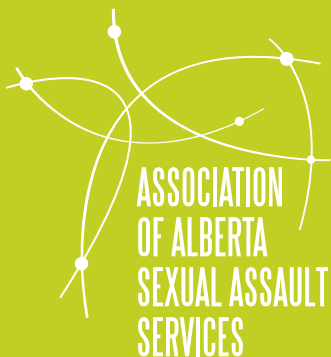
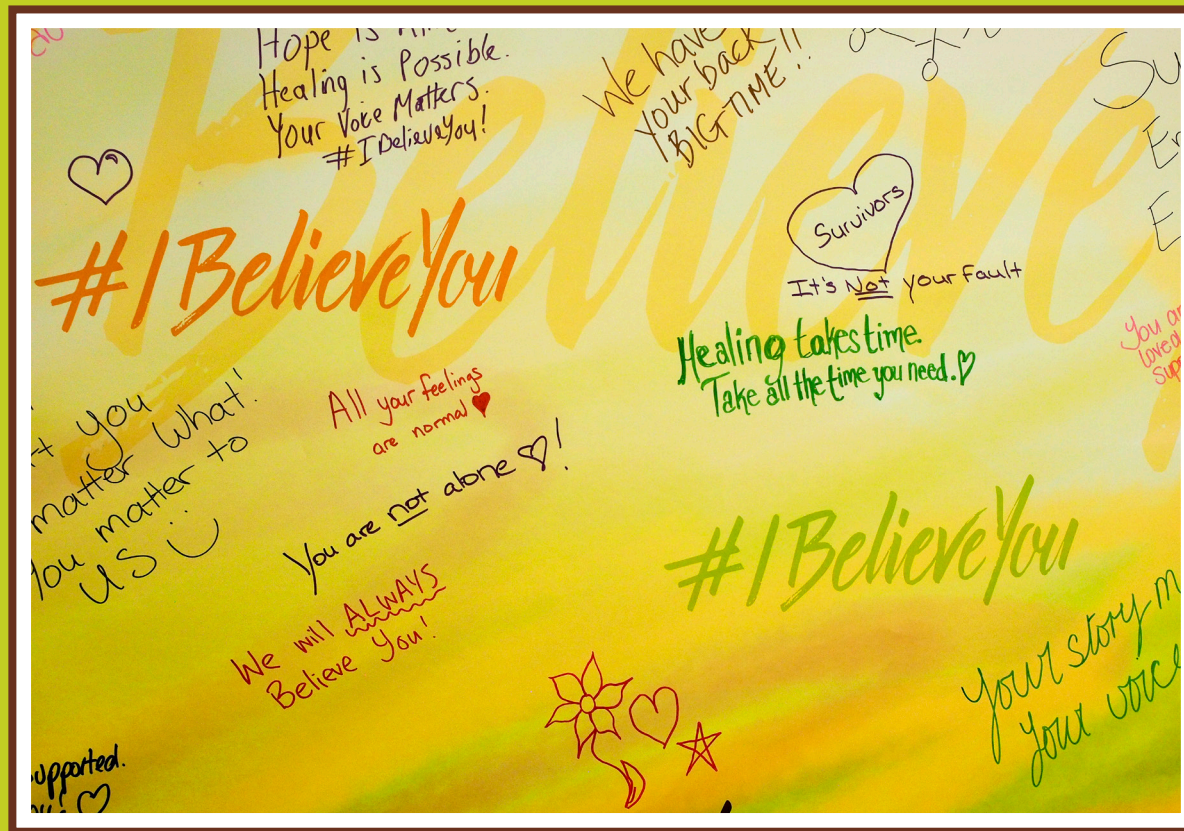
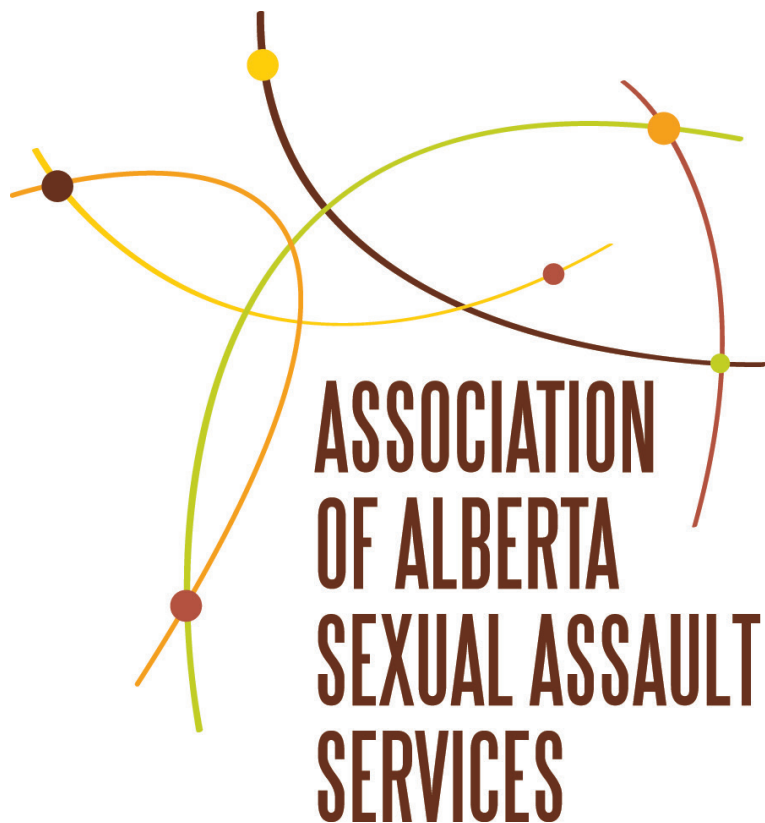


Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services

Annual Report 2017-2018



Working Together for an Alberta Free From Sexual Violence



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mailbox@asas.ca
www.asas.ca

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

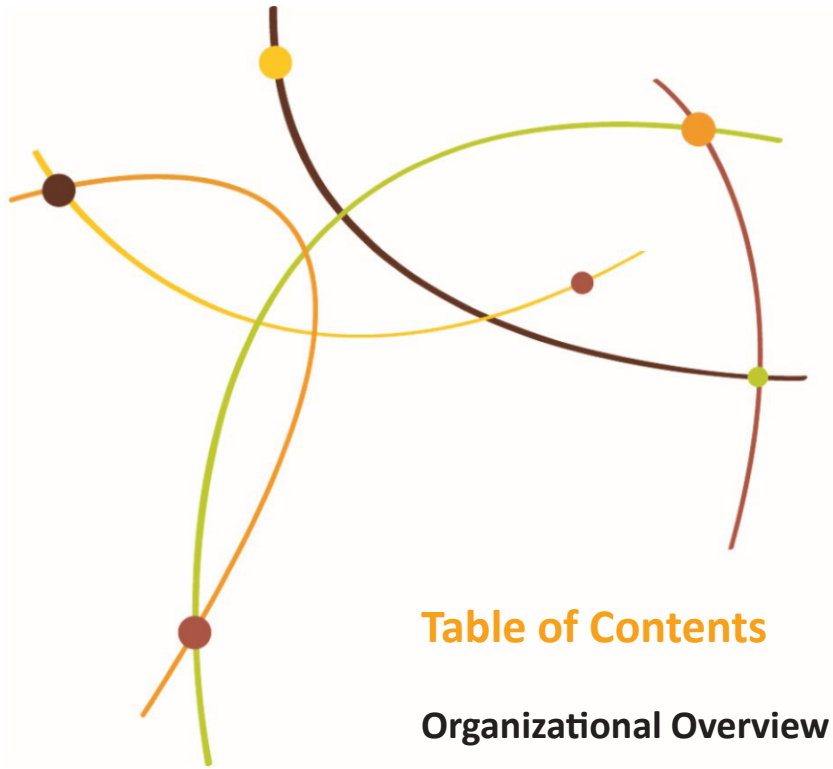


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Organization Overview

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 Community Support, Sexual Assault & Trauma Centre (Grande Prairie)

