

RESOURCES BOOSTED, ALTERED TO MEET DEMAND

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"We're seeing people who have lost hope. We have seen an increase in suicide ideation ... We're seeing people upset that they can't go to a funeral ... We're seeing people who are very upset because society is in shutdown right now. We're seeing panic over the uncertainty of what is happening with our economy. Isolation is at an all-time high, not only with our seniors, but people who have been at home for quite some time."

The Reach Out Centre for Kids (ROCK), which provides child and youth mental health services in Halton, has also seen an increase — from six calls per day in March 2020 to a current average of 36 calls per day.

They also noted referrals are up 52 per cent since the pandemic began.

ROCK board chair and Halton police Deputy Chief Roger Wilkie attributed the surge to an increase in parental stress levels, which he said greatly interferes in children's quality of life.

Faced with the pandemic and an increased call volume, both ROCK and Distress Centre Halton have adapted to better serve the community in its time of need.

Thanks to a United Way grant, Clancy said the distress centre was able to hire an additional staff member.

The charity is also training more volunteers.

At present, roughly 200 people volunteer for Distress Centre Halton.

"The Halton community really stepped up and we increased our capacity to take calls and to be that safety net of the community," said Clancy.

She also said the bulk of her people are now work-



Graham Paine/Metroland
Deputy Police Chief Roger Wilkie, who is also chair of ROCK, and vice-president of finance and operations for ROCK, Aretha Perkins, are facing an increase in demand for their agency's services.

ing remotely, which she said has increased their capacity to take more shifts and more calls.

Because of the pandemic, Wilkie said, ROCK's service delivery was completely reprogrammed to embrace and deliver virtual services and improve system navigation.

"Our walk-in clinics are all virtual and we in-

creased the hours of these clinics. We provided over 10,797 virtual sessions between just March 17 and Aug. 31 (of 2020)," he said.

ROCK has also recently hired additional staff.

When asked what residents can do to improve their mental health, Clancy said residents should reach out and talk to someone, noting they can call Distress Centre Halton if they don't feel comfortable speaking with family or friends.

Getting exercise, going outside for a walk and eating healthy were other recommendations.

Wilkie said engaging in activities that bring joy is very important right now.

He also suggested finding new ways to connect with people, such as through a virtual book club or other virtual activities.

The board chair warned to be aware of changes in

youth behaviour, which may include spending more time in their room or on their devices, not socializing with friends, sleeping more or being irritable.

"While we expect these behaviours to have increased during COVID, they may also be indicators of depression," he said.

"It's important we talk to our loved ones in a way that opens doors for conversations about their feelings, letting someone know you've noticed and that you care is a great first step to open that door. If you have concerns or questions about a loved one's mental health, it's important to reach out to a professional who can help or give you advice. It's important to remember we are not in this alone."

STORY BEHIND THE STORY: With the ongoing pandemic intensifying mental health issues and in conjunction with Bell Let's Talk Day (Jan. 28), we wanted to explore how

ALARMING STATISTICS

• Halton police responded to 3,081 mental health related calls, 3,523 intimate partner violence calls and 692 calls related to suicide/attempted suicide in 2020.

• In 2019 police responded to 3,051 mental health calls, 3,326 intimate partner violence calls and 762 calls related to suicide/attempted suicide.

Support resources available
Distress Centre Halton can be reached at 1-833-924-1946 or at <https://www.dchalton.ca>. ROCK can be contacted at 289-266-0036 or through its 24-7 Crisis Line at 905-878-9785 or at <https://rockonline.ca>. Additional resources can be found at <https://www.halton.ca/For-Residents/Public-Health/Mental-Health>.

local organizations are handling things and what's being done to help the growing number of people in need.



Leathertown Lumber COVID-19 Store Policy



January 1, 2021

OPEN FOR ESSENTIAL SERVICES

We are currently staying open to serve our contractors and commercial customers who need to keep their business operating. We are asking that all orders be called or emailed in for curbside pick-up or curbside delivery.

Interim Business Hours: Monday to Friday 8am-4pm (closed Saturday & Sunday)

To place an order or get a quote:

- Call : 519-853-1970
- Email : jcober.leathertown@bellnet.ca
- Visit our website for a quote: www.leathertownlumber.ca

Picking Up Your Order:

- Our staff will contact you when your order is ready for pick-up
- Your order will be ready in the front parking lot (no entry into the store or yard is permitted at this time)
- Staff will not be assisting with loading orders, please bring assistance for large/heavy items

Deliveries:

- Contact Free, curbside delivery can be arranged at this time

Returns:

- Returns are not accepted at this time
- We recommend not over purchasing on lumber to ensure that they are in good salable condition at the time returns are accepted

Payment:

- NO CASH PAYMENT WILL BE ACCEPTED AT THIS TIME
- Payment by credit or debit card accepted at time of order or pickup (we recommend increasing your limit for payment by tap)
- Payment by e-transfer to jcober.leathertown@bellnet.ca

Leathertown Lumber thanks our team of dedicated employees for their efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our employees are rising to the daily challenge of providing safe and efficient service to our valued customers. We ask that when placing or picking up an order you recognize these efforts and express gratitude and patience with our safety protocols. Without our amazing team we would not be able to continue to serve our customers.

Leathertown Lumber continues to monitor and follow provincial and federal guidelines for our operation. Our top priority is the health and well-being of our employee's, their families and our customers. We thank you for your consideration, patience and cooperation during this difficult time we are all facing. Please help work with us to keep you and our team safe!

This policy may change without notice.

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Contact one of our family counsellors to discuss your wishes and options.

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