

Annual Report

2016 – 2017

sasc

SEXUAL ASSAULT
SUPPORT CENTRE
OF WATERLOO REGION

you
are
not
alone!

SASC STAFF MEMBERS

Sara Casselman
Executive Director

Andrea Arthur-Brown
*Manager of Counselling
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Sara Jane Friesen
Counsellor/Advocate

William Fujarczuk
Male Allies Educator

Farhat Javed
Counsellor/Advocate

Kaitlin Lindquist
Counsellor/Advocate

Joanna Piatkowski
Family Court Support Worker

Nadia Schafer
Office & Donor Administrator

Stephen Soucie
Male Allies Program Coordinator

Joan Tuchlinsky
Public Education Manager

Heidi Wheeler
Volunteer/Support Line Manager

SASC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Our Mission, Vision And Values

This year as part of our strategic planning process, our staff and board members engaged in a collaborative process to revise our Mission, Vision and Values. You'll find the fruits of this labour below.

Mission

We support survivors of sexual violence. We listen, facilitate healing, and celebrate resiliency. Using an intersectional feminist approach, we work to transform systems which promote gender-based violence.

Vision

A world without sexual violence and oppression.

Values

- Sexual violence is both a crime and a human rights violation.
 - Survivors are never responsible for assaults committed against them.
 - Full responsibility for any sexual assault lies with the perpetrator.
 - Any sexual act between a child and an adult constitutes sexual assault, the responsibility for which lies solely with the adult.
 - Sexual assault can have a profound impact on survivors' lives - physically, emotionally, spiritually, and mentally.
 - Each individual, our community, and our society has a responsibility to both provide support to people who have been sexually assaulted and to work toward ending sexual violence.
- Survivors of sexual violence have the right to control their own bodies and their own path to healing.
 - Survivors have the right to access feminist, trauma-informed supports and services.
 - Survivors have the right to confidentiality.
 - Adult survivors have the right to choose whether or not to report an assault to authorities.
 - Every person has the right to full access to reproductive health care and reproductive justice.
- An expression of social inequality, sexual violence is a gendered issue; the vast majority of sexual assaults are perpetrated by men against women and children. The sexual assault of a woman takes place within

a social, political, cultural and economic context of historical disadvantage and oppression.

- Prevailing social attitudes often normalize and perpetuate sexual violence.
 - Institutions such as law enforcement agencies, the judicial system, and the medical system are often sexist and punitive and can work to re-victimize survivors.
 - In order to bring about broad-based social change, prevention-oriented education and feminist advocacy are essential.
 - The work required to end both the causes and effects of sexual violence needs to be led and directed by women and non-binary individuals because of the power imbalance between these groups and men in society.
 - A feminist analysis recognizes that men's socialization processes can serve as barriers to male-identified survivors reaching out and receiving support; we are committed to making our services accessible to all genders.
- All forms of oppression are damaging. Sexism is but one of the intersecting oppressions used to violate and control. The prevalence and impact of sexual assault is compounded by these oppressions. Others forms of oppression include, but are not limited to, racism, heterosexism, classism, ableism, ageism, homophobia, transphobia, and discrimination based on cultural, ethnic or religious background. These oppressions, which are systemic and pervasive on individual and organizational levels, establish and maintain unequal power relationships in society. It is essential to our vision and direction that we recognize the historical contribution to the anti-sexual violence movement made by women with intersecting identities; criticism that the feminist movement has excluded them is valid and these voices must be heard at our Centre.
 - We promote the self-care and wellness of those working at our Centre; this is a political tool that sustains us in our work.

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

DEAR FRIENDS:

This is a time of growth and optimism at SASC. To ensure that this growth is sustainable and intentional, this year we engaged in an extensive strategic planning process.

To launch this process, we engaged in a collaborative process to revise our Mission, Vision and Values. We followed this with an environmental scan, and sought feedback from clients, community partners, volunteers, staff and board members. Four strategic directions emerged through this process to guide SASC over the next three years.

