



40 YEARS CENTRE FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

2020 – 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND BOARD PRESIDENT

For 40 years we've been talking about preventing suicide. We've driven conversations that break down stigma, promote togetherness, empower people in crisis, comfort the bereaved, equip caregivers and call people to action. On social media, in the media, and on advisory committees we've engaged with government, people with lived experience and researchers. And we engage with everyday people, everyday.

We're often asked how to prevent suicide – and while our human nature craves an easy answer, this simply does not exist.

But there are many things we can do. It starts in authentic, honest, open conversation with the people around us. Research is clear – asking people compassionately and directly about suicide helps save lives. It opens the door to meaningful dialogue. It gives people pause. It affirms and validates someone when they are at their lowest. This is not an easy conversation to have, but we can all learn how to have it.

CSP started training people to skillfully respond to those who are considering suicide in 1983. We have run one workshop every business day since then – nearly 9000 workshops training more than 160,000 participants. That's a lot of conversations.

This year, come talk with us. Whether you champion the Buddy Up campaign and ask friends "How are you really doing?" or register for a 2-day suicide intervention workshop, together we can help the most vulnerable around us. Let's talk about preventing suicide.



Mara Grunau
Executive Director



Carmelle Hunka
President, Board of Directors

OUR PEOPLE

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Jim Campbell Vice President

Dave Dart Secretary-Treasurer

Linda Beaton Director

Bill Bone Director

Michael Power Director

VOLUNTEER

Andrew Bone

+ 178 TRAINERS

OUR PARTNERS

Through this unprecedented year, staff worked remotely and we moved hundreds of workshops online. Despite the disruptions, we continued to offer suicide prevention education uninterrupted. Thank you to our partners and funders who supported our pandemic operations and ongoing work.



Max Bell Foundation

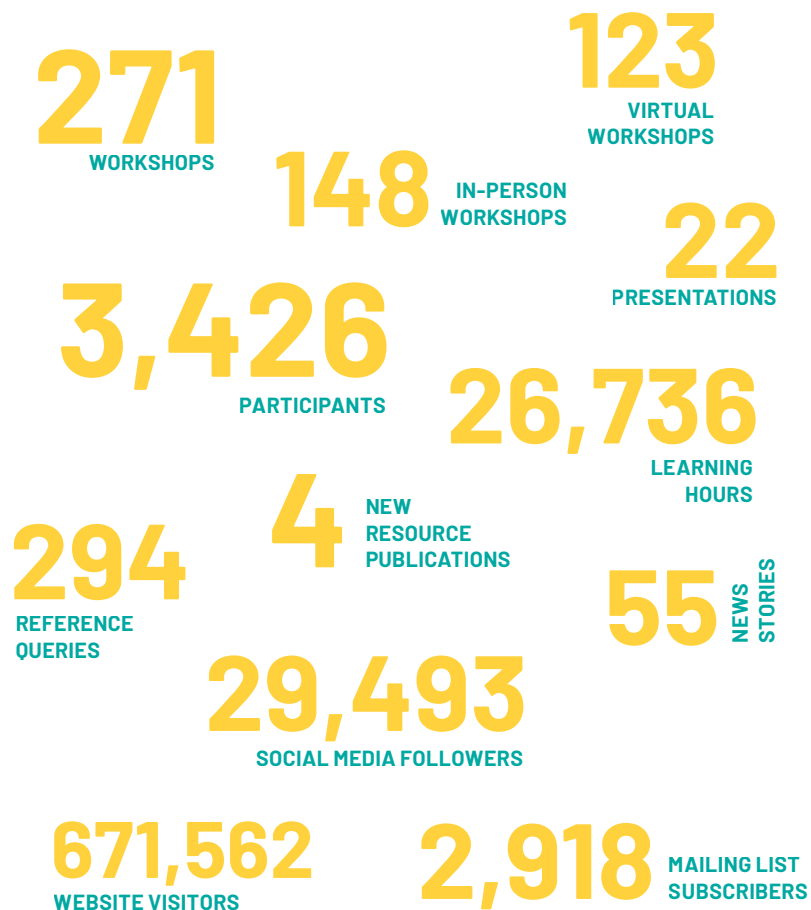


City of Calgary, FCSS
Servus Credit Union
Gwyn Morgan and
Patricia Trottier Foundation

Lecky Foundation
Mental Health Foundation,
Breaking the Silence
Viewpoint Foundation

WE EDUCATE FOR LIFE

Anyone can respond to a person thinking about suicide when they're equipped with information, knowledge, and skills. This belief guides our process of creating and updating workshops and resources.



