



COLCHESTER
SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE

25 YEARS

2023 – 2024

ANNUAL REPORT

Colchester Sexual Assault Centre

35 Commercial Street, Suite 403, Truro, NS

ColchesterSAC.ca

info@colchestersac.ca 902.897.4366

 @ColchesterSAC

 @CSAC16

 @ColchesterSAC

 CSAC Colchester Sexual Assault Centre

OUR MISSION & VISION

Mission

Based in Mi'kma'ki, the Colchester Sexual Assault Centre is a registered charitable organization that provides quality programs and services aimed to strengthen, empower, and support anyone impacted by sexual violence.

Vision

Until prevention of sexual violence is fully reached, we believe all Nova Scotians should have free and equitable access to the programs and services they need.

Values

Advocacy / Awareness / Education
Inclusivity / Prevention / Support



L-R: Abby MacLeod (Community Engagement Officer), Jamie Matthews (Executive Director), Nicole Williams and Theresa Robertson (Counselling Therapists)

AT A GLANCE

- ▶ We had an average of at least **1** new client starting counselling services every other day
- ▶ We have supported **112** clients in the past year
- ▶ **33%** of our graduating clients opted to enroll in our Aftercare: Journey program
- ▶ On average, clients only missed **1** session each
- ▶ Nearly $\frac{1}{3}$ of our clients graduated from counselling services
- ▶ **1 out of 5** of our clients identified within a racialized or marginalized community

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to extend our deepest appreciation to everyone who has made this another exciting year in the history of the Colchester Sexual Assault Centre. I am continually honoured and humbled to have served as Chair over these past four years. I would like to extend my deepest appreciation to the members of the Board of Directors for volunteering their time, your passion and dedication inspires everyone within the organization. The dedication and leadership you have provided has led our organization into our next exciting chapter as a registered charity. To our Executive Director who recognized our full potential when he first joined us nearly 4 years ago, we would like to thank you for your invaluable work in achieving this milestone. To our team of Counselling Therapists and administrative staff, you motivate the rest of us each, and every, day by the compassion you provide to our clients and for building the reputable service we provide to our network of community partners. It is all of you who have solidified our presence in the community as we embark on this new journey as a registered charity and for embracing our new 5-year strategic plan.



As a local charitable organization, it is incredibly important to us that the support we receive gets reinvested to directly benefit those in Nova Scotian communities. We would like to thank everyone who has offered their support over the past year. Whether it be the local business community for supporting our 2nd annual Reverse 50/50 Lottery Campaign, or those prize winners who have generously donated their winnings back to us, or our partner organizations for entrusting us to support their referred clients, or our funding partners for supporting our mission – your support has made our communities safer and more inclusive for everyone. Sadly, none of us are immune from the effects of sexual violence and that is evident from the outpouring of support that we receive, but there is still much work to be done.

Lastly, on behalf of the Board of Directors, we would like to extend our appreciation to the Province of Nova Scotia, the Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia, the Canadian Women’s Foundation, and to all our funding partners and donors, for their ongoing investment into addressing the needs of those impacted by sexual violence. Every gift – big or small – enables us to sustain and grow our prevention, education, awareness, outreach and support initiatives.

Sincerely,

Deb Pryor, Chair of the Board of Directors

Executive

Deb Pryor	Chair
David McKillop	Vice-Chair
Nancy Brenton	Treasurer
Jillian Toonders	Secretary

Members-at-Large

Christine Blair	Cathy Hinton
Jeanine Clague	Karen Wade
Susan Henderson	

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This past year has been a particularly exciting time in the history of the Colchester Sexual Assault Centre. After three years of investment into our operations and governance, I am absolutely thrilled to say that our organization is now a registered charity. I would like to extend my sincerest thanks to the Board of Directors, past and present, for their ongoing commitment during this process, and to our team for their patience and dedication to our mission. On behalf of our team, we remain honoured to have supported those impacted by sexual violence in communities from across our province. We are also looking forward to the possibility of continuing to do this vital work for many years to come, now as a registered charity.



