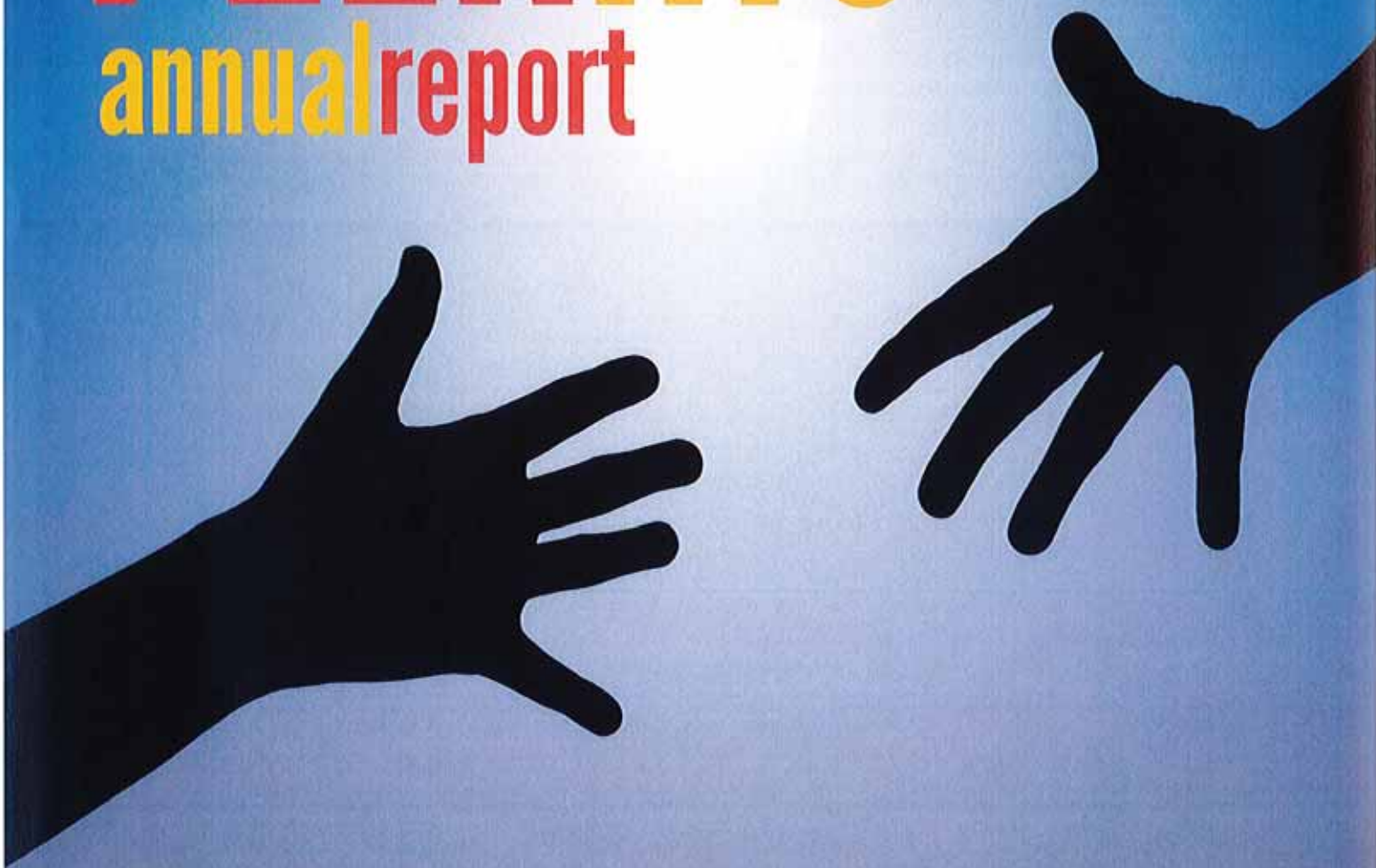


2017-2018

# PEERlife

## annualreport



Hope • Reintegration • Success

**PEERlife**  
**Transition**  
**Services**

## PeerLife Annual Report 2017-2018

This past year has been one of hope. We are so thrilled to announce that Correctional Services Canada (CSC) has extended us a small but important contract for the first six months of fiscal 2018-2019. The PeerLife collaborative (St. Leonard's House Windsor, St. Leonard's Society of Hamilton, St. Leonard's Society of Peterborough, and the House of Hope) met several times with the current Regional Deputy's office to begin a dialogue about a strategy for long term offenders. For the first time in almost six years we feel that we have representatives within the current administration who are concerned about long term offenders and who are dedicated to bring back the concept of peer support for lifers and long term offenders. The grant will implement modules of the Lifer Resource Strategy that was designed specifically for long-term offenders but never implemented due to the elimination of the program by the Conservative Government in 2012. The project will also reach out to lifers who are significantly passed their parole eligibility date to assess the barriers to moving through the system. We have also been asked to explore the unique needs of Aboriginal lifers and we look forward to partnering with the elders at each institution to develop recommendations for CSC.

While there still desperately needs to be a national strategy on lifers and long term offenders, I believe that awareness of this population's unique needs is one of the key issues that the current administration can no longer ignore. We were very encouraged by the Annual Report from the Office of the Correctional Investigator where in which Dr. Ivan Zinger recommended full reinstatement of the Life Line program.