WORKSHOPS

After attending an Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) workshop, participants feel more ready, willing, and able to help someone considering suicide:

92% of participants feel **more prepared** to help



89% of participants feel **more confident** to help



91% of participants feel **more skilled** to help



"I am grateful for taking this workshop because it helped me save my friend."
—ASIST Participant

After attending other CSP workshops, participants feel more confident to identify and willing to help those considering suicide. These workshops include safeTALK: suicide alertness for everyone (LivingWorks Education Inc.), Looking Forward: Preventing suicide in youth, Small Talk: Preventing suicide in children, Little Cub: Preventing suicide in Indigenous children, and Walk With Me: Indigenous Suicide Bereavement.

55% of participants feel **more willing** to help



83% of participants feel **more confident** to identify



BUDDY UP

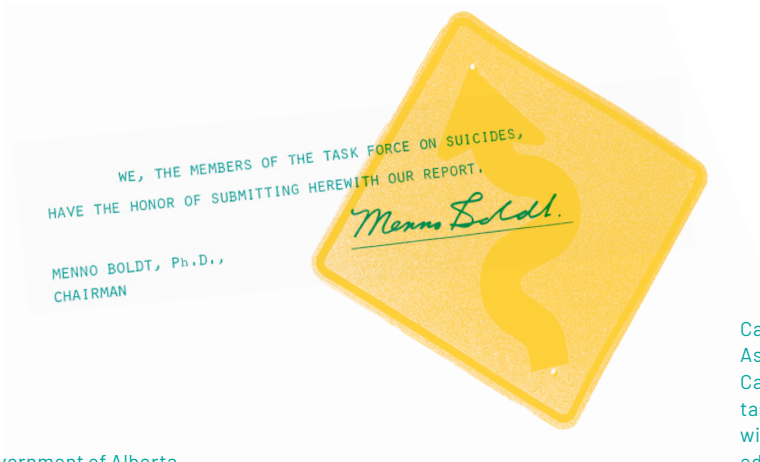
In 2020 we launched Buddy Up, a communications campaign by men, for men that promotes authentic conversations among men and their buddies. Our majority-male advisory committee and focus groups heavily informed the campaign and over 100 Champions spread the word that men's suicide is preventable through social media, print materials, and webinars. Check it out at buddyup.ca.



WE'VE BEEN EDUCATING FOR LIFE SINCE 1981 – FIRST AS TWO SEPARATE YET INTERDEPENDENT PROGRAMS: THE SUICIDE INFORMATION AND EDUCATION CENTRE (SIEC) AND SUICIDE PREVENTION TRAINING PROGRAMS (SPTP). CENTRE FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION WAS FORMED WHEN THESE TWO PROGRAMS CAME TOGETHER OFFICIALLY IN 2002. LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR ROOTS AND OUR CONTRIBUTION TO SUICIDE PREVENTION.

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Government of Alberta (GoA) commissions University of Lethbridge to undertake Task Force on Highway Accidents.

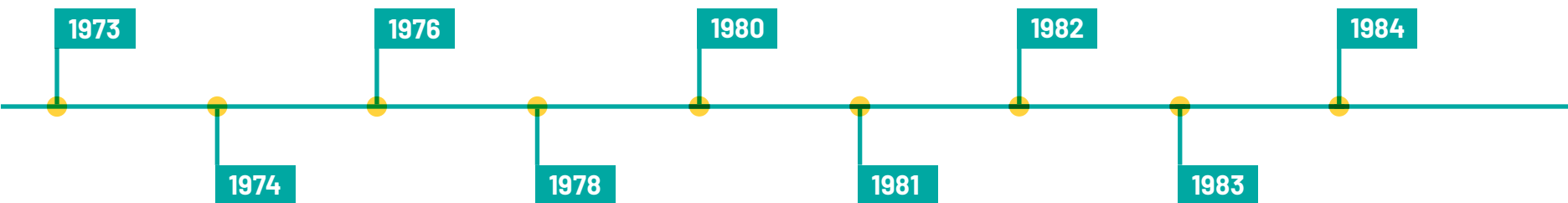
Task Force on Suicides releases the *Boldt Report* outlining five themes of recommendations.

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA)-Calgary launches a 5-year task force on suicide with 3 priorities: public education and awareness, training for frontline workers, and survivor support. This was later coined the *Alberta Model*.

