



AVALON SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE

Report to the Community

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2018

As part of strategic planning to make Avalon a workplace of excellence, staff did a re-imagining activity to enhance the way we work together, identify what we need to address Vicarious Trauma and improve self care, strengthen workplace culture, and re-structure programs, services, and current practises in order to meet ongoing and emerging needs. Pictured is a portion of the 10'x3' vision board that resulted.

Avalon's Vision

We aspire to a world in which individuals are empowered and mobilized to share responsibility in creating communities free from sexualized violence and abuse. We provide a leadership role in raising awareness, supporting those who have experienced sexualized violence, holding sexual perpetrators accountable, and influencing social and systemic change.

PHOTOS

"People", pg 22: *Johansson's Photography*

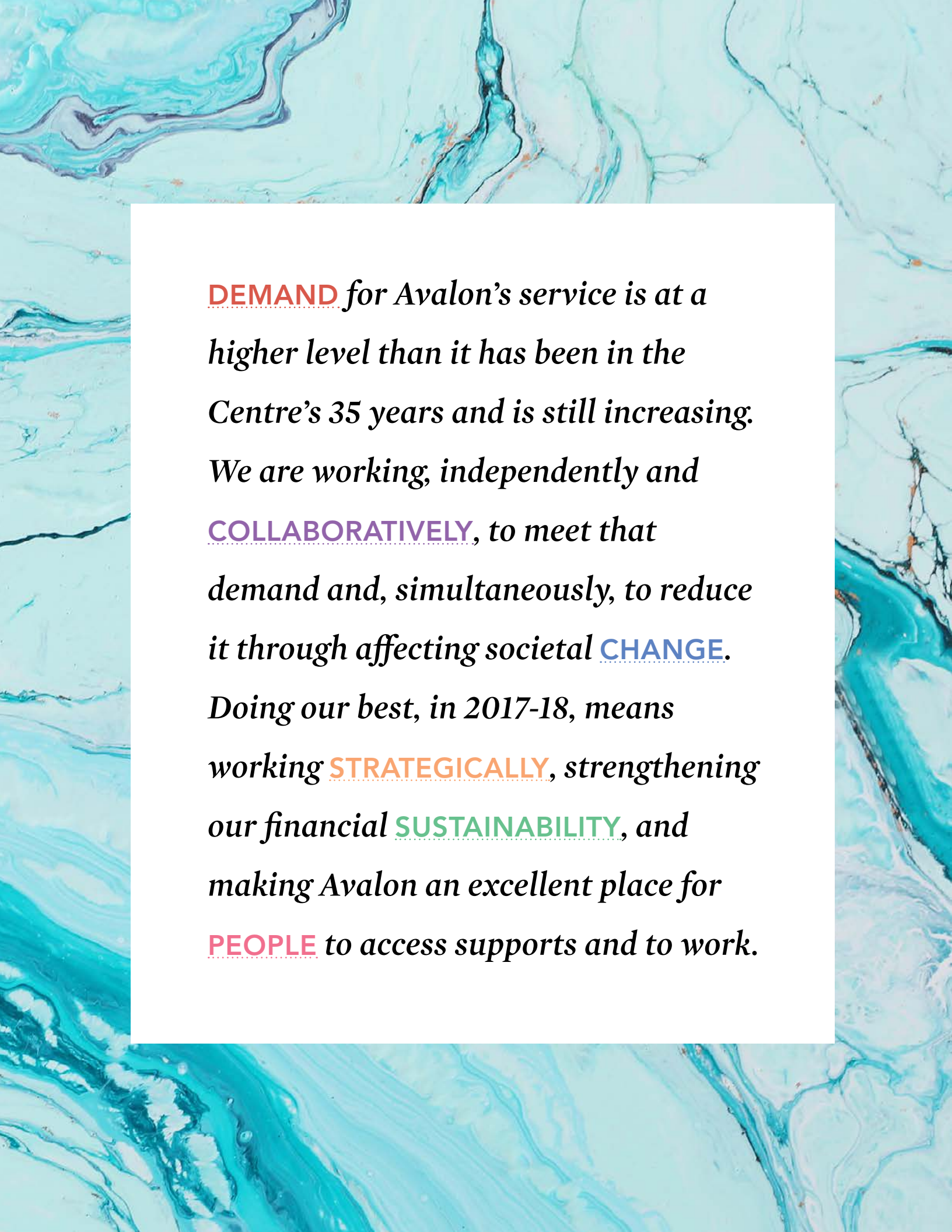
"Demand", pg 4; "Change" pg 8; "Strategic", pg 15; "Sustainable", pg 19: *Steph Young, stephanieyoungart.ca*

Other photos: unsplash.com

DESIGN & PRINT

Graphic design: *Forest Friend Creative Projects, forestfriend.ca*

Printing: *HALCRAFT, halcraftprinters.com*



DEMAND for Avalon's service is at a higher level than it has been in the Centre's 35 years and is still increasing. We are working, independently and **COLLABORATIVELY**, to meet that demand and, simultaneously, to reduce it through affecting societal **CHANGE**. Doing our best, in 2017-18, means working **STRATEGICALLY**, strengthening our financial **SUSTAINABILITY**, and making Avalon an excellent place for **PEOPLE** to access supports and to work.



