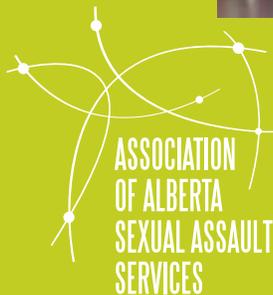
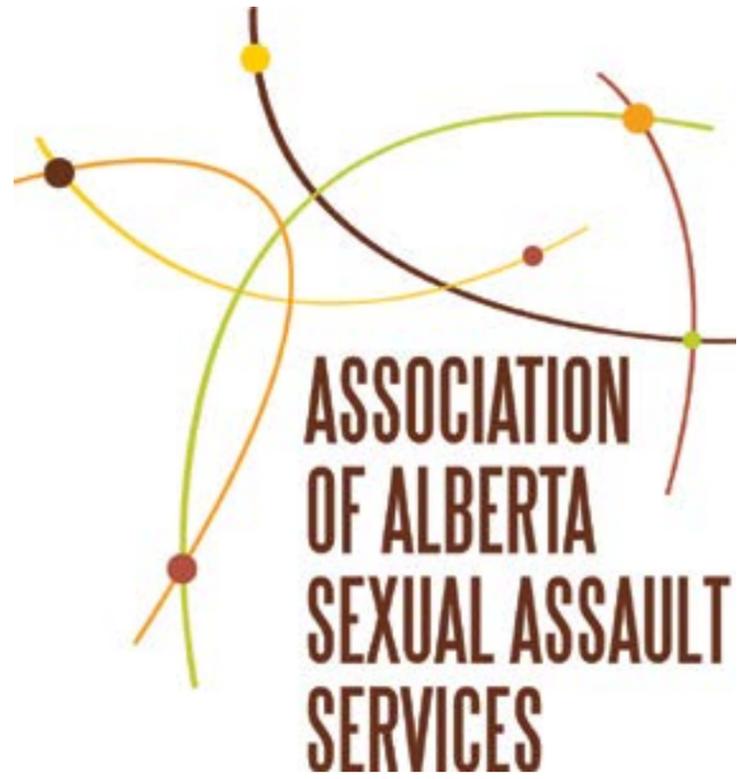


Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services Annual Report 2016-2017



Working Together for an Alberta Free From
Sexual Violence



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www.asas.ca

Providing leadership, coordination, collaboration and a unified voice on issues of sexual abuse and sexual assault.



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Organization Overview

The Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services (AASAS) is a non-profit, registered charitable organization that began operations in 1993. As a provincial umbrella organization, AASAS provides leadership, coordination and a unified voice on issues of sexual assault and sexual abuse while increasing recognition, support for and access to sexual assault services in Alberta.

Our Vision

An Alberta free from sexual violence.

Our Mission

To provide leadership, coordination, collaboration and a unified voice on issues of sexual abuse and sexual assault.

The Role of AASAS

The AASAS Member Agencies/Services are responsible for day-to-day, front line delivery of services within their local communities and regional areas. As a provincial support organization, AASAS focuses its efforts in these key areas:

- AWARENESS:** AASAS works to increase public and government awareness of issues involving sexual abuse and sexual assault and the impacts they have on all Albertans.
- ACCESS:** AASAS strives to ensure that all Albertans affected by sexual abuse and sexual assault have access to healing and recovery programs, services and supports.

AASAS Core Beliefs

- We believe anyone can be a victim of sexual abuse and sexual assault.
- We believe anyone affected by sexual abuse and sexual assault has the right to access effective, affordable and timely services that are distinct and specialized.
- We believe everyone has the capacity and resiliency to recover from sexual abuse and sexual assault.
- We believe victims of sexual abuse and sexual assault are not to blame and perpetrators must be held accountable.
- We believe society minimizes the crime of sexual abuse and sexual assault on individuals and that minimization has devastating outcomes for survivors.
- We believe services addressing sexual abuse and sexual assault need to be delivered in an inclusive, respectful and equitable manner regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation or ability.
- We believe there is a need for increased recognition and support for existing and emerging sexual assault services in Alberta.
- We believe education and awareness initiatives need to be targeted at everyone.
- We believe the prevention initiatives are not to be targeted to survivors or potential survivors but towards perpetrators and potential perpetrators as well as those who can intervene.
- We believe that treatment is a form of prevention because healthy individuals and healthy communities break the cycle of abuse.
- We believe in the need for treatment and greater access to treatment for perpetrators of sexual abuse and sexual assault.

