

New Executive Director Message



I would like to thank all of the team members at Victoria Sexual Assault Centre who supported me into the role of Executive Director. Thank you to the survivors and community members who have taught me so much about resilience and the importance of connection; and to the staff and donors who support and contribute to our work of ending sexualized violence.

I want to share with you, our donors and supporters, a little bit about myself, my approach to leadership and why I feel so honoured to work closely with the programs and people who support survivors, their families and community.

I am an uninvited visitor on the territories of the *ləkwəŋən* Peoples, now known as the Songhees and Esquimalt nations, and the WSÁNEĆ people on whose land I have worked and lived for the last 10 years. Originally from Nova Scotia, I gained a Masters Degree in Sociology from Dalhousie University, located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq. I have spent the last 15 years in management and leadership roles over a variety of sectors including customer service, sexual health, human resources and anti-violence.

As a woman with mixed ancestry, I identify my heritage as Black Nova Scotian, Acadian settler and honour distant roots in the Mi'kmaq communities of Nova Scotia. On all sides, my heritage is generations deep on the East Coast, and I bring with me the principles of loyalty, steadfastness, and approachability that I learned growing up as a Maritimer.

My style of leadership is rooted in collaboration; I seek to uplift the voices of people around me and strive to highlight the knowledge and experience of voices who are most often silent or silenced. I see myself as a catalyst and amplifier for the staff, survivors, and community members who trust me with their feedback, concerns, and successes. I value and foster partnership with our donors and community partners and recognize these relationships as vital to supporting survivors and our community. It is my job to encourage and listen to feedback, maintain the financial health of the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre, and enact strategic priorities that reflect our organizations mandate, capacity, and relationships in community.

I look forward to supporting Victoria Sexual Assault Centre as we move forward as an organization; as we strive to better support and understand the needs of survivors and our community, and to uphold our mission of ending sexualized violence through healing, education, and prevention.

Thank you,
Samantha Loppie

Announcement: New Executive Director

The Victoria Sexual Assault Centre (VSAC) Board of Directors is pleased to announce that Samantha Loppie has been hired as its new Executive Director. Loppie replaces Elijah Zimmerman, who led the Centre from 2020 to January 2023. Loppie is well-positioned to launch into this new role, having served as Interim Executive Director between January and May 2023 and previously as Direct Client Services Manager at VSAC. Loppie brings both a deep knowledge of VSAC and fresh leadership to the organization.

Read the full announcement from the board: www.vvac.ca/2023/06/

Charitable Status Reinstated

We wish to update you on the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre's charitable status. We are happy to report that we received confirmation from the Canadian Revenue Agency on July 26, 2023 that we have been re-registered as a charity.

Our re-registration has been backdated to October 29, 2022, which is the date we lost charitable status due to an administrative error. This means we can resume providing charitable donation receipts.

We deeply appreciate the support of the community as we navigated the process of reinstatement and your continued confidence in our mission.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Samantha Loppie, Executive Director, at samanthal@vsac.ca or 250-383-5545 ext. 108.

Territory Acknowledgement

We acknowledge and respect the lək'wəŋən Peoples, on whose traditional territory the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt, and WSÁNEĆ Peoples, whose relationships with the land continue today.

Why we acknowledge the territory: Acknowledging the territory calls our attention to the ongoing colonization of Indigenous lands. These lands were taken through violence and non-consent, and impacts of colonization continue to express themselves through disproportionate rates of gender-based violence against Indigenous people. Recognizing Indigenous sovereignty and the lands we are on is part of the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre's commitment to reconciliation and taking leadership from Indigenous community in our work of healing, education, and prevention.

NEW: Drop-in Groups

We have started to offer two new groups at VSAC. Both offerings are drop-in style and all clients past and present are welcome to attend.

If you are not a VSAC client and are a survivor of sexualized violence and would like to attend, please be in touch with Kathryn Saunders, our Counselling Supervisor to arrange a short intake (kathryns@vsac.ca). If you're new to VSAC and are curious about our services this is a good place to start.

Mindfulness With Metta

Mindfulness With Metta is an online weekly drop-in led by Metta, one of our counsellors. The group is an easy to access 30-minute session, where survivors have the opportunity to practice grounding skills through a guided mindfulness practice. There is no check-in or chatting in the group and microphones and cameras are off. This creates space for participants to simply engage in a brief and gentle mindfulness practice.



Comfort & Tea Drop-In Group

The Comfort & Tea group is the newest addition to VSAC's groups. This weekly drop-in is a welcoming space for survivors to share tea, snacks, crafts and art, to chat informally, and to receive support. Participants are encouraged to bring their own knitting/crochet, or portable projects. We also provide crafting materials, snacks (including gluten free), and of course, tea. The group is facilitated by VSAC counselling staff.



For more information about VSAC's groups visit: <https://www.vsa.ca/group-counselling/>

This publication was generously discounted by 

Thank You To Our Funders

Canadian Women's Foundation – Capacity Building

City of Victoria – Clinic

Civil Forfeiture Office, Province of BC – Access line/SART

District of Oak Bay – Access line/SART

Community Gaming Grants Program, Province of BC– Clinic, youth counsellor, prevention education

Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General – Stopping the Violence counselling and Victim Services

Province of BC – Prevention education: SHIFT

Public Health Agency of Canada – Indigenous Community Response Network, Technology upgrades

Rotary Club of Victoria-Harbourside – Clinic

Township of Esquimalt – Clinic

Township of View Royal – Access line/SART

Women and Gender Equality Canada – Capacity building, Indigenous Community Response Network

Zonta Club of Victoria – Clinic

Youth Council Zine Launch Party

On June 22nd, Project Respect, the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre's prevention department, hosted the Project Respect Youth Council's Zine Launch Party.

"I Can Relate" is a zine created by Youth Council's group of 6 youth ages 15-20 to share their experiences about the intersections between queer/Trans identities and gender-based violence. The Zine commemorates all they have gained from being a part of this group and the messages that they want to send out to the community.

At the event the Youth Council presented this intimate piece of art to youth, community members, and VSAC staff and provided performances and readings from the Zine.



Scan the QR code above to view the Zine

Triathlon Of Compassion

Sunday, June 25th marked the 30th annual Triathlon of Compassion. Nearly 200 people of all ages swam, biked, and ran in support of survivors. The event raised \$11,597 for VSAC's services!

Thank you to the racers, fundraisers, donors, and Human Powered Racing, our event partners, for a successful event!

