

Sexual Violence Awareness Month May 2013

Action Sheet

What do we know about Sexual Assault?

- In 2010, 682 assaults were reported to police in Nova Scotia
- About 84% of the victims/survivors were women
- In 2007, sexual assaults were 7.7% of all police reported violent offences in Nova Scotia.

What is Consent?

The word consent is very much a part of the discussion when it comes to talking about sexual assault. This is because, if consent hasn't been given by one person to engage in a sexual act with another person, it is a criminal offence.

What resources are out there?

- Check out the Canadian youth led initiative on consent and prevention of sexual assault go to www.consented.ca.
- For more Information and resources on the ASK Campaign go to tcwhc.ca or tricountywomenscentre.org.
- For more information and support contact Tri County Women's Centre at 742-0085 or Juniper House at 742-4473 .

What do we know is best practice about consent and preventing Sexual Assault?

- Providing sexual violence prevention program to educate everyone on consent.
- Implementing by-stander programs so everyone is aware they have a role in preventing sexualized violence.
- Providing a critical analysis of our hypersexualized media and advertisements that objectifies women and men, often to the detriment and safety of women and girls.
- Establishing strong working relationships with all relevant service providers so intervention and prevention services are responsive and appropriate.

What can you do to prevent Sexual Assault?

Thirty years ago a campaign called **NO MEANS NO** was started to get the message out that *if a person said no it means they are not consenting*.

Today we have another campaign on consent called the **ASK CAMPAIGN**. The campaign is intended to raise awareness about sexual consent and alcohol and drug facilitated sexual assault.

Besides talking about consent, the **Ask Campaign** is a way for everyone, especially young people, to discuss this important topic of sexualized violence. Sexualized violence includes a continuum of sexual offences from rape and sexual assault to on-line sexual bullying and pornography.

Talking about consent and sexual assault is a sensitive topic, partly because of the sexual assault myths/ lies and sex role stereotyping that still prevails. These lies protect the offender and blame the victim. For instance; *what she wore or how much she drank was why she was raped*. Added to this is; our ever increasing hypersexualized culture, easy access to pornography (that is getting increasingly more violent towards women), and use of social media for bullying and intimidation. These factors and many more, are contributing to men's sense of entitlement and use of violence and thus, to women and girls' vulnerability to sexual violence.

Service providers are sounding the alarm and being proactive in stopping sexual assault. Encouragingly, today there are many groups of young people doing positive work to stop this rape culture. In our own tri county community we have lots of youth getting involved in educating their peers and wanting to talk about consent and sexualized violence.



Juniper House



Tri County Women's Centre



Parent's Place Yarmouth FRC



Acadia First Nation



Tri County
Women's Health
Coalition

NO MORE SEXUAL ASSAULT!