**PACE Sexual Assault Centre
(Grande Prairie)**

Peace River Cell Phone:
780.618.3933
Business: 780.539.6692
pacecentre.ca

Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton

24-Hour Line: 780.423.4121
Business: 780.423.4102
sace.ab.ca

**University of Alberta Sexual Assault
Centre**

Crisis Line: 780.492.9771
Business: 780.492.0172
uofa.alberta.ca/current-students/
sexual-assault-centre

Saffron Centre Ltd. (Sherwood Park)

Business: 780.449.0900
saffroncentre.com

**Central Alberta Sexual Assault Support
Centre (Red Deer)**

Toll Free: 1.866.956.1099
Business: 403.340.1124
casasc.ca

**Calgary Communities Against Sexual
Abuse**

Toll Free: 1.877.237.5888
Business: 403.237.6905
calgarycasa.com

AASAS Member Agencies/Services



**Waypoints Sexual Assault & Abuse
Programs & Services (Ft. McMurray)**

Crisis Line: 780.791.6708
Business: 780.743.4691 Ext. 231/232
fmmfcs.com

**Dragonfly Sexual Assault Services
(Bonnyville)**

Business: 780.815.4456
thedragonflycentre.com

**Lloydminster Sexual Assault &
Information Centre**

Crisis Line: 306.825.8255
Business: 306.825.8255
lloydminstersexualassault.com

**Association of Communities Against
Sexual Abuse (Stettler)**

Toll Free: 1.866.807.3558
Business: 403.742.3558
againstabuse.ca

**Southeastern Alberta Sexual Assault
Response Committee (Medicine Hat)**

Phoenix Safe House Crisis Line:
1.800.661.7929
Business: 403.548.2717
mhsarc.com

**Sexual Violence Action Committee
(Lethbridge)**

YWCA Harbour House Crisis Line:
403.320.1881
Toll Free: 1.866.296.0447
Business: 403.327.5724
svaclethbridge.org

Message from the Leadership

Imagine Alberta as a province where survivors of sexual assault feel safe telling someone about what happened to them. A place where survivors feel confident they will not be shamed or blamed – they know they will be believed. Where survivors are encouraged to seek help to recover from the trauma they have experienced and they are directed to a place where they can consider their options and make an informed choice about seeking justice.

For more than 40 years, this has been the vision of the sexual assault centres in Alberta. And this year, more than ever, we can see that change is happening!

The number of Albertans who reached out to sexual assault services for counselling increased by 53%. The number of counselling sessions provided increased by 73%. In a poll of 1000 Albertans, the number who would give a positive response to a disclosure of sexual assault (I'm sorry that happened, it's not your fault) went up from 21% to 66%. The number who would use the specific phrase "I believe you" increased from 1% to 12%.

This is the Alberta we have been working so hard towards. We want to congratulate and applaud the sexual assault services and all of our partners - everyone that is working together to make this vision a reality.

Of course, we still have work to do but we are on our way to creating an Alberta where it is safe for survivors to tell.

Staff

Deb Tomlinson, Chief Executive Officer
Corinne Ofstie, Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Barbara Hagen, Community Collaborative Response Coordinator
Katie Robertson, Continuing Education Coordinator
Hilary Jahelka, Community Development Associate

Leadership and Board of Directors

Lisa Oracheski, President
Bill Walker, Vice-President
Thorna Lawrence, Treasurer
Dara Sutton, Secretary
Brad Cunningham, Director
Marilyn Fleger, Director
Donovan Hoggan, Director
Rhonda Steinwood, Director
Debra Tomlinson, Chief Executive Officer

Highlights of 2016-2017

#IBelieveYou

Last year, the award-winning AASAS I Believe You campaign successfully engaged 26 Alberta post-secondary institutions and increased public understanding about believing as the first step in responding to a disclosure of sexual assault. Our efforts were rewarded this year when the Government of Alberta provided AASAS with an additional three year grant to build on the success of last year's campaign.

In this first year of three, we reinforced the "I believe you" message and enhanced it with a "we believe you" message that showcased the groundswell of support for survivors that is happening across Alberta. We wanted Albertans to see for themselves the vast number of individuals and community groups who were already standing with survivors.