Over this past year, we have continued to dedicate ourselves to creating a welcoming and inclusive experience for those impacted by sexual violence, particularly for those in marginalized communities. Regardless of location, identity, age, gender, sexual orientation or expression, we strive to ensure that every Nova Scotian has equitable access to the support options they need. This is done through our in-person, virtual and tele-support options, as well as through our network of community referral partners.

As you'll see throughout this report, the impact we've had is undeniable – and could not be possible without each, and every one of you within our organization and those in the community who support our vision.

Over these past 33 years since our organization was founded, we have developed a reputation as leaders in prevention, education, advocacy, and support for those impacted by sexual violence. As we embark on our next journey as a registered charity, and with the unveiling of our 5-year strategic plan, it is our hope to reach even more people in the years to come. I continue to be inspired leading this organization forward and would like to thank everyone who has contributed to another historic year. We are incredibly excited for the year ahead and remain committed to supporting those impacted by sexual violence in our communities.

Sincerely,

Jamie Matthews, Executive Director

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to those who have contributed to our organization's growth and success over the past year. Your support has had a lasting impact on our community.

- ▶ Niki Henderson (Vice-Chair) and Victoria Mumford (Treasurer & Secretary) who completed their terms, and to our former Members-at-Large who retired from service
- ▶ Sara-Lynne Lantz and Reena Davis – Former Counselling Therapists
- ▶ Nicole Arseneau and Kaleigh Cormier – 2023 Canada Summer Jobs Students

OUR TEAM



Jamie Matthews
Executive Director



Marilyn Ebsary
Bookkeeper



Abby MacLeod
Community Engagement
Officer

Counselling Therapists



Theresa Robertson



Nicole Williams

OUR CLIENTS

- ▶ Over **7%** of clients identify as male
- ▶ Over **89%** of clients identify as female
- ▶ Over **15%** of clients identify as 2SLGBTQIA+
- ▶ **23%** of clients are youth
- ▶ **22%** of clients are aged 18-24
- ▶ **47%** of clients are ages 25-50
- ▶ **8%** of clients are 50+
- ▶ Over **2%** of clients are people with a disability
- ▶ Nearly **5%** of clients identify as BIPOC



REGISTERED CHARITABLE STATUS

In December 2023, The Colchester Sexual Assault Centre successfully obtain Registered Charitable Status with Canada Revenue Agency. This process began in September 2020 when the Board of Directors embarked on an exercise to ensure we could position ourselves to take on this added responsibility. After an exhaustive investment into our governance and operations over the course of three years, we were absolutely thrilled and proud that our hard work culminated in our organization becoming a registered charity.

What this means for our organization and for those impacted by sexual violence in our communities:

- ▶ to have the ability to accept, process and receipt charitable donations from those in the community committed to sexual violence support, prevention and education
- ▶ to designate the generous support we receive from our donors in a meaningful way
- ▶ donations can be made in honour of someone impacted by sexual violence or in memory of something they lost
- ▶ the ability to host awareness and advocacy events with a fundraising component to sustain our operations
- ▶ to more effectively engage with the local business community
- ▶ increased access to available funding opportunities
- ▶ to invest in our organization's ability to sustain our vital programs and services for many years to come

How you can show your support

- ▶ Visit ColchesterSAC.ca and click the Donate Now button at the top of the page to donate safely and securely online through Canada Helps
- ▶ Visit our Community Resource Centre to drop off cash or cheque donations
- ▶ Contact us anytime to see how your donation can be best utilized to support those impacted by sexual violence
- ▶ If you have an event coming up, you can select us as a recipient of your fundraising efforts
- ▶ Be sure to like and follow us on Facebook, Instagram and X (Twitter) so you don't miss any of our exciting plans throughout the upcoming year

2nd ANNUAL REVERSE 50/50 LOTTERY DRAW

Based on the response we received in 2022, we were incredibly excited to launch our 2nd annual Reverse 50/50 Lottery Draw campaign in the fall of 2023! This was a great opportunity for us to engage with the community and to provide them with a means of supporting the vital programs and services we offer.

We are extremely grateful for the generosity we received from the local business community who donated 39 prize packages for our lucky winners, in addition to the \$11,000 in available cash prizes! We would like to extend our thanks



Congratulations to our 2022 Grand Prize winner Darnell Reddick

to everyone on our team, Board of Directors, summer students, community partners and volunteers who made the campaign another success, and to the Truro Farmer's Market and Truro Mall, as our retail partners!

