



Strategic plan
2013 - 2018
Lifeline Canberra

 **Lifeline** Saving Lives
Crisis Support. Suicide Prevention.

Introduction

Now in its 41st year of operation, Lifeline Canberra continues to provide support to Canberra and the surrounding regions. We are active partners in a national network that provides a high quality telephone service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to those in crisis. The most critical part of this service is our focus on suicide prevention, as expressed by Lifeline Australia whose vision is “An Australia free of suicide”.

We are a trusted part of the Canberra landscape and continue to promote community resilience. We are proud that our organisation’s success has been based on our large group of dedicated volunteers from the local region.

This plan lays the foundations of our organisation as it is today, including our products and services. It also outlines the vision of the organisation for the future and how we intend to achieve that vision.

Where we are today

Crisis Support Services

Every hour of every day, trained volunteer telephone crisis supporters are available to the community of the ACT and surrounding region. Lifeline is there 24 hours a day, seven days a week, when other services are closed. Many services and private practitioners refer clients to our service for support between appointments and after hours.

Our telephone crisis supporters provide skilled and knowledgeable support to our callers at the time when their situation has overwhelmed them or just seems too much to bear alone. They listen with care and acceptance, whatever the circumstances. People call Lifeline for many reasons. Common themes include relationships, suicide, loneliness, anxiety, addictions, health, bereavement and information.

In 2012/13, Lifeline Canberra answered over 25,000 crisis calls. This could not have been achieved without the dedication and compassion of our 300 volunteer telephone crisis supporters.

CORE Solutions

Lifeline Canberra offers a range of resilience and crisis intervention training courses. This is a further opportunity for us to provide support for the community and to raise funds to support our telephone crisis line. These courses are available publicly and we also contract to government agencies and private enterprise to conduct in-house courses.

Community Resilience

Lifeline Canberra holds a number of events each year to bring the Canberra community together and raise awareness of specific issues. These include the "Out of the Shadows" walk to mark World Suicide Prevention Day in September and the annual "Women of Spirit" awards in November. In July 2013, we also launched "It only takes a moment to tell someone you love them"; a campaign to encourage people to reach out to their loved ones. We see these activities as a support to the Canberra community and a way to bring our brand to life.

Bookfairs

An icon of our city, Lifeline Canberra has two major bookfairs each year, in March and September, and a smaller winter fair has been introduced recently. These fairs provide much needed funds to support our services. We have a warehouse in Mitchell that enables our 200 warehouse and bookfair volunteers to collect, sort, and price the thousands of books that are generously donated each year. The volunteers work almost 365 days of the year to support our bookfairs.

Commercial Ventures

In addition to the bookfairs, Lifeline Canberra has embarked on other activities to maintain our financial viability. It is important to us that these activities are in line with our overall intent and purpose of "Changing Lives for the Better". In 2012, we opened our vintage clothing shop "Hipsley" which we hope will become a meeting place for the community. We also launched a mobile coffee cart "Bean Talkin", emphasising the importance of taking a break and having a chat in our normal lives. There are also one-off events held throughout the year.

Where do we want to be?

Our Vision

To be the first organisation people turn to when they seek crisis support

Our Purpose

To support Australians in times of crisis and equip individuals to be resilient and suicide safe – Changing lives for the better.

Our Core Values

Integrity
Respect
Compassion
Professionalism

Key Indicators of Success

By 2018, Lifeline Canberra will know that it has been successful if;

Crisis Support Services

- We have continued to increase the number of calls taken by Lifeline Canberra, by 10% each year.
- Lifeline Canberra remains within the top 5% of the most efficient call services (as reflected by Lifeline Australia – efficient against infrastructure costs).

Relationships

- We have continued to build a strong partnership with Lifeline Australia so that we are considered a preferred supplier of counselling services within the national Lifeline brand.
- We have strong relationships with ACT and federal government agencies that ensures we receive consistent share of government funding
- We have increased the number of our sponsors, both large and small by 50% and continue to have productive partnerships with a large number of businesses across Canberra
- We continue to be well supported by the Canberra community.

People

- We continue to attract increasing numbers of volunteers to all aspects of our organisation and we have waiting lists for all volunteer groups.
- The retention rate of our telephone crisis supporters is the highest in the country.
- Recruit and retain high quality individuals who are professional and recognised as experts in their field.

Support Systems

- All our volunteers and our paid staff are satisfied with the level of support they receive from our organisation.
- All our volunteers and our paid staff are satisfied with the systems that they use in our organisation.
- All our volunteers and our paid staff are satisfied with the training they receive from our organisation.

Training

- Core Solutions is the preferred training provider in the area of community resilience and crisis intervention in Canberra.

Financial Stability

- Lifeline Canberra has sufficient finances to operate the telephone crisis line and to provide additional community support as identified by the Lifeline Canberra Board and the CEO, at all times.
- Lifeline Canberra has an annual debt to income ratio of 2.1.
- Lifeline Canberra has increased the number of major sponsors to 10 and developed a core group of medium level partners that number 30.
- Lifeline Canberra has continued to investigate diversification of income streams.

Brand

- Lifeline Canberra is the most recognised and trusted not for profit brand within the Canberra community.
- The Canberra community associates the Lifeline brand with suicide prevention, crisis intervention and resilience.

Services Provided

- Lifeline Canberra has developed sustainable outreach services within the Canberra region to support “Changing Lives for the Better”, including prisoner support, youth activities and suicide prevention.



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