1. We want to structure our growth to support our continued health as an organization.
2. We want to continue to meet the needs of survivors of sexual violence by providing expert, innovative, effective and timely services.
3. We want to have a strong, stable funding base and financial resiliency.
4. We want to live out our values as an intersectional feminist agency committed to social action and social justice.

Our new 2017-2020 strategic plan has just been approved by our Board of Directors. Our Executive Director and staff team are currently working on an Operational Plan to move these directions forward in service to our community.

Further to this, our fundraising program had a strong year. Our gala, Cirque du SASC, was an entertaining and successful evening; thanks to our sponsors, donors, and attendees, we raised over \$20,000 to support our services. We were also thrilled to receive more than \$13,000 from the amazing third-party fundraiser, Stone Soup 3!

Our success this past year has been made possible by the continued support of our community, partners, our government supporters, our donors, our talented staff, and our generous volunteers. For this we are truly grateful. With this ongoing support and increasing awareness, we are able to move forward in our goal to end sexual violence.

Respectfully,

Leona Bruijns, President, Board of Directors



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DEAR FRIENDS:

Sometimes, in the midst of a busy day, one shows up in my email.

I might have been drafting a report or policy, and all of a sudden, I'm transported somewhere else – somewhere real, and raw, and intimate.

It is one of the greatest privileges of my position; survivors send me their testimonials. Each one reminds me of what a gift it is to be supporting the incredible team doing this work.

Sexual violence can have a profound impact on survivors' lives - physically, emotionally, spiritually, and mentally. For many, this impact is something incomprehensible... until it unexpectedly and intrusively becomes reality.

Too often survivors' experiences are shrouded in secrecy and shame. Many of the messages they receive directly or indirectly blame them for what happened. Sometimes the systems they reach out to for support end up causing them further harm. They become alone in their pain, isolated, and find it so difficult to reach out again.

There is tremendous value in the services that a community-based sexual assault centre offers, that SASC offers, to survivors. SASC is a safe place. We walk beside survivors. We listen. We bear witness. We advocate. Sometimes, we agitate. We understand the complex systems impacting survivors' lives; we help navigate. We use an intersectional approach, which means we respect how survivors' unique social locations impact their experiences, how people respond to them, and what resources they have access to. We celebrate the amazing resiliency of those that use our services. We facilitate healing. We offer hope.

As we look back and celebrate our growth over the last year, we also understand the reality. With so much public dialogue on sexual violence, survivors are reaching out to us like never before. The demand for our services is growing faster than we are.

Our motto has always been 'You are not alone.' Help us say this with confidence to the survivors in our community currently waiting for our support. Please consider becoming a monthly donor – just visit the SASC website to sign up.

Be part of our extraordinary team... and inspire the next email.

Sincerely,

Sara Casselman, Executive Director



HIGHLIGHT OF SERVICES

24 Hour Support Line

Our 24 Hour Support Line is available to anyone who has experienced sexual violence. With support available in more than 50 languages, this telephone line is supplemented by accompaniments to the hospital, police station and courthouse.

Counselling, Advocacy and Support Groups

Our counselling program includes individual counselling for people, sixteen and older, who have been sexually assaulted recently or historically, as well as support for friends and family. We also offer group counselling, workshops, practical assistance and advocacy.

Public Education Program

Our public education program educates for social change! We provide workshops and resource materials to schools, professionals, and the broader community. This program also houses our *Male Allies Program* which invites and trains men to be allies in the work to prevent gendered violence.

Family Court Support Program

This program provides practical and emotional support to women who have experienced violence in their relationship as they navigate the Family Court System.