Support & Intake:
780.539.6692
Crisis Line: 1.888.377.3223
pacecentre.com

Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton (SACE)

24-Hour Support & Info Line: 780.423.4121
Business: 780.423.4102
sace.ca

University of Alberta Sexual Assault Centre

Business: 780.492.9771
ualberta.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
24-Hour Text: 403.986.HELP
Business: 403.340.1124
Web Chat: 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 Healing Centre (Ft. McMurray)

Crisis Line: 780.791.6708
Business: 780.743.4691 Ext. 232
waypointswb.ca

Dragonfly Counselling & Support Centre: Sexual Assault Services (Bonnyville)

Business: 780.812.3174
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.com

Message from the Leadership

This was a historic year for the Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services (AASAS).

In May '17, AASAS announced Alberta's first ever Sexual Violence Action Plan – a blueprint outlining how to address sexual violence in Alberta. September '17 saw the results of the 'I Believe You' campaign continue to soar with over 70% of Albertans saying they would give a positive response to a survivor's disclosure of sexual assault. And if there was ever a watershed moment, it was in October '17 when "Me Too" hit social media boosting Alberta's "I Believe You" campaign reach to over 40 million.

Following "Me Too", Albertans experienced an unprecedented cultural shift. Following decades of silence, many survivors felt safe to come forward and ask for help, compelling our institutions and policy makers to respond. AASAS presented a business case and on March 7, 2018, the Government of Alberta announced an \$8.1 million increase to funding for sexual assault services.

And with the rapidly increasing demand for service and these additional resources, AASAS member agencies hit the ground running. The result? More survivors have access to much needed counselling services to help them heal and more survivors can get information they need in order to consider their options for seeking justice.

And that means healthier and safer communities for all Albertans.

Yes, this was a year we will never forget.

Staff

Deb Tomlinson, Chief Executive Officer
Corinne Ofstie, Strategic Initiatives Coordinator
Katie Robertson, Continuing Education Coordinator
Cheryl Wallach, Communications Specialist
Tiffany Goebel, 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
Rhonda Steinwand, Director
Linda McCracken, Director
Brenda Murdoch, Director
Debra Tomlinson, Chief Executive Officer

Highlights of 2017-2018

#IBelieveYou

The culture of believing continued to grow across Alberta through the third year of the #IBelieveYou campaign. This year, individuals across the province were encouraged to “Add Your Voice” in support of survivors of sexual violence. The message “it’s not your fault” was added to help responders understand another very important message to share with survivors. This was enhanced by the creation of an amazing original song called ‘Not Your Fault’ by local musician Jesse Peters, who was inspired by this campaign.

**#MeToo boosted
this year's
#IBelieveYou social
media reach by
40 million!**

AASAS partnerships with post-secondary institutions remained strong. Fun, new graffiti walls were distributed to 24 post-secondary institutions, and students, faculty and staff penned messages of support for survivors on them. These walls continue to be on display at numerous campuses. The schools also received posters to display and hosted booth days - in partnership with their local sexual assault centres - where the graffiti wall was featured, and stickers and magnets were available along with information about how to keep providing positive support to survivors.

