REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR

Amazing changes occurred at our Centre this year! While we continue to provide important, client-focused services as a result of sexualized violence, we also continue to work on being more inclusive in our practice and persist in addressing funding pressures.

We officially changed our name to Victoria Sexual Assault Centre to reflect that we serve all women and trans+ survivors; and men for emergency services. I know we have relayed this information in a variety of ways, but it remains a priority of our work to serve marginalized people who may have few or no existing services. We are committed to reviewing our values individually and as a team, and working toward an anti-oppressive practice. We are making important changes to become more inclusive.

Receiving donor bequests in 2012/2013 fiscal year allowed for planning and transformational growth. We continue our savings from our administrative consolidation partnership with the Victoria Women's Transition House, which enables us to pursue more cost saving measures and reduce our overhead costs. Additionally, VSAC was able to purchase an office suite for our counselling, prevention education, and administrative services in the same building as the Victoria Women's Transition House Community Office, which will allow us to save on expenditures in our current overhead costs. We have now settled into our suite and encourage donors and community to come by for a tour. The cost saving is a good return on our investment, and staff volunteers and clients are happy to not to have to relocate every five years.

In closing I want to acknowledge our donors’ support whether they be gifts of time, goods, or money. Many have long ties to this agency and act on that commitment so generously each year. Thank you all for your support of VSAC and showing that the community cares about preventing, sexualized violence and supporting those traumatized by sexualized violence.

Makenna Rielly, MA
Executive Director

REPORT FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Another year has passed in the life of VSAC, and as always – there are important changes to our community.

Probably the biggest piece of work the board undertook in the last year was navigating big changes to our board – including the resignation of some members, the voting in of a new co-chair, and the recruitment of new members.

First, we wish to acknowledge the resignation of some important members of our board: Emily Arthur and Elizabeth Holland, who brought such skill, passion, and energy to our board. As well, we wish to offer deep gratitude to two very special, long-time members of the board who left us this past year: Sally Gose and Yvonne Haist.

Though we have lost people who have been a part of our board for many years, and who have helped to guide VSAC through much challenge and change. They leave incredible legacies of unparalleled commitment, leadership, and support, and will be deeply missed.

With Sally’s resignation was the need to vote in a new co-chair – Sean Dhillon. Sean has served on the board through the recent and very fast-paced, work-packed, and challenging time of our agency move, administrative consolidation, and trans+ inclusion beginnings, so was ready and excited to be voted in to help lead the board. Congratulations, Sean, and welcome to the position of Co-Chair!

Keeping in mind we had some resignations coming, the board wanted to be pro-active in our approach, while also wanting to update and improve our recruitment, interview and training process for new members coming in. We worked with VSAC staff (special thanks to Lindsay Pompe, Volunteer Coordinator) and Makenna’s (Makenna) leadership to update our recruitment practices, ensuring there was a wider reach than before to invite people to our board. We also offered more information nights for interested individuals to learn more about the work we do. We extended our interview process to allow for more dialogue between interested folks and our staff and board, to help ensure the best fit between our agency and potential new board members.

Finally, we planned to host an orientation night to help bring new members up to speed on the work they will engage in, and to help build a sense of team with more senior board members from the start. This resulted in the largest and most skilled group of board members we have ever seen! The decisions to select only a few were very tough, but we are proud to announce the newest members to the VSAC board: Jean Ference, Nat Johnstone, Srin Sathyakrishnan, and Lisa Iona.

In other work, we continued our support for awareness and fund-raising events for the centre, including Walk a Mile, the Triathlon for Cancer, and the Goddes Run. Increased funding was however, not enough to support the decision to make this year’s Walk a Mile on us. Unfortunately, we were hearing more and more from various individuals and groups that the event was not inclusive of everyone, and may be perpetuating enactments of gendered violence. VSAC brought forward this concern, especially given our recent move to become more trans+ inclusive. VSAC is committed to the humble, inspiring and provocative process that drives us to rethink and improve our work on issues of gender-based violence in society, so we realized we had a responsibility to investigate these concerns and respond. Thus, we are excited to plan something that will take the place of Walk a Mile next year, while being more engaging and welcoming to everyone.

