



Wheatland Crisis Society



PRESS RELEASE

April 3, 2020

STATUS & UPDATE

Dear friends,

The Board and Staff of the Wheatland Crisis Society want to take an opportunity to reach out to our supporters with an update. The past two weeks have been full of uncertainty, presenting many new challenges each day. We want to assure you that we have risen to the challenge and remain committed to supporting the community in days to come.

Thank you to everyone who has contacted us to see how they can help. In spite of the challenges each of you might be facing, you continue to support the work we do and the families who need us. We know the world is much different today than it was a few weeks ago, and it has left few of us free from experiencing health and economic fears.

The Wheatland Crisis Society remains open. We have been responding daily to new recommendations from all levels of Government, ensuring our programs support the health and safety of our clients and staff. This has required changes to some of our programs, however our doors are open for those families who are living in unsafe situations. Our crisis line is available to anyone who needs support during this time, and crisis counsellors remain on site.

We know that for many individuals and families isolating at home may not be safe. We encourage those at risk to contact us and we can help them get to safety. Many of us are taking daily walks and connecting with our circles. We encourage anyone at risk to utilize these strategies to contact us from a safe and secure location or via a trusted friend or family member. For more information on safety planning please [click here](#).

WHAT WE'RE DOING

We are committed to being a safe place for families, but we know we have to do so responsibly, and this means making some changes.

1. We have reduced our capacity making sure that each family is able to maintain physical distancing. We want to ensure that if someone needs to quarantine, we can support them.

2. We are asking new screening questions in-regards to COVID-19 as part of the assessment and intake process. We want to make sure we are prepared to meet each family where they are at, while keeping all families safe.
3. If the shelter is full, we will be sure to find another safe option. No one should live where they are unsafe.
4. We have some new processes in place to support physical distancing, including the way programs are offered.
5. Our Outreach program continues to support clients using alternate platforms. We are committed to supporting social connection while complying with physical distancing. Staff continue to reach out to clients ensuring they are safe, but also supporting those who are feeling lonely or isolated. For more information please call 1-877-934-6634.

6. Our Children's Outreach program is also using innovative ways to connect with kids and parents. We know that many times the biggest victims of family violence are the smallest. We are pleased to announce WCS will be offering support specifically for parents via our crisis line effective immediately.

Parents, have you noticed:

- Challenging behaviours
- Anxiety
- Fear
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Relationship strain
- Uncertainty on how to talk to your children about COVID & other family issues
- Frustration

Be safe. Be smart. Be kind.

#wcssupportforparents

We are here for you.

Call our WCS crisis line at 403-934-6634 ex. 0 and advise our team you are seeking parenting support. One of our dedicated Children's Outreach team members will call you back within 24-72 hours to provide over the phone help, tips and support.

7. Our Public Education program continues to spread our commitment to a violence free community using social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram. With schools closed, we know we will have to find new ways to support and engage kids in the community. We are looking at how we can use video and online tools to support educators who access our programs during the school year. Our adult programs are available virtually and we invite your business or organization to connect with our Public

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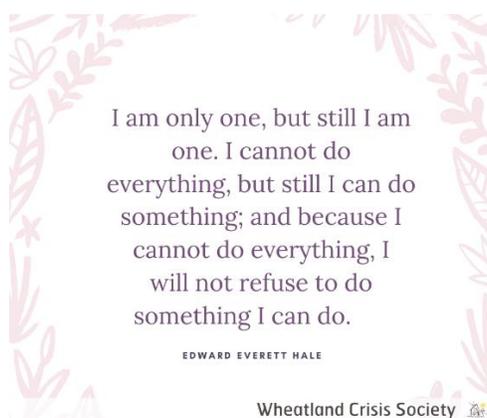
Educator. We are able to offer web-based trainings for employers who want to support employees with Domestic Violence in the Workplace training as well as Shelter Programs, Responding to Family Abuse and Inclusive Shelter Practices. For more information please [email our Public Educator](#).

ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE

Family Violence does not stop during times of crisis. In fact, difficult times can increase both stress and incidents of violence in families. Please check in on your loved ones! Do not be afraid to ask if everything is ok. If you aren't sure how to have a conversation with your loved ones about Family Violence, [check out our website](#) for resources, [send an email](#), or call the crisis line for support 1-877-934-6634.

We couldn't do this without you.

We thank you again for being an amazing community who leans in to support those around you. We could not do this work without each of you. So many have called offering generous donations of food and supplies. We are very thankful, and hope you understand it has become necessary for us to limit visitors to the shelter, so we have had to change the donations we are able to accept on-site. If you would like to donate, please consider contributing via our online ATB Cares Portal where your donation will be matched by 15%. This helps us, help others in many meaningful ways. Please [click here](#) to be redirected to our ATB Cares donation page. 100% of donations will be used to support programs and services operated by the Wheatland Crisis Society.



COMMUNITY PROGRAM UPDATES

As the concerns around COVID-19 continued to build we made the difficult decision to temporarily discontinue our BEYOND the PLATE GROUP. This is a very special activity for so many families, and although we miss each and every family, we knew we had to make a decision that would keep everyone safe. We hope to be able to begin a new group in the fall. Please watch for updates.

The Finding Our Voices Group set to begin on April 1st was also postponed until the public health situation allows us to set a new start date for this beloved 6-week peer support group.

Please watch our social media channels and website for updates related to all community programming. You can find our website [here](#), our Facebook page [here](#) and our Instagram page [here](#).

All of us at the Wheatland Crisis Society thank you. We wish each of you health and peace as we get through the days ahead.