Our Space and Accessibility

At the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre (VSAC), we recognize the resourcefulness of people facing multiple intersecting barriers. We understand that folks who live with disabilities spend more time and energy navigating an ableist society. We do not want accessing services at VSAC to be an additional set of barriers for folks with disabilities. We want VSAC to be a welcoming space for all survivors, and to do so, we realized we needed to review our accessibility practices.

Using the Radical Access Mapping Project’s accessibility audit as our guide, we reviewed our practices and the structure of our Centre, and found there are some things we are doing well, and others that needed improving. Making our Centre a more accessible space is very important, and so we have made it a priority to update our Centre in 2017.

We have created a page on our website to provide detailed descriptions of our facilities, using various categories, such as: Blind/Low vision, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Wheeled/Scooter and Mobility Limitations, Neurodiversity and Mental Health and Financial. You can check the page here: https://vsac.ca/space-and-accessibility/

Our newest improvement: the complete installation of our accessibility door for our entrance! Thank you to the Government of Canada for making all our accessibility improvements possible.

35 Years of Service

This year marks the 35th anniversary of the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre. For over the past three decades, we have provided vital services to over 100,000 survivors of sexual assault and childhood sexual abuse, as well as reached thousands of youth with our prevention education program, Project Respect. Over the past three decades, we have provided vital services to over 100,000 survivors of sexual assault and childhood sexual abuse, as well as reached thousands of youth with our prevention education program, Project Respect.

As a donor to the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre, one of the greatest gifts you can provide is sustainability for our agency.

Double Your Donation

Did you know that there are hundreds of companies in Canada that will match the donations their employees make. What a great way to make your annual donation go further!

Check out: www.vsac.ca/matchinggifts to see if your employer is one of the participating companies!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

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PATHWAYS TO HEALING

YOU’RE INVITED!

Please join us for the 2017 Victoria Sexual Assault Centre Annual General Meeting

Monday, September 25th
4pm - 6pm
Cedar Hill Golf Course

“It’s our 35th year!”

Please RSVP by Monday, September 18, 2017
call 250-383-5545
or email info@vsac.ca

Hope to see you there!

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS & GRANT PROVIDERS

Canada Summer Jobs Program
Canada Women’s Foundation
Chris Spencer Foundation
City of Victoria
Department of Justice
Greater Victoria Savings and Credit Union
Government of Canada - Status of Women
Homelessness Action Coalition
Ministry of Public Safety & Solicitor General
Province of BC
Community Gaming Grant
Provincial Employees Community Foundation
Trusty’s Smile Card
United Way of Greater Victoria
Vanier Community Foundation
Vancouver Foundation
Victoria Foundation
Zebra Club at Kelowna

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For all, this is what the Triathlon is about, The funds that you raise through your donations are vitally important to us. Thank you for putting your trust in me and in our agency.

FALL 2017

June 25, 2017 marked the 24th annual Triathlon of Compassion, a yearly fundraiser for the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre (VSAC). It also marked the tenth experience for Barb Peck, one of VSAC’s counsellors, swim, biked and ran alongside the hundreds of triathletes that come out, year after year, to support the event.

As a counsellor who has provided support to survivors of sexual assault and childhood sexual abuse for many years, Barb can tell you there are many pathways to healing, even paths, like the Triathlon, that might be less than obvious. For some survivors, participating in the Triathlon of Compassion is how they tell the world that they matter. For others, it is a courageous reclaiming of what was taken; a way to achieve what they never thought was possible.

The support you give changes lives; like the stories of three survivors that Barb would like to share with you now, who used the Triathlon of Compassion to resist, and heal from, the effects of sexualized violence:

“I want to tell you about what inspires me the most. What really keeps me hooked on the Triathlon of Compassion, and of course my work as a counsellor, is the healing I witness. Three former clients stick out for me with respect to this event. All three were working through difficult, painful events in their lives. For each one, doing the Triathlon of Compassion required them to overcome long events in their lives. Despite that, they also threw themselves into the fundraising, wanting others to experience the support they had at the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre. For all, completing the Triathlon was a personal triumph.

With some modifications, here is the essence of their stories.

Compassion was a safe venue to ease back into more competitive endeavours and reconnect with her physical and emotional self.

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As Barb, one of our counsellors, highlighted, there are many ways to heal. There is no right way. At the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre, our goal is to provide support through each step of a survivor’s healing journey. That’s why we provide a continuum of care.

We know that when a survivor receives immediate, compassionate support, it has a significant impact on their healing. We also know that navigating through a sea of multiple services can be daunting and that without a continuum of care, a survivor is more likely to experience frustrating gaps in care. A continuum of care ensures that our services are accessible, seamless and progress with the survivor as they take their next steps towards healing.

Through the continuum of care, we can provide services to survivors that are meaningful and relevant for them. One person may want long term individual counselling, another may want group counselling, and yet another may just need support via the telephone to get through a difficult day. We are here to provide choices for survivors.

DO YOU KNOW?
Since opening, demand for these services have increased by 80%—more people are getting support.

CRISIS AND INFORMATION LINE:
Available 24hrs/day, 365 days/year. There are many reasons why someone might call this line, some include: feeling overwhelmed; wanting to access services; feeling suicidal; and/or if someone was recently sexually assaulted, they can be connected to our Sexual Assault Response Team and receive immediate medical care, crisis support and options for reporting to police. Crisis & Info Line: 250-383-3232

The VSAC Crisis and Information line received over 1900 calls. That was a 30% increase from 2015.

VICTORIA SEXUAL ASSAULT CLINIC:
Opened in February 2016, the Clinic is the first and only integrated sexual assault clinic in British Columbia. The Clinic provides a single location for recent survivors of sexual assault to access key services (medical exams, forensic exams, access to preventative medications, crisis support and options for reporting to police) and acts as an information hub connecting survivors to the next steps in their healing process. Accessible 24hrs/day.

DID YOU KNOW?
In 2016, the VSAC crisis and information line received over 1900 calls. That was a 30% increase from 2015.

VICTIM SERVICES - JUSTICE SUPPORT:
Only a survivor can decide if they would like to report to police. For many survivors it is a really difficult decision, one that comes with many questions: “What happens after I make a police report?” “Will everyone find out?” “How long does this process take?” “Do I have to testify in court?” “Do you think they will believe me?” Victim Services are there to help answer those questions and support a survivor regardless of what decision they decide to make. From contemplating making a police report to accompanying a survivor to court, VSAC Victim Services workers can support survivors at every stage of the process.

COUNSELLING:
The effect of sexual assault is not only psychological or emotional but also impacts a person physically, socially, interpersonally and financially. Counselling helps survivors to rebuild their lives after trauma to not only survive, but thrive, individual, group, crisis and long-term. We offer a full range of specialized, trauma-informed counselling options for survivors, 13 years and older, who have experience sexual assault or childhood sexual abuse. Through these life-changing counselling services, survivors learn coping skills to deal with triggers and flashbacks, develop internal resources, and safely process memories of trauma.

VSAC WINS BC HEALTH CARE AWARD!
We are excited to announce that the Clinic won an Award of Merit for Collaborative Solutions at the BC Health Care Awards (BCHCA)! BCHCA honors projects that improve health care delivery through innovative and collaborative approaches and that make a positive impact in the community. We are thrilled to have this recognition. A big thank you to all of our partners, funders and donors that made this clinic possible.