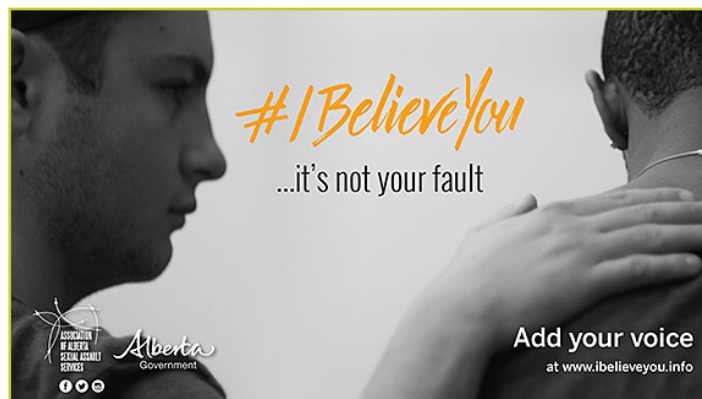
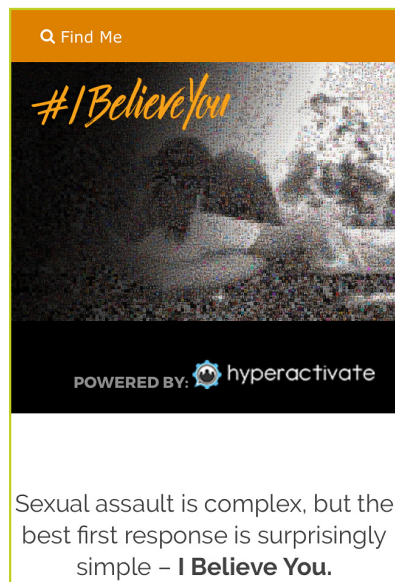
Social media played a major role in the campaign as people added their voices through Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Every message with the hashtag #IBelieveYou was placed into a digital mosaic hosted on the ibelieveyou.info website. By campaign conclusion there were 10,000 unique messages of support for survivors included in the mosaic.



The hashtag #MeToo exploded on social media and had a huge impact on the campaign. It was thrilling to see individuals all over North America hashtagging #IBelieveYou along with #MeToo and posting the creative from our Alberta campaign. It is estimated #MeToo boosted the social reach of #IBelieveYou by 40 million. The scope of this outpouring of public support for survivors of sexual violence is unprecedented.

A new public service announcement was filmed that focused on how believing is something you can say, do and show. The new PSA and poster were created, both featuring a person with a disability. Because people with disabilities are at high risk of sexual violence, it was important to engage with the disability community and AASAS is grateful to the members of that community who provided input on the creative.

Corporate media support and generous sponsorships from Pattison Outdoor, Pattison Broadcast Group, AML and Corus/Shaw was outstanding and resulted in #IBelieveYou billboards not just in Edmonton and Calgary, but in rural communities throughout the province. Transit advertising and PSAs that were aired on television and radio spread the message of believing far and wide.



#IBelieveYou continues to make a difference. Before the campaign, Leger Research polled 1000 Albertans and asked 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 72% after this year's campaign. Respondents who would use the specific phrase "I believe you" increased from 1% pre-campaign to 21% this year. And once again, reports of sexual assault to police in Calgary increased this year - this time by 32%.



First Responder to Sexual Assault and Abuse Training™

When people who have experienced sexual violence receive positive social support, they're more likely to seek help and consider their options for seeking justice. First Responder to Sexual Assault and Abuse Training™ was created to educate individuals to assess, screen and respond effectively to disclosures of sexual assault and abuse.

The demand for this training continues to grow across the province. This year, AASAS trained 499 professionals during 31 First Responder Trainings in the communities of: Calgary, Lethbridge, Edmonton, Grande Prairie, Fort McMurray, Brooks, Lac La Biche, Oyen and Bonnyville.

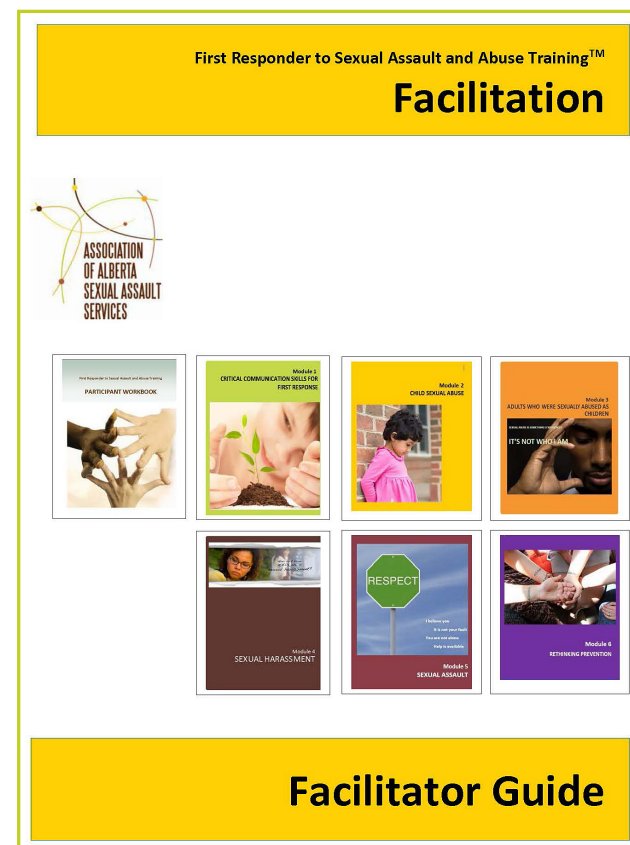
AASAS collaborated and coordinated with 21 different facilitators from six different sexual assault centres and two post-secondary institutions to deliver the trainings.