Unfortunately one of our In-Reach workers, John Rives, experienced serious health issues and was unable to work for six months. We were touched by the outpouring of support and concern for John by the men he worked with inside. They also wrote letters to key officials begging for the return of a national life line program and spoke of the impact it had on them and the other lifers.

I would like to sincerely thank our funding partners, St. Leonard's Society of Hamilton, St. Leonard's Society of Peterborough, the House of Hope, and Maison Decision House for their continued financial support and for the hard work each has contributed over the years since LifeLine was cut. I want to also thank the St. Leonard's House Windsor's Board of Directors for their understanding of the need for this program and for being committed to supporting the program financially.

Despite the renewed financial support of CSC to the program we were still unable to afford two In-Reach workers and the very difficult decision was made to reduce the program to one In-Reach worker, Rick Sauve. The loss of John Rives as an In-Reach worker will have an impact on the men serving time in the Kingston institutions but we also know that Rick will do what he can to lessen that impact. We thank John for his many, many years of service and wish him nothing but health and happiness going forward. We thank Rick for his perseverance and extreme dedication to working with long term offenders.

Catherine Brooke  
Executive Director,  
St. Leonard's House, Windsor

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Catherine Brooke  
Executive Director,  
St. Leonard's House, Windsor



## PeerLife InReach Report 2017 -2018 – Rick Sauve

The fiscal year for 2017 - 2018 was a year with hope, promise, sadness and unanswered questions. For me personally I had some high lights and accomplishments. Topping the list was being awarded the Ed McClassic Human Rights Award. This truly was a humbling experience. I received the Award in Ottawa at a dinner. It was exciting to share this with family friends, and colleagues. I was also pleased to connect with past and new partners who worked or currently involved in the criminal justice world.

In June I was invited to speak at the Windsor St. Leonard's AGM meeting. It is always great to get to Windsor, which I consider home base. It is there the LifeLine family is not only there for support but the place where I always feel at home.

The Break Away Group was and is another of my highlights. I presented Groups at both Warkworth and Collins bay Institutions. The groups are very well received by both prisoners and staff. There is continued interest in expanding and continuing to deliver the program. It was also satisfying to assist some of the group members at parole hearings.

In February I was invited to fly out to British Columbia to speak at Okanagan College Campuses. The Dean created a Speakers Series and I was honored to be the first speaker. While there I did interviews for CBC radio and local newspapers. I also had the opportunity to work on a three year plan for Break Away with Dr. Mellissa Munn, a friend and supporter of mine and the St. Leonard's family.

In April of 2018 I reached out to Michael Milech Asst. to Ralph Goodale Public Safety Minister. I met with him in Ottawa where I pitched LifeLine and the Break Away program. He was very interested in both. In fact he has agreed to accompany me into one of the prisons in Kingston are to meet with group members. It is hoped that this outreach will lead to brighter future for LifeLine.

I also did a fair amount of media, some personal but I also promoted LifeLine and St. Leonard's.

This year also had some downs. My friend and colleague John Rives had a serious brush with death due to medical concerns. Fortunately he has made a remarkable recovery. However, due to budget restraints St. Leonard's was only able to keep one Inreach worker on. And so sadly I am left as the only Inreach Worker. Despite the challenges Peer Life and St. Leonard's continue to be a beacon of hope and the bridge to the community. The energy is still there to keep the spirit of LifeLine alive.

## PeerLife InReach Report 2017-2018 – John Rives

On that first working day of 1999 when I began my tenure as a barely fledged LifeLine InReach Worker, I did not anticipate how my “new job” would become an integral part of my life and identity as a Lifer on parole. For almost two decades I have had the privilege to be invited into the lives of hundreds of men and women. During times of extreme duress and challenges both critical and confusing I have witnessed Lifers confront every obstacle with strength and grace; shared their successes and failures. And yet, despite their personal circumstances, almost every one of them has consistently expressed concern for my well-being. I believe this speaks to the very heart of the LifeLine Concept – the workers and clients are one. This is why I will always believe in the value of our work. LifeLine has been a success. It has been the very key to success for many, many people.

With thanks to everyone who has contributed to that success, both behind and beyond the walls, I offer this poem:

### *The Calculus of Humpty Dumpty*

Again, inside the Visiting Room.  
Another year of waiting dangerously.

Thirty-six of those, and counting,  
since my scaffold  
caught a certain gust of wind, collapsed  
and took me down

flat on my back...a light  
so bright  
has branded shadows in my eyes.  
What may I see? What can I see?  
What numbers push against  
my fragile will?

Opposed and sanctioned,  
shattered in the proving:

healing,  
as another prisoner appears  
to seek my counsel.

~ John Rives © 2018

**Activity Report**  
SLS PeerLife Transition Services

Apr2017-Mar2018

	Case Confs.	NPB Panels	Judicial Reviews	Inst. Groups	PubEduc & Media	Comm. Relations	Family Assist	Meetings	Client Contacts	Misc. including travel*
Rick Sauve (BCImin/med:groups)	24	24	1	33	13	5	1	120	985	11
John Rives* (CBImin/JImin)	1	5	0	2	0	14	1	22	45	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>1030</b>	<b>13</b>

\*6 month sick leave