The proceeds from the campaign have directly funded the programs and services we offer, see pages 10 – 12. To learn more about the campaign visit ColchesterSAC.ca/Lottery and for when tickets go on sale again this fall for the 3rd annual Reverse 50/50 Lottery Draw!

COLLABORATIONS ADDRESSING SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Truro Pride Society

Since 2022, the Truro Pride Society has been an incredibly valuable community partner. This relationship has provided us with the ability to better support the 2SLGBTQIA+ community by building a relationship of trust with those who identify as members of this typically under served population. Since this relationship formed, we have seen a steady increase of gay, queer and trans people

accessing our services. Our continued involvement in Pride Week celebrations has also helped to raise awareness of sexual violence within the community and has heightened our presence as a trusted source of information and support for everyone in the Town the Truro, Colchester County – and beyond!



L-R: Raelee Rath (Chair, Truro Pride), Abby MacLeod (Community Outreach Officer), Marci Ien (Minister, Women and Gender Equality Canada), and Jamie Matthews (Executive Director)

Nova Institution for Women

This past year, we were invited by the Nova Institution for Women to provide education for the staff and residents of the facility. We were incredibly honoured to provide this service to these women and female-identifying residents, as well as the staff who are tasked with ensuring their safety. We provided a series of sessions on sexual orientation and gender identity, healthy relationships and boundaries, sexual violence prevention, and other themes. The goal of this partnership was to not only support them during their incarceration but to also provide them with the tools and access to services upon their release and their reintegration back into the community. Our organization continues to partner with organizations and agencies who are committed to sexual violence prevention initiatives.

Black Girl Magic Colchester

Our relationship with Black Girl Magic Colchester began in December 2021 when our team members were the recipient of their Ally is a Verb training. Since then, our organization has remained committed to developing relationships within the African Nova Scotian communities within the Town of Truro. Most recently, through funding received from the Truro and Area, Northern Health Zone, Community Health Board, our organizations co-hosted a networking event providing the community with an opportunity to directly engage with the non-profit service providers within the region. Through community consultation, our organizations identified the gaps in service and helped to bridge those gaps by bringing community members together and were treated to an educational presentation from Robert Wright of The Peoples' Counselling Clinic.



L-R, front to back: Kiley White (Program Coordinator, Truro Pride), Jennifer Teal (Office Coordinator, The Lotus Centre), Abby MacLeod (Community Outreach Officer), Jamie Matthews (Executive Director) and Michaela MacLachlan (Executive Director, The Lotus Centre)



L-R: Jamie Matthews (Executive Director), Tracy Dorrington-Skinner (Founder, Black Girl Magic Colchester) and Robert Wright (Executive Director, The Peoples' Counselling Clinic)

PROGRAMS & SERVICES

We have seen the undeniable impact our organization has had over the past 28 years, with thousands directly benefiting from our free counselling services. We provide an alternative for those with limited financial means, our 12-week offering is valued at just \$420 compared to upwards of \$1,400 through a private practice. Our free counselling services also helps to alleviate the burden placed on our healthcare system and government agencies.

Counselling

Our team of highly trained Registered Counselling Therapists provide a wide range of mental health counselling, emotional support and psychoeducational services. One-on-one counselling services are one of the most valuable and accessed services offered through our Community Resource Centre. Each client receives up to 12 free individual counselling sessions for those impacted by sexual violence. They are welcomed by a highly trained

intake professional who then pairs the client with the best suited Counselling Therapist based on their unique situation and needs. They will then meet with the same counsellor weekly or biweekly for an hour-long session of therapeutic conversation. During treatment the main focus is on developing goals, collaborating on a treatment plan, evaluating progress to determine what future services may be beneficial and charting a course for healing.



Colchester Sexual Assault Centre
25 YEARS

Summer 2023
Roadshow Results

148 Organizations Visted

Throughout **18** Communities

Across **5** Counties

After-Care: Journey

The After-Care: Journey Program was created to further support our clients with their healing and growth process after completing individual counselling sessions with a Counselling Therapist. It also acts as an alternative to formal counselling and is open to anyone impacted by sexual violence who may be seeking a less formal support option. This educational, empowerment, and self-care focused program is specifically focused on a client's personal goals and needs.