OUR COLLABORATION HIGHLIGHTS

Our Centre collaborates with regional and provincial partners to prevent and respond to sexual violence and to enhance our presence in the community. In 2016-17, members of our staff team were active on the following committees:

- **Connectivity Cambridge**
- **Connectivity Kitchener**
- **Domestic Assault Review Team of Waterloo Region**
- **Executive Director Network**
- **Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres**
- **Sexual Assault Response Team of Waterloo Region**
- **Sex Workers' Action Network of Waterloo Region**
- **Volunteer Manager's Network**
- **Waterloo Region Sexual Health Youth Strategy Steering Committee**
- **WLU's Gendered Violence Collaborating Committee**
- **WLU's Gendered Violence Task Force (Education and Training Working Group)**
- **YWCA Cambridge's Equal Are We Organizing Committee**

STATISTICAL HIGHLIGHTS SEXUAL ASSAULT SUPPORT SERVICES



Number of support calls	1475
Number of individual counselling sessions	1743
Clients in group counselling / Workshops	106
Number of new people accessing counselling	221
Advocacy and accompaniments provided	237
Practical assistance provided	209
Public education events	178
Community liaison meetings	272
Information and referrals provided	862
Hours worked by volunteers	11790

"Hearing how the organization worked - the values you held, the focus on privacy and empowerment above legalities and paperwork - was truly refreshing. Just recently... I asked how many sessions I had remaining; fearful of using all of [my counsellor's] precious time on my current stressors and not the origin of my trauma. To be reminded that your organization doesn't put a limit on your help brought me to tears. Finally, I don't feel rushed to heal. I don't feel the need to push aside my current battles in favour of digging up the source. Instead, I feel truly supported and held through the healing. It's incredibly freeing." — SASC CLIENT, 2017

PROGRAM REPORTS

Counsellor Advocate Program

BY SARA JANE FRIESEN, COUNSELLOR/ADVOCATE

Like many years prior, the counselling program has continued to grow in space, staff, students, locations and even technology!



This year saw us settle into our larger, brighter counselling offices. This change elicited extremely positive responses from clients and was a welcome change for our counselling team.

To improve overall access to our services, we began participation in a project that made video counselling available to our clients. This pilot is being led by the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres and involves various Sexual Assault Centres across the province.

As part of our expanded partnership with Wilfrid Laurier University, this year our counselling team was on-site on at the Waterloo Campus to serve students who had experienced sexual violence. Video counselling has improved access for students as they leave for summer but wish to continue counselling.

Kaitlin accepted a position as a Counsellor/Advocate after serving as a volunteer on our 24 Hour Support Line and in our Intake Program.

With additional office space came the opportunity for additional students. For the first time ever, SASC had four students simultaneously including two Masters of Social Work students (Milena and Laura), a Bachelor of Social Work student (Sydney) and a Social Services Worker student (Stephanie). These students supported the counselling, 24 Hour Support Line, and Family Court Support programs.

This year brought several significant moments in social and political history that brought forward important conversations about sexual and gendered violence. Some local events ("unfounded" reports) and some international (Women's Marches) brought awareness to such issues once again. This increase in awareness necessarily corresponds with increased demand for services.

As we strive and struggle to grow with the demands of an ever changing community, we thank those who volunteered, donated, encouraged, and worked to help all our front line services rise to the challenge of responding to community members in need.

Public Education Program

BY JOAN TUCHLINSKY

This year's word for public education at SASC is collaboration.

A brief sample of the collaborations:

- As part our expanded partnership with Wilfrid Laurier University, we offered a variety of public education services on their Waterloo Campus
- SASC continued our work with community partners on the Waterloo Region Sexual Health Youth Strategy Steering Committee and on the Sex Workers' Action Network (SWAN)
- SASC provided resources and support for the series of Sex and Disability workshops offered by community partners SHORE and ACKWA with the Independent Living Centre of Waterloo Region
- SASC provided six healthy relationship workshops to Community Living Cambridge
- The Male Allies program worked in collaboration with numerous partners during the year (See Male Allies Program report)

William Fajarczuk joined our staff team as the third member of our public education program at the beginning of February 2017. Working full-time in our Male Allies program, half his time is spent with our partners at the YWCA Cambridge.



Along with Stephen Soucie, our Male Allies Program Coordinator, and our small but dedicated group of volunteers, we are facilitating critical conversations about healthy relationships, consent, and healthy masculinity.

Our most sincere thanks to the Astley Family Foundation; they have made much of our work possible for the last seven years.