DEMAND

“Demand for Avalon’s leadership, services, programs and feminist analysis is at a higher level than it has been in the Centre’s 35 years and is still increasing.”

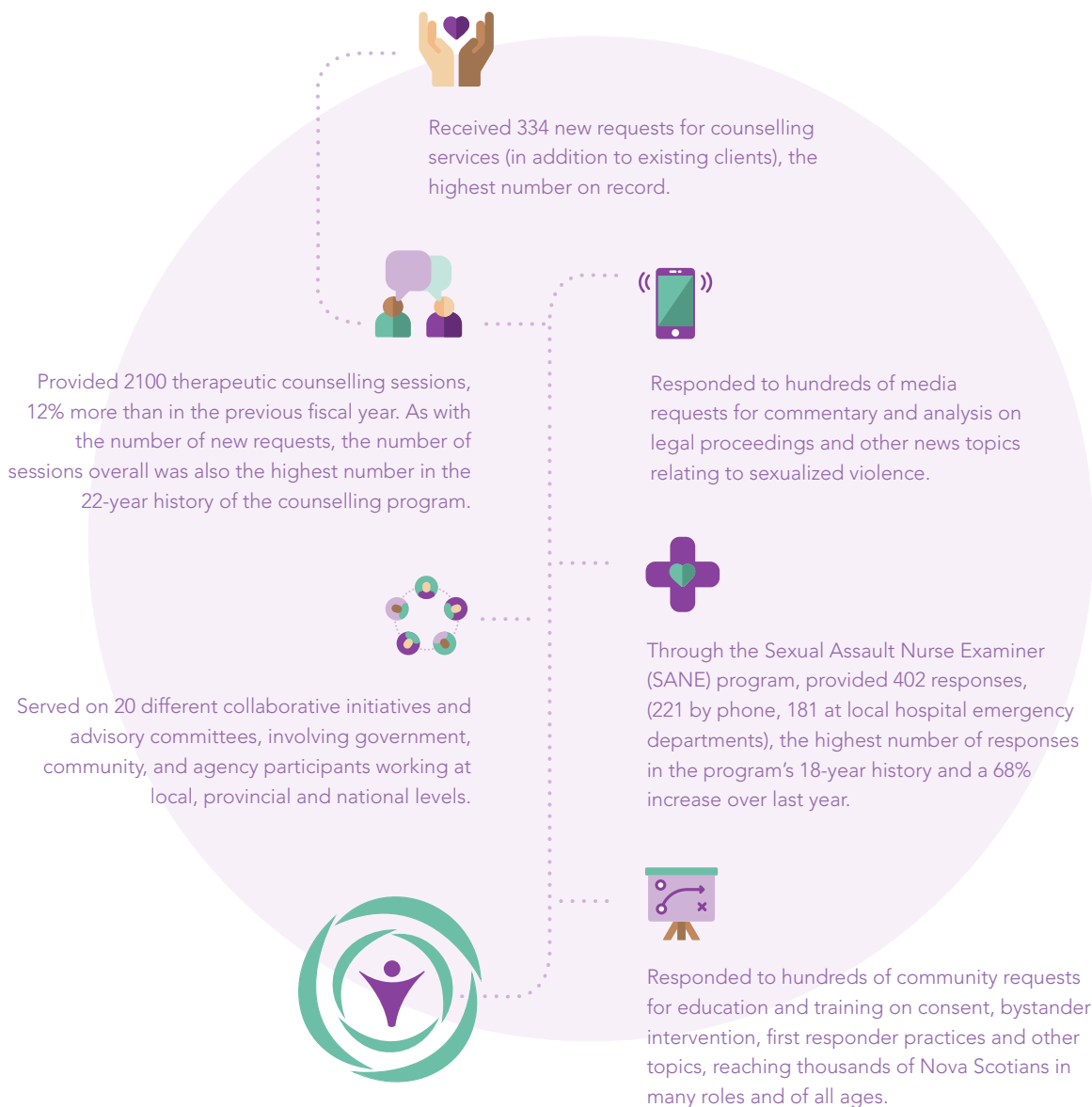
This is a multi-year trend in all sexual assault centres, correlating with high profile revelations of sexualized violence, in tandem with widespread use of topical tags in social media, such as **#metoo**, **#timesup**, and **#nomore**. Historically, sexualized violence and abuse was not reported for reasons including lack of systemic and societal support. However, this is now more often disclosed, and services sought as a result of more public support for survivors. More individuals are seeking immediate medical treatment, and seeking counselling for recent sexual abuse. More community and societal organizations and institutions are turning to sexualized violence experts such as Avalon for education, consultation, analysis, advocacy, and participation in collaborative initiatives.