"I genuinely cannot think of anything that was not helpful. Even what I had already learned previously was worth revisiting!"

After a successful pilot where AASAS licensed and certified trainers at two Alberta post-secondaries, the program was expanded and two train-the-facilitator sessions were scheduled for 2018 with a focus on other post secondary institutions. This will help continue to build capacity and expand program reach.

AASAS achieved a milestone after applying for and receiving Alberta College of Social Workers (ACE) accreditation of the First Responder to Sexual Assault and Abuse Training. Registered social workers will now receive continuing education credits for successfully completing the course.

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



Hope and Healing: Sexual Assault Counselling in Alberta

The number of new clients who received sexual assault counselling increased by 25%.

Each of the 12 sexual assault serving agencies in Alberta offered specialized sexual assault counselling to individuals of all gender identities and ages thanks to continued funding from Alberta Health and Community and Social Services.

Despite having resources stretched to the limit, agencies were able to increase counselling services. This year, Alberta's sexual assault services supported 4365 new clients – a 25% increase in the number of new clients served as compared to last year. And AASAS member agencies provided 28,784 counselling sessions – a 5% increase in the number of counselling sessions provided as compared to last year.

Sixty-nine percent of individuals served were adults with the remaining being children ages 17 and under. While the majority of counselling clients were women; 14% were men and 1% identified as transgender. Outcome data collected showed that 87% of adult clients and 73% of child clients served during this period experienced a reduction in trauma symptoms.

Learning to Counsel Survivors Healing from Trauma of Sexualized Violence

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. It is designed for counselors, therapists, and other mental health practitioners who are new to working with survivors of sexual violence, or who may be already working with survivors and would like to more deeply inform their counselling practice.

This year, AASAS offered two rounds of the course, educating a total of 41 counselling professionals.

To register for the next available online training, visit www.aasas.ca.

"One of the best courses I have ever taken. The instructors were articulate and their experience was evident."

Sexual Violence Action Plan

In May 2017, AASAS launched the Alberta Sexual Violence Action Plan. The plan was designed to act as a blueprint for multi-disciplinary service providers and policy makers to help address the problem of sexual violence in Alberta.

This plan is a first for Alberta and the first of its kind in Western Canada. It is the only one in Canada developed and led by the community of front-line service providers - the network of sexual assault centres across Alberta.

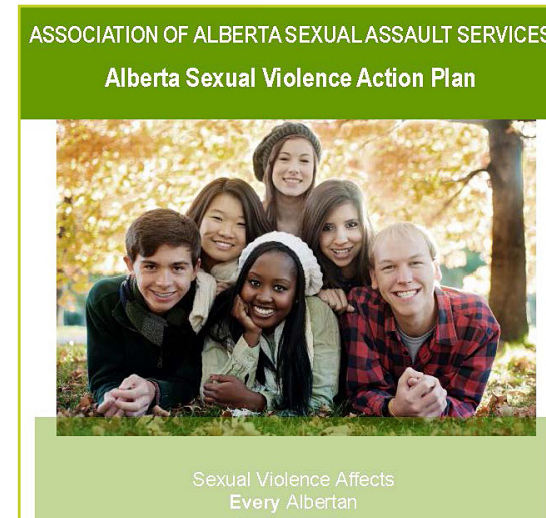
Keeping our vision of an Alberta free from sexual abuse and sexual assault, AASAS established the following four strategic priorities for the plan:

