March Newsletter 2017

February 17th, 2017 marked the first anniversary of the Victoria Sexual Assault Clinic. It was on that day one year ago that the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre opened the doors to a new, confidential, and accessible facility that provides recent survivors of sexual assault with support, medical and forensic care, and options for reporting all in one centralized location.

Every survivor deserves access to services, and to have their choices supported. By shifting key services for recent survivors from the hospital and police stations the clinic is breaking down barriers, streamlining the process and providing individualized, trauma-informed care for survivors of all genders.

Research shows that when a survivor receives compassionate support during the initial response, it has a significant impact on their healing. Since opening the clinic, the demand for these services from recent survivors has increased by 80%. What this means is that more people are getting support in the crucial time that they need it. And for us, this is, without question, a success.

Sexual assault continues to be a reality for far too many people but with your support the Clinic will always be there to support someone in the moment they need it the most.

It took a whole community of people to make the Clinic a reality. It is truly amazing what can happen when people come together and strive to do better. Thank you for being part of this groundbreaking first year. Your support is changing lives.

“The private, quiet, contained and homelike space of the clinic is like a cocoon of comfort to help create a sense of safety and control in the aftermath of an uncontrollable experience. Being able to give the survivor a choice of going to the Clinic feels like a first step in walking with them to reclaim their power and begin healing.”

~ Nan, volunteer support worker on the Sexual Assault Response Team

THANK YOU TO OUR CLINIC PARTNERS AND FUNDERS

Island Health, the dedicated team of Forensic Nurse Examiners, local Police, Victoria Child Abuse Prevention and Counselling Centre, Ministry of Justice, United Way, the City of Victoria, and the Zonta Club of Victoria.

BE PART OF THE CLINIC

Thank you to all of the donors that have supported the clinic. Anyone that has made a donation of $1000 or more has their name acknowledged on our donor recognition plaque at the clinic. We proudly display this plaque to let survivors know there is a community of support around them.
TRI OF COMPASSION

When: June 25th, 2017
Where: Esquimalt Rec Centre
Register: www.triofcompassion.com

This year marks the 24th annual Triathlon of Compassion! The longest running fundraiser of the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre (VSAC), this fun and feel-good event sees athletes of all abilities and ages come out to swim, bike and run to support VSAC’s programs and services.

Last year’s event was an incredible success where over 130 participants raised $25,000 to support survivors of sexualized violence.

Seeing the word triathlon can be daunting for most folks, but the Triathlon of Compassion really puts the “try” in Triathlon - our focus is on completion, not competition! It is a shorter distance triathlon (500m swim, 20k bike and 5k run), making it an ideal event for beginners and a great tune-up for experienced athletes!

The other great part is that you can sign up as a team of three; meaning one swimmer, one biker and one runner! We bet you can find two friends, family members or co-workers to create a team with you.

The event also features race distances for kids, ages 5 years old and up.

There are great prizes for the top fundraisers like a new bike and weekend getaway.

If you ever had “completing a triathlon” on your bucket list, this is your year!

Questions? Contact Lindsay Pomper at 250-383-5545 or lindsayp@vsac.ca.

We hope to see you in June!

READ ALL ABOUT IT!

Three years ago, the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre (VSAC) started a blog. It is a great way to communicate with our supporters, the people we serve and keep the community informed about our services. Our blog features interesting, informative articles and resources from our program staff. Below is a small taste of what you can find on our blog:

GROUPS AT THE VICTORIA SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE

“There are a few reasons that groups can be beneficial... When we ask, “What did you learn from the group?”, one of the most common answers is, “That I am not alone.” Groups are just as valid a pathway as individual counselling (or anything else you find helpful) on your healing journey.”

Read the full blog: www.vsac.ca/2016/10/groups-at-vsac/

GUIDED AUDIO RESOURCES FOR HEALING

“Each of the resulting 8 tracks (not to be confused with an 8-track tape!) has a different resource, many of which we consider to be fundamental skills for establishing emotional safety...Creating a foundation of safety is necessary for healing; thus, our CD has guided directions and imagery to help one feel grounded, connect with an inner healer, relax, create an imaginary safe place, contain distressing thoughts or emotions, or simply to breathe deeply...available on our website where you can listen or download it for free!”

Read the full blog: www.vsac.ca/2016/11/guided-audio-resources-for-healing/

WHY CALL THE CRISIS AND INFORMATION LINE?

“Often people are surprised when I tell them all of the things they can access the Line for so I’d like to clear up any misconceptions. The very first and most important message is: You don’t have to be in crisis to call!” Crisis & Info Line: 250-383-3232

Read the full blog: www.vsac.ca/2016/09/call-crisis-information-line/

IN DEFENSE OF ANGER

“My name is Anger. One thing I’m good at is providing information...I am the part of a person that says, “I don’t deserve to be mistreated”. That makes me a great antidote to the self-blame and shame which sometimes results from experiences of sexualized violence.”

Read the full blog: www.vsac.ca/2017/02/in-defense-of-anger/

Stay in the loop & subscribe: www.vsac.ca/subscribe/

Check out Project Respect’s Blog (our youth-led prevention education program): www.yesmeansyes.com/blog