“It’s not just that demand continues to grow for all of the programs and services, it’s that there is a different perspective on the demand now. People are saying ‘I want justice, I want repair, I want action taken around this.’”

JACKIE STEVENS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



During 2017-18, Avalon...



Avalon’s work in community education, advocacy, and public awareness is aimed at reducing the incidence of sexualized violence, and increasing justice and access to justice in the legal system. The volume of work in these areas in 2017/18 was, as in our other programs and services, unprecedented (see ‘Change’.. pg.8).

And, as in our other areas of activity, our strategic approach to the work in 2017/18—the first year of our three-year plan—is already pointing the way to new and better ways of serving our community and partnering with supporters. (See ‘Strategic’.. pg.15.)

MESSAGE

from the Board Co-Chairs and Executive Director

Dear Friends of Avalon,

After 35 years as the only sexual assault centre in the Halifax region, we continue to provide confidential and non-judgemental services and support to victims/survivors of sexualized violence. By continuing to consult with clients, community partners and members of the general public, we have evolved our services and best practises to continue to meet needs. We remain committed to addressing sexual assault needs in the Halifax region and it is this commitment that has led us to this moment: at the end of fiscal year 2016/17, Avalon launched a three-year strategic plan to enhance our stability, sustainability and growth. While continued and new financial supports have enhanced stability and short-term sustainability, we still face challenges in achieving long-term financial and organizational sustainability and growth. We have been able to improve program and service delivery, but we continue to experience higher than average increases in requests for all of our programs and services, and this stretches our capacity and resources. We continue to work with funding partners to address this.

The increased awareness of the prevalence and severity of sexualized violence and abuse has created a cultural shift that makes survivors feel more supported and validated, and has empowered more people to speak out, access services, and demand accountability, justice, and action. This has been an impetus for Avalon Centre to seek external input and challenge ourselves and our community partners on what needs to be done to achieve intersectional systemic and social change that is anti-oppressive and inclusive. We are also looking internally at what we need to do as an organization to enhance staff retention and professional development, and to continue to become more inclusive and a safer space.

As we move into a new fiscal year, we are assessing how we can best continue to serve and support our community and clients, and remain strong and effective models, leaders, and partners. We continue to explore innovative, responsible and strategic ways to build on our strengths and specializations to do what we do more effectively.



We extend gratitude and appreciation to board members, staff, on call SANEs, students and volunteers; our funding and community partners; clients and other survivors and community members; as well as our Friends of Avalon. You shape and influence our work, and we value your shared advocacy, leadership, and ally-ship. Avalon Centre commends survivors, community members, and other social justice activists who this year demonstrated courage, inspiration, and bravery to support empowerment and intersectionality, end silence and compliance, to engage and mobilize, and to demand accountability from perpetrators of sexualized violence/abuse, other forms of oppression, and systemic failure. We stand with you, and with those who still remain silent. We believe you; we work for change with you.

