

DCGT is the only organization in Canada to have 8 multilingual helplines that directly support our community members in their own language (i.e. without third party translation). Individuals who are going through a difficult time can call the lines and feel comfortable speaking to someone who understands their struggle. Our English Helpline is available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. Our multilingual lines are available in Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu, Spanish, Portuguese, Cantonese and Mandarin, Monday to Friday 10am to 10pm. These lines provide emotional support for anyone who needs a caring, compassionate, and non-judgmental listening ear. Majority of the callers are dealing with issues of mental health, interpersonal, social isolation, settlement, relocation, and cultural issues. These lines serve as a model for other organizations because our services allow for an open dialogue about depression, anxiety, and crisis and suicide ideation. Our trained staff and volunteers provide support and commend callers on having the courage to call and talk about difficult issues. Volunteers speak to the callers about the importance of mental health well-being and promotion of speaking openly about mental health issues as well as cultural and systemic barriers. These issues affect everyone, everywhere.

THEMES OF CALLS

Anger Management: 1400 (5%)
Bereavement/loss: 1,762 (7%)
Caregiver Issues: 330(1%)
Cultural Issues: 1,481 (6%)
Isolation: 9,812(38%)
Loneliness/social contact: 17,107 (66%)
Relationships: 13,342 (52%)
Self-esteem/self-worth: 8,838 (34%)

CALL OUTCOMES

49% - Decrease in social isolation and loneliness (12,692)
30% - Increased ability to cope (7876)
0.6% - Immediate crisis diffused (162)
1% - Decrease in harmful intentions (277)
DCGT recorded over 160,000 helping interactions in 2022.

2022 PROGRAM RESULTS AND SUCCESSES CONTINUED

ELDER ABUSE

DCGT's Elder Abuse Support Program provides direct, phone-based support to seniors or loved ones of seniors who have been exploited, abused, and/or are experiencing challenges and struggles associated with abuse, neglect, and aging.

57% of calls resulted in referrals

69% of callers reported an increased knowledge of the Elder Abuse Program at both DCGT Peel as well as other appropriate support resources in the community

60% of callers reported decreases in distress, anxiety, isolation, and loneliness

51% of calls explored action planning with a service user

PARTNERSHIP LINES (CRISIS LINK, PARO, EMS)

Crisis Link is a unique poster/payphone program available on every TTC subway platform. It is a partnership between TTC, Bell, and DCGT. It is designed to encourage anyone contemplating suicide to use the payphone and reach out to speak to a DCGT responder for support, risk assessment, and possible intervention. If intervention is required, DCGT works with the TCC to react appropriately to limit risk and provide support to everyone in need.

In partnership with DCGT, PARO (Professional Association of Residents of Ontario) is a 24/7 Ontario phone-based Helpline available to medical residents, their partners and family members, as well as medical students to provide immediate assistance in emergency or urgent matters, or to provide emotional support.

DCGT partners with Toronto's Emergency Medical Services to provide a dedicated warm transfer line for callers to EMS who are experiencing suicidal ideation. At-risk individuals who have already provided their contact information and are awaiting EMS are connected with volunteers at DCGT for crisis support until EMS arrives on scene. This frees up EMS dispatchers to continue to respond to other emergencies, while at the same time providing emotional support to distressed individuals.

2022 PROGRAM RESULTS AND SUCCESSES CONTINUED

TELECHECK

TeleCheck for Seniors program provides ongoing support for isolated seniors. These regular calls provide safety check-ins, medication reminders, and emotional support. This program aims to reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness, provides positive coping skills, offers referrals to community services, and keeps people safe.

414 clients served
43,152 calls
5,989 volunteer hours

"You listen to me with love and understanding. "

"I look forward to Monday morning because of your calls. Thank you for all the lovely work you do for us."

"I'm very thankful for your calls, it breaks up the silence."

TOUCHING BASE

Touching Base program provides ongoing transitional support for people in the community identified with a mental health issue. The regular calls that provide safety check-ins, medication reminders, and emotional support provide consistency and connection to the community.

269 Clients served
22,777 Calls
5,066 Volunteer hours

"I feel at peace, being able to have these conversations have really helped me think more about what I want, and worry less about what the future holds"

"One kind word can make all the difference, thank you from the bottom of my heart. These calls let me know that there is someone out there who will listen and cares."