GoA funds CMHA-Calgary to develop Suicide Prevention and Training Programs (SPTP) as SIEC team of investigators advocates for an educational approach to suicide prevention, based on early evidence that people considering suicide reach out to friends and family who in turn need to be skilled responders. They begin to develop the world's first suicide intervention workshop. Together, SIEC and SPTP form what is known today as Centre for Suicide Prevention.



SIEC and SPTP provide province-wide services with administrative responsibility transferred from CMHA-Alberta. Kathy Bentley replaces Donna Sim as the Director of SIEC/SPTP.



Task Force on Highway Accidents hypothesizes that many single-car fatalities are suicide motivated. GoA creates Task Force on Suicides to investigate, led by University of Lethbridge sociologist Menno Boldt.

GoA takes Boldt's advice and appoints the first provincial suicidologist, Dr. Mark Solomon, to develop an Alberta model of suicide prevention. He reports directly to the Minister of Social Services and Community Health.

A Ministerial Order establishes a citizen committee, Suicide Prevention Provincial Advisory Committee, to aid the provincial suicidologist and CMHA-Calgary, led by visionary Executive Director Ron LaJeunesse, to implement the *Alberta Model*. GoA provides start-up funding to CMHA-Calgary for Suicide Information and Education Centre (SIEC), to collect and disseminate suicide research.

SIEC/SPTP team launches the Foundation Workshop, the first iteration of Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) and pilots it in Calgary. GoA funds workshop development with the goal of blanketing the province with suicide intervention training consistent in philosophy and approach to promote continuity of care.



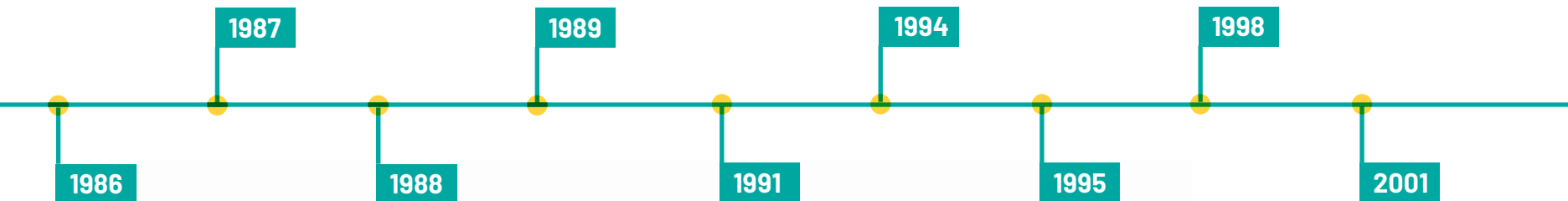


SIEC surpasses 10,000 records in the library.

SPTP develops and distributes a Youth Suicide Awareness Package.

Carmelle Hunka, current Board President, joins SIEC/SPTP Board of Directors. SIEC surpasses 20,000 records in the library.

SPTP develops and launches an Adolescent Suicide Prevention workshop, a precursor to Straight Talk. Suicide Bereavement workshop is re-evaluated and re-launched as Counselling the Bereaved workshop.



Gerry Harrington replaces Kathy Bentley as SIEC/SPTP Director. SPTP hosts its 100th workshop.

SPTP launches a Suicide Bereavement Workshop for Caregivers.

SPTP develops and pilots a workshop for caregivers of older adults.

Linda Beaton, current Board member, joins SIEC/SPTP Board of Directors. SPTP hosts its 1000th workshop, educating 20,000+ workshop participants.

Diane Yackel replaces Gerry Harrington as the SIEC/SPTP Executive Director. SPTP hosts its 2000th workshop.





Centre for Suicide Prevention (CSP) is formed with the coming together of SIEC and SPTP. CSP surpasses 30,000 records in the library.

CSP incorporates as a separate legal entity and branch of CMHA in Alberta. Michael Power, current Board member, joins CSP's Board of Directors. CSP develops a preliminary version of the Tattered Teddies: Preventing suicide in children workshop and begins offering LivingWorks' safeTALK workshop. CSP hosts its 3000th workshop.

Dave Dart, current Board Secretary-Treasurer, joins CSP's Board of Directors.

CSP testifies to the Senate of Canada Standing Committee on Human Rights regarding cyberbullying and its relationship to suicide. CSP hosts its 5000th workshop, educating over 100,000 participants.

CSP launches Little Cub: Preventing suicide in Indigenous children workshop. CSP hosts its 6000th workshop.