KATIE MALLAM AND KERRY COPELAND

Co-Chairs, Board of Directors

JACKIE STEVENS

Executive Director



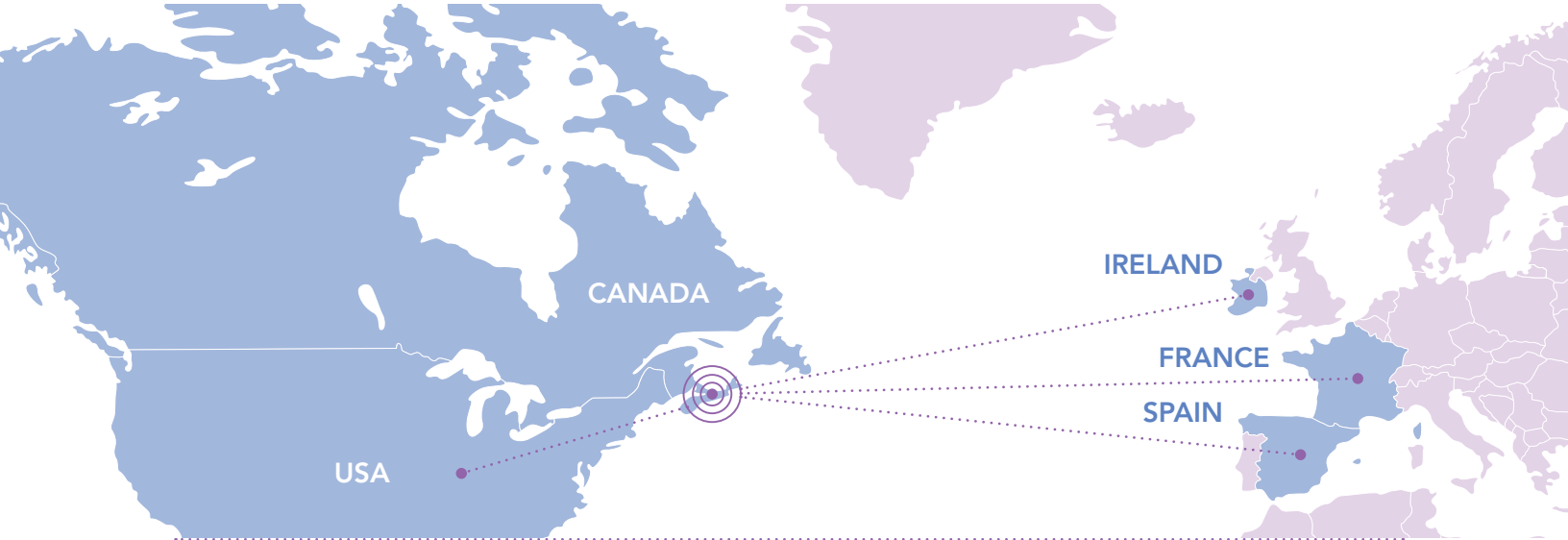
CHANGE

“... working to reduce demand through effecting societal *change*...”

Sexualized violence — from sexual assault to street harassment — is a symptom of how society views women and trans people. Avalon is committed to challenging these root causes of sexual assault through education, public awareness and community mobilization. Here are some of the types of campaigns and initiatives we undertook during 2017-2018 towards this strategic priority:

- along with the Women’s Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF), Avalon applied for and was granted intervenor status in R v Al-Rawi - an appeal of the acquittal of a taxi driver charged with sexually

assaulting a passenger – and went on to complete that intervention later in the year. Judge Gregory Lenehan had acquitted the driver, citing a failure to prove the passenger’s lack of consent. The passenger had no recollection of the events due to her level of intoxication and therefore could offer no direct evidence. At the Crown’s appeal of the acquittal, LEAF and Avalon made submissions on how the courts should evaluate consent when a complainant has no memory of the events due to her intoxication. The Nova Scotia Court of Appeal overturned the acquittal and ordered a new trial.



International reach of the “I Don’t Owe You” Campaign

Our “Doesn’t Mean I Owe You” campaign is a public awareness campaign that focuses on consent and bystander intervention. We have identified drinking establishments as a good location for us to communicate these messages about consent, given what we know about the relationship between alcohol and

assault. This viral campaign has been adopted in jurisdictions across Canada as well as five other countries, was included in an e-book on sexual assault prevention, has been translated into three languages, and was included in the Cannes Film Festival Act Responsible program.

“At the end of the workshop, we each made an agreement to do something to prevent sexual violence and support people who have experienced it.”

YOUTH WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT

- conducted 227 events attended by 6789 people on topics including sexual assault definitions and laws, rape culture, consent, bystander intervention, sexual harassment policy, and safe space, among others. Avalon presented training and information sessions in schools, to festivals like the Halifax Pop Explosion and Halifax Pride,

for cultural organizations like the Khyber Centre for the Arts, Carbon Arc Cinema and the Atlantic Filmmakers Cooperative, and for community organizations like the YWCA, Lea Place, and the Immigrant Settlement Association of Nova Scotia, among others.

- introduced a new series of posters to the I Don’t Owe You campaign. The campaign aims to increase understanding about consent and issues around entitlement. The posters depict scenarios identified in collaboration with youth, and are installed in schools, bars, bus stops, waiting rooms and other public social settings. Some of the scenarios include being in a relationship, sexting, and giving then withdrawing consent to sex, all with the tagline “doesn’t mean I owe you”. The series has been adopted in jurisdictions across Canada as well as five

other countries, was included in an e-book on sexual assault prevention, has been translated into three languages, and was included in the Cannes Film Festival Act Reponsible program.

- responded to hundreds of media requests throughout the year on topics ranging from victim-blaming to consent to trauma-informed first responder practices. As incidents relating to sexualized violence continued to make headlines, Avalon was called upon by media from across the country to provide commentary and analysis, ultimately improving society's understanding of factors contributing to the issues.

- continued to increase intersectionality and accessibility of resources, for example new resources for queer and trans survivors

These are just a few examples...as with other Avalon programs and services, the demand (See, 'Demand', p.g.4) for Avalon's voice, educational expertise and resources was higher in 2017-18 than ever before. As we work through our three-year plan towards greater stability, sustainability, and growth, we are re-imagining how we can have the greatest impact possible with the resources available, as well as working to secure additional resources, and working collaboratively in communities to build capacity outside of Avalon. (See, 'Strategic', p.g.15).

WHO WE ARE

Board of Directors

Board of Directors Co-Chairs

KATIE MALLAM
KERRY COPELAND

Governance & Nominations

LEE-ANN CONROD, CHAIR
HEATHER MACLEAN
KERRY COPELAND
SUMAN JHA

Finance Committee

SHARON MERWIN, TREASURER

HR/Personnel Committee

SHAKIRA WEATHERDON, CHAIR
ALEXANDRA CONNOR

Communications Committee

NICOLE DORIA, CHAIR
ALISON DELORY
CAROLE RANKIN
KATIE MALLAM
ROBIN LEVY

Avalon Centre wishes to thank the following members of the Board of Directors, staff, SANE program, and student placements who left during 2017/18. Your support and commitment are greatly appreciated.