Again, social media played a significant role in our success. A highlight of this year was a digital tag campaign to showcase support for survivors. We encouraged groups of Albertans to film a short "we believe you" video, post it and tag another group of people to do the same. The response was phenomenal! We had videos and photos from post-secondary student governments, faculty and administration, sports teams, office staff, politicians and even Premier Notley herself. In fact, this year's social media reach of #IBelieveYou was 6.5 million.



The cheers of the crowd reverberated throughout the hockey arena.

Keeping with the theme of community support, we filmed a new I Believe You public service announcement showing the transition from support between two individuals; to members of a hockey team; to an entire arena full of I Believe You fans. In order to do this, we asked Albertans to come and be filmed as part of the public service announcement at an Edmonton hockey arena. Along with special guests from the Government of Alberta and the Canadian Armed Forces, the cheers of the crowd reverberated throughout the hockey arena. And we captured it all on camera!

This year's #IBelieveYou social media reach was 6.5 million!

Similar to last year, AASAS forged partnerships with post-secondary institutions in Alberta. The schools received posters to display, and hosted booth days on their respective campuses. Each booth offered a social media photo booth for "I Believe You" selfies and provided stickers, temporary tattoos, and "what to do next" cards so that students would be informed on what they could do to make a positive change in a survivor's life.

Matching post secondary institutions with their local sexual assault centres and using social media as a tool for change, #ibelieveyou swept across Alberta. Corporate media support and generous sponsorships from Pattison Outdoor, Bell Media and Corus Shaw resulted in I Believe You billboards and entire I Believe You C-trains and buses in Edmonton and Calgary.



Calgary Police Service points to #IBelieveYou as a contributing factor in increased rates of reporting to police.

Best of all, we made a difference. Two years ago, we asked Leger Research to poll 1000 Albertans and ask them what they would say if someone disclosed sexual assault to them. Of those who said they would know what to say to a sexual assault survivor, the number who would give a positive response (I'm sorry that happened, it's not your fault) went up from 21% pre-campaign to 66% after this year's campaign. Respondents who would use the specific phrase "I believe you" increased by 1% pre-campaign to 12% after this year's campaign. And we were excited to discover that this year, reports of sexual assault to police in Calgary increased by 20%, and Calgary Police Service pointed to #ibelieveyou as a contributing factor.



First Responder to Sexual Assault and Abuse Training™

In order to mitigate the negative effects of sexual assault on the health and safety of our communities, it is essential that every professional in Alberta knows how to respond to a disclosure from a child or an adult. Of even greater importance, is the need for professionals to be aware of and be able to unpack the myths and stereotypes we all hold about sexual assault.

First Responder to Sexual Assault and Abuse Training™ is a comprehensive adult education curriculum outlining the knowledge and skills necessary for helping professionals to assess, screen and respond effectively to disclosures of sexual assault and abuse.

This year, AASAS trained 391 professionals during 21 First Responder Trainings in the communities of: Vermillion, Banff, Calgary, Edmonton, Medicine Hat, Brooks, Valleyview, La Ronge, Saskatchewan, Lethbridge, Bonnyville, and Grande Prairie. AASAS collaborated and coordinated with 16 different facilitators from 9 different sexual assault centres to deliver First Responder Training as well as facilitated a week-long intensive Train the Trainer, to begin the training process of 12 new facilitators and 5 new mentors.



In order to further expand the reach of our trainings and build capacity outside of our network, AASAS was thrilled to have the opportunity this year to license and certify trainers from the provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. As a pilot, AASAS also licensed and certified trainers at the University of Lethbridge and Lethbridge College. If this pilot is successful, AASAS will consider training and certifying facilitators at other post-secondary institutions in Alberta.

To register for training in your area, go to www.aasas.ca.

“This training left me reflecting on my life – both personally and professionally. Amazing practical knowledge and skills”

Hope and Healing: Sexual Assault Counselling in Alberta

In January of 2016, Alberta Health provided funds for AASAS to continue the expansion of sexual assault counselling for a 39 month period. Each of the 12 sexual assault serving agencies in Alberta offered specialized sexual assault counselling across the province to individuals of all genders starting as early as age 3.

This year, Alberta’s sexual assault services supported 3500 new clients – a 53% increase in the number of new clients served as compared to last year.

