



Sexual Violence Prevention & Supports

Department of Community Services

Standing Committee on Community Services
December 5th, 2017

Background

- Sexual Violence Strategy was a 3-year commitment of \$6 million
- Development began in 2014 with extensive research and community engagement
- Strategy launched in June 2015, ended March 2017
- Currently in the process of operationalizing the work
- 3 action areas identified:
 - Services & Supports
 - Prevention & Education
 - Approach & Accountability

Training Resources

Service providers need more training to prevent stigma, victim blaming, stereotyping, minimizing of experiences and retraumatization.

breakthesilenceNS.ca/training

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Supporting Survivors of Sexual Violence

A Nova Scotia Resource

Introduction

Ending sexual violence, and making this world a better place for those who have survived sexual violence, is a collective effort. In taking this training you are demonstrating your commitment to these goals. Thank you!

This training is designed to help you learn more about sexual violence and how to support someone who has survived it. It is for service providers, friends, family members, neighbours, teachers, first responders, counselors, and anyone who is acting as a support person, or is concerned about sexual violence.



Take the Course for Free

[Register Now](#)

- Free of charge
- Certificate of completion
- Can be done over time
- Takes between 4-6 hours
- This training is for anyone who is concerned about sexual violence
- Over 1,600 people are registered for the course

Grid of Course Modules

Sexual Violence: An Introduction

This module includes the basics about what sexual violence is and who is impacted. It dispels common rape myths and explores how rape culture normalizes sexual violence.

[Start This Module](#)

Responding to a Disclosure

This module provides information about what you might expect when supporting a victim/survivor, the effects of trauma, and how you can respond if someone tells you they have been subjected to sexual violence.

[Start This Module](#)

Choices following Sexual Violence

This module explains some of the options that a person has after sexual violence. It describes resources that you could refer a victim/survivor to, and what they might expect when navigating these resources.

[Start This Module](#)

Exploring Sexual Consent

This module outlines the basic elements of sexual consent, ways to ask for consent, consent and age of consent laws, and the impacts that power imbalances can have on someone's ability to consent or communicate no.

[Start This Module](#)

Enhancing the Well-being of Support People

This module outlines signs of stress in support people, and both individual and organizational strategies to foster mental and physical well-being.

[Start This Module](#)

Indigenous Perspectives

This module explores the connections between colonization, intergenerational trauma, racism and sexual violence. It also focuses on Mi'kmaq resilience and pathways to healing.

[Start This Module](#)

“An amazing and comprehensive resource that a wide audience will find to be a concise and thorough means of learning about sexual violence in its many facets.

I also think it is an extremely valuable tool for families and anyone who has children and youth in their lives.

I was also incredibly impressed with the course’s attention to culturally relevant content, language, and inclusion.”

Natalie Flinn, Active Healthy Living Consultant
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

A drunk yes is a **big** no.



See more at birdsandthebees.ca

We all have a role in ending sexual violence.

In June 2017 the Birds and the Bees public awareness campaign won in 5 categories at the ICE Awards, including:

- Public Service Integrated Campaign
- Public Service Digital for online videos
- Fearless Client



It's not your fault.

**Sexual violence
is never okay.**

FIND HELP HERE: breakthesilenceNS.ca



**There is help
for your hurt.**

**Sexual violence
is never okay.**

FIND HELP HERE: breakthesilenceNS.ca



Nous te croyons.

**La violence sexuelle
n'est jamais acceptable.**

POUR OBTENIR DE L'AIDE :
breakthesilenceNS.ca/fr



Tu n'es pas seul / seule.

**La violence sexuelle
n'est jamais acceptable.**

POUR OBTENIR DE L'AIDE :
breakthesilenceNS.ca/fr

Year 3 Public Report



- Released in October 2017
- Available to public online
- Highlights work carried out in 2016/17

African Nova Scotian Community Engagement

- In partnership with East Preston Family Resource Centre, who are leading the project
- Conversations with service providers and community leaders
- Province-wide engagement
- Held 2 sessions to-date, New Glasgow and Whitney Pier
- Will be holding approximately 15 sessions in total

How does sexual violence impact African Nova Scotian communities?

We want to hear from you!

Conversations are being organized across the province to bring together African Nova Scotian community leaders and service providers to discuss how we can prevent and respond to sexual violence in our communities.

Prevention

Training

Supports

Refreshments will be provided and we can offer travel and childcare subsidies if needed.