SANE/STAFF/STUDENT PLACEMENTS

Paula Nickerson, Melissa Ashton, Cora Webber, Cindy Knapton, Emily Robinson, Linda Bent, Alexa MacLeod, Frank Heimpel, Susan Wilson (seconded to NSHA Provincial SANE program)

BOARD *Alex Connor, Heather MacLean, Suman Jha, Shakira Weatherdon, Robin Levy, Alison DeLory, Kerry Copeland, Katie Mallam*



▲ Some members of Avalon's office staff

Some of Avalon's Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners ▼



TREASURER'S REPORT

The Avalon and SANE financials for the fiscal year have been overwhelmingly positive as the organization continues to grow and develop. Income recognized in the current year was approximately \$1.1 million (2017: \$672,000) which included several sources of both new and ongoing funding. Most notable increases were 431,761 from the Province of Nova Scotia: Nova Scotia Health Authority, a second year of funding from the Province of Nova Scotia: Community Support Network Grant and \$98,624.00 from donations and fundraising efforts from private and corporate donors. While some of the new funding sources were short term or project funding, we also received the confirmation of multi-year and year-to-year funding. All of these sources contribute to the ongoing sustainability of Avalon Centre.

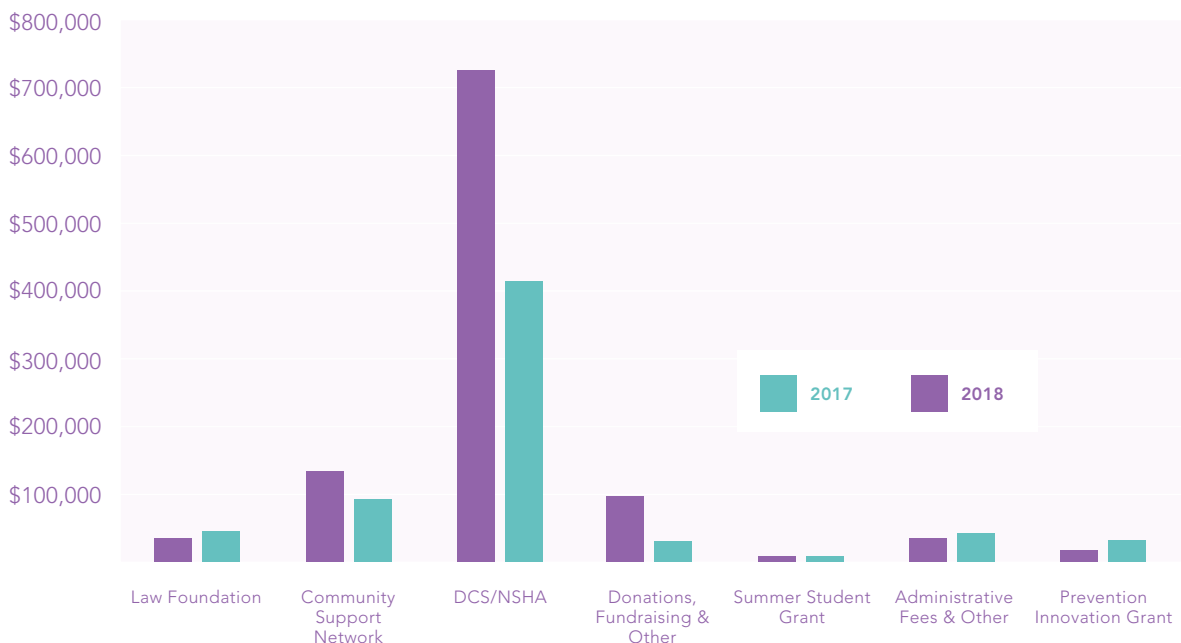
The SANE program has maintained steady funding (\$372,800.00) and continues to operate consistently (Net Income 2018 - \$7,158 (2017: \$5,900)). Over the past few years, total numbers of requests to the SANE Program have increased to the point that we

need to monitor the ability of the current funding to support a continued increase of responses to the hospital and other program priorities.

Avalon's expenses in the fiscal year totaled \$995,046 (2017: \$749,300) with major increases in line with strategic spending for livable wages, a better working space, and larger professional fees to handle the demands of a growing organization. The net income after expenses in the current year (\$100k) is above our budgeted expectations. This is mostly due to our added effort in fundraising and individual donor income as well as multi-year project funding that will continue in 2018/19. A portion of this income is allocated to our reserve fund and will be used as a contingency fund in the upcoming year. The remainder will remain available for use by the organization and will be prioritized based on strategic need.