Male Allies Program

BY STEPHEN SOUCIE

We have had a busy year working with our community partners.

One of our most frequent collaborators has been the Cambridge YWCA. In 2016, the Male Allies program worked with them to offer (i) All4One, a mixed-gender summer camp, (ii) December 6th workshops for youth in grades six to eight, and (iii) Equal Are We, a conference designed to promote inclusivity and gender equity in the Waterloo Region. These successful collaborations provided the impetus for the hiring of our new public educator, William!



Stephen

While we're talking about Wil, I should also mention our collaboration with Family and Children's Services (F&CS). Last Spring, the Male Allies program ran a trauma-focused version of our Young Men's Group at the Family Centre in Kitchener. Due to the success of this program, F&CS will provide a staff member to facilitate trauma-focused YMG's in the community with Wil.

Our partnership with Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU) also continued this year. Most notably, we trained all Orientation Week leaders, residence dons, and student union executives. We also provided trainings for the

WLU Athletics Department and The Cord. Off-campus, we collaborated with the WLU student group, Consent is Golden, to create and deliver several workshops for high school students in Waterloo Region. We also continued our off-campus work with the Sigma Chi fraternity by offering its members a workshop focused on consent.

And we can't forget OHL Onside, our partnership with Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre and the Ontario Hockey League (OHL). The Male Allies program was responsible for creating the curriculum which focused on promoting respect for women. This mandatory training will be offered yearly to Junior A teams.

That's all for now... but stay tuned for some exciting announcements! (Hint: 2017-18 marks the tenth anniversary of our Male Allies program!)

"We ran a successful OHL Onside training with our local Junior A team this past Tuesday. The sequence of the activities was really useful, as the 'ManBox' got them talking, the 'Strongest Man' got them sharing/put some vulnerability in the room, and then the 'Continuum of Harm' prompted the most pushback. Thanks Kawartha and Waterloo for enabling this opportunity for us to start to create a relationship with our OHL team!"

— TESTIMONIAL FROM A SISTER
SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE

Family Court Support Program

BY JOANNA PIATKOWSKI

This past year has seen some movement for the Family Court Support Program! To be more accessible to our clients, we moved our office out of the Waterloo Region Courthouse to our new main office. We



Joanna

appreciate that our courthouse office is still available for our use when we need it, which is convenient during our many court accompaniments. This move was also a welcome change for me, allowing me to more readily access the support of my colleagues in our main office.

We've also seen a number of clients who are considering applying for compensation through the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. Women have brought forward a plethora of questions, which allowed us to host two information sessions run by Community Legal Services.

This year we acquired a student to support us with accompaniments

and workshops, and she is returning for a second year of placement with us in the fall. Our hope for the upcoming year is to offer more frequent workshops to our existing clients, as we have seen a demand for this.

Finally, thank you to our volunteers who provided court accompaniments to clients in the Family Court Support program! We appreciate your commitment and compassion!

STATISTICAL HIGHLIGHTS FAMILY COURT SUPPORT PROGRAM

Number of new women served	94
Total number of women on our caseload	143
Safety plans created	94
Court accompaniments	77

Support Line and Volunteer Program

BY HEIDI WHEELER

Our 24 Hour Support Line is a unique service in Waterloo Region, providing sexual violence focused support to survivors of sexual violence and their friends and families. Because of our volunteers, this



Heidi

incredible service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Our dedicated volunteers are highly-trained and passionate about the work of supporting survivors of sexual violence. They offer a listening ear and wealth of information and resources. Support Line volunteers cover more than 8500 hours on our line annually;

they are responsible for making this much needed service available.

To complement our 24 Hour Support Line, this year our Centre is participating in a project to make Online Chat Support available to local survivors. This pilot is being led by the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres and involves various Sexual Assault Centres across the province. We're excited to see the results of this pilot project.

Overall, our volunteer program is thriving. As our agency grows, the need for volunteers also grows. This year, SASC has enjoyed a steady stream of volunteer inquiries from individuals representing so many walks of life. Our volunteers are highly skilled and compassionate, and we are so grateful for the time and energy they share with us. Our volunteers participate in a number of program areas including: Public Education, Family Court Support, Fundraising and Event Planning, Administration, and on our Board of Directors.

