**WAYS TO SUPPORT**

November 28th (Giving Tuesday - the global day of giving) starts the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre’s 50-day campaign to raise $50,000 to support services for survivors of sexualized violence and valuable prevention education for youth in our community! Last year, we came so close to reaching our goal, raising an astonishing $48,000! Thank you to everyone who made that possible. With your support, we know we can reach our goal this year. $50,000 has the ability to make a lasting impact in the lives of so many.

We are unbelievably grateful to everyone who donates. We encourage anyone to contribute to this campaign in any way that they can:

- Donate by mail, over the phone (250-383-5545) or online (www.vsac.ca/donate)
- Join the Monthly Donor Club (www.vsac.ca/monthly)
- Join the $1000 Club (vsac.ca/1000-club)
- Spread the word - feel free to share this newsletter with your friends, family & colleagues.
- For more info about our 50 day campaign, check out vsac.ca/50days

**Thank You**

Double your donation, double your impact!

Did you know there are countless companies in Canada that will match your donation to the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre? Some companies will even triple your donation and there are even companies that will match gifts made by retirees.

Millions of dollars in donations go unmatched every year, so we encourage you to check out: www.vsac.ca/matchinggifts to see if your employer is one of the participating companies! It is a great way to make your annual donation go further!

**Wishing you a happy holiday season and new year!**

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**Project Respect: youth and staff**

- VSAC started their award-winning prevention program, Project Respect: an innovative program that supports youth to become leaders and take action to address the root causes of sexualized violence and create cultures of consent and respect (1999)
- VSAC was instrumental in starting the B.C. Specialized Victim Assistance Program, now known as Ending Violence Association of BC (EVA BC), a province-wide network of anti-violence programs that provides support, resources, and training.
- The Triathlon of Compassion is VSAC’s longest running fundraiser and one of the longest-running triathlons in Victoria. 2017 will mark its 25th year!
35 YEARS CONTINUED:

- Development of TIPS Program: Trauma Informed Practice and Support. The goal of the TIPS Project is to increase capacity throughout the community to respond effectively and consistently to people who are struggling with the impacts of trauma. VSAC has provided this training to multiple community organizations within Victoria as well as in the Yukon (2008).

- Project Respect started Rhizome, an awesome youth-led social action team (2012).

- Becoming a Trans-Inclusive organization. This meant extending all of our services to all Trans, Two-Spirit, Gender Diverse, and Gender Non-Conforming survivors, as well as various policy changes including changing our agency name to the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre (2014).

- Found a permanent home at Cedar Hill in 2013. Before VSAC moved to our current location at 3060 Cedar Hill Rd in 2013, we leased, and too often had to move (every 5 years or so!).

- Our Trans Inclusion workshops - developed and facilitated by 12 awesome members of the Trans community - have reached over 1000 staff, volunteers, and students in Victoria.

- A 4 year partnership with the Native Friendship Centre to provide counselling at their facility.

- Opening the Victoria Sexual Assault Clinic; the first, and only, integrated sexual assault clinic in B.C. Developed with enthusiastic support from Island Health, RCMP/Police, Crown, and the Victoria Child Abuse Prevention & Counseling Centre, the clinic provides recent survivors of sexual assault with all medical, forensic, legal, and community supports in one location.

PROJECT RECLAIM!

This past summer, our youth prevention program, Project Respect, began an exciting partnership with Beangka Elliot, the Tsartlip community, and youth leaders Addie Elliot and Graham Olsen to start a new initiative called Project Reclaim.

Project Reclaim is a youth-driven, land-based project that engages youth from the Tsartlip Nation to lead their community in healing from, resisting, and preventing violence through land restoration activities and the development of culturally relevant violence prevention education.

As Addie explains, “Harm on our lands is harm on our bodies; and Project Reclaim is an effective way to restore our respectful relationships with the lands we live on. Together, with Project Respect, we will create that crucial connection with respectful relationships, ultimately building communities free from violence. I’m very passionate about creating positive change in my community and I am so eager to collaborate and learn from others.”

This project was made possible through funding from the Horner Foundation and Greater Victoria Savings and Credit Union Legacy Fund.

You can stay updated with this project’s progress through Project Respect’s blog: www.yesmeansyes.com/blog

#ME TOO

Over the past couple of months, we have seen multiple accounts and ongoing investigations of sexual assault and harassment covered by major media outlets. One result of this has been the revival of a 10-year-old campaign launched by Tarana Burke called #MeToo. As #MeToo gained momentum, you may have noticed your social media feeds fill up with disclosures as people in your networks decided to share their own experiences of sexualized violence. With millions of survivors from all over the world using this hashtag, the #MeToo campaign has helped illustrate, for some, just how prevalent sexualized violence is.

Choosing to share your experience of sexualized violence is an individual choice, and for many, it can be an important step in their path towards healing and justice. There is no one right way to heal. Only a survivor can know what is best for them. Often, being publicly vocal does not feel right or safe, and sometimes the most powerful forms of resistance to violence are “small” acts that are deeply personal. It is important that we support and listen to the many different ways survivors choose to resist, speak out, heal, and create justice for the violence committed against them.

If you are wondering how you can help a loved one who is a survivor, here are some suggestions you may find helpful: Offer support and listen, making space for whatever feelings are expressed; Let them know you believe their experience - say “I believe you”; Let them know that whatever they did, or did not do, was to survive the circumstances; Reassure them that it is not their fault; Let survivors make their own decisions; Remember it is not your job to “rescue” the survivor - honor their resiliency and their knowledge about what is best for them on their healing journey, and practice self-awareness: allow yourself to grieve and feel your feelings as well.

For more information, you can check out: https://vsac.ca/how-to-help/ or you can call our crisis and information line at 250-383-3232.

BECOME A FAST FIVE FUNDRAISER!

In March 2017 we introduced a new fundraising initiative called the Fast Five Fundraiser. It was a successful fundraiser that saw people from the community come together to form teams of five (or more) and come up with creative ideas to raise funds to support the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre (VSAC!). We had teams host a raffle at their workplace, host a fundraising picnic, a kettlebell lifting competition, a sing-along screening of Mamma Mia at Star Cinema, a Shi Studio (local jewelry and accessory designer) Trunk Show, a dance party, among others, all throughout the month of March. All together, these events raised close to $10,000 for VSAC.

It was wonderful to see such success with a first-time event that we are energized to do it again this coming March! We welcome you to get involved and take on the Fast Five Fundraiser challenge. It is a chance to turn your favorite activity into a fundraiser.

For more details about how you can get involved, please check out: https://vsac.ca/fastfive/

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