- Strong leadership and accountability
- Effective prevention strategies
- Effective outreach strategies
- Enhanced intervention

AASAS Business Case

The AASAS network presented a business case to the Government of Alberta to increase current funding to six critical areas – crisis services, counselling, service coordination, outreach, education, and police and court support (in order to support an effective coordinated response to sexual violence as well as to meet the increased demand in all service areas across the province.) In addition, funding was requested to support service development in seven underserved areas of the province.

In March, in response to the AASAS Business Case, the Government of Alberta announced an \$8.1 million dollar increase to funding for sexual assault services. Funding was provided through the Ministry of Community and Social Services but flowed jointly from the Ministries of Health; Justice and Solicitor General; Status of Women; as well as Community and Social Services. Funding was allocated to sexual assault centres to address counseling waitlists and respond to the increase in new counseling clients. In addition, funding was provided for specialized police and court support positions for 11 of the 12 sexual assault centres in Alberta. Two positions, a regional coordinator and a systems navigator were also allocated to seven under-served regions of the province.



2017 Inspiration Award

AASAS's Sexual Violence Action Plan Committee received an Inspiration Award from the Ministry of Community and Social Services in recognition of their extensive work developing Alberta's first Sexual Violence Action Plan.

The Committee contracted with researchers to conduct an analysis of sexual violence action plans from around the world. Over a four-year period, the committee consulted extensively with representatives from several government Ministries including Human Services, Health, and Justice and Solicitor General, as well as with the AASAS Senior Leadership Committee, AASAS Board of Directors, AASAS Staff and key stakeholders.



Collaborative Justice Response

A three-year Status of Women Canada grant has allowed AASAS to further explore ways in which to improve and enhance the criminal justice response to adult survivors of sexual assault in Alberta.

A multi-disciplinary Criminal Justice Sexual Assault Committee was struck and a literature review to identify best practices was completed. A Stakeholder Survey was developed and the results were collated and analyzed into a needs assessment report. From this needs assessment, the advisory committee will identify recommendations and priority actions for improving and enhancing the criminal justice response to adult survivors of sexual assault.

Allying with Indigenous Peoples: Decolonizing Workshop

In order to increase access to sexual assault services for Indigenous peoples, it is important that AASAS and its members continue to seek resources and support to develop and implement decolonizing practices. In May 2017, Charlene Hellson of the Siksika Nation presented a Monologue titled "Unpacking the Backpack." to AASAS senior leadership.

"Unpacking the Backpack" is an educational and experiential monologue that speaks to the heart and creates a new understanding of the historical and ongoing impact of colonization upon Indigenous people in Canada today.



East Region 7 - Community Action Plan

AASAS continued to support the development of resources and programming in the communities of East Region 7 including: Lac La Biche; Cold Lake; Bonnyville; St. Paul; and Elk Point in partnership with member agency, Dragonfly Counselling and Support Centre.

Community members along with multi-disciplinary service providers in five rural municipalities, four Metis settlements and six First Nations communities were engaged to inform the development and implementation of a three year community action plan with the following objectives:

- To promote the physical and mental health and well-being of persons impacted by sexual violence;
- To increase community capacity to respond to sexual violence by implementing and promoting best practices;
- To foster effective community collaboration among community stakeholders involved in the response to sexual violence.

Thank You



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 the Government's leadership and for recognizing the need to meet the growing demand for specialized sexual assault services for survivors with an unprecedented increase in funding.



**Status of Women
Canada**

**Condition féminine
Canada**

The funding AASAS received from Status of Women Canada supports a three-year project working to improve and enhance the criminal justice response to adult survivors of sexual assault in the province of Alberta.

AASAS is very appreciative of the support of Status of Women Canada on this very important initiative.

**Audited financial statements for the year (April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018) are available
by request from the office of the Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services.
mailbox@aasas.ca**