"Your Family Court Support Worker was the first person to listen and hear what I was saying about what was happening. She helped me find solutions to get out of an abusive home and start to rebuild my life." — SASC CLIENT, 2017

"As long as I feel like the person is in a better place than they were when they started, I feel like I've helped someone. It's very rewarding." — SUPPORT LINE VOLUNTEER, 2017

VOLUNTEER MEMBERS IN 2016-2017

Andrea Areguy	Maggie Hamel-Smith	Keren Mann
Gitta Arvola	Stephanie Hunte	Di-Anne Martin
Melanie Baker	Talia Hashmani	Leah Martin
Laurie Ballantyne	Marlene Haywood	Sandi Mavi
Laura Black	Nafisa Hussein	Obi Obasi
Leah Bremner	Rawan Hussein	Aidan Oczkowski
Leona Bruijns	Samantha Ianuzzi	Sweta Panchal
Brittany Buck	Tara Innes	Dianne Piluk
Sarah Burley	Kaitlyn Jantzi	Kasey Polatino
Nicole Burns	Landon Jennings	Susan Prange
Laura Coakley	Jennifer Kalbfliess	Elizabeth Price
Karen Coco	Caroline Kim	Lexi Salt
Rikki Lynn Crooks	Rebecca Knapp	Kelsea Schaefer
Raquel Damiao	Haylee Knight	Paula Schultz
Izza Dawoo	Jill Kolb	Alina Lorraine Scott
Karen Earl	Anna Liargovas	Thanuja Selvanayagum
Erin Stanhope	Shirley Lichti	Supriya Sethi
Lisa Evans	Kasey Lohnes	Rabia Tariq
Sara Fazal	Jenn Love	Jaspreet Thandi
Sarah Ferlans	Kelty Macvicar	Elysia Tiegs
Alana Freiburger	Nicky Madill	Mary Timmer
Sakana Gnanasegaram	Shalini Mallik	Beth Timmers

MALE ALLIES VOLUNTEERS IN 2016-2017

Alyna Walji	Bob Bender	Brockshire Lemiski
Tina Wallace	Scott Calway	Sam Nabi
Samantha White	Joel Fairlie	Judah Oudshoorn
Shelley White	Michael Greaves	Scott Stager Piatkowski
Sarah Wiley	Graham Jackson	Caleb Redekop
Joan Williams	Warren Kurt	Paul Sauder
Anika Williams-Hewitt	Erin Lankin	Rohan Thompson
Sophie Whitcomb		
Joyce Young		



SASC SUPPORTERS IN 2016-2017

Thank you to our annual funders including:



Ontario's Ministry of the Attorney General, the primary funder for our core services, our *Male Survivor Program*, and our *Family Court Support Worker Program*.

(Funding for these Programs is provided by the Government of Ontario. The views expressed in this publication are the views of SASC and do not necessarily reflect those of the Province.)



Region of Waterloo

The Region of Waterloo, for their support of our *Counselling and Public Education Programs*



The Astley Family Foundation, for their support of our *Male Allies program*



Wilfrid Laurier University, for their support and partnership to ensure Counselling and Public Education is available to students on campus.



LYLE S. HALLMAN FOUNDATION

The YWCA-Cambridge and the Lyle S. Hallman Foundation, for their support and partnership in our *Male Allies program*.



The City of Cambridge, for their support of our *Cambridge Counselling Program*

We would also like to extend our gratitude to:

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**Fem Ales
Judith Koeller
Michael Klein
RBC Wealth Management Dominion Securities
Toyota Motor Manufacturing Canada
Waterloo Region Record
Whitney & Company Realty Limited**

A special thank you to:

Last but not least, thank you to all the amazing individuals and businesses in our community who generously supported our work this past year!

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Find Male Allies on twitter @MaleAllies | Find Male Allies on facebook at [fb.me/MaleAllies](https://www.facebook.com/MaleAllies)

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