



Annual Report for 2008

**Serving the 865 Area Code
in East Tennessee**

Services of CONTACT

- CONTACT Helpline, Inc. is a telephone helpline (865-482-4949 or 865-584-4424), staffed by trained volunteers. Through the use of empathetic, non-judgmental listening techniques, callers have a chance to discover their self-worth and inner strength in resolving issues that affect their health and well-being.
- CONTACT provides daily phone contact with homebound individuals whose circumstances deprive them of normal participation in their community, by calling them on a set schedule (Reassurance Program). In some cases these calls provide social contact and in others they provide a safety net designed to provide a regular check on the clients's health and safety.
- CONTACT maintains an extensive file of area social services and agencies to help callers who need information and referrals to other agencies.
- CONTACT offers an intensive "How to Listen" training program at least twice a year to the general community.

Our Mission

The mission of CONTACT Helpline is to provide a confidential telephone listening service staffed by trained volunteer listeners for people in crisis or need.

2008 Volunteer Information

- 71 volunteer telephone workers were available 365 days in 2008 and answered 7,668 helpline calls (up 27% over 2007) and made 2,700 reassurance calls (19 clients).
- 30 community mental health professionals (support workers) served as back-up resource counselors for the helpline.
- 17 community volunteers served as board members.
- 15 training participants joined the CONTACT team as new volunteer telephone workers.

2008 Highlights

- We celebrated our 35th anniversary.
- We extended our area of service to cover the entire 865 area code.
- We worked with three MBA students and their professor in developing best practices for increasing public awareness of CONTACT in the region, and for expanding our services.
- Our helpline hours of operation were 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. in 2008, and we met our goal of increasing our hours to 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. on January 1, 2009.

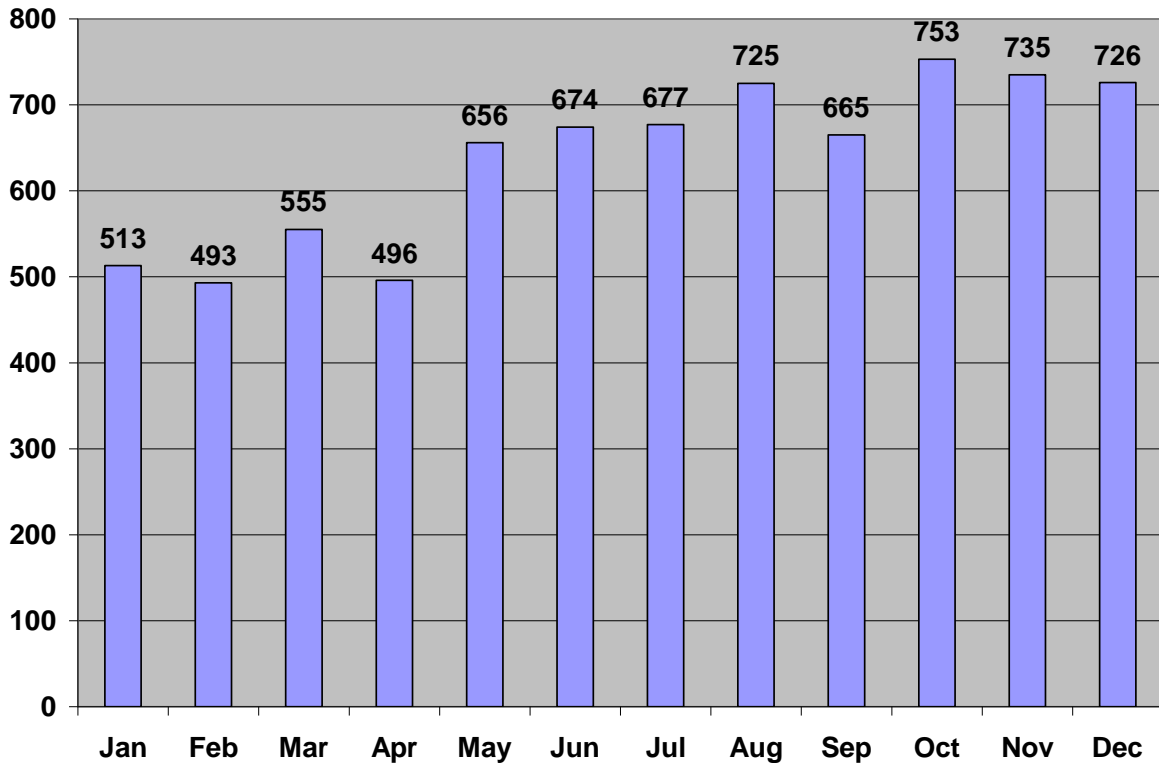
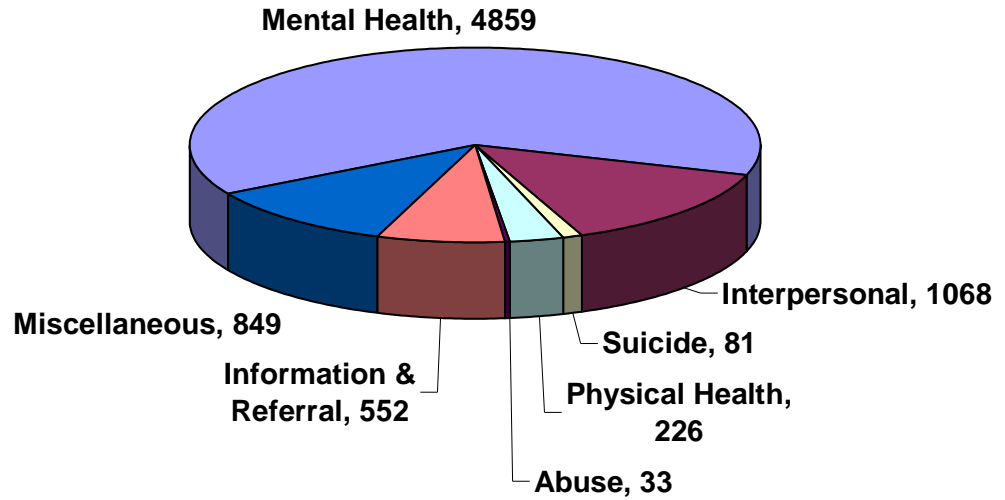
2008 Caller Profile