Respectfully submitted,
SHARON MERWIN, CPA, CIA

Avalon (Year over year) Income Comparison





Avalon: Summary of Revenue & Expenses

Year Ended March 31, 2018

	2018	2017
REVENUE		
Administration fees	\$40,000	\$46,608
Donations, fundraising, other	\$98,624	\$33,871
Law Foundation	\$38,811	\$45,660
Province of NS: DCS, NSHA	\$773,561	\$409,800
Special Projects: Dartmouth North Project – Province of NS Prevention Innovation Grant	\$15,022	\$34,978
Special Projects: Province of NS - Community Support Network Grant	\$139,536	\$95,251
Summer student	\$5,082	\$5,028
	TOTAL \$1,110,636	\$671,196

EXPENSES

Advertising & website	\$2,445	\$0
Board & staff development	\$10,978	\$19,766
Capital equipment & maintenance	\$19,358	\$13,853
Equipment rental & repairs	\$3,105	\$2,271
Fundraising	\$1,364	\$2,520
Insurance	\$9,062	\$8,683
Membership fees	\$3,028	\$2,289
Miscellaneous	\$4,275	\$1,689
Office	\$12,102	\$2,000
Professional fees	\$17,303	\$9,257
Rental	\$79,663	\$65,953
Salaries & wages	\$773,482	\$510,121
Special projects	\$50,529	\$103,988
Telephone	\$3,527	\$5,062
Travel	Incl. w/ projects	\$1,516
Therapy groups	\$4,825	\$333
	TOTAL \$995,046	\$749,301

Excess/ deficiency of revenue over expenses from operations	\$115,590	-\$78,105
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	Unrestricted Fund	2018	2017
Net assets - beginning of year	\$155,350	\$213,437	\$285,613
Excess of revenue over expenses	\$122,748	\$122,748	-\$72,176
Net assets - end of year	\$278,098	\$336,185	\$213,437

SANE Program: Summary of Revenue & Expenses

Year Ended March 31, 2018

	2018	2017
REVENUE		
Department of Health & Wellness	\$372,800	\$372,800
Department of Justice Canada Victims' Fund	\$0	\$18,198
Donations, fundraising, other	\$8,587	\$4,246
	TOTAL	
	\$381,387	\$395,244
EXPENSES		
Administration	\$40,000	\$46,608
Bad debts	\$1,311	\$0
Insurance	\$8,302	\$9,562
Memberships	\$598	\$716
Office	\$13,749	\$3,271
On-call Nurses	\$160,585	\$151,903
Salaries & wages	\$116,004	\$128,260
Telephone	\$10,021	\$10,630
Educations & training	\$16,366	\$8,050
Miscellaneous	\$4,777	\$2,727
Purchased services	\$1,000	\$1,000
Transportation	\$1,516	\$699
Research project	\$0	\$25,889
	TOTAL	
	\$374,229	\$389,315
Excess of revenue over expenses	\$7158	\$5929



STRATEGIC

"...doing our best, in 2017-18, means working *strategically*..."

"We needed to be able to focus on certain things that take more than twelve months. What we identified was a need first for stability, to enable us to then work toward sustainability, which would in turn enable us to work to grow to meet demand."

BOARD MEMBER NICOLE DORIA



Avalon's Sexualized Violence and Healing Centered Support training is delivered to community organizations, service providers, police, medical staff, among others. The exercise pictured is about "secondary wounding", sharing with participants common responses survivors receive upon disclosing their assault to people in various roles.

As is documented throughout this report to Avalon’s community, 2017-2018 was the first year of the Centre’s three-year strategic plan.

The report highlights the impact this multi-year approach has had, so far, on planning and re-imagining Avalon’s work and funding.

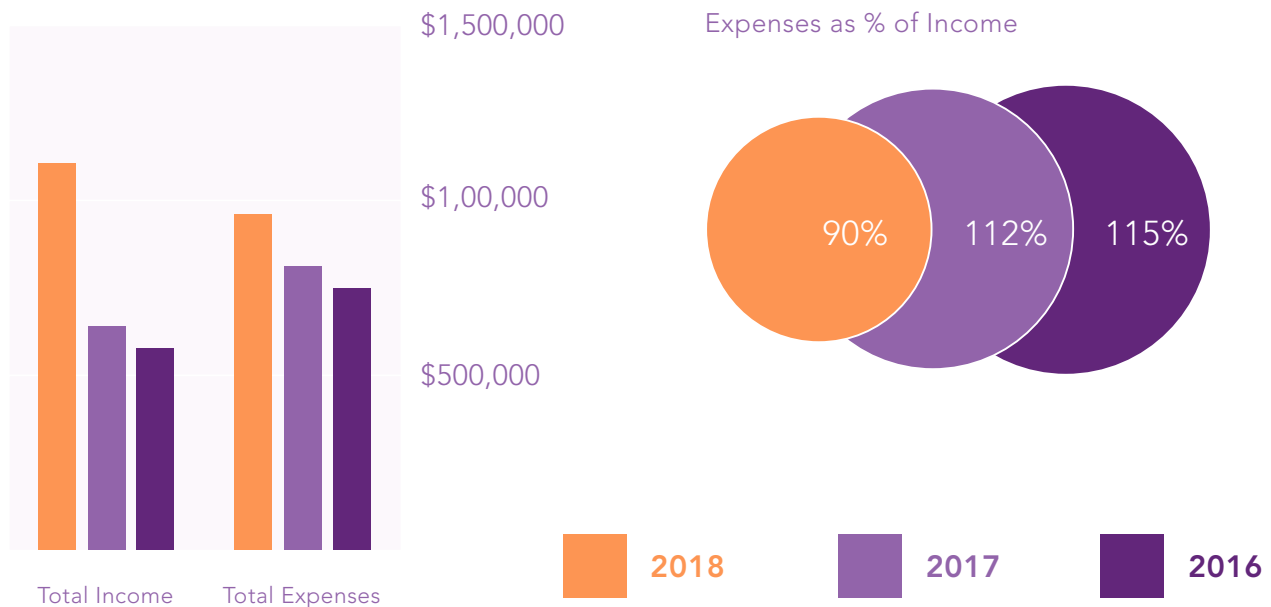
Implementing a strategic fundraising plan has meant new sources of revenue for programs and services.