For more information or to sign up for a session, contact:
justine.colley-leger@hotmail.com

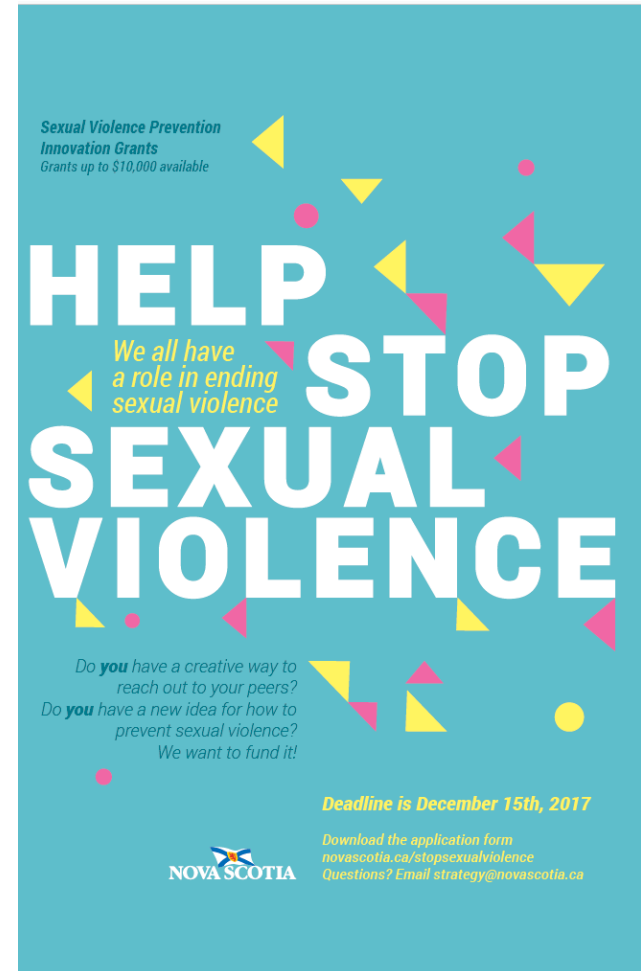
Evaluation of the SVS

Purpose:

- To help understand the impact the Strategy has had on achieving a more coordinated approach to addressing sexual violence and supporting public education, awareness, and prevention
- To identify opportunities to improve the operationalization of Sexual Violence Prevention and Supports going forward.

Prevention Innovation Fund

- Invest to support community based prevention initiatives, expand best practices, better research & evaluation, and better use of technology
- Assist youth groups to reach out to peers in innovative ways
- Support marginalized populations including African Nova Scotian, Indigenous, and LGBTQI+ communities