2002

2004

2005

2006

2010

2011

2012

2014

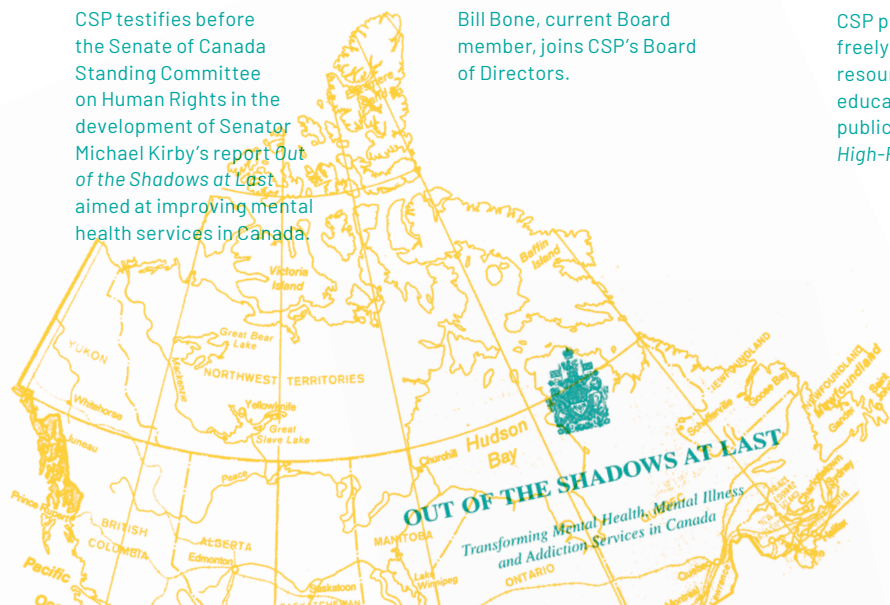
2015

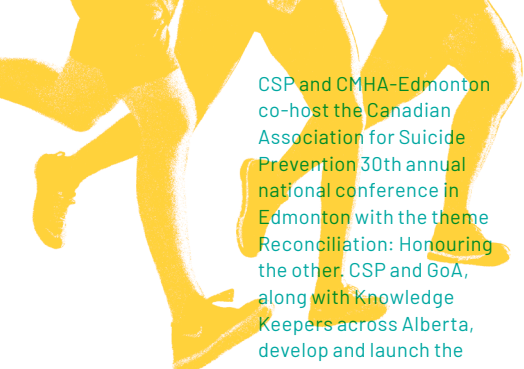
CSP testifies before the Senate of Canada Standing Committee on Human Rights in the development of Senator Michael Kirby's report *Out of the Shadows at Last*, aimed at improving mental health services in Canada.

Bill Bone, current Board member, joins CSP's Board of Directors.

CSP publishes its first freely available print resource focused on educating the general public: *Men and Suicide: A High-Risk Population?*

CSP launches Walk With Me: Indigenous Suicide Bereavement workshop. Mara Grunau replaces Diane Yackel as CSP's Executive Director.





CSP and CMHA-Edmonton co-host the Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention 30th annual national conference in Edmonton with the theme Reconciliation: Honouring the other. CSP and GoA, along with Knowledge Keepers across Alberta, develop and launch the resource: *Community-led life promotion plans for Indigenous youth and communities*. Jim Campbell, current Board Vice-President, joins CSP's Board of Directors. CSP hosts its 8000th workshop.

CSP redevelops Straight Talk and Tattered Teddies workshops, relaunching them as Looking Forward and Small Talk, respectively; River of Life and Little Cub workshops are redeveloped with a focus on reconciliation. CSP commemorates its 40th anniversary. To date, nearly 9000 workshops have been facilitated and close to 50,000 library items have been collected. Since the inception of workshops, CSP has offered the equivalent of one workshop every business day.

2019

2021

2018

2020

CSP hosts first annual Run for Life, an event that remembers those we've lost to suicide, and raises awareness for suicide prevention.

CSP launches the Buddy Up communications campaign for men's suicide prevention. During the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual workshops are offered for the first time, and updates are made to workshops to accommodate this new delivery.



Anyone can learn to identify someone considering suicide and get them help.
Call us.

We are the Centre for Suicide Prevention. For 40 years we've been equipping Canadians with knowledge and skills to respond to people thinking about suicide. We can equip you too.

We educate for life.

CENTRE FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION

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Association canadienne
pour la santé mentale
La santé mentale pour tous



**centre for
suicide prevention**