Establishing a yearly agreement with the Nova Scotia Health Authority has allowed us to expand our counselling team and reduce some waitlists.

Thinking strategically about capacity meant working with groups, agencies, organizations, and networks in our communities to share Avalon’s knowledge and expertise and build capacity throughout the community, beyond the Centre.



Three-year Income/Expense Trend



THANK YOU

to Our Funders

We extend our sincere gratitude to all funders, donors, volunteers and community partners. It is because of your generosity that we were able to accomplish all we did in 2017. Making a gift to Avalon not only provides the critical funding needed to sustain and grow our programs and services, it is also a powerful show of support to the many survivors in our community.

Government Funders

NOVA SCOTIA DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNITY SERVICES

NOVA SCOTIA COMMUNITY
SUPPORT NETWORK GRANT

NOVA SCOTIA PREVENTION
INNOVATION FUND

NOVA SCOTIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND
WELLNESS / IWK HEALTH CENTRE

NOVA SCOTIA HEALTH AUTHORITY

GOVERNMENT OF CANADA –
CANADA SUMMER JOBS

Grant Providers

CANADIAN PROGRESS CLUB HALIFAX CORNWALLIS

CANADIAN WOMEN'S FOUNDATION

CHEBUCTO WEST COMMUNITY HEALTH BOARD

COBEQUID COMMUNITY HEALTH BOARD

DARTMOUTH COMMUNITY HEALTH BOARD

EASTERN SHORE MUSQUODOBOIT COMMUNITY
HEALTH BOARD

HALIFAX COMMUNITY HEALTH BOARD

LAW FOUNDATION OF NOVA SCOTIA

MEDAVIE

NSPIRG

SCOTIABANK – COBURG & ROBIE

SOUTHEASTERN COMMUNITY HEALTH BOARD

In-Kind Donors

BLACK MARKET

HOPE BLOOMS

JANE SOFTWARE INC.

LORD NELSON HOTEL

SUTHERLAND AND WATT CPAS INC.

Third-Party Fundraisers

BELLA ROSE ARTS CENTRE SOCIETY

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF PERINATAL AND
WOMEN'S HEALTH NURSES

DALHOUSIE ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
STUDENT SOCIETY

DALHOUSIE/KING'S FASHION SOCIETY

DALHOUSIE LAW COMMUNITY OUTREACH

DALHOUSIE HEALTH PROFESSIONS –
FOR THE HEALTH OF IT!

DEEP HOLLOW PRINT

GOOD ROBOT BREWING COMPANY

JAMPY

LADIES BEER LEAGUE

LILI & MADDI INC.

NEW SCOTLAND CLOTHING CO.

OMEGA PI SORORITY

OVER THE EDGE

PRAMANA

PREMIERE ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

PUSSY HAT PROJECT – HALIFAX CHAPTER

ROCKY LAKE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

ROLLING BOLD PRODUCTIONS

VETERANS AFFAIRS CANADA – HALIFAX OFFICE

This list acknowledges gifts made between April 1, 2017 and March 31, 2018. Please note that this list only includes some of our many incredible donors. To protect privacy, we do not list donations made by individuals.



▲ In December Jampy created limited edition Christmas ornaments for A Very Listless Christmas Market, donating sales to Avalon and inspiring Ladies Beer League, Good Robot Breaking Company and New Scotland Clothing Company to donation match!

“Due to recent events in the news and because of very brave people coming forward with their own experiences, sexual assault has been on many of our minds. The statistics surrounding how often it occurs and the low conviction rates are just abysmal. It can really make you feel hopeless. But giving into hopelessness obviously isn’t the path to brighter days. This is OUR society and we’re ALL in charge of making it better in some small way. That’s why Jampy joined forces with The Ladies Beer League, New Scotland Clothing and Good Robot to do our part to help out.”

