



SASS

**Sexual Assault Services
of Saskatchewan**

Awareness. Education. Support.

A Resource Manual for Service Providers



SASS is a provincial umbrella organization for the sexual assault services in Saskatchewan

Mission:

SASS creates opportunities for members and communities to collectively work together to end sexual violence.

Vision:

SASS is the provincial leader for coordinating, collaborating, and capacity building in creating a province that is free of sexual violence for children, women and men.

To fulfill our mission, we:

- Coordinate education and awareness campaigns
- Act as a resource centre and clearing house of information on issues surrounding sexual violence
- Provide support and consultation services to existing sexual assault centres and community organizations that support survivors
- Research best practices and collect data

For more information and resources, contact: SASS
(306) 757-1941
www.sassk.ca/index

OUR CONNECTION WITH NORTHERN COMMUNITIES

Sexual violence is a significant issue in Canada with 1 in 3 women reporting an experience of sexual violence in their lives. Presently of all provinces, Saskatchewan has one of the highest rates of sexual victimization in Canada.

SASS conducted a needs assessment project in Northern Saskatchewan in 2014 in order to engage both community members and service providers to help identify existing strengths and potential gaps in service provision for sexual assault victims and survivors. We also hoped to create an implementation plan that will help to support sexual assault services in these communities



WHAT IS CONSENT?

*Consent is permission, approval, or agreement to allow something to happen and can be withdrawn at any time when a person does not feel okay or is uncomfortable to continue with what is happening. Whether it is kissing, touching, oral sex, penetrative sex, or photographs/video – **whenever** a person changes their mind and does not want to continue with the sexual activity, it means voluntary consent has been withdrawn and the activity must stop.*



- ✓ Is a clear YES, not an absence of a NO
- ✓ When it is enthusiastic and freely given
- ✓ Can be revoked at anytime

WHAT IS SEXUAL ASSAULT?

Sexual Assault is:

Any form of unwanted sexual contact - that is any sexual contact that happens without freely and enthusiastically given consent.

Any form of non-consensual sexual activity (e.g., touching any part of the body, oral sex, vaginal or anal intercourse) or non-consensual bodily contact for a sexual purpose.



It is not consent if the person says NO or STOP or is silent.

- × It is not consent if there is threat, manipulation or coercion involved.
- × It is not consent if the person is unconscious, asleep, intoxicated or drugged.
- × It is not consent if the person is under 16*.
- × It is not consent if the other person is a position of authority.

WHAT IF I WANT TO STOP?

Withdrawn consent can be shown in many non-verbal ways such as change in mood, stopped physical movements, pulling away, a turned face, reduced sounds or silence, tears, breath holding.

*If the activity continues when consent is withdrawn, it becomes a **forced criminal act**.*

*Contrary to what many people think, under Canadian law a person **does not have to say "no" or fight back** for the experience to be considered an assault. Rather, the responsibility lies with each person to pay attention to find out if voluntary consent is being given or not.*

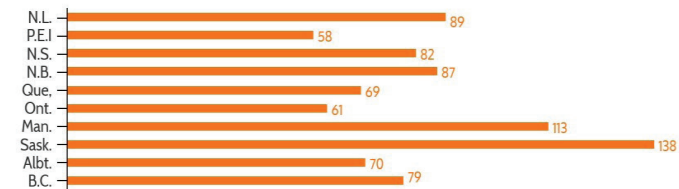
THE TRUTHS ABOUT SEXUAL ASSAULT

- *Sexual assault can involve any kind of unwanted sexual contact*
- *The majority of sexual assaults are committed by men against women*
- *Most women are sexually assaulted in a home or vehicle by someone they know; an acquaintance, intimate partner, family or extended family*
- *Most sexual assaults involve coercion, force or threats of some kind; many result in severe yet invisible psychological injuries and many involve serious physical injury, also often invisible*
- *Survivors are never to blame for the aggressions of others, even if they were intoxicated, got into a car, were on a date, or invited the offender into their home*
- *While girls and young women between the ages of 15 & 24 are the group most targeted, sexual assault can happen to any woman, at any age*
- *There are an estimated 677,000 sexual assaults in Canada every year*
- *Sexual assault is the most under-reported of all violent crimes, with less than 8% - 10% reported to police*
- *False sexual assault reports are no more common than false reports of any kind (2%)*

Did You Know...



