



Business line: 902-422-4240
Fax line: 902-422-4628
SANE business line: 902-422-6503
SANE fax line: 902-422-4962
SANE response line: 902-425-0122
www.avaloncentre.ca
info@avaloncentre.ca
sanecoordinator@avaloncentre.ca

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Avalon seeks commitment from candidates to address sexualized violence

Halifax – In the run-up to the province’s May 30 election, Avalon Sexual Assault Centre (Avalon) is calling on candidates to continue addressing sexualized violence in Nova Scotia.

“We want to make sure that whoever is elected is committed to ensuring that victims of sexualized violence have the support and help they need province wide,” says Jackie Stevens, executive director of Avalon.

Sexual assault levels in Nova Scotia are significantly higher than the national average. Additionally, high-profile cases in the news have contributed to a sharp increase in demand for Avalon’s services, and without adequate resources Avalon is unable to fulfill its mandate of not only offering trauma-informed therapeutic counselling and the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner program, but also community education, and legal and professional training. Currently there is a minimum six-month wait list for new clients seeking counselling support at Avalon, and requests for services overall exceed capacity. To respond, Avalon is enlisting the help of all citizens concerned about sexualized violence.

“Sexualized violence impacts everyone in our province: not only victims but their friends, families, co-workers and communities, too,” says Stevens. “We all need to stand together.”

The community has identified sexualized violence as an important issue. Avalon encourages people to consider asking their local candidates to articulate their plans. A suggested list of questions is available on Avalon’s [website](#). Included with this press release is an additional list of more detailed questions. Avalon encourages people to ask the part candidates in their ridings whether their party will commit to adequately funding the province’s three existing sexual assault centres (including Avalon) so these centres can provide support and counselling services to survivors in a trauma-informed way, as well as supporting the implementation and further development of new sexual assault services across the province.

“We can and must make this an election issue, but we all need to raise our voices,” says Stevens.

Avalon is proud to work with and advocate for victims/survivors of sexualized violence. Avalon would like to continue doing its important work within the framework of a clearly mandated commitment from a government that ensures its long-term sustainability.

-30-

Avalon Sexual Assault Centre is a non-profit feminist organization working to eliminate sexual assault/abuse, and to change the current socio-political culture that fosters sexism, social injustice and other forms of oppression.

Contact:

Jackie Stevens, Executive Director
Avalon Sexual Assault Centre, Halifax, NS
executivedirector@avaloncentre.ca



Business line: 902-422-4240
Fax line: 902-422-4628
SANE business line: 902-422-6503
SANE fax line: 902-422-4962
SANE response line: 902-425-0122
www.avaloncentre.ca
info@avaloncentre.ca
sanecoordinator@avaloncentre.ca

Ask a candidate

General questions

1. How does your party intend to address the sexualized violence crisis in Nova Scotia?
2. Sustainability is a pressing issues for organizations like the Avalon Sexual Assault Centre in Halifax. If elected, what steps would your party take to ensure that centres like Avalon are able to maintain a high standard of service to those who need it?

Liberal candidate

1. The N.S. Sexual Violence Strategy had a positive impact on service provision across the province. This initiative along with a number of recent high profile sexual assault cases has created a greater demand in the community for services like those offered at Avalon Sexual Assault Centre resulting in long wait lists and inadequate staffing. If elected, how would the Liberal party ensure that victims continue to receive the services and advocacy they need to heal?
2. The Liberal party rehired Kyle Harris as director of communications. Harris voluntarily stepped down from the position on May 9. Two years before he was rehired, Harris was fired for lying about an domestic assault charge. How can we be sure the Liberals will take a strong stance on issues such as domestic violence and sexualized violence when they knowingly rehired an individual charged with assaulting a woman?
3. The Liberal party has only 12 female candidates out of total of 51 and has not committed to ensuring a 50 per cent female cabinet. How does the party intend to address women's health and women's issues when they do not have adequate representation?

Progressive Conservative candidate

1. The N.S. Sexual Violence Strategy had a positive impact on service provision across the province. This initiative along with a number of recent high profile sexual assault cases has created a greater demand in the community for services like those offered at Avalon Sexual Assault Centre resulting in long wait lists and inadequate staffing. If elected, how would the PC party ensure that victims continue to receive the services and advocacy they need to heal?
2. In the PC platform, the party commits to requiring post-secondary institutions to develop comprehensive sexual violence policies, and provincial court judges to complete comprehensive and ongoing education in sexual assault law. The party also states they will pass the Dignity for Victims of Sexual Violence Act and keep communities safer by restoring the Liberal cut to the Boots on the Street Program. If elected, how much money is the party committing to addressing sexualized violence in Nova Scotia?
3. The PC party has only 16 female candidates out of a total of 51 and has not committed to ensuring a 50 per cent female cabinet. How does the party intend to address women's health and women's issues when they do not have adequate representation?



Business line: 902-422-4240
Fax line: 902-422-4628
SANE business line: 902-422-6503
SANE fax line: 902-422-4962
SANE response line: 902-425-0122
www.avaloncentre.ca
info@avaloncentre.ca
sanecoordinator@avaloncentre.ca

New Democratic Party candidate

1. The N.S. Sexual Violence Strategy had a positive impact on service provision across the province. This initiative along with a number of recent high profile sexual assault cases has created a greater demand in the community for services like those offered at Avalon Sexual Assault Centre resulting in long wait lists and inadequate staffing. If elected, how would the NDP ensure that victims continue to receive the services and advocacy they need to heal?
2. In their platform, the NDP state they will renew the Sexual Violence Strategy and allocate \$500,000 in additional funding to sexual assault service providers with multi-year funding agreements for sexual assault centres and other community organizations providing sexual assault services. The NDP also allocated \$500,000 in additional funding to Nova Scotia's women's centres and \$1 million to immediately double the number of sexual assault therapists available across the province. Upon renewal of the Sexual Violence Strategy what changes, if any, will be made?
3. Does the NDP commit to ensuring equal male/female representation? In what other ways does the party intend to address women's health and women's issues?

Green Party candidate

1. The N.S. Sexual Violence Strategy had a positive impact on service provision across the province. This initiative along with a number of recent high profile sexual assault cases has created a greater demand in the community for services like those offered at Avalon Sexual Assault Centre resulting in long wait lists and inadequate staffing. If elected, how would the Green party ensure that victims continue to receive the services and advocacy they need to heal?
2. Does the Green party commit to ensuring equal male/female representation? In what other ways does the party intend to address women's health and women's issues?
3. In the event the Green party is elected, would more core funding for sexual assault services and centres be provided and how much money is the party committing to addressing sexualized violence in Nova Scotia?