Sexual Violence Prevention
Innovation Grants
Grants up to \$10,000 available

**HELP STOP
SEXUAL
VIOLENCE**

*We all have
a role in ending
sexual violence*

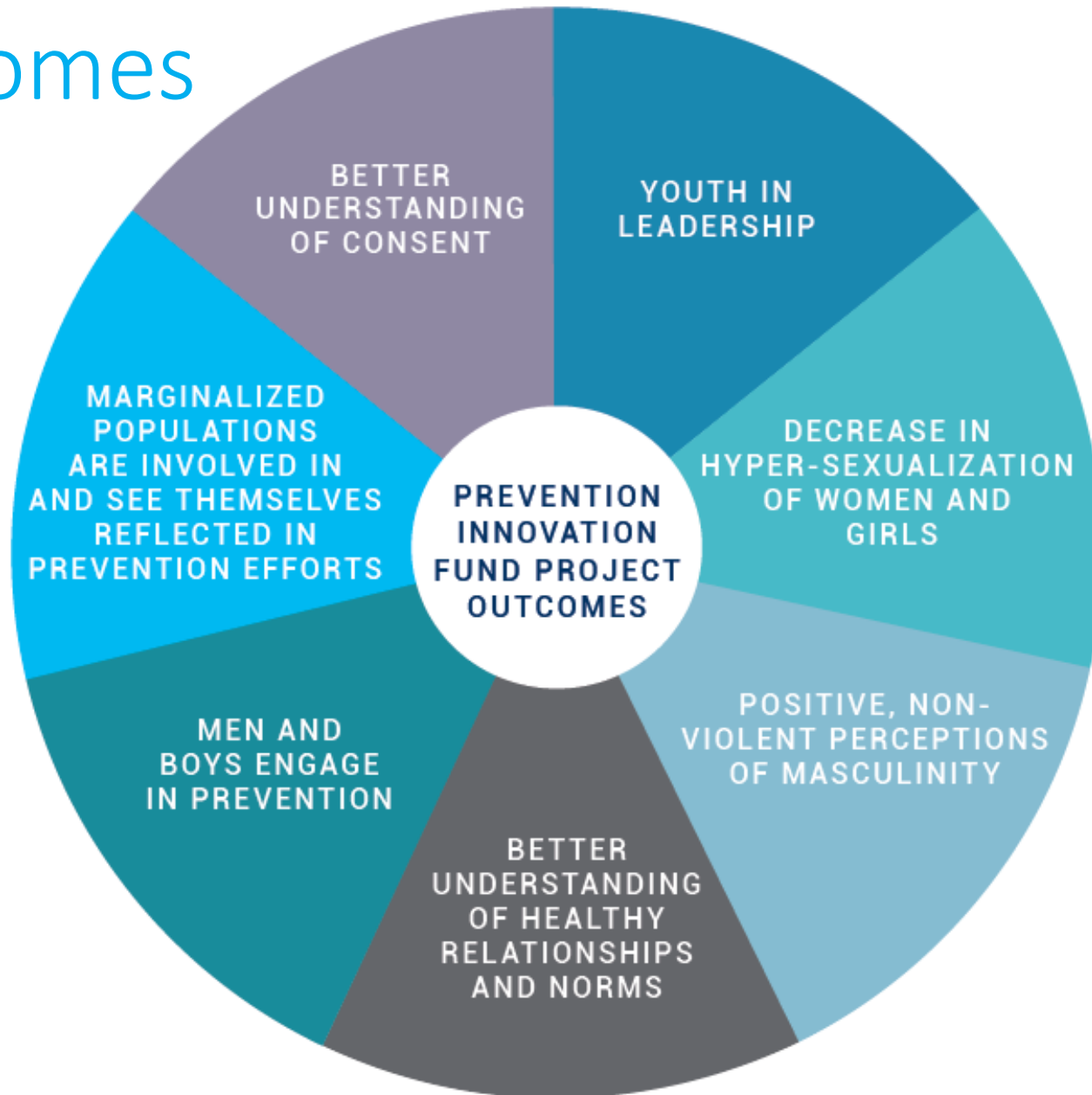
Do **you** have a creative way to reach out to your peers?
Do **you** have a new idea for how to prevent sexual violence?
We want to fund it!

Deadline is December 15th, 2017

Download the application form
novascotia.ca/stopsexualviolence
Questions? Email strategy@novascotia.ca

NOVA SCOTIA

Outcomes



Next Steps

To ensure the work continues, we will be focusing on the following key areas:

- Targeted initiatives that focus on the prevention and early intervention of sexual abuse and exploitation of youth and children, including human trafficking
- Prevention through Prevention Innovation Grants
- Increased capacity of organizations that provide therapeutic counselling services for victims
- Targeted initiatives that focus on giving victims a choice and voice in the legal system

Submission to the Standing Committee of the Department of Community Services

BY: SASNS

December 5, 2017

Presenters: Georgia Barnwell, Women's Centres Connect, Jackie Stevens, Avalon Sexual Assault Centre

Introduction: I am Georgia Barnwell and this is Jackie Stevens. We represent The Sexual Assault Services Network of Nova Scotia (SASNS) and we are here today to **recommend that the Province of NS make a minimum additional investment of two million dollars yearly in sustainable core funding for sexual assault services across NS.**

Our work on the issue of sexualized violence gives us a well-informed perspective. SASNS is a group of 30 long-established community based agencies including sexual assault centres, women centres, transitions houses and other equality seeking women's organizations and anti-violence groups, as well as organizations that provide services to marginalized populations. We are located across NS and provide specialized sexual assault services to survivors of sexualized violence.

After working together for many years as an ad hoc group, the network formalized in 2015 combining our specialized knowledge and expertise to address sexualized violence and abuse at a provincial level.

SASNS recognizes that in addition to the ways in which women are targeted for male violence and oppression, that racialized, rural, indigenous, African Nova Scotia, male survivors, newcomers, and people with disabilities are also vulnerable and lack access to specialized and culturally specific services.

Preamble: This is what we have seen since the implementation of the Sexual Violence Strategy:

- Despite the Strategy's investment in **short-term sexual assault programming**, we continue to see **significant gaps across the province especially in the need for specialized therapeutic counselling and services to support rural communities, African and Indigenous Nova Scotians, boys and men, new comers, and people living with disabilities.**
- One of the challenges of the Strategy and the CSN grants was government's expectation that communities would sustain programs beyond the project funding knowing that most communities were only able to implement sexual assault programs because of the CSN grants. **The termination of the Strategy-funded sexual assault programming will leave organizations without the capacity to meet demand for prevention and education programs as well as for navigation and coordination.**
- The support services that some organizations have been able to enhance with SVS funding will be reduced. **This will leave clients vulnerable and without adequate services and supports. It is unethical and does not follow trauma informed practise.**

It is unrealistic for the Province to expect community based organization to sustain essential services through project and short-term funding when sustainable core government funding is required.