2022 PROGRAM RESULTS AND SUCCESSES CONTINUED

CALLER REASSURANCE PROGRAM

The Caller Reassurance Program (CRP) program provides ongoing support for isolated seniors. These regular calls provide safety check-ins, medication reminders, and emotional support. This program aims to reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness, provides positive coping skills, offers referrals to community services, and keeps people safe.

98 Clients served
9,018 Calls
1,205 Volunteer hours

"I always look forward to your calls, it makes my day go better. I really appreciate everyone who's calling me. Don't ever stop."

"I get calls from my daughter, but getting a call from the reassurance centre is a stranger, having someone from the outside world discussing something with me, makes me realize I'm still worthy, I'm still here."

SURVIVOR SUPPORT PROGRAM

Our professionally developed traumatic loss program, provides a safe peer mentored environment in which, survivors of suicide and homicide can identify, explore, and begin to navigate the aftermath of sudden, violent death. The past year was a year of growth as we began an outreach to the LGBTQ2S+ community, developing a partnership with The 519, a critical organization providing support to the LGBTQ2S+ community in Toronto. Over the past year we developed new partnerships with organizations in Peel to deliver in person group supports to survivors of suicide loss in that area.

381 total participants
1,258 helping interactions.
3,520 volunteer hours

Group sessions delivered (each volunteer delivered session): 134 Participant satisfaction (satisfied or very satisfied): 100% Participant recommend program to others: 100%

2022 PROGRAM RESULTS AND SUCCESSES CONTINUED

TALK SUICIDE VOICE & TEXT (formerly the Canada Suicide Prevention Service)

DCGT partners with Talk Suicide to provide important and life-saving support which are accessible via phone or SMS (text). Talk Suicide is a national network of existing distress, crisis, and suicide prevention line services. These programs are committed to supporting any person living in Canada who is affected by suicide. DCGT is one of 8 partner sites supporting Talk Suicide. Services can be access via 24/7 phone line or via text from 4pm-midnight daily.

14,471 Total interactions (# of Text, # of Calls)
75% service users reported an increased ability to cope
311 emergency interventions were made
1,307 suicide plans were safely disabled

8,992 (62% of total interactions) said yes to thoughts of suicide. Of those, 2,960 said yes to current plan for suicide. Of those, 1,307 plans were disabled safely.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

Program staff are involved in the delivery of this program, which includes volunteer/community fairs, workshop presentations, networking, and consultation. Staff continue to be active in United Way's Speaker's Bureau, including participation in the high-value donor events. Last year, there were invited presentations with a continuing shift, to consultation requests. These included case consultation, protocol/ policy review, program development, volunteer management and participation on advisory panels.

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS

City of Toronto
Ministry of Health
Public Health Agency of Canada
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United Way Greater Toronto

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Distress Centres of Greater Toronto



Statement of Operations

For the year ended December 31, 2022

	2022	2021
Revenues		
Fund development	\$ 828,289	\$ 588,067
United Way Greater Toronto	518,345	570,076
Fee for service	395,940	463,775
Municipal grants	380,617	262,635
Provincial grants	335,970	335,962
Federal grants	321,782	38,869
Other revenue	31,631	31,217
	2,812,574	2,290,601
Expenses		
Salaries and benefits	1,895,111	1,550,028
Systems and telecommunications	273,539	294,390
Office, general and administration	107,276	104,309
Marketing and communications	116,244	-
Accounting, audit and legal	44,945	55,330
Program and volunteer related	43,888	71,019
Fundraising expenses	40,734	15,636
Building occupancy	33,688	137,692
Insurance	30,731	26,147
Repairs and maintenance	29,067	22,329
Amortization	1,495	747
	2,616,718	2,277,627
Excess of revenues over expenses	\$ 195,856	\$ 12,974

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

THANK YOU

Our Mission

We provide support for those in crisis, at risk for suicide and those experiencing emotional distress through 24/7 multi-lingual inbound, outbound and in-person programs.

Our Vision

We are the leader in providing resilience and hope through innovative crisis and mental health support.

CONTACT



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of Greater Toronto

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