CHRIS SMITH, JAMPY



▲ Laura MacDonald of Deep Hollow Print designed and printed feminist posters on a 1930s-era Vandercook press, donating 75% of sales to Avalon.

“I am so grateful to Avalon for being there in traumatic times for people close to me. It is a vital resource to many sexual assault survivors in the province.

LAURA MACDONALD, DEEP HOLLOW PRINT



“The Ladies Beer League was formed to provide a safe, welcoming space to gather and share a passion for local craft beer. Avalon Sexual Assault Centre offers a safe, supportive environment for those who have lived through an act of sexual violence. We respect the vital services Avalon provides—empowering people who have been victimized—and want to continue to be supportive in any way we can.”

◀ On International Women’s Day, Ladies Beer League hosted a panel discussion of women brewers, bartenders, performers, and industry leaders with proceeds donated to Avalon to support the development of our Safe Bars Program.

SUSTAINABLE

“...strengthening our financial *sustainability*...”

A central insight of Avalon’s strategic planning was the importance, to most if not all of its operations, of a longer planning and coordinating horizon. Underpinning the ability to take a longer view of the work: financial sustainability.

During 2017-18, Avalon...

- secured a service agreement with the Nova Scotia Health Authority for yearly funding of our trauma-specific therapeutic counselling program
- began discussions with the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services regarding a three-year service agreement for work including prevention, intervention and awareness.
- completed the first year of a strategic fundraising plan, resulting in a successful annual appeal campaign, a record number of monthly donors and online donations, and a host of individuals, community groups, and businesses raising money for Avalon

“Seeing how your structures enable or hinder service, determining what programming is sustainable, listening to partners, becoming an excellent workplace, these things don’t happen overnight, they need time.”

BOARD MEMBER LEE-ANN CONROD





◀ In celebration of 35 years of service, following our Annual General Meeting in September we hosted a panel discussion on Sexualized Violence in the Legal System, featuring El Jones (MSVU), Stephanie Carlisle (Halifax Regional Police), Susan McKay (Public Prosecution Service of Halifax) and Carmella Farahbakhsh (South House), with moderation by Emma Halpern of the Nova Scotia Barristers Society.

▶ Sam Horak and Rolling Bold Productions raised funds for Avalon with the show ROCK N ROLL SAVED MY LIFE during Halifax Fringe 2017.



▼ Omega Pi Sorority fundraised throughout the year for Avalon!





◀ Dalhousie University's Health Faculties raised funds for Avalon with their event For the Health of It.



◀ Our Tree of Light. Over the past year, clients, staff members, partners, support workers, and friends have all contributed to this growing community art project by writing messages of support and love. Each month, we choose a different theme for our messages which are based on current events happening locally and internationally. This project has brought forth voices of our community by anonymously allowing people to be heard, as well as to receive the advice and guidance of others, and a way to offer peace in times of extreme and unimaginable pain and injustice. Over 100 messages are held on this tree, all in support of one another.

.....



PEOPLE

“...making Avalon an excellent place for people to work...”

Everything referenced in this report – every event, program, service, initiative; every plan, consideration, proposal or commentary – is the work of people dedicated to the Avalon vision. Caring for those people, motivating them, rewarding them, and supporting them in that dedication is the reason we’ve achieved what we have to date, and will be the bedrock of our success going forward.

Naturally, workplace excellence is one of the four strategic priorities we are pursuing. For 2017-2018, some of the key areas of focus were:

- further extending health benefits, leave of absence options, and flexible work opportunities
- improving salary structures
- improving professional development access and mentorship within the team
- continuing to enhance our knowledge and practice of self care and vicarious trauma

“I’m really grateful to work for an organization that is so true, in its work, to the values it was founded on. To be part of a team that puts its feminist, anti-oppressive lens at the forefront of everything that’s done, it just gives you great confidence in the work.”

AVALON THERAPEUTIC COUNSELLOR



Staff Professional Development

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner training

Trauma informed first responder training



Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR)

Neuro-biological informed therapy with Dr. Bessel van der Kolk

Social work ethics and intersectionality



Internal Family Systems (IFS)

Trauma informed yoga training

Dr. Janina Fisher's sexual assault trauma therapy training

Gender based violence

Clinical skills

Talk Justice

Trafficking

Rape culture



Bystander intervention facilitation

Strangulation/lethality

Cultural safety and inclusivity for newcomer communities



International Association of Forensic Nurses conference

Grant writing

Fund development

Non-Profit leadership

Conflict resolution

Diverse workplaces

Sexual health education and sexual violence prevention for people with disabilities

Solution Focused Brief Therapy

Complex Trauma and Dissociation



Transgender self care

Trauma and the Body: An Introduction to Sensorimotor Psychotherapy

Trauma Strategies for Resolving the Impact of Post-Traumatic Stress

*“Avalon has been a refuge in
my healing process, a place that
has nurtured my courage
and resilience.”*

AVALON CLIENT

