

Breaking the Silence

A Coordinated Response to
Sexual Violence in Nova Scotia

June 2017 Update

Hello and hope you are enjoying the warmer weather! You may have noticed that it has been a while since a Strategy update has been sent out – it has indeed been a wildly busy winter and spring! Better late than never, though.

Let's start with the most recent update: A free, online training was launched in April 2017. Supporting Survivors of Sexual Violence: A Nova Scotia Resource was created to help Nova Scotians learn more about sexual violence and how to support someone who has survived it.

This training 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.

The training was developed by a Provincial Committee made up of community members from across Nova Scotia. Thanks to their expertise and unwavering passion, Nova Scotians can now access this incredible resource. To date, over 600 people have already registered!

The training has six separate topics, including an introduction to sexual violence, responding to a disclosure, choices following sexual violence, exploring sexual consent, enhancing the wellbeing of support people and Indigenous perspectives.

The training can be done as a whole, or in parts, all at once, or over a period of time. If someone needs to stop a module part way through, they will be able to resume the training where they left off later. The course takes appx. 4-6 hours to complete and can be accessed at: nscs.learnridge.com

The screenshot shows the homepage of the online training course. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: Home, Start Course, Course Dashboard, Resources, Log In, Register, Get Help, and Exit. Below the navigation is a decorative background featuring a geometric pattern of overlapping triangles in various colors (yellow, green, blue, grey). Overlaid on this background is the title "Supporting Survivors of Sexual Violence" in large, bold, black font, followed by "A Nova Scotia Resource" in a smaller, dark blue font. Below the title, there is a section titled "Introduction" with a brief description of the course's purpose and target audience. To the right of the introduction is a circular icon containing a red pencil, with the text "Take the Course for Free" next to it. At the bottom right of the page is a red button labeled "Register Now".

"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

Prevention Innovation Fund

Also in April, over \$630,000 was awarded to groups across Nova Scotia through the Prevention Innovation Fund. This fund is meant to:

- Invest in 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, First Nation, and the LGBTQIA2S+ communities

Funded projects include:

Group	Project Location	Project Title	Amount
Annapolis Valley First Nation	Annapolis Valley First Nation	Prevention of sexual violence through tradition, culture and dance	\$46,990
Autism Nova Scotia	Province-wide	Autism Sexual Education Project	\$50,000
Chebucto Community Development Association	Halifax	Healthy Development and Relationships Program	\$47,855
Community Justice Society	Dartmouth	The HIVE Girls Group & Vignettes	\$28,441.98
Autumn House	Amherst	Community Bystander Empowerment Program	\$49,985
Eskasoni Mental Health & Dalhousie University	Eskasoni	Break the silence: Be the change	\$48,458
Lea Place	Sheet Harbour	Taking Action for Growth Project	\$5,000
Heartwood Centre for Community Youth Development	Halifax	Loosen Up and Start Talking for "Grown Ups"	\$25,000
Immigrant Settlement Association of Nova Scotia	Halifax	ISANS Breaking the Silence: Immigrant Youth Sexual Violence Project	\$50,000
L'Arche Atlantic Region	Province-wide	SEXCESS Supporting Sexuality and Healthy Relationships	\$5,000
LOVE: Leave Out Violence Nova Scotia	Sipkne'katik	Kesaluei Sipkne'katik	\$35,750
LunaSea Theatre Company	Halifax	SLUT The play	\$50,000
Nova Scotia Native Women's Association	Sydney	Sisterness Outreach Care Project; Increasing Safety for Mi'kmaq Women and Girls Gathering	\$28,784.13 \$5,000
Residence Life, Saint Mary's University	Halifax	SMU Res Consent Project	\$4,200
Sackville High School Student Support Group	Sackville	Sackville High Girls on Fire	\$3,500
Second Story Women's Centre & Be the Peace Institute	Lunenburg	The Pink Snowsuit Project	\$25,000
Sexual Health Nova Scotia	Province-wide	AFFIRMATIVE - Sexual Violence Prevention and Intellectual Disability	\$50,000
Shelburne County Youth Health and Support Association	Shelburne	Paint n Chat	\$5,000
The Youth project	Province-wide	Healthy Relationship Education for LGBTQ + Youth	\$20,000
Youth Art Connection	Dartmouth	Intergenerational Arts Mentorship (IAM) - Youth Arts Leadership Project (YALP)	\$16,380
Youth Health Centre Advisory Hosting Team	Sydney Mines	"Opening our Eyes"	\$5,000
YWCA Halifax	Spryfield	SafetyNET Living Labs	\$30,591

Community Support Networks

Each of the nine Community Support Networks (CSN) received another grant this spring to continue supporting their work. The CSNs are working to coordinate services and supports, increase visibility and accessibility of supports and foster safer and nonjudgmental spaces.

Each CSN meets at least quarterly, and has a unique action plan, reflecting the diverse realities and needs of our province. CSN Initiatives include: support groups for survivors, providing navigation support and developing Communities of Practice and Sexual Assault Response Teams.

We would love for you to get involved with the Community Support Network in your region! Email strategy@novascotia.ca and we will connect you with the community mobilizers in your area.

Nine Community Support Network Locations



Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program Expansion

Following an RFP process, Nova Scotia Health Authority has entered into contracts with Every Woman's Centre to lead the expansion of the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Program in the Eastern Zone (which includes Sydney), and the Tri-County Women's Centre in the Western Zone. Both organizations have successfully recruited coordinators to lead the expansion and oversee the operations of the program for them. Both coordinators have received their SANE-A education and are now receiving the clinical hours required to become certified.

The coordinators have also been reaching out to identified expansion sites within each area, working with the local leaders to identify appropriate space and to develop protocols to

support service delivery. They have also been meeting with and developing relationships with local organizations who will comprise the membership of the local Sexual Assault Response Teams (SART). As the next step, both organizations are seeking individuals who are interested in working as part of the SANE Program. Once identified, education and clinical training of the staff will take place and a phased approach to implementation will be undertaken. Nova Scotia Health Authority is also proceeding with the hiring of a provincial coordinator who will assist with the expansion programs as well as the coordination of all four SANE Programs delivering service across Nova Scotia.

What is a SANE?

These registered nurses have advanced training in providing non-judgmental, confidential support as well as conducting medical exams and collecting forensic evidence. People of any gender can access this service.

A person may want to see a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner to: take care of any physical injuries, test for pregnancy, test for STIs and begin treatment if necessary, and collect evidence for police.

Evidence will only be collected at the request of the person who has been assaulted. The victim/survivor has a minimum of six months to decide if they want the evidence to be transferred to the police.

Upcoming Free Event!

Conversations about Sexual Violence on University Campuses: New Challenges, Novel Solutions

[June 15 \(9am to 5pm\)](#)

Research Exchange

Atrium Building, Room 340 (the CLARI lab) at
Saint Mary's University

Researchers from across Canada will present a wide range of work on issues related to sexual violence on university campuses. We will have brief presentations in the morning and structured conversations about the research in the afternoon. We hope to create a space for knowledge exchange among researchers, policy-makers, and community activists.

[June 15 \(7pm to 9pm\)](#)

A Public Panel and Conversation About Campus Sexual Violence

Sobey Building, Sobey Theatre
at Saint Mary's University

Featuring:

- Constance Backhouse (Law Professor, University of Ottawa)
- Kelley Castle (Dean of Students, Victoria College, University of Toronto)
- Farrah Khan (Coordinator of Ryerson's Office of Sexual Violence Support and Education)
- Diana Swain (CBC's Senior Investigative Correspondent)