What services are currently being offered in the After-Care: Journey Program?

1. Educational programming: Wounds of Change: *Strengthening Self Worth*

This is a guided discussion and workbook that is completed one-on-one and focuses on the following:

- ▶ Understanding self-esteem / self-worth and connection to wounds & triggers
- ▶ Identifying your values & strengths
- ▶ Understanding self-forgiveness and shame and building self-compassion
- ▶ Learning about boundaries, healthy relationships, and the role of values and wounds and assertive communication

2. Creating a self-care plan and health-focused goals

One-on-one discussion using the *Strategies Tool Kit* and other resources to create a realistic plan for self-care.

3. *Mini Psycho-educational groups*

- ▶ Understanding Healthy Relationships
- ▶ Safety
- ▶ Body Oriented Strategies

Body-Oriented Strategies for Trauma is facilitated virtually or in-person, depending on enrollment and is only available to CSAC clients.

This 4-session group would provide the opportunity to learn about the following:

- A. Trauma — brief overview of common responses and trauma and the brain
- B. Breathing and mindfulness – includes learning breathing strategies and mini mindful practices for your everyday
- C. Guided Practices – includes Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR), body scans, and meditation
- D. Body-Oriented Strategies

4. Connection to other organizations for programs

Providing information and the contacts for local and provincial programs:

- ▶ ElevateHer / Truro Program Centre
- ▶ Slate Youth Centre
- ▶ Peer Support NS Virtual Groups for youth and adults
- ▶ Other organizations and virtual opportunities
- ▶ Clients also participated in the *Body Oriented Strategies for Trauma* group



Outreach & Education

We provide educational workshops, presentations, and group support options in the community. Throughout the year, our organization has provided outreach and education services to schools in the CCRCE, facilitating programs for youth, workplace educational services, as well as several participants and staff within our network of community partners. These presentations have included:

- ▶ *Understanding Healthy Relationships (for youth)*
- ▶ *Understanding Healthy Relationships (for adults)*
- ▶ *Online Safety for Families and Youth*
- ▶ *Sexual Violence and Trauma-Informed Practices*

We provide resources and information on various issues, including sexual violence, trauma and trauma responses, trauma-informed practices, online safety, trafficking and exploitation, sexuality, relationships, sexual health, and personal and self-care planning.

REGIONAL BREAKDOWN

▶ Colchester County	85%
▶ Halifax Regional Municipality	5%
▶ Cumberland County	4%
▶ East Hants County	4%
▶ Windsor and Annapolis Valley	1%
▶ Sydney	1%

Community Partnerships

We have developed an extensive network of community partnerships that enable our organization to provide the best possible service to our clients. Our sincerest thanks to all of our referral partner agencies, funders and friends in the community.

- ▶ Autumn House
- ▶ Bible Hill RCMP
- ▶ Big Brothers Big Sisters of Colchester
- ▶ Black Girl Magic Nova Scotia
- ▶ Bridges Institute
- ▶ Canada Summer Jobs
- ▶ Canadian Mental Health Association – Colchester East Hants Branch
- ▶ Canadian Red Cross
- ▶ Canadian Women’s Foundation
- ▶ CBDC NOBL
- ▶ Colchester County
- ▶ Colchester Partners working group
- ▶ Dalhousie Agricultural Campus
- ▶ Department of Community Services
- ▶ ElevateHer
- ▶ Elizabeth Fry Society
- ▶ Futureworx
- ▶ Government of Canada
- ▶ Indian Brook First Nation (Sipenke’katik)
- ▶ Indian Brook Peer Outreach Support Services and Education (POSSE)
- ▶ Interagency working group
- ▶ The Lotus Centre
- ▶ Maggie’s Place Family Resource Centre
- ▶ Mental Health Community Foundation of Nova Scotia
- ▶ Mentoring Plus Strategy
- ▶ Mi’kmaw Family Healing Centre
- ▶ Millbrook First Nation
- ▶ Nova Institution for Women
- ▶ Nova Scotia Community College – Truro Campus
- ▶ Nova Scotia Sexual Violence Strategy
- ▶ Office of Addiction and Mental Health
- ▶ Province of Nova Scotia
- ▶ Rath Eastlink Community Centre
- ▶ Roots of Hope
- ▶ Third Place Transition House
- ▶ Town of Truro
- ▶ Trafficking and Exploitation Services System (TESS) working group
- ▶ Trauma Recovery for Exploited Youth (TREY)
- ▶ Truro and Area Community Health Board
- ▶ Truro and Colchester Chamber of Commerce
- ▶ Truro and Colchester Partnership for Economic Prosperity
- ▶ Truro Farmer’s Market
- ▶ Truro Mall
- ▶ Truro Police
- ▶ Truro Pride Society
- ▶ United Way of Colchester County
- ▶ Village of Bible Hill
- ▶ YReach
- ▶ The schools, educators and guidance counsellors across the region who have entrusted us to support their students



