

The following letter about LifeLine™ was sent to the leaders of the federal political parties.

December 16, 2006

Dear Sirs:

Re: LifeLine™ Program

This past week the media has given coverage to LifeLine™, a correctional program staffed by life sentenced and long term offenders successfully living on conditional release. The St. Leonard's Society of Canada, a community-based charitable organization since 1967, has a mandate to promote a humane and informed justice policy and responsible leadership to foster safe communities. We have a long standing relationship with LifeLine™ and offer the following facts for you to consider in connection with this coverage.

1. LifeLine™ grew from a community agency initiative to reach into the prisons to help life sentenced people prepare for conditional release. After incarceration for periods in excess of 20 years, offenders returning to the community face a world much changed from the one that they knew. Familiarization with how our society currently operates is an essential step to foster community safety.
2. LifeLine™ In-Reach workers, because of their past incarceration and present status as sentenced persons on conditional release, have direct knowledge of the challenges facing 'lifers' who are working to reintegrate to society. Among the benefits of peer communications are:
 - \$ shared experience allows for effective communication and understanding;
 - \$ the workers model successful reintegration after lengthy incarceration and are good examples to those with whom they work; and
 - \$ the ability to recognize and speak to indications of unease and potential areas of concern.
3. One goal of our corrections system is to prepare people to safely return to the community. In-Reach workers are professionally trained for their positions as escorts. They are employed and contributing to society through their work. They are examples of successful reintegration. In Canada we benefit from their willingness to help others achieve a safe return to society.
4. LifeLine™ is an acknowledged best practise internationally. It has been recognized by the International Corrections and Prisons Association and the American Corrections Association.

For further information please contact Elizabeth White at 416-920-6116 or slsc@on.aibn.com.

Yours truly,



Elizabeth White
Executive Director