REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Community partnerships were a cornerstone of the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre’s work in 2014-2015. The power of partnerships cannot be underestimated. Collaboration keeps our agency vital and responsive to community need and this year we worked to build new connections as well as bolster established ones.

Thanks to generous funding from the Ministry of Justice and private donors, the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre (VSAC) in partnership with Child Abuse Prevention & Counselling Society of Greater Victoria (formerly Mary Manning Centre), Island Health, local police and RCMP are working together to create the first Integrated Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Support Centre at British Columbia. The Centre will provide crisis counseling, medical/forensic exams, police interviews, and other support in a central, safe, welcoming environment for survivors of sexualized violence of all ages and genders. The project will address the critical need for a non-institutional venue to reduce barriers to service for survivors of sexualized violence. We have long had the vision to open such a clinic but only in early 2015 did we conceptualize the project and begin talks with partner agencies to lay the early groundwork. At this time, construction has begun and the clinic will open in fall 2015.

The Community Based Response network is a two-year project funded by the Status of Women Canada and currently we are working with six partner agencies, The Victoria Native Friendship Centre, The Intercultural Association of Greater Victoria, Child Abuse Prevention and Counseling Society of Greater Victoria, PEERS Resource Society, Victoria Women’s Transition House and Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre. Our goal is to create a network to better respond to sexualized violence in the greater Victoria area by collaborating with multiple agencies and developing strategies to better serve multiple communities.

For five years we have partnered with the Victoria Women’s Transition House in an administrative consolidation which has allowed us to reduce our overhead. This relationship is not only cost effective but we are also more efficient in our administrative processes.

Community partnerships are a good way of doing business and our donors are our most important community partners. Thank you for trusting us to do the needed work in our community. Survivors need our services so I want to acknowledge our donors’ support whether they be gifts of time, goods, or money. Many have such strong ties to this agency and act on that commitment so generously each year. Thank you for all of your support of VSAC and know that with the Community cares about preventing sexualized violence and supporting those traumatized by sexualized violence.

REPORT FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Victoria Sexual Assault Center Board of Directors has experienced a year of change, bringing about new opportunities, ideas, and members.

Over this past year the faces at the board meeting table have changed. We are pleased to share with you Heidi Exner, Kim Brown, and Yvonne Hasla. These women have been long time members of the board, volunteers for the center, and ambassadors in the community.

We had two successful board member recruitment sessions; giving us five new members. Our new members bring with them fresh ideas, new strengths, and opinions allowing us to diversify the abilities of the board.

The financial audit for this past fiscal year was presented to the board members by the Treasury Committee. The board voted unanimously to pass the motion to accept the audit.

The board has participated and volunteered in many successful community events! The Goddess Run and Triathlon of Compassion were both great events where the members participated and volunteered! The board collaborated with community members and Victoria Sexual Assault Centre employees to host “This One’s For the Girls” event in July! The event was a night of dancing, education, and fun! The goal of the event was to celebrate, empower, and unite all women. The proceeds raised from the event went directly toward client services programs. The event was a success! We all left with intentions of hosting another similar event in the New Year!

The board is ecstatic to be involved in such a ground breaking venture, the Integrated Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Support Centre. The center will strive to provide efficient and effective medical and forensic care for survivors of sexual assault, child maltreatment, and domestic violence. The combination of medical and forensic care coupled with education creates strong healthy women in our community.

Sincerely,
Kelly Branchi (Co-Chair & Secretary), Sean Dhillon (Co-Chair), Julia Denley, Gulroje Jiwani, Nat Johnstone (Treasurer) and Lisa Jozia.

2014 - 2015 VICTORIA SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE STAFF

Makenna Rielly, Executive Director

2014 - 2015 EXPENSES/REVENUE BREAKDOWN

Makenna Rielly, MA
Executive Director

REPORT FROM TRANS INCLUSION COORDINATOR

This last year has been an exciting one for Trans Inclusion! We brought together a brilliant group of 12 local Trans folks to develop and facilitate our Trans Inclusion workshops. These workshops are decolonizing, participatory, and skill building events with the aim of getting service providers more confident and comfortable when serving Trans and Gender non-conforming clients. We’ve been able to connect with hundreds of staff and volunteers at a wide range of organizations - including PEERS, the United Way Community Partners, NED2, and many more!

This year also marks the last year in this role for Alyx, and the introduction of Alex as the new coordinator (as well as the affection that everyone working in Trans Inclusion is named some form of Alex). Trans inclusion remains committed to working towards inclusion and acceptance for Trans folks here at the Centre, as well as within our networks and the wider community.

2014 - 2015 VICTORIA SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE STAFF
A major highlight of this past year was the top Left Social Action Camp where youth from the Rhizone Youth Social Action team put together a video and wrote the lyrics to a popular song, making them empowering through writing about the importance of consent! The following is a blog published by Eliza Lizette, Prevention Manager who currently is a student and intern at the youth group:

Project Respect launched its first hit music video “Respect Me Like You Do” re-written as “Love Me Like You Do” (from Fifty Shades of Grey). We are creating the message that as we see in the world - media that shows diverse bodies, genders, orientations, relationships, ways of loving, and lots and lots of explicit consent! The lyrics and scenes were developed by young people at The Tides Youth Conference, and the song was recorded in partnership with The Choir (Larsen’s Music) and directed by Project Respect’s year-round youth group, Rhizone.

Youth participants and facilitators at this year’s Project Respect Top Left Social Action Camp.