We wish to acknowledge and thank our community for coming out in support of Walk a Mile these many years, and to the many who offered their support about how we can change for the better.

project

Finally, we wish to acknowledge the community for all it does to support the work of the centre—we are ever grateful for your support.

Sincerely,

Kim Brown, Heidi Enever (Co-chair), Sean Dhillon (Co-chair), Kelly Branchi (Secretary), Julia Denley, and Debra Scarfoni (Treasurer).

REPORT FROM COORDINATOR OF VOLUNTEERS

8000 hours is the amount of time, commitment, and compassion the volunteers of the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre provided this year in order to ensure that survivors of sexualized violence are supported in our community. Volunteers serve on our Sexual Assault Response Team (SART), as office volunteers, on our Board of Directors as well as at events. The volunteers at the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre are truly exceptional and one of our volunteers, Kyla Brower, is no exception. Kyla started in the Fall of 2011 as a volunteer on the SART team. As part of her role, Kyla provided immediate support and information to recent survivors down at the hospital and/or police station. Kyla also went above and beyond as a volunteer, whether it was covering a shift last minute, taking on-calls over the holidays, helping new volunteers in training or providing back-up support to other SART vol-unteers while on-call, Kyla was always generous, thoughtful, open and supportive. We ask that vol-unteers stay on for a year, but Kyla stayed on for 3 years right up until she moved to Halifax this year.

Kyla is just one example of the dedication and skill our vol-unteers bring to the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre. Year after year, our staff is truly thankful for their contributions.

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS & GRANT PROVIDERS


Contact Information: #201-3060 Cedar Hill Rd. ~ Victoria BC ~ V8T 3J5 Business Line: (250) 383-5545 Crisis & Information Line: (250) 383-3232 @VSAcentre 3J5 in partnership with the Vancouver Island Crisis Line WWW.VSAC.ca Charitable Business #10822 0054 R60001 Twitter: VSACentre Find us on Facebook @ Victoria Sexual Assault Center

2013-2014 VICTORIA SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE STAFF

2013—2014 EXPENSES/REVENUE BREAKDOWN

expense

Revenue $1,162,923
Expenses $800,161
Surplus $362,762

Thank you to our presenting sponsor, Vancity, our volunteers and everyone that participated and supported our 8th annual, and final, Walk a Mile in Her Shoes® on May 25th, 2014. Thank you to everyone that helped make this event a memorable one!

This June Triathlon of Compassion participants raised $22,000 to support VSAC services. Special thanks to Rob Dibden and the Tri of Compassion Race Committee and to the hundreds of volunteers who made the event possible.

3000 runners and walkers took to Langford Streets on June 1st for the third annual Goddess Run to support three local charities, includ- ing VSAC. Of special note, our very own Victim Service Worker, Lara Graves, placed first in the half marathon distance!

VSAC Board member, Julia Denley launched a new grocery store fundraising campaign which raised awareness and $5000!

Donations from direct mail and telemarketing continue to be critical to VSAC’s financial solvency and we extend sincere thanks to those donors who contribute.

This year, VSAC launched a new website and blog that better allows VSAC to connect with community members, share resources, and provide support to survivors.
PROJECT RESPECT
Project Respect, the sexualized violence prevention program of the BC Assault Centre, works to engage the whole community in addressing the root causes of gender-based violence. Project Res- pect’s Rhizome Youth Social Action Team, made up of youth ages 12-21 from across Greater Victoria, are working to create meaningful changes in and implementing the vision for the pro- gram.

In our school-based work, we engage clas- ses of youth ages 12-19 in sexualized vio- lence prevention workshops, providing safe and skillfully facilitated spaces for young people to begin to think critically about, act to resist violence, and share their experiences with other students in a curriculum that is harmful (yet normalized) messages they receive about gender, relationships, sexuality, and violence. Pro- gramming addresses individual, relation- ship, and societal level influences by fo- cusing on knowledge change, skill building, attitude change, and social change.

As usual, over the 2013-2014 school year we have integrated many new learnings into Project Respect’s sexuality and vio- lence prevention workshops. Our focus remains to shift cultural understandings of the root causes of violence and introduce tools for critical thinking. However, our approaches and entry points are constantly shifting to respond to the particular contexts and experiences of participants. Over this past year, we have offered workshops in mid- dle schools, high schools, alternative schools, employment-skills programs, and other community-based programs serving youth.

