

# Help Line workers handle crises, questions

By Ellyn Hess

"When the phone rings, we have no idea what it will be. It might be a person wanting a phone number or it might be someone falling apart emotionally," according to Don Holm, chief coordinator of the UNL Help Line.

Holm called the service a clearinghouse for information. Students manning the special telephone line try to answer callers' questions and help them with problems.

Holm said Help Line workers either answer general questions themselves or direct the caller to someone who can. Help Line workers are also prepared to deal with crises, Holm said.

"Our workers must be able to react well under stress," he said, explaining that Help Line workers are hired because they are skilled at dealing with people's personal problems. Most workers are graduate students studying for master's degrees in counseling, he said.

Qualities we look for in our workers are maturity and an ability to deal with problems without being embarrassed," Holm said.

Six Help Line staff members each work about 20 hours a week. According to Holm, they either answer or make referrals on 96 per cent of the approximately 3,000 calls they get each month.

"I joined Help Line because I thought I would keep in touch with what kids at the University are concerned about, and what kinds of problems they

"I enjoy the contact with kids on campus. Working for the Help Line points up the hassles they have, and the frustration they must feel," she said.

Another telephone service, the Gay Rap Line, helps persons trying to reach a decision about their sexuality and how to deal with it, student coordinator Joe Creason said.

Creason, who has worked with the phone service since its beginning in 1970, said workers try to help people who just want to talk about being gay. Gay Rap Line workers also refer medical, psychological and legal problems to experts.

"We usually don't offer personal advice about problems. We just try to help people clarify their problems so they can deal with them," Creason said.

Callers' problems range from how to tell their families they are gay to how to handle a charge for loitering, he said.

Volunteers staff the Gay Rap Line from 8 p.m. to 2 a.m. daily. They generally receive the most calls near holidays and on weekends.

Creason said he thinks calls increase during holidays because gay persons often have problems being with their families. Calls increase on weekends because drinking tends to lower people's inhibitions about discussing their sexuality, and sometimes increase feelings of depression related to being gay, he added.

Volunteers don't have to be gay to work for the rap line, Creason said.

He said being gay helps because callers usually want to talk to another gay person.

Doug Weiss, a Gay Rap Line staff member, said he likes working for the service because "I simply enjoy sitting down and talking with people." Weiss said most of his calls are "of a serious nature."

To train for the Gay Rap Line, volunteers make up potential situations, then determine how they probably would answer the call. Creason said 20 volunteers staff the service.

Sue Aitchison, one of the three coordinators of the Women's Resource Center information line, said the service mainly helps women with women's problems.

"She said having only eight volunteers limits the amount of time the line can be used. The line usually is open from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily and sometimes on weekends.

Most women students who volunteer to work are interested in learning about women's issues. She said many calls received are for medical and legal information, and for information about Lincoln women's organizations.

Aitchison mentioned a call the center received from a mother who was upset about her daughter living with her boyfriend. The mother wanted information about placing her daughter in a dormitory.

"There wasn't much we could say about housing in that situation," Aitchison said.



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## Financial aid sessions

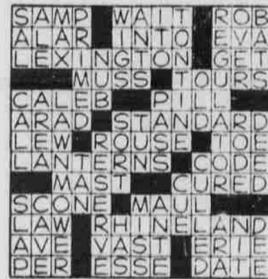
The Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid will be holding sessions this week to provide students information about financial aid.

The office staff will explain what scholarships, grants, loans and work study programs are available and how students can apply for them.

Two will be held Wednesday at 7 p.m.: one in the Selleck multi-purpose room and the second at Burr Hall on East Campus. Thursday at 6:30 p.m. a session will be held in the Abel Hall north lounge.

## Crossword puzzle

- |                         |                           |                      |                         |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>ACROSS</b>           | 41. Ballerina skirt       | 4. Spouses           | 21. Nimbus              |
| 1. Crone                | 42. Longings              | 5. Transgresses      | 22. Bar offerings       |
| 4. Distribute           | 46. Death notice          | 6. Cravat            | 23. Corded fabrics      |
| 8. Part of door         | 47. Bob                   | 7. Cloth measure     | 25. Riding whip         |
| 12. Hebrew priest       | 48. Dove's cry            | 8. Male name         | 26. Proof               |
| 13. Seed covering       | 49. Khyber, for one       | 9. Wings             | 27. Without (L.)        |
| 14. Medicinal plant     | 50. Roman date            | 10. New-hay          | 28. Makes lace edging   |
| 15. Musical entertainer | 51. Consume               | 11. Most desirable   | 30. Word of comparison  |
| 17. Adages              | <b>DOWN</b>               | 16. Tans oneself     | 33. Walks pompously     |
| 18. Regrets             | 1. Surround               | 19. Yellow and Coral | 34. Buddhist language   |
| 19. Squandered          | 2. Son-in-law of Mohammed | 20. Printer's mark   | 36. Evidence of allergy |
| 20. Avoids              | 3. Card game              |                      | 37. Road sign           |
| 22. Release             |                           |                      | 38. West Indian island  |
| 24. Headgear            |                           |                      | 39. American inventor   |
| 25. Most transparent    |                           |                      | 40. Record              |
| 29. Shade tree          |                           |                      | 42. Greek letter        |
| 30. Journeys            |                           |                      | 43. Fishing pole        |
| 31. By way of           |                           |                      | 44. Tibetan gazelle     |
| 32. Children love them  |                           |                      | 45. Habitual drunkard   |
| 34. Measure             |                           |                      |                         |
| 35. Faucets             |                           |                      |                         |
| 36. Underworld          |                           |                      |                         |
| 37. Despise             |                           |                      |                         |
| 40. Floor covering      |                           |                      |                         |



Answer to last puzzle

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
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49				50					51	

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