PROVINCIAL SEXUAL ASSAULT RATES IN CANADA PER 100,000 PEOPLE:



75%

of survivors know their perpetrator, such as a friend, family member, romantic partner, co-worker, or acquaintance



Less than
10%

of sexual assaults are reported to the police

460,000
ASSAULTS IN
CANADA EVERY YEAR

OUT OF EVERY 1,000 SEXUAL ASSAULTS:



STATS FROM STATS CANADA AND YWCA CANADA

HOW TO ACCESS SUPPORT AFTER A SEXUAL ASSAULT

If you are a survivor of sexual assault...

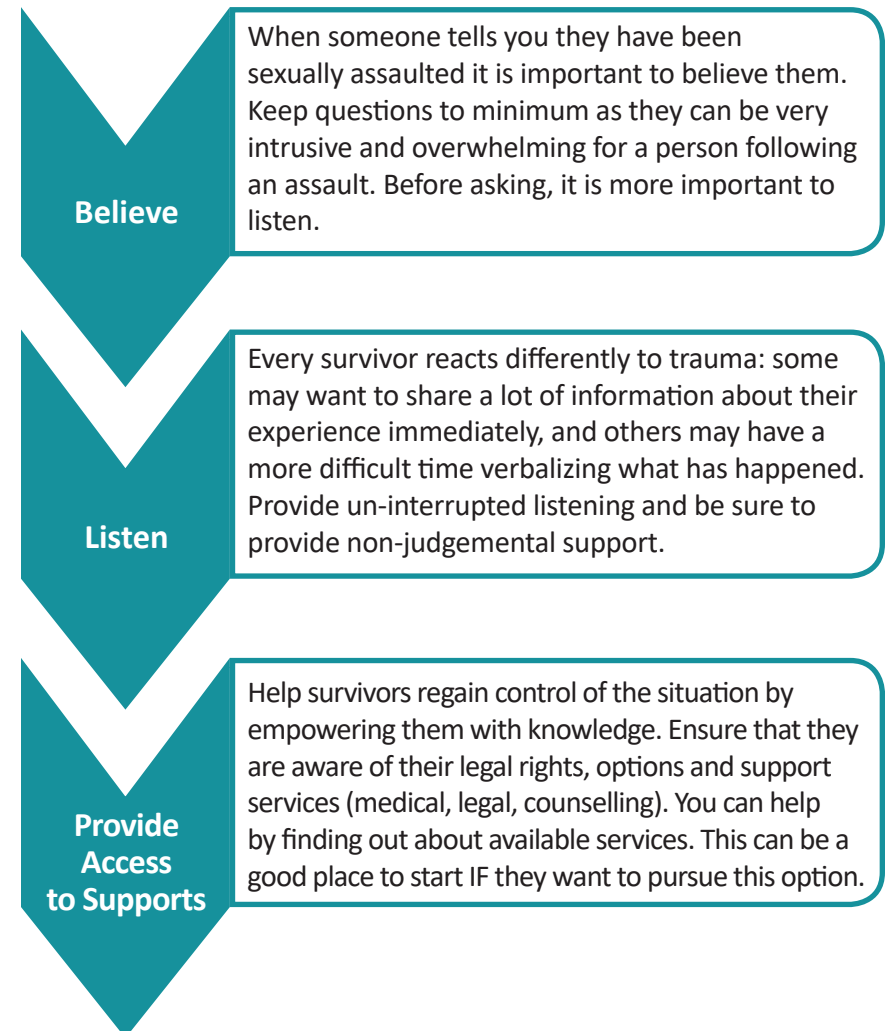


- The time after a sexual assault can be very confusing and decisions may be difficult to make. Only you know what is best for you. Talk to someone you trust or a sexual assault crisis line to help assist you in making choices that are right for you.
- Phone the police if you are still in immediate danger. Go to friend and neighbor you trust to stay safe and ask for help.
- Don't change, shower, or throw away your clothing as they can be used as evidence.
- Go to the hospital right away to get a medical examination.
- Write down as much details as you can remember about the assault.
- You can choose to report the assault to the police or RCMP
- Call the nearest Sexual Assault Centre for counselling, guidance and support.
- Remember that what happened to you is not your fault. You have the right to say NO and sexual assault is a criminal offense. Know that you did not ask to be assaulted and you are not responsible for the assailant's behaviour.

(Refer to the back of the manual for a crisis line in your area).

IF SOMEONE HAS DISCLOSED A SEXUAL ASSAULT TO YOU...

Disclosing or sharing the experience of a sexual assault can be very difficult for survivors. They often fear that they will not be believed, or that they will be blamed or that their experience will be minimized or dismissed all together.



IF SOMEONE HAS DISCLOSED A SEXUAL ASSAULT TO YOU...

