

THIRD PARTY FUNDRAISERS



Meet Jodi Bali, a community member who plans an annual holiday fundraising raffle to support our Clinic Program. We checked in with Jodi to talk about why he is a third party fundraiser and how he raised over \$3,300 for the Centre.

What inspired you to fundraise for the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre?

It's a unique, one of a kind non-profit organization providing much needed services. To help provide much needed funding as VSAC relies on community raised funds & donations.

How did you raise over \$3,000 for the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre?

- I solicited community minded businesses to donate wonderful prizes
- Made a poster explaining VSAC and demonstrating it's a very worthy cause, posted it all over the ER department and on our group Facebook page, as well as word of mouth not only to colleagues, but friends & family.
- When selling or upselling the raffle tickets explaining what VSAC is about, getting folks excited about the VSAC & the raffle that they were willing to buy more and/or spread the word.

What suggestions do you have for others who are interested in organizing a fundraiser on behalf of VSAC?

It's very rewarding to be able to raise funds for a non profit, worthy organization.

1. Choose a fundraising type activity that will resonate with your potential donors. Be creative but ensure you understand BCLC rules if selling prize tickets, as well as policies & procedures within your own organization.
2. Have a brief but powerful message.
3. Communication & advertising is key. Think about the best way to reach a large volume of donors.
4. Set a realistic goal and timeline.
5. Have fun with the fundraising process. We had a fun little challenge with each other: who could sell the most raffle tickets each day. We would text each other throughout the day bragging how much we sold, to help motivate and challenge each other to keep selling.
6. Provide updates on what percentage of your goal has been achieved. It's a good reminder & motivator.
7. Have a tracking device to keep track of your donors, their contact information and the funds raised. I used an Excel spreadsheet.

Have fun, be creative. It's a great team building activity. It's very rewarding. The best part is presenting Carissa at VSAC the cheque and the look of excitement and appreciation on her face.

Thank you, Jodi! Community support, in the form of fundraising events like the annual holiday raffle, is meaningful to us. They help sustain our services and raise awareness about the issue of sexual violence.

Interested in planning a fundraiser? Contact Carissa at 250-383-5545 ext. 115 or email carissar@vsac.ca.

Find us on the Web!

www.vsac.ca
www.yesmeansyes.com

Read our blog: www.vsac.ca/blog



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 @Project Respect - VSAC
 @Trans and Gender Variant Inclusion at VSAC



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TRI OF COMPASSION

SUNDAY JUNE 21, 2020

Where: Esquimalt Rec Centre

Swim, bike and run for the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre! Whether you are a first timer or seasoned triathlete, this family-friendly event is the triathlon is for you. Compete as an individual or a team! Race distances for adults and children of all genders. This is an inclusive event.

Register: www.triofcompassion.com

Questions? Contact Carissa Ropponen at 250-383-5545 or carissar@vsac.ca.

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Spring Newsletter 2020

Welcome Elijah, VSAC's New Executive Director!



I am pleased to introduce myself as the new executive director of VSAC, and as a guest to the territories of the Lkwungen and WSÁNEC peoples. I grew up on the traditional homeland of the Dakota and Ojibwe, also known as Minnesota, in a working class and farming community of Scandinavian, German, and Scottish-Irish settlers. I come to the work of ending sexualized violence through intersect-

ing experiences of having served in the military, obtaining my doctorate in communication and culture with a focus on consciousness-raising, feminism, and healing, and my lived embodiment as trans masculine.

I'm arriving from the West Kootenays and the territory of the Sinixt, where I enjoyed canoeing Slocan Lake, hiking with my partner and dogs, and appreciating the wildlife. I also recently spent 18 months on the homeland of the Inuit, Dene, Cree, and Metis on the Hudson Bay in Churchill, MB as an executive director for a field station supporting Northern research and education. Here, I was transfixed by sea ice, in awe of aurora borealis, besotted with beluga whales, and inspired by polar bears. Some of my favourite things are public libraries, community recreation, art, wooden boats, and dogs.

It is a privilege to be chosen to lead a feminist organization dedicated to anti-oppression, inclusivity, and to healing colonial, systemic and personal violence. I bring to the role a vision for widening VSAC's commitment to Reconciliation, for deepening internal and external Relationships, for strengthening organizational systems to build Resiliency and Regeneration, and for extending our Reach in advocacy, education, and healing within the local community and beyond.