Total Number of Helpline Calls: 7,668 (up 27% over last year)

<u>Age</u>	<u>Number of Calls</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Number of Calls</u>
Under 13	12	Female	4,101
13-18	40	Male	3,567
19-35	2,046		
36-60	4,270		
Over 60	1,300		

Calls to Support Workers for backup help: 34

Number of Calls by Category



Number of Calls per Month

Our Callers

Chronically mentally ill. One in four adults in America experiences mental illness in any given year. Many adults experience only brief periods of mental illness. However, one in 17 adults and one in 10 children have a serious, lifetime mental disorder. Approximately 55% of our calls are from individuals who are chronically mentally ill, with diagnoses including schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, depression, anxiety, personality disorders, and substance dependence. Mental illness is the second leading cause of disability and pre-mature mortality in the United States and is more prevalent than cancer, heart disease, asthma, and diabetes.

The chronically mentally ill person is often looking for reassurance, a reality check, affirmation, or a place to vent. We at CONTACT Helpline are sometimes the only people in their lives who affirm their successes, listen to their difficulties, and accept them for who they are without blame or judgment. Acceptance by others leads to self-acceptance which can help some accept and comply with psychiatric care.

CONTACT Helpline is one of the agencies which assist this population in living with their illness, becoming more stable, more functional members of society, and achieving an improved quality of life for themselves and their families.

Needing a listener. About 37% of our callers are simply seeking a confidential source to listen to them. They may want help sorting out a problem, or may be deeply lonely without anyone else with the time or interest to listen. The caller may be making a difficult life decision – whether to divorce, leave the community, change jobs etc. Many callers are attempting to cope with a significant and painful life event – having a baby without family support, the death of a parent or a child, health issues, chronic pain, money worries, and so on.

Information and Referral. In about 7% of our calls, the caller has a specific and concise question:

- Where do I go to sign up for food stamps? I've never had to do this before, but with all this inflation, I can hardly feed my family.
- Where can I get free medical care for my 3 year-old daughter? My employer dropped my insurance this year and now I'm desperate.
- Where can I get away from my husband; he comes home drunk and beats me and then is a perfect gentleman? (i.e., where is the local domestic violence shelter?)

Suicide. In 2008, CONTACT received 81 calls (23 calls in 2007) in which an individual was considering suicide. We believe that if we save even one life, CONTACT has more than justified its existence.

The Effect of Increased Loneliness

Today, more than 25 percent of U.S. households consist of one person. Sixty years ago, people living alone accounted for only 7 percent of the population. Duke University researchers reported recently that the number of people with whom the average person discusses personal and important matters has dropped from three to two. According to a study by psychiatrists at Harvard Medical School, the number of people who said that there was no one with whom they discussed important matters has tripled in recent years. Loneliness and isolation are important factors that often lead someone to contemplate suicide. While higher unemployment and economic downturns play a critical role, not having someone to discuss feelings with, including suicidal thoughts, increases the risk. If you or someone you know is depressed and feeling suicidal, please call our helpline at 865-584-4424.

2008 Finances

Revenue & Support

Special Events	\$20,664
Individuals	\$16,207
United Way	\$10,000
Churches	\$ 8,708
St. Mary's Health Partners	\$ 5,000
Anderson County Commission	\$ 4,000
Misc. Income	\$ 2,478
Grants	\$ 2,000
Community	\$ 443

Total Revenue \$69,500

Net Income \$ 2,234

Expenses

Compensations	\$36,922
Operations/Occupancy	\$13,750
Special Events	\$ 6,209
Telephone/Internet	\$ 4,412
Conferences/Training	\$ 1,840
Audit	\$ 1,800
Publicity	\$ 1,239
Dues/Accreditation	\$ 1,094

Total Expenses \$67,266

As of December 31, 2008, our cash reserves were \$17,060. This represents approximately three months of operating expenses.