This year, Project Respect reached approx- imately 2020 youth and community mem- bers through the 2013/2014 school year through: 60 workshops in schools and community-based settings; 36 youth-led social action projects; and, key community events. Our reach extends across School Districts 61 (Victoria Area), 62 (Sidney Area), and 63 (Esquimalt Area), with request from all across BC and bey- ond for resource and curriculum sharing and planning.

Through national partnerships with and funding from the Canadian Women’s Foundation, Students Commission of Can- ada, and the Girls Action Foundation, Pro- ject Respect is able to address the root causes of gender-based violence and engage young people to take the lead on engaging communities in this work.

TEEN HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS PROJECT In 2013, Project Respect received a Canadian Women’s Foundation 4-Year Teen Healthy Relationships Programs grant. Through this funding, as well as additional support from Telus Community- Fund and the United Way of Greater Victoria, we just delivered the first year of this program. We worked with students in two schools over 12 sessions to create a rich and meaningful process that enabled students to explore their experiences, learn more about the root causes of violence, create strategies to address the forms of violence they see happening in their daily lives, and become anti-vio- lence leaders in their schools and communities.

HOLLABACK! VICTORIA Hollaback! is an international movement to end street harassment. It consists of locally run Hollaback! sites all over the world. Run by members of the Project Respect Rhiz- ome Youth Social Action Team, Hollaback! Victoria has been busy over the past year running their blog (http:// victoria.hollaback.org) and developing projects to incite commu- nity action to end street harassment. A particular focus for com- munity engagement has been to teach community members the skills to intervene when they see street harassment in order to shift the culture that normalizes this violence. In December, the Hollaback! Team facilitated a community event called HollaCafe! in collaboration with Discovery Coffee.

STOPTELF : ENGAGING BOYS AND YOUNG MEN IN GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION In 2013, we began a partnership with national youth organization, the Students Commission of Canada, to do the Top Left Project. Youth involved in the project named it Top Left because that’s where the heart is. The project is designed to en-gage more boys and young men in working with youth of all genders to end gender- based violence. Top Left is happening in four communities across the country: Victo- ria, Saskatoon, Toronto, and Miramichi NB.

Over the course of the year, Rhizome youth travelled with Project Respect staff to attend Stop the Line conferences in Ontario hosted by the Students Commission. At these conferences, youth from all four communities came together, shared experiences, ideas, and skills, and created social action products (such as videos and presentations) to take back to their home communities. The conferences were also life changing on a personal level for many of the youth who were able to go.

TOP LEFT YOUTH SOCIAL ACTION TEAM
Organized and co-facilitated by the Rhizome youth social action team, Project Respect held our first overnight anti-violence youth conference at Camp Barnard March 7, 8, and 9 as part of our local Top Left project. In line with the outcomes for this project, 13 of the 30 youth who participated self-identified as boys or young men. The conference brought together youth ages 12-18 from di- verse backgrounds and cultural contexts to explore the root causes of gender-based violence and create strategies to end it.

THE PREVENTION TEAM
In the fall of 2013, The Project Respect Rhizome Youth Social Action Team was recognized by the BC Ministry of Justice, Crime Prevention and Community Youth Leadership Award. Project Respect’s success over the past year is due to incredible facilitators and youth leaders, who bring amazing skill, knowledge and energy to engaging diverse audiences in difficult discussions about violence and inciting collective action toward building non-violent communities. Our staff team over 2013/14 included: Elia Losslee (Prevention Manager), Kingsley Strudwick (Prevention Coordinator), Alyx MacAdam (Trans* Inclu- sion Coordinator), Alex Filippoli (Auxiliary Facilitator), Matthew Davydiuk (Auxiliary Facilitator), Paloma Pont (Youth Community Developer), and praACTic student Darnel Mang-Woody. Many youth were involved in creating our various social action projects this year. Our core team of talented and fierce youth leaders kept the momentum of the projects going throughout the year: Alicia Lee, Chloe Mumford, Emily Carson-Apston, Eunice Rasmussen, Genevieve Nevin, Kele Antoine, Lucius Hall, Mikyela Milne, Nicholas Hig- gins, Paloma Poets, Rowan Helbert, Jafathana Hussein, and Shan Khan. We’d also like to thank our adult volunteers Amy Dorais and Isaac Rosenberg for their hard work and support in their projects this year!

