


REPORT TO COMMUNITY

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2021



AVALON
SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE



THE AVALON SEXUAL ASSAULT
CENTRE IS A 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.

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www.avaloncentre.ca

Cover photo by Shianne Gordon

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

In October 2020, I stepped into the role of Chair of the Board. During the 2020-21 fiscal year, Avalon continued to provide services amidst the backdrop of a long global pandemic. The Board continues to support Avalon through a period of change and transformation. We've had a group of committed Board members who have dedicated countless hours to ensuring that we are supporting the organization in a way that promotes principles of diversity and inclusivity, and honours our feminist and anti-oppressive values.

During this period of change and transformation, the Board has worked with staff to create a culture of transparency and trust. We continue to bridge the gaps through regular conversation with staff, and being open to and employing feedback from staff. We continue to realize one of our greatest assets is open and transparent communication. I would be remiss if I did not highlight the incredible work and dedication of the staff representative on the Board.

We are excited to see how things continue to grow and change at Avalon. We realize that we have experienced and navigated some difficult challenges during the 2020-21 fiscal year, however we maintained our focus on transparency and trust, organizational change, collective

bargaining, and a whole organization repair-restructuring process. While steering through these challenges, we also witnessed a willingness and resiliency among staff, and I am excited to continue working with this organization to see the exciting effects of the changes that have already happened, and those to come.

Meaghan Norris BSW, MSW, RSW

CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OPERATIONS



Avalon Sexual Assault Centre works to reduce sexualized violence through education, training and advocacy; and offers survivors Sexual Assault Nurse Examination (SANE) supports, navigation, and counselling supports.

Through the **Community/Legal Education, Training, and Advocacy** program, Avalon collaborates with other community organizations, institutions, and survivors to improve access to sexualized violence services and supports, champion policy development and reform, and support social justice initiatives from an intersectional and healing-centered lens. The program works to increase the capacity of service providers, organizations, and communities to prevent and respond to sexualized violence, and support survivors through increased community mobilization and engagement.

While the global pandemic and COVID 19 public health restrictions had a significant impact on this work, the year also brought about an opportunity to re-envision activities, for instance we began preparing our education and training curriculums for online delivery. As well there was opportunity to expand into important new work such

- 16 training sessions attended by 317 people
 - 49 support sessions (including justice system accompaniment) to 9 clients
 - Worked with 11 organizations on policy development and reform
 - Served on 8 local, provincial, and national working groups through 62 committee meetings
 - Distributed educational resources and the I Don't Owe You Campaign to 35 organizations across the World
- 

as legal support and advocacy; and establishing community navigation, peer support, and initial response services through our **Women and Gender Equality (WAGE) project**

This five-year project develops and tests a new navigation model to better reach and support marginalized survivors of sexualized violence. Marginalized populations, including individuals from Indigenous and African Nova Scotian communities, the 2SLGBTQIA+ population, newcomers, sex workers, and survivors with disabilities, are particularly vulnerable to sexualized violence and are also underserved by community and systems-based support services. This year Avalon hired a Community Navigator who began working with survivors, diverse community and systems-based service providers, and organizations to identify barriers and begin creating a community supported system of healing and support.

Responding to the four health centres within the HRM Municipality, Avalon's **Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners** provide emergency response to all ages and genders within 168 hours (7 days) of an assault for adults/adolescents and within 72 hours (3 days) of an assault for prepubescent victims.

Ideally this 24/7 response would be provided by a roster of 16-18 SANEs, but during the pandemic Avalon experienced nursing shortages like those seen elsewhere in health care, and was often only able to schedule 12-16 SANEs. This increased demand on the program Coordinators, who are also SANEs and respond to hospital as required in order to provide 24/7 response. Coordination faced other challenges during the year as well, as Avalon piloted a model of two part-time coordinators instead of one full-time. Some of the potential improvement (to work balance and sustainability of the role) could be seen in this pilot, but also the need for further monitoring and adjustment was clear, and will be explored during 2021/22.

Nova Scotia Health established provincial SANE response during 2020/21. Avalon provided education and support to the other programs, and

contributed to provincial policies.

Avalon's SANE program has traditionally participated in community collaborations and educations, such as with crown attorneys, ER staff, and university classes, but these activities were limited by public health restrictions.

In addition to seeing 139 clients at the hospital this fiscal year, we provided support and information to survivors, family, or friends of same, police, physicians, and other community organizations. The number of this type of service was greater than in the past two years at 188 calls.

In Avalon's **Counselling** program, public health protocols for the pandemic drove a shift to online counselling. During this period, after two years of prioritizing waitlisted clients, the length of the wait on the list had shortened enough that some new requests were able to be served. The team implemented a limited intake, focussed on internal referrals (clients of SANE, legal advocacy, or community navigation), and continued to see clients on the waitlist.