The Sexual Violence Strategy talked about strengthening sexualized violence services, but the focus has been on short-term projects and programs. **It has ignored the primary need for comprehensive sexualized violence services across the province, in particular the need for specialized therapeutic counselling.**

There is no statistical indication that the Sexual Violence Strategy has reduced sexualized violence. What it has done is increase the demand for comprehensive services as people become more aware about sexualized violence and feel safe to come forward, but long-term, comprehensive services are not available.

Core Components of Sexualized Violence Services: We encourage you to **build on the capacity already developed to invest in the *core components of sexualized violence services* identified by SASNS members.** Core services must be trauma-informed, culturally specific and available to all Nova Scotians: women, men, LGBTQ+ individuals, youth, Indigenous peoples, Acadian/Francophone individuals, African Nova Scotians, immigrants and refugees, people from culturally specific groups, and people with disabilities. Services provide equitable access to information and resources across diverse communities and organizations. They recognize the intersections of all forms of oppression and address sexism, racism, classism, homophobia, transphobia, agism, and ablism.

The core components include the following:

- Trauma-informed support services;
- Community-based SANE programs and SANE Response Lines;
- Specialized sexualized violence trauma therapeutic counselling;
- Legal information, support, advocacy, and accompaniment;
- Transitional and emergency crisis housing;
- Provincial sexual assault crisis line;
- Indigenous cultural healing practices and ceremonies;
- Professional education that is trauma-informed, culturally specific and competent.

Recommendations:

SASNS formally recommends that the Province of NS make a minimum additional investment of two million dollars yearly in sustainable core funding for sexual assault services across NS. We would suggest a phased-in approach, with \$500,000 provided by the Department of Community Services in the 2018/19 fiscal year. For the 2019/20 fiscal year, we would recommend that the Department of Community Services work with the Department of Health to provide a minimum of \$2,000,000. In subsequent years, funding and service requirements would be informed by community needs. SASNS has identified locations across the province that meet the needs of rural and marginalized communities and can provide this information in subsequent meetings.

Conclusion: We recognize the government interdepartmental element around the core need that we see. The Province has recognized the need for specialized sexual assault services province wide and has made this commitment known through the strategy as well as through the implementation of the Provincial SANE Program. We are also aware that discussions are in place between DCS and DOH regarding a provincial model for therapeutic counselling. In keeping with the principle of equitable access, government interdepartmental long term planning should consider how sexual assault trauma therapy services can be made available throughout NS in consultation with and through the development of the specialized capacity within community based organizations. The success of SANE programs and counselling requires a foundation of core services provided by sustainably funding community based agencies providing sexual assault response, intervention, and service to the diverse populations identified above.

Sexual Assault Service Network of Nova Scotia

Membership list

Alice Housing, Halifax

Antigonish Women's Resource Centre and Sexual Assault Services Association, Antigonish

Avalon Sexual Assault Centre, Halifax

Be the Peace, Mahone Bay

Central Nova Women's Resource Centre, Truro

Every Woman's Centre, Sydney

Harbour House, Bridgewater

HeartWood Centre for Youth Development, Halifax

LEA Place Women's Resource Centre, Sheet Harbour

Leeside Society, Port Hawkesbury

ManTalk, Halifax

Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre, Halifax

NS Association of Black Social Workers, Dartmouth

Persons Against Non-State Torture, Truro

Pictou County Sexual Health Centre

Pictou County Women's Resource and Sexual Assault Centre, New Glasgow

Raven Wisdom Retreat, Hants County

SANE Halifax

Second Story Women's Centre, Lunenburg

Sexual Assault Services of Lunenburg and Queens Counties

Sexual Health Nova Scotia

Sheet Harbour Sexual Health Centre, Sheet Harbour

Strait Area Women's Place, Port Hawkesbury

Tearmann House, New Glasgow

The Youth Project, Halifax

Transition House Association of Nova Scotia, Halifax

Tri-County Women's Centre, Yarmouth

Women's Centres Connect, Halifax

Women's Place Resource Centre, Annapolis Royal

YWCA Halifax