And Alberta’s sexual assault services provided 27,500 counselling sessions – a 73% increase in the number of counselling sessions provided as compared to last year.

Seventy percent of individuals served were adults with the remaining being children ages 17 and under. While the majority of counselling clients were women; 13% were men and 1% were trans-identified individuals. Over 60% of counselling clients identified having a mental health diagnosis and/or addiction(s) demonstrating how sexual assault is linked closely to these serious health conditions. Outcome data collected showed that 90% of adult clients and 72% of child clients served during this period experienced a reduction in trauma symptoms.

Learning to Counsel Survivors Healing from Trauma of Sexualized Violence

There is a great deal of information available on trauma-informed practice. Guiding and counselling those individuals who have experienced trauma from sexualized violence however requires a very specialized knowledge base and a unique set of skills.

AASAS offers a 12 week integrative online course, Counselling Adult Survivors of Sexual Violence, which draws on the most current theory and focuses specifically on healing the unique trauma effects of those who have experienced sexual violence.

This year, AASAS offered two rounds of the course, educating a total of 38 counselling professionals.

To register for the next available on-line training, go to www.aasas.ca.

The number of new clients who received sexual assault counselling increased by 53%.

“I really enjoyed every part of this course...I felt my instructors were very informative and presented the course well.”

Allying with Indigenous Peoples: Cultural Solutions and Cultural Safety

In the first week of May 2016, AASAS Board members, Senior Leadership Committee and AASAS staff travelled from across Alberta to be part of an immersion opportunity in order to better understand Indigenous worldviews. In this case, the immersion was in a way of life, a worldview and a language that is more congruent with the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

Through various practices including smudging, ceremony, feasts, traditional teachings and protocol, participants embarked on a journey, with the end goal of understanding how these practices can and should inform the delivery of sexual assault services to Indigenous people.

Sessions were facilitated by four expert facilitators (Elder Dr. Reginald Crowshoe along with his wife Elder Rose Crowshoe, Adrian Goulet and Dr. Liza Lorenzetti) who delivered both oral and written training materials that together, explored concepts of relational accountability, circle process, the medicine wheel, language, as well as other relevant service theories and methods in a First Nations and Métis context.

AASAS is committed to continuing to seek resources and support to develop decolonizing strategies and work towards reconciliation for sexual assault services in Alberta.



“Thank you. The experience was transformative. My soul was screaming for more. Thank you for your permission and the wings to start this journey. Thank you for the process and commitment to a better world. It was the best training I have ever had”
(Training participant)

Show Your Support - Social Media

AASAS CEO, Deb Tomlinson, was asked to participate in a panel discussion this year called “Social Media: The Good, The Bad and the Ugly”. While she acknowledged that social media can and has been used to hurt and harm others, it undoubtedly also has the potential to be a powerful tool for positive social change.

For years, the issue of sexual assault managed to remain under the radar, shrouded by secrecy and shame. In the last 2 -3 years, through social media, we have seen the issue of sexual assault elevate to the centre of public awareness and public policy.

Please help us to continue to use social media for good. Join AASAS on social media and show your support for survivors of sexual assault!

Follow us and join our conversations on Twitter - @aasasmembership

Post an encouraging “I Believe You” picture or quote on Instagram - @aasas_ab and remember to hashtag with #IBelieveYou

Keep up to date with the cultural transformation from “rape culture” to “I Believe You” culture on Facebook by liking the Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services Facebook Page – <https://www.facebook.com/Association-of-Alberta-Sexual-Assault-Services-385453678169704/>

Thank You to the Alberta Government



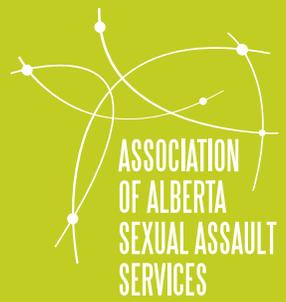
The funding from the Government of Alberta supports AASAS efforts to increase awareness of issues of sexual abuse and assault, and to ensure all Albertans affected by sexual violence have access to programs, supports and services.

AASAS is very grateful for your generosity and for recognizing the need for specialized sexual assault services for survivors.



Audited financial statements for the year (April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017) are available by request from the office of the Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services. mailbox@aasas.ca





ASSOCIATION
OF ALBERTA
SEXUAL ASSAULT
SERVICES