Over the last year under the leadership of interim executive director, Jane Sterk, a collectively created momentum at VSAC has fostered stability and empowered engagement from the board, staff, volunteers, donors, and partners to continue the vital work of supporting women and all Trans survivors of sexual assault and childhood sexual abuse. **Growing out of this fertile ground is my hire as a permanent executive director and the development of a new strategic plan this Spring.** These changes bring forth possibility, excitement, and a recognition of the nurturing required to translate this hope into enduring impact.

I am humbled to be a part of the VSAC community and the wider network of people and organizations dedicated to the transformation of trauma into justice. I look forward to the many conversations and meaningful actions of care we will share together.

Thank you,

Elijah Zimmerman

OUR MISSION

The Victoria Sexual Assault Centre is a feminist organization committed to ending sexualized violence through healing, education, and prevention.

We are dedicated to supporting women and all Trans survivors of sexual assault and childhood sexual abuse, through advocacy, counselling, & empowerment.



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 ACCESS LINE: 250-383-3232 ♦ VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.VSAC.CA
 CHARITABLE BUSINESS NUMBER: #10822 0054 RR0001

SHIFTing Culture Project: Violence Prevention Education



Thanks to five year funding provided by the Public Health Agency of Canada, Project Respect is able to expand the SHIFTing Culture Project to multiple partner schools across the South Island.

Niko Mumford, Prevention Coordinator, shares about the new SHIFT project:

Through multiple program components, we are seeking to facilitate shifts towards consent culture within schools who receive our programming. We also have the exciting opportunity to assess the impacts of our programming through Youth Participatory Action Research. Components of the program include our two part in-class consent workshops for an entire grade at each school, training and support sessions for school staff, and twelve week social action leadership training for a smaller group of students.

In addition, we are offering our annual Youth Social Action Camp in March to bring together youth from diverse communities & experiences to explore issues that matter to them. Youth will explore social justice subjects, engage in the Youth Participatory Action Research process & develop social action projects towards dismantling violence & creating cultures of consent in their lives & communities.

What is youth-led prevention education and why is it important?

We believe that youth are the experts of their own experiences. In adopting this approach, we are dedicated to making our programming youth-led and youth-informed. In collaboration with our Youth Social Action Team, we have been able to develop curriculum that is both relevant and responsive to the diverse realities of gender-based violence in the lives of youth in our communities.

The program has always strived to encourage youth to be leaders towards social change, through training youth facilitators, delivering social action training in schools, and encouraging inter-generational collaboration at camp each year.



Why is consent-based education an important part of gender-based violence prevention?

At Project Respect, we acknowledge systems of violence such as colonization, binary understandings of gender, patriarchy, & racism to be the root causes of sexualized violence. By exploring these forms of violence, we are able to recognize the ways in which they cause harm and devalue consent.

Through our consent-based education in schools, we engage youth in understanding & resisting/shifting power inequities in their relationships and support them to build skills to practice consent. All of this works to build communities free from violence.

What is your favorite aspect this work?

Although I adore collaborating with our awesome adult prevention team, my favourite aspect of our work is the amazing youth that we work with. Hearing the different perspectives and ideas in each classroom is such a gift. I began my involvement with Project Respect as a youth volunteer with the Social Action team, and so coming full circle to being an adult support for the current team is such a wonderful thing to experience. Although working with youth can be challenging, I never have more fun than when I'm in a workshop, at camp, or in a social action team meeting.



Annalea Sordi, Project Respect's research manager, discusses working with an amazing youth team to explore the impacts our SHIFT prevention programming is having on youth and our partner schools.

What kind of research are you undertaking and why is it an important part of the SHIFT project?

To meaningfully evaluate our youth programming, youth's knowledge, expertise and experience are what counts. At its core SHIFT is a Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) project. It's youth-led and collaborative at every stage. Right now we're designing the evaluation tools together. Surprisingly, the youth team has loved making surveys! After we'll test, refine and launch the tools. I'm excited to see what students, teachers and school staff will say about our programs. And what the experience is like for the youth researchers. I'm curious to hear all about how youth are resisting and preventing gender-based violence in their own lives and communities.

What issues are youth identifying as important to them and how does the SHIFT project address these issues?

At every meeting youth talk about gender-based violence and how pervasive it truly is. They see and experience it every day, but each person finds ways to resist it, too. SHIFT offers a safe space for youth to explore gender-based violence in its many forms and understand its root causes (e.g., colonization, patriarchy, power, etc.). By exposing/weakening the roots youth can imagine a violence-free world and take action to make one possible.

