Innovation keeps Kids Help Phone relevant to young people

"Part of what I think makes us so unique is that we're one of the few support places that young people can access without intermediaries. They don't need health insurance, or a referral from a doctor, or counsellor, or teacher, and we are there for them 24/7 regardless of what the moment of need or crisis is." — Alisa Simon

Innovation can be challenging for charities that are often focused on meeting the special costs of delivering their services. But for Kids Help Phone, the organization is raising funds to add that capacity, which is critical because in order to remain relevant, we know that young people expect us to communicate with them and to be available to them at the moment of need or crisis," says Ms. Simon.

"We keep them for however long it takes to find them a home. Animals that have medical and behavioural issues can be re-homed, says Ms. Chortyk. It often requires thousands of dollars of medical treatment and months of rehabilitation before they can be adopted, says Ms. Chortyk.

In 2002, the charity launched a web posting service where a young person could anonymously send an electronic letter and receive a reply. Kids Help Phone then offered its counseling services via a recorded message and a chat counselling service in 2006. It launched its mobile app in 2013 and started offering sessions over Live Chat in 2013. These apps connect directly to Live Chat. For young people who prefer to find a service without calling a counsellor, they can visit the Kids Help Phone website to use Resources Around Me, which enables them to find services and support groups in their own communities.

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T h i s f o s s i l w a s a c q u i r e dw i t h g e n e r o u s su p p o r t t o ft h e L o u i s H a w l e yS t o n e C h a r i t a b l e T r u s t.

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Mr. Chorytk explains that while the BC SPCA is mandated to enforce the animal cruelty laws in the province, it must raise all the associated costs, such as salaries for special constables and the cost of the investigations, in addition to the veterinary costs. These are part of its total annual budget of $5.5 million.

"We are so grateful to donors. These animals have no one else to care for them, and they are in pain and suffer- ing. If we were not for the generosity of those who so generously make donations, they wouldn't be able to care for them and give them a second chance," she says.

While the organization's reactive services are more often in the news, the BC SPCA also has vigorous education and advocacy programs focused on reduc- ing the root causes of animal suffering. "We have many programs for children between 8 and 12 years of age — these are developmental years for kids when they learn about empathy and compassion," says Ms. Chorytk.

"We take a holistic approach to our programming. Although it is a sentencing focused, it encourages kids to care and become more aware of what is going on around them. We want our programs to help kids to understand that their actions can make a difference. Whether it's bullying at school or mistreating animals, they have the tools to speak out when they see it happening."

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