

## Envision Closes Support Line after 23 years

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*Executive Director for Envision Christa Daku.*

Envision Counselling and Support Centre has noticed a change in the way people are accessing their support. With a decrease in calls and more people accessing online services, Envision has decided to close their 24-hour Abuse/Sexual Assault Support Phone Line after 23 years.

"We've been evaluating the effectiveness of the line for the past several years," shared Executive Director Christa Daku. "There just wasn't the same usage. 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."

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.

"Back in the day when the line started, it was because we didn't have the abundance of counselling support that we do now. So we were offering a lot of after-hours support through this volunteer line which was very, very helpful. But with the changes over the past several years with technology and the accessibility to online resources, we've noticed that a lot of people are accessing our website instead and contacting us through that."

Daku said Envision wants to thank all 167 volunteers who participated in the 24-Hour Abuse/Sexual Support Line over 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."

Those in need can call the newly launched free referral service, 211 Saskatchewan, to reach someone on the phone or go online to the Envision website.