Advocacy

In the Summer of 2023, we met with our Member of Parliament, Dr. Stephen Ellis, to discuss the need for increased financial support from our federal government. The Canada Summer Jobs program is just one way that non-profit organizations sustain their operations, as well as the delivery of their programs and services. We took this opportunity to further reinforce the National Action Plan on gender-based violence that we participated in during the NAP on the Hill in May of 2022 held in Ottawa. We are grateful for the support we receive from all levels of government but there is still much work to be done to truly prevent acts of sexual violence.



L-R: Jamie Matthews (Executive Director), Dr. Stephen Ellis (Member of Parliament), Sara-Lynne Lantz (former Client Intake Supervisor and Counselling Therapist), Nicole Arseneau and Kaleigh Cormier (Canada Summer Jobs students)

OUR WORK

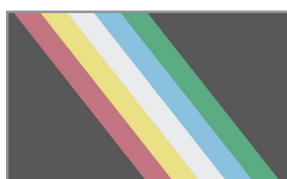
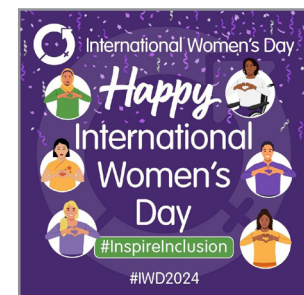
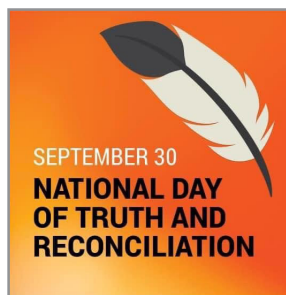
- ▶ March 2024, presented to the Municipality of Colchester Council for funding to sustain our programs and services
- ▶ February 2024, met with the Minister of Women and Gender Equality Canada, Marci Ien, regarding our ongoing partnership with the Truro Pride Society and the need for greater accessibility for community-based non-profits to apply for federal funding opportunities
- ▶ October 2023, met with the office of the Member of Parliament of Halifax West, Lena Metlege Diab, regarding our ongoing partnership with the Truro Pride Society and the funding received through Women and Gender Equality Canada
- ▶ July 2023, met with the former Minister of Community Services, Carla MacFarlane, to discuss the importance of financial investments needed to enhance community-based education and prevention initiatives
- ▶ July 2023, met with Member of Parliament, Dr. Stephen Ellis, to discuss the need for increased financial support options, as well as the urgency of the National Action Plan on gender-based violence, from our federal government
- ▶ Ongoing communications with our MLA for Truro-Bible Hill-Millbrook-Salmon River, Dave Ritcey, for local funding opportunities and advocacy initiatives

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Awareness Campaigns

In addition to the annual Sexual Assault Awareness Month campaign in April, the Colchester Sexual Assault Centre participates in and supports various initiatives throughout the year. It is our fundamental belief that diversity and inclusion enriches our culture and builds stronger communities, our organization is proud to be a safe space for everyone.

