

# Wilson Crisis Center

By ALLAN R. SHARP

After one year's full operation, the Wilson Crisis Center would have to be termed a definite success. What began nearly two years ago as an idea is today a healthy, vital communication agency handling thousands of incoming crisis calls per year and calling daily approximately a hundred elderly people living alone in Wilson and the surrounding community. Over 200 volunteers have been trained and have, or are donating some of their time regularly to helping others. In 20 years in Wilson, I don't know of any other community volunteer service that has had such enthusiastic response as has the Wilson Crisis Center.

During its first year, operational money was obtained through the generous donations of churches, civic clubs and individuals; however, as of January 1, 1973, the Crisis Center became an agency of the United Fund.

The Crisis Center is a telephone service, therefore, there is no personal contact. The anonymity of the volunteers is essential and the location of the center remains a closely guarded secret (as if you can keep anything with 200 persons involved a secret!).

Every volunteer must work out his own technique and telephone style, though all volunteers have been trained in classes or have on-the-job training. We have a most complete referral file and if the volunteers, after talking to the caller, decides that a referral is necessary, they have at their fingertips the information.

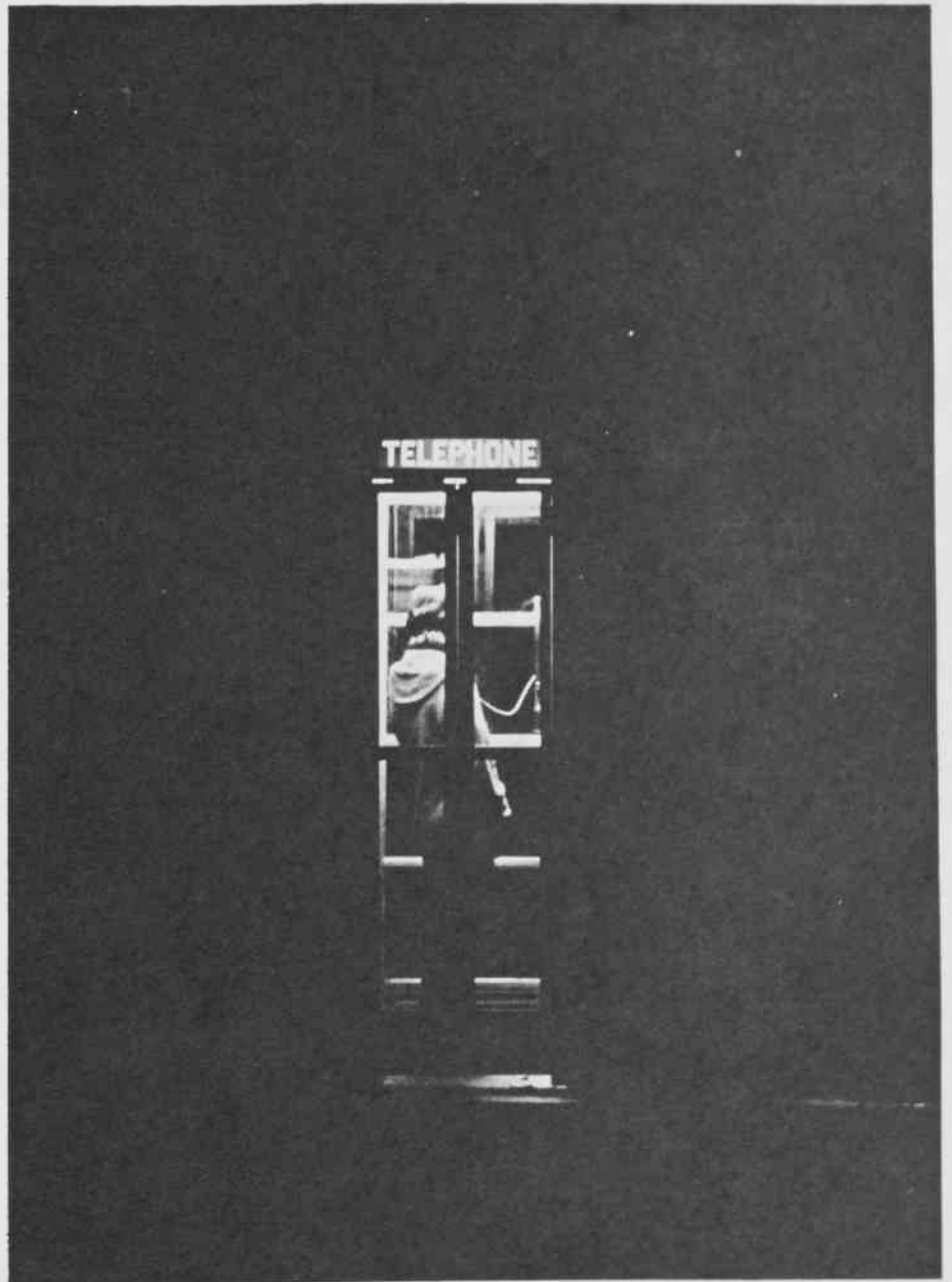
There are six rules which we ask our volunteers to follow. They are:

1. No one expects volunteers to be an expert. If additional help is needed it is available.
2. We must be kind and considerate to all callers. Their problem is real and we must help all we can.
3. Do not moralize.
4. Do not do for caller what he can do for himself, but if he cannot act for himself the Crisis Center will.
5. All calls must be treated with strictest confidence.
6. No specific records are kept. We only keep a tabulation on the types of calls received.

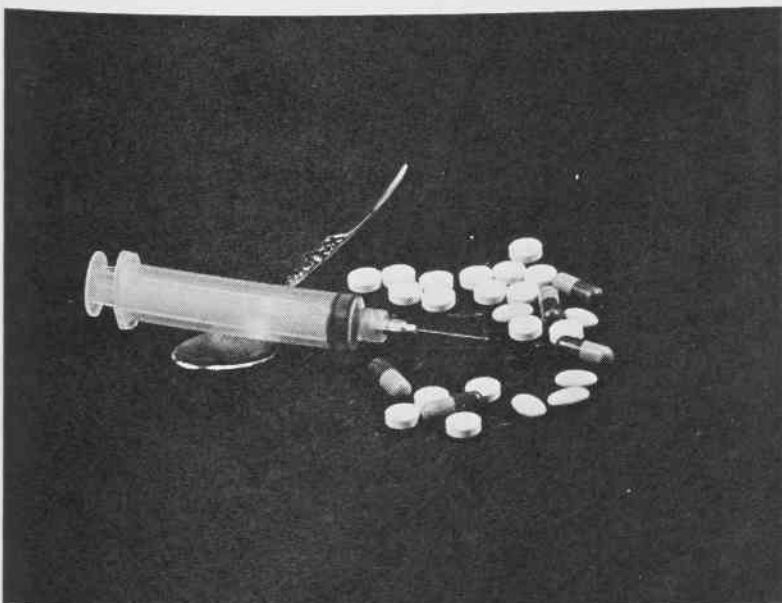
Anyone interested in volunteering should see me and secure an application blank.



Volunteers handle calls 24 hours a day...



Calls may come at anytime ... day or night.



Problems may concern drugs, VD, unwanted pregnancy, family problems...