What is the most impactful thing you have learned from working with the youth research team?

Seeing firsthand that today's youth care deeply about creating a safer, inclusive and just world. They're highly aware of the issues and are already making the change they wish to see in the world.

INDIGENOUS RESPONSE NETWORK

The Victoria Sexual Assault Centre has started a new program, the Indigenous Response Network, partially funded through Women and Gender Equity Canada. The 5 year project will build meaningful partnerships between anti-violence organizations & local Indigenous communities to create and enhance culturally-relevant responses to gender-based violence for Indigenous womxn, youth, 2Spirit people, sex workers & their communities.



The Project's Coordinator, Lacey Jones, shares her thoughts on the project's decolonizing work:

Why is addressing colonization critical to addressing gender-based violence?

Addressing colonization is an important piece when addressing gender-based violence against Indigenous peoples within Canada because of the colonial history that Canada is founded on. Indigenous systems of governance and law fundamentally oppose western political and economic structures and an integral piece to many Indigenous systems of governance were to honor and uphold two spirit people and women. In many Indigenous societies both women and two spirit people held prominent roles in their socio-political societies.

The honoring and empowerment of diversity and womanhood runs in direct contrast to the hetero-patriarchal norms that were enforced by European settlers. In order for settlers to establish their foreign systems of dominance, they quickly realized that breaking down these pieces of Indigenous governance structures would be a key component to establishing themselves as an authority in these lands. As we can see today, western systems of oppression and dominance are still needed in order to maintain notions of sovereignty over Indigenous territories.

Violence is enacted onto Indigenous women and two spirit people through policy/law and sometimes stemming from harmful and dangerous stereotypes. This harm can be carried out in violent ways such as the high numbers of sexualized and gender-based violence that two spirit and Indigenous women face within North America.

Why is taking the lead from Indigenous community critical in creating accessible, innovative, and culturally-relevant responses to gender-based violence?

Taking the lead from Indigenous community when dealing with these issues becomes an important piece when addressing gender-based violence against Indigenous people because they are the ones who have been directly affected by this violence. Indig-

enous people have had laws and methods for dealing with conflict, violence, and healing for thousands of years. These laws and methods are still fully functioning today and it is important to allow the space for Indigenous peoples to lead projects such as this so that they can utilize their own experiences, culture and governance to combat this oppression and to enact healing within their communities.

In the colonial context of Canada and because of the fact that Indigenous people have been considered wards of the state, they have been governed and controlled in almost every aspect of their lives, especially with regards to their over-all well-being. However, when working with Indigenous communities, the understanding of health and well-being tends to be understood through a western lens with a lack of recognition for Indigenous ways of being.

Not all western forms of healing are productive for Indigenous people. Because we are on Coast Salish territory it becomes important to recognize their laws and ways of healing as this project moves forward. In this way, agency for Indigenous people and Indigenous community is acknowledged and also recognition for the expertise and experiences of Indigenous peoples provides space for this discussion and healing to take place.

How is this project taking the lead from community?

This project is taking lead by community because it focusses on building relationship with local nation members to take guidance from those that have been affected directly or indirectly by gender-based violence. The Network is also focused on learning the local history & laws of these lands to develop connections for those that are not from these territories. In this way, we can ensure that we are following Coast Salish laws & protocol as we build the Network's capacity to connect & address issues of gender-based violence & Indigenous people.

What are the successes of the project so far and where is the work heading in 2020?

Again, back to relationship building with community, one success is that we have reached out to local Indigenous communities to join the table & discussion of decentralizing services for Indigenous peoples that have faced gender-based violence. A goal for the project is that we work alongside rather than trying to lead or guide communities & give space to those most vulnerable in Indigenous communities to share their experiences & thoughts with regards to decentralizing services & breaking down barriers for accessing services.



INDIGENOUS COUNSELLING

Did you know that we provide one-to-one counselling to indigenous survivors of sexualized violence at the Victoria Native Friendship Centre (VNFC)? VSAC is committed to working in collaboration with community agencies and we are proud of our 10-year-plus relationship with VNFC. This relationship has allowed us to strengthen culturally safe(r) support, decrease barriers for Indigenous survivors to access our services, as well as to recognize and respond to the higher prevalence of sexualized violence experienced by women, girls, and Two-Spirit people from Indigenous communities.

Our counselling service at the Victoria Native Friendship Centre can be accessed by connecting with VNFC: 250.384.3211.