A big thanks to all of our community partners and supporters, and to our funders: Canadian Women’s Foundation, United Way, Telus Community Fund, and Province of BC Community Gambling Grant, Vancouver Foundation, Government of Canada - Canada Summer Jobs, Girls Action Foundation.

DIRECT CLIENT SERVICES: SUPPORTING SURVIVORS OF SEXUALIZED VIOLENCE
This year has been a very successful year for the Direct Client Services Team. With a core staff of ten providing immediate crisis support, victim services support, and long-term counselling to survivors of sexual assault and childhood sexual abuse, clients may access service at various points in their recovery and healing journeys.

Stopping the Violence (STV) counsellors are working with the changes to the new mental health policy inclusion and exclu- sion criteria through the use of new assessment tools that can be discussed with clients. Following the adoption of this pol- icized consent for service forms, which clearly indicate rea- sons for ending service and counselling interfering behaviours assessment, which also identifies limitations to future ser- vices.

The individual waitlist has been brought down substantially with a waiting period of approximately 12 to 14 months for individual counselling. However, clients are being streamed through our two core groups. Skills for Healing and Building Strengths provide the necessary skills to under- take trauma therapy while waiting for this service. For the most part, this is going well as we are seeing some attrition from the individual and group waitlists through these processes. Please note increase number of group session participants in the DCS summary.

Adapted sessions, on Trauma Informed Practice and Support (TIPS), were presented to the community organizations Cool-Aid Society and PEERS. Also, two mini-TIPS trainings were provided to the Cool-Aid Society, generating funds.

The Team has been working closely with Ayya, our Trans Inclu- sion Coordinator, to discuss changes to DCS programming (such as trans inclusion in groups, evaluation and possible research opportunities) and is committed to the inclusion of trans* and gender variant survivors.

Our counselling services range from short-term crisis support to longer-term, individual trauma therapy and groups with other survivors. A variety of techniques, such as EMDR, so- matic, narrative and Art therapy are used by our counsellors with additional support from Community Services. Individuals have come to trauma-informed practice and honed their skills through a placement with the crisis services. This professional and dedicated team continues their commitment to sup- porting women, trans* and gender variant survivors of sexual assault and sexual childhood abuse and working towards an end to sexualized violence.

“Thank you for helping me help myself. Thanks to you I have discovered I did not know I possessed.” ~ VSAC client

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF SERVICE!
Karen Wickham came to VSAC as a fortuitous accident. Volunteer Victoria misdirected Karen to the VSAC/crisis line instead of the general crisis line in 1986 when she was a student at UVIC, involved in various campus clubs. And the rest, as they say, is history.

After a year on the crisis line and a trained member of the Emergency Response Team, Karen became an employee in 1988. She has worn many hats in different capacities: crisis intake, emergency response, crisis intervention program (a combo of crisis and victim services), counselling and court services. Today Karen still manages two hats, Crisis Line Coordinator and Team Leader for Direct Client Services.

Being an island tongue, Karen has seen: • early leader in the drug culture • the staff contingent grow from 4 to 25 employees • the inception of the Victim Services Program, the roll out of the Stopping the Violence Initiative • the introduction of the Residential Historical Abuse Program • the creation of Ending Violence Association of BC • the provincial umbrella group supporting Victim Assistance and Stopping the Violence Counseling programs • the ground breaking trans* inclusion work being done to provide services for the trans* and gender variant survivors.

Karen is the “expert” when it comes to access to information for computers and hard word data, to an early database than many computers, Karen has assisted those of us, who goe over at the mention of numbers, re- port on our daily work and has shared with us the “joy” of data input and recording stats!

In 1996 when VSAC was certified with the BCCEU, Karen began a shop steward and continues to support the staff to this day. As Shop steward, Karen has served on the Provincial Bargaining Committee and participates in ongoing training with the union.

Karen holds the history of VSAC and is a much respected member of this organization. We appreciate the enormous breadth of knowledge and expertise you bring to the table and your state and wisdom that supports and enriches us all.