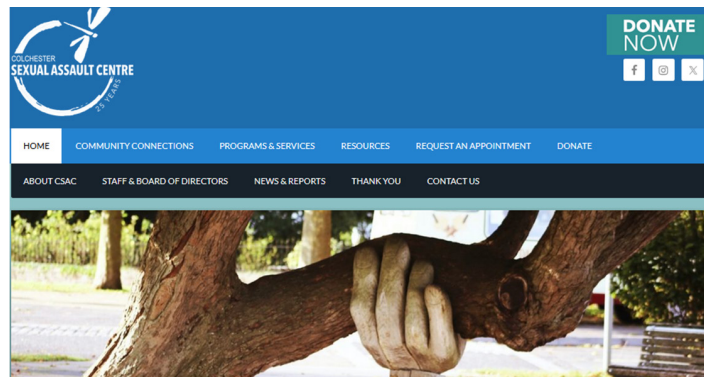
112
Education and Outreach Activities



Website

ColchesterSAC.ca continues to be a trusted resource for those impacted by sexual violence and trauma. People can safely and securely Request an Appointment with one of our Counselling Therapists and gain access to:

- ▶ up-to-date resources and information
- ▶ external links to our referral partners on our Community Connections page
- ▶ individual pages for distinct marginalized and racialized groups with applicable resources under the Resources menu



- ▶ special announcements on our News & Reports page
- ▶ our funding partners and community supporters on our Thank You page
- ▶ how to make a donation in support of our FREE programs and services

AVERAGE MONTHLY STATS

- ▶ 596 total visitors
- ▶ 579 unique visitors
- ▶ 81% of visitors use a search engine to find us
- ▶ 16% of visitors typed in our website address
- ▶ 3% of visitors reached us through our social media
- ▶ Most visited pages are Myths About Sexual Violence (328), Programs & Services (47), Sexual Violence (43), Reverse 50/50 Lottery (39), Consent (35), Staff & Board (33), Contact Us (31), Resources for Men (29), Marginalized Communities (17) and Community Connections (15)

Social Media

Facebook visits
2.4K ↑ 124.2%



We see consistent engagement across our platforms!

Be sure to **LIKE** and **FOLLOW** us for exciting updates and special content!



OUR FUNDING PARTNERS

The Colchester Sexual Assault Centre is a registered charitable organization that relies on the generous financial support of grants and donations. We would like to recognize and thank our funding partners and donors for their generosity!

To show YOUR support of those impacted by sexual violence please visit ColchesterSAC.ca to securely donate online!

\$11,000

December 2023 – We can't possibly thank everyone enough for supporting our **2nd Annual Reverse 50/50 Lottery Campaign!** To all our prize donors and to everyone who purchased a ticket – you've all made a lasting impact on how our organization responds to those impacted by sexual violence in our communities!



\$9,266

July 2023 – Thank you to Canada Summer Jobs for selecting our organization to host two summer students this year! We provided meaningful employment to university students in the areas of education and programming, fundraising, and marketing and communications!



\$43,300

April 2023 – Thank you to the Department of Community Services of the Province of Nova Scotia for their annual funding contribution in support of our daily operations, and our education and prevention initiatives!



\$25,000

April 2023 – Thank you to the **Mental Health Foundation of NS** for their contribution towards the delivery of our programs and services by our team of Master’s-level Registered Counselling Therapists!

\$46,352

March 2023 – Thank you to the **Office of Addictions and Mental Health** of the Province of NS for their contribution to continue the vital programs and services we offer across Colchester, Cumberland and East Counties... and beyond!

COLCHESTER SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE
Statement of Revenues and Expenditures
Year Ended March 31, 2024

	2024	2023
REVENUE		
Province of Nova Scotia (Note 6)	\$ 85,851	\$ 213,300
Canadian Women's Foundation (Note 6)	30,788	121,212
Charitable organizations	25,000	5,200
Fundraising and donations	9,510	16,637
Rental	9,294	6,330
Government of Canada	8,964	8,149
Training services	7,682	-
	177,089	370,828
EXPENSES		
Advertising and fundraising	13,502	14,302
Education services	1,652	2,887
Insurance	1,437	1,420
Office	13,143	22,684
Professional fees	9,848	8,201
Rent	19,144	14,273
Salaries and benefits	228,928	306,972
Telephone	2,722	2,550
Travel	4,578	2,641
	294,954	375,930
DEFICIENCY OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES FROM OPERATIONS	(117,865)	(5,102)
OTHER INCOME		
Interest income (Note 4)	6,840	7,070
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	\$ (111,025)	\$ 1,968