Clients work with a team of six who can provide a variety of types of support to meet the needs of the community, including supportive counselling, consultations, therapeutic counselling, and other sorts of support as needed. Counsellors are trained in a variety of modalities including EMDR, Internal Family Systems, Sensori-motor Psychotherapy, Wholebody Relational Focusing, and art therapy. Our specialized trauma counselling is available to female youth, women, transgender and non-binary identifying individuals, who are 16 and older, and have experienced a recent or historical sexual assault, childhood sexual abuse and/or sexual harassment. We also provide information sessions to the non-offending parents of children who have disclosed sexual abuse, and information sessions to supportive partners of clients accessing our services.

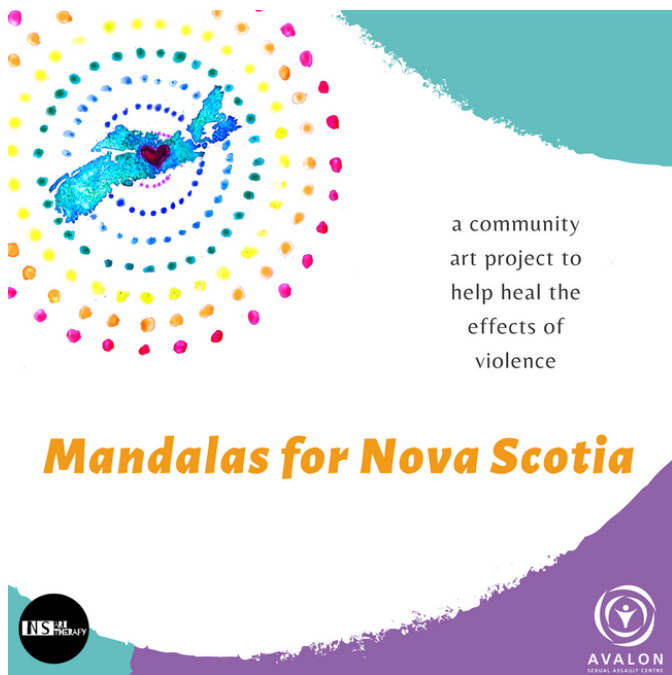
At current staffing levels, we are able to offer 10 supportive counselling sessions to new clients who are referred by Avalon's internal community-

based programs, and for those on the waitlist for trauma processing, we have shifted to 40 sessions instead of multiple rounds with mandatory breaks. These changes reflect a more expansive view of trauma healing, and recognizes that some processing happens in initial stages.





Behind the scenes at Avalon, a small team provides **administrative supports**: managing accounts, supplies, communication, organizational and professional development, technology, governance support, and more. As with all of Avalon's work during 2020-2021, the COVID-19 crisis presented considerable challenges. Prior to the pandemic, office staff worked almost entirely in person. With little notice, we had to find ways to support nearly 100% of this work being done remotely. The nature of Avalon's work meant that in many cases this was not as simple as bringing a laptop home. Creative problem-solving and incredible lengths of teamwork enabled Avalon to rise to this challenge and continue serving the community.

PHYSICAL DISTANCE, SOCIAL SOLIDARITY



a community art project to help heal the effects of violence

Mandalas for Nova Scotia



"Many Nova Scotians are grieving during this time of fragility, vulnerability and shock. Because we can't connect with each other in person, we'd like to offer a community art project with the intention of healing and connectivity in relationship. Mandalas are a symbol of wholeness and healing, and can manifest as a vehicle for self-expression. They have roots in many ancient cultural traditions and have been identified as stress-relieving, relaxing, and helpful for focus and mindfulness. We invite you to create a mandala, photograph it, and send us the photo. We will be posting the submitted images and will either identify or leave anonymous the creator, according to directions provided by contributors..."

"Check out our new virtual healing/resource room, on the main Resources page of our website (link to main site in bio, resources in main menu)! When doing workshops, we like to ensure there is a space to decompress, with resources. It's a bit challenging online, but we hope this offers something of the feeling of that kind of space. We hope you enjoy exploring all the interactive elements of the room!"



FINANCE REPORT



The conclusion of the March 31 2021 audit yielded Avalon a clean report; with a note from the auditors that they cannot sufficiently verify money received from fundraising activities, which is common for a not for profit.

In 2021 the total revenue received was \$1,243,987. Over 50% of funding is received from Nova Scotia Health Authority partnered with the IWK. In 2020, The Government of Canada awarded \$1,000,000 to be received over a six year period for support toward the Halifax Sexual Assault Community Support Network Project and just under \$400K total has been received with a slight amount deferred into 2022 to date. Avalon receives other grants from the Department of National Defense, Canadian Women's Foundation, Law Foundation of Nova Scotia, etc. that help make a community impact annually. A special thank you is deserved to our continued community donors and fundraising efforts; this was the third largest source of income received in 2021 and helps guarantee these crucial services go back into our community.

SANE received \$378,572 in funding for 2021. The main source of income is the Department of Health and Wellness. In addition to that, almost \$6K in donations was raised. Again, a huge thank you to our donors, volunteers and those involved with fundraising efforts.

