



PRESS RELEASE

To be released: April 1, 2022

**Sexual Violence Continues to Rise Across Nova Scotia
April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month**

Truro, NS: April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and the Colchester Sexual Assault Centre continues to play a lead role in supporting those impacted by all forms of sexual violence. There has been a steady increase in cases of sexual violence and assault over the past two years, making awareness campaigns such as this more important than ever. Since the Covid-19 pandemic first appeared in early 2020, call volumes into the Colchester Sexual Assault Centre's Community Resource Centre have quadrupled.

"Our team of Masters-level Counselling Therapists have provided over 1,400 hours of free counselling services this past year, which is an increase of 25% from the year prior. We are seeing cases on the rise in all forms of sexual violence, and no one is immune from experiencing it in one form or another. We are seeing more men reaching out to us for support than ever before, historical cases are re-emerging particularly with racialized and marginalized communities, and we have never been busier with our outreach activities to support our youth.", says Jamie Matthews, Executive Director.

As equally important as support services are, so is education and prevention. Sexual Assault Awareness Month provides an opportunity to reduce stigma, dispel myths and misconceptions, and to lessen feelings of isolation associated with the traumatic after-effects following an experience of sexual violence. The Colchester Sexual Assault Centre is committed to hosting prevention activities, in hopes of educating those before the need for support services are needed. Recognizing the warning signs, defining consent and boundaries, and healthy relationships is a critical piece of the work that is being done in our communities by the Colchester Sexual Assault Centre.

Throughout the month of April, the Colchester Sexual Assault Centre will have a visual campaign across social media focused on the negative emotions people experience, and how those feelings can play a positive and healthy role in the healing journey. The use of social media is an effective tool in reaching those in surrounding communities who are oftentimes under serviced and experience barriers with accessing available services. These service gaps and significant growth within the province comprise nearly 18% of the clients being served residing outside of the Colchester, Cumberland and East Hants regions.

"We encourage everyone to follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, and to visit us at ColchesterSAC.ca for resources that might help. Our website is a trusted resource for relevant and up-to-date information and is a means of connecting with us through our confidential and secure Request an Appointment function. Our team is not here to judge, we're here to help, you're not alone.", says Matthews.

Colchester Sexual Assault Centre
35 Commercial Street
Suite 403
Truro, NS B2N 3H9

902.897.4366 | info@colchestersac.ca | ColchesterSAC.ca



ABOUT THE COLCHESTER ASSAULT CENTRE:

Located in Truro, Nova Scotia, the Colchester Sexual Assault Centre provides its free services to everyone impacted by sexual violence within the Colchester, Cumberland and East Hants counties. Since its founding in 1992, and its formal incorporation in 1996, the Colchester Sexual Assault Centre (CSAC) is a non-profit, community-based organization dedicated to strengthening, empowering, and supporting those impacted by sexual violence in a gender-equitable, compassionate environment. The CSAC provides various programs and services including; confidential one-on-one counselling, the Aftercare: Journey program, education and prevention initiatives, as well as awareness and advocacy, and community events.

MEDIA CONTACT:

Jamie Matthews
Executive Director
902.897.4366 (office) / 902.986.4031 (mobile)
jmatthews@colchestersac.ca

Website: www.ColchesterSAC.ca

Facebook: @ColchesterSAC

Twitter: @CSAC16

Instagram: @ColchesterSAC

Colchester Sexual Assault Centre
35 Commercial Street
Suite 403
Truro, NS B2N 3H9

902.897.4366 | info@colchestersac.ca | ColchesterSAC.ca