

Envision Discontinues 24-Hour Abuse/Sexual Assault Support Line

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Southeast, Saskatchewan – It is with profound sadness that Envision Counselling and Support Centre announces the closure of its 24-Hour Abuse/Sexual Assault Support Line due to decreased call volumes and increased demand for their other services.

The support line had been in existence since Envision was known as the Violence Intervention Program and began offering services in Weyburn and Estevan in 1995. It was operated by a dedicated team who kept the line open night and day.

At its peak, the support line averaged more than 50 calls per month. Envision wishes to thank all 167 volunteers who participated in the 24-Hour Abuse/Sexual Support Line for the past 23 years.

“The volunteers were the backbone of this program for so many years. It was a dedicated group of women who gave their time and talent while remaining respectful of the information that was shared on these calls,” says Christa Daku, Executive Director of Envision Counselling.

A noticeable shift was observed in how individuals were accessing Envision’s services in the Southeast. Fewer people were using the phone line, but increases were seen in counselling requests online.

“There just wasn’t the same usage,” says Daku. “We put the same amount of time and resources into the support line, but people aren’t using phones the same way they did in the past.

Our support line was a referral source, or a place for someone to call to talk about their abusive relationships, sometimes simply to figure out if they were being abused. But increasingly, instead of calls, we’re seeing growth in the use of our website resources and referrals online.

The 24-hour line has been a huge part of Envision’s history, and it’s very difficult to see it go,” says Daku.

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Envision offers counselling and support to individuals experiencing violence or other relationship issues. Those needing immediate support or referrals can now turn to the recently launched province-wide *211 Saskatchewan*. It's free, confidential, 24x7 information and referral services by phone, text, web chat and email, with trained professionals to help people find and navigate the wide range of community services in our province.

The difficult decision to close the support line was made to ensure Envision's face-to-face counselling services, including all of the community outreach in their vast service area, are able to continue in a sustainable fashion. Envision is still available as a local resource for Southeast Saskatchewan, during office hours by phone or online anytime at www.envisioncounsellingcentre.com.

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For more information, or interview requests, please contact:

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