The total amount of 2021 expenses was \$1,627,132. Salaries and rent were the main drivers of Avalon and SANE spends combined. We see a slight impact from the pandemic as we were unable to travel, provide therapy groups and fundraise accordingly as we did in prior years, however, we can say in less technical words that just over \$1.6 million went back to the Halifax community from the feverish work of our wonderful, invaluable staff.

In 2021 we finished the year with a slight deficit of \$(4,573) which is a dramatic improvement from 2020 and we finished the year with \$66,470 equity in the organization.

In 2021 Avalon hired Carolyn Brown, a local CPA whose business has a wealth of experience in Not for Profit bookkeeping. The assistance she provides on a daily basis goes beyond measure to the health of our financial reporting and guidance in operations. Thank you so much, Carolyn, you have been an absolute gem since the first day we brought you on.

Cara Pfeffer

TREASURER

Financial Statements

AVALON SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE

Avalon Sexual Assault Centre Revenues and Expenditures Year Ended March 31, 2021

	2021	2020
Revenues		
Province of Nova Scotia funding	\$ 773,485	\$ 773,561
Halifax Sexual Assault Community Support Network	217,112	146,012
Law Foundation of Nova Scotia	45,660	45,660
Canadian Women's Foundation	42,065	-
Administrative fees	46,000	46,000
Donations, fundraising and other	58,330	81,729
Emergency Community Support funding	50,000	-
Department of National Defense funding	11,335	-
Special projects: Province of Nova Scotia- Community Support Network Grant	-	52,743
	<u>1,243,987</u>	<u>1,145,705</u>
Expenses		
Advertising and website	1,877	1,038
Board and staff development	30,092	45,827
Capital equipment and maintenance	17,222	26,180
Equipment rental and repairs	1,644	2,874
Insurance	11,975	9,528
Membership fees	16,310	15,000
Miscellaneous	17,540	4,262
Office	21,444	14,841
Professional fees	36,758	20,155
Rental	100,794	99,227
Salaries and wages	949,089	942,028
Special projects	-	51,465
Telephone	12,596	10,939
Therapy groups	-	2,867
Travel	-	5,743
	<u>1,217,341</u>	<u>1,251,974</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses from operations	<u>26,646</u>	<u>(106,269)</u>
Other income (Schedule 1)		
SANE income	378,572	378,572
SANE expenses	<u>(388,113)</u>	<u>(386,289)</u>
	<u>(9,541)</u>	<u>(7,717)</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses before unusual item	17,105	(113,986)
Unusual Item	<u>(21,678)</u>	<u>(68,008)</u>
Deficiency of revenues over expenses for the year	<u>\$ (4,573)</u>	<u>\$ (181,994)</u>

Financial Statements

AVALON SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE SANE

SANE Statement of Revenues and Expenditures Year Ended March 31, 2021

	2021	2020
Revenues		
Department of Health and Wellness	\$ 372,800	\$ 372,800
Donations, fundraising and other	5,772	5,772
	<u>378,572</u>	<u>378,572</u>
Expenses		
Administration expense	46,000	46,000
Education and training	83	7,454
Insurance	13,690	9,451
Memberships	2,313	1,000
Miscellaneous	1,216	2,527
Office	7,572	5,266
On call nurses	163,905	166,901
Purchased services	-	1,000
Salaries and wages	141,151	136,600
Telephone	10,045	9,928
Transportation	2,138	162
	<u>388,113</u>	<u>386,289</u>
Deficiency of revenues over expenses for the year	\$ (9,541)	\$ (7,717)

DONORS 2020-2021



Government

DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE
NOVA SCOTIA DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNITY SERVICES
NOVA SCOTIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AND WELLNESS / IWK HEALTH CENTRE
NOVA SCOTIA HEALTH
WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY CANADA
GOVERNMENT OF CANADA'S EMERGENCY
COMMUNITY SUPPORT FUND AND
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF NOVA
SCOTIA

Grants

CANADIAN PROGRESS CLUB HALIFAX
CITADEL
LAW FOUNDATION OF NOVA SCOTIA
SISTERS OF CHARITY

This list acknowledges gifts made between April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021. Please note that this list only includes some of our many incredible donors. To protect privacy, we do not list donations made by individuals.

Businesses, service clubs & community groups

DALHOUSIE LEGAL AID PURPLE RIBBON
CAMPAIGN
DALHOUSIE STUDENT UNION (DSU)
EAST COAST SPECIALTY HARDWOODS LTD
GARRISON BREWING
JAMPY
JANE SOFTWARE INC
LOVEDUP
MEDUSA METRIC
MOBIA
MOUNT SAINT VINCENT UNIVERSITY
MUSIC NOVA SCOTIA - INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S DAY SHOWCASE
OUTLAW SOCIETY, SCHULICH SCHOOL OF
LAW
PRINCE ANDREW HIGH SCHOOL - CLASH
OF THE BRUSHES
RBC ATLANTIC WOMEN'S EMPLOYEE
RESOURCE GROUP
ROWE WOMEN IN BUSINESS ASSOCIATION
SHOPPERS DRUG MART LOVE YOU
THE GET DOWN
UNITED WAY HALIFAX ANNUAL CAMPAIGN



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