Never Blame

Remember, survivors are NEVER to blame for sexual assault. Regardless of what a woman was wearing, how she was behaving, or if she had been drinking - it does not mean she is asking to be sexually assaulted. This belief is often used by offenders to rationalize their own behaviour blame the victim.

Ask before you touch

It is important to understand that following a sexual assault, many people do not want to be physically touched. It is important to ASK FIRST. For example, you might ask, "Would it be okay if I gave you a hug?" Asking permission shows respect and you are less likely to cause them to re-experience trauma.

Acknowledge your own feelings

Supporting someone through a sexual assault is a very difficult experience. Be aware of your own feelings and emotions and understand that it is normal to feel upset, angry and sad. Be sure to seek out support for yourself also.

OPTIONS FOR AFTER A SEXUAL ASSAULT

Seeking Medical Help

After a sexual assault, it is strongly encouraged to seek medical attention from a hospital as soon as possible. It is important to get treatment within 72 hours.



If you have been assaulted in the last 3 days, you have the option of a forensic medical examination (rape kit) to gather evidence that may be used in a police investigation. Select hospitals have specialized Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE nurses) or doctors who are trained to do forensic exams. If you choose to have the forensic exam, the police will be called to take your statement and collect evidence. This can be done at the hospital.

You are not required to have the forensic exam in order to get medical treatment. If you do not want to the forensic exam or police involvement, please seek medical attention to treat any internal and external injuries, test for sexually transmitted infections and/or the potential for pregnancy.

OPTIONS FOR AFTER A SEXUAL ASSAULT

Reporting to Police

You may choose to report the crime at the scene, at the hospital or you may be unsure about reporting. It is common to have mixed feelings, anxiety, uncertainty or fear about making a police report.

If you do not want to make a report now, but you might in the future, write down everything that you can remember from the incident. There is no time limit for reporting a sexual assault. Call a nearby crisis line for support and information on reporting.

If you are at the scene and want to file a report before going to the hospital, do so as soon as possible to preserve evidence. Do not shower, wash, bathe, douche, change or destroy your clothes. Do not alter the area where the assault occurred until medical and legal evidence has been collected.



OPTIONS FOR AFTER A SEXUAL ASSAULT

At the Hospital

Depending upon community supports in your area, the SANE nurse or doctor will ask if you want a trained sexual assault advocate to come to the hospital and support you through the evidence gathering process. Most survivors and their family members value the support and resources an advocate provides through the difficult time.

After Evidence Collection

Depending on the situation, you may need to be available to the police for other aspects of the investigation such as identifying the crime scene or the perpetrator. Once the suspect is charged, you must attend a preliminary hearing to decide if there is enough evidence for trial. An advocate may be able to support you through this process.

RESOURCES

Western Canada Sexual Assault Initiative

SASS in Saskatchewan began a collaborative partnership with the provincial sexual associations in British Columbia, Alberta, and Manitoba two years ago to ensure consistent and improved responses to sexual assault across the four western provinces. We have developed resources that are being shared among the group and we encourage you to use our websites below as resource for all things sexual assault. If you need help looking for resources, please contact SASS and we will assist you.

Sexual Assault Services of Saskatchewan

<http://sassk.ca/>

Klinic Community Health (Manitoba)

<http://klinik.mb.ca/>

Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services

<http://aasas.ca/>

Ending Violence Association of BC

<http://endingviolence.org/>

EVA CAN- Ending Violence Association of Canada

Founding Members:

BC: Ending Violence Association (EVA BC)

Alberta: Alberta Association of Sexual Assault Centres

Saskatchewan: Sexual Assault Services of Saskatchewan

Ontario: Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses and Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres

EVA CAN is a national body that collaborates closely, to lead national discussions focusing on violence against women and children, crime prevention, building of best practices to increase safety and wellness, and foster sound and effective cross sector collaborative initiatives.



Sexual Assault Crisis Lines in Saskatchewan

La Ronge	1-306-425-4090
Prince Albert	1-306-764-1011
Lloydminster	1-306-825-8255
Melfort/North East	1-800-611-6349
Battlefords	1-866-567-0055
Saskatoon	1-306-244-2224
Kindersley/West Central	1-306-463-1860
Regina	1-306-352-0434
Moose Jaw	1-800-214-7083
Swift Current/South West	1-306-778-3833
Estevan/Weyburn	1-800-214-7083



The goal of this booklet is to give service providers a basic understanding of sexual assault and how they can support victims and survivors.

Regina, SK
(306) 757-1941
www.sassk.ca/index