Special Events

35th Annual Celebration and Volunteer Recognition
Annual Flea Market
Knoxville Lifestyle Book Sales
Recycling of aluminum cans and newspapers
Annual "Strings for Rings" Concert with Maura O'Connell



Newspaper Recycle

A newspaper recycling station is located on the corner of Rutgers & Wilson in Oak Ridge in the J. C. Penny parking lot across from Mr. Gatti's. Proceeds of the recycling station go to CONTACT. We appreciate your efforts to drop your old newspapers off.

2008 Board of Directors

Russ Reynolds, President
Jim Tedford, Vice-President
Becky Rushton, Secretary
Linda Maddox, Treasurer

Chuck Agle
Liz Batchelor
Danny Bush
Linda Doyle
Valerie Hansen
Parker Hardy
Leo Holland
Bob Jolley
John Keyes
Adolf King
Patti Pitts
Katie Smith
Rusty Stuck

2008 Staff

Holly White, Executive Director
Dana Gaines, Part-time Office Manager
Sara Turner, Part-time Backup Director

Business Office: (865) 482-5040

When we honestly ask ourselves which person in our lives means the most to us, we often find that it is those who, instead of giving much advice, solutions, or cures, have chosen rather to share our pain and touch our wounds with a gentle and tender hand. The friend who can be silent with us in a moment of despair or confusion, who can stay with us in an hour of grief and bereavement, who can tolerate not knowing, not curing, not healing and face with us the reality of our powerlessness, that is a friend who cares.

--Henri Nouwen

Value of Volunteer Time

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the value of one hour of volunteer time was \$17.88 for the state of Tennessee in 2007. The calculation is based on the average hourly wage for all workers in non-management, non-agricultural positions.

CONTACT Telephone Workers provided \$84,840.60 worth of free service in one year ($\$17.88 \times 365 \times 13$). **What a bargain for this community!**

This does not include Support Worker time, Board member time, special event time, and committee time.

Cost of a community CONTACT Helpline center.....**PRICELESS!**

CONTACT “How to Listen” Training

CONTACT offered training in listening skills twice in 2008. The training, titled "How to Listen Constructively, Creatively, Caringly" is open to anyone in the community and is also the first step for people who may be interested in becoming a volunteer phone worker for the CONTACT Helpline. The training teaches powerful active listening skills that everyone can use in their daily life with family, friends, and co-workers by helping participants develop empathetic, non-judgmental listening techniques. This extensive training, presented by area counselors and mental health professionals, offers important information on many of the problems people face today. The training is offered in various formats and consists of 20 hours of instruction and practice covering the following topics: Active Listening Skills; Youth and Their Parents in Today's Society; Senior Adults in Today's Society; Advanced Listening Skills– the CONTACT model; Addictive and Compulsive Behaviors; Violence, Neglect, and Exploitation; Loneliness, Grief, and Loss; Depression and Mental Illness; QPR for Suicide Prevention; and Caring Confrontation/Limit Setting.

Active Listening

Our core skill at CONTACT is active listening, a skill which is person-centered, feeling-centered, and present-centered. Our volunteers help callers work through their problems and examine potential solutions, unencumbered by personal bias. Callers gain enhanced self-confidence through the satisfaction that they have found their own answers. Our listening, then, becomes a resource to be used by callers as needed - a calming factor in times of stress, a process which brings clarity into confusion, and stimulation in moments of discovery. Because callers are assured of confidentiality and can remain anonymous (if they choose), they can feel free to discuss deeply personal problems. Active listening requires a decision to listen, to disengage from personal concerns and viewpoints, and to make oneself available.

This is CONTACT.
May I help you?



THIS CALL IS FOR YOU.



**BECOME A CONTACT
HELPLINE VOLUNTEER.**

**CALL 865-482-5040 FOR
MORE INFORMATION.**

"I learned for the first time how helpful and therapeutic listening was to people who are hurting – that you don't need answers to help people – listening helps them clarify. It led me to consider graduate school in some form of counseling. I found that the training I got through CONTACT in listening skills was far more effective than anything I got in graduate school."

"CONTACT has helped me to focus more on who is speaking and what they are saying rather than thinking about what I want to say. It puts the other person at the center of the conversation."

Reassurance Program

CONTACT Helpline offers a special free program for seniors, disabled persons, and other homebound individuals. CONTACT recognizes that these individuals may require periodic reassurance that someone cares about their well-being and, most importantly, that their health and safety is being considered.

There are two types of service that these individuals may request:

1. The first is simply a friendly visit over the telephone once a day with a specially trained volunteer. Medication reminders can also be requested during this daily chat.
2. The second is the same friendly telephone visit with emergency follow-up if the individual fails to answer the telephone. For this level of service, the client must provide the names and phone numbers of people who can check on them in person if they fail to answer the phone.

Referrals for the program may be made by clergy, social service agencies, visiting nurses, social workers, case workers, families, friends, senior housing centers, or from prospective clients themselves.

For more information or to apply:

Please call the business office at (865) 482-5040, or

Visit our web-site at www.contact-helpline.org, click on Reassurance at the top of the page, and then click on the link to print the application.



Anderson County Agency

