

## Community Education and Training

This program provides custom designed workshops and training sessions on issues related to sexual violence and violence prevention. It is available to schools, businesses, community groups and government organizations. We do charge a fee for service for professional training; please consult with the Community Educator regarding this.

## Partnerships

We partner with community agencies and other organizations on an ongoing basis to improve and change social and health policy, and the criminal justice system.



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[www.avaloncentre.ca](http://www.avaloncentre.ca)

**If you or someone you know needs support, please call**

## About Avalon Sexual Assault Centre: Who We Are

Established in 1983, Avalon Centre is the only sexual assault centre in the Halifax Regional Municipality. We are a registered, not-for-profit, community based, charitable organization. We gratefully received funding from The NS Department of Community Services, The NS Department of Health, The Law Foundation of Nova Scotia, and from special projects and private donations.

### Vision Statement:

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.

### Mission Statement:

To provide services for those affected by sexual violence, with primary emphasis on support, education, counselling and leadership/advocacy services for women.

### Guiding Principles

As advocates, counselors, educators, health practitioners and activists, we are committed to providing a leadership role in the community by developing our practice around the following guiding principles:

1. We believe that sexual violence is caused and maintained by social and political imbalances of power. Therefore, we are committed to working with our colleagues, clients, and community using a feminist approach to invoke change and healing at both personal and societal levels.
2. We believe in using a flexible, client-centered approach that supports the inherent right to self-determination. As such, we support clients by being non-judgmental, providing information about their options and affirming their decisions.
3. We believe that healing is a process. Therefore, we offer a variety of program options that reflect different needs and layers of recovery work.
4. We are committed to a practice approach that promotes victim empowerment and acknowledges that the person who commits the violence is responsible for his behaviour.
5. We are committed to reducing barriers to accessing Avalon Centre's confidential services within our existing mandate and resources.
6. We are committed to providing a leadership role in eliminating barriers for access to justice.
7. We are committed to working with grass roots and women's organizations and other community partners on a local, provincial and national level to improve social policy and promote social action.
8. We are committed to fostering an environment that supports self-care and provides professional growth and learning opportunities for staff, students and volunteers.
9. We are committed to being flexible and accountable by developing policies, procedures and programs that are in keeping with our mission statement, principles and resources.
10. We are committed to a women only staff and Board of Directors.

**We acknowledge that sexual violence profoundly affects individuals, families and our community. We ask every member of our community to support us in assisting sexual assault/abuse survivors/victims, their partners and non-offending parents to heal from the effects of sexual violence. We challenge all people to commit to a culture free from sexual violence and abuse.**

Direct Services  
Provided

## **Direct Services**

**Note:** For general information about the various programs and services provided by Avalon Centre read *Who We Are/What We Do* or check the website: [www.avaloncentre.ca](http://www.avaloncentre.ca).

### **Avalon Sexual Assault Nurse**

#### **Examiner (SANE) Program**

The Avalon Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners have advanced training and education in forensic examinations. They will provide emergency response to victims of an immediate sexual assault (past 72 hrs) 24 hours a day, seven days a week. SANE nurses will respond to the emergency rooms of the QEII, IWK, Dartmouth General hospitals and the Cobequid Community Health Centre.

Storage of forensic evidence is available for up to six months. Note that SANEs provide service to females, males and trans persons of all ages.

The Avalon Centre SANE Program offers a Response Line, a service which is available to individuals dealing with an immediate sexual assault that has occurred within the past 72 hours. Nurses can provide information and referrals over the phone, and can arrange to provide medical care and/or collection of forensic evidence at the hospital.

Business office, call 422-6503. SANE Response Line: (Available 24/7). Call 425-0122. For emotional support and/or counseling, call Avalon Centre 422-4240 during business hours.

### **Group Programs**

Full descriptions of all of our group programs can be found on our website, [avaloncentre.ca](http://avaloncentre.ca). Groups are offered throughout the year at Avalon Centre, numbers permitting. Groups at Avalon include:

**Strengthening Present Life Coping**

**Relating Mindfully With Self and Others**

**Embracing Emotions in Healing**

**Deepening Healing Through Self-Parenting**

**Sexual Healing and Re-embodiment Workshop**

**Living in Wholeness Workshop**

**Weaving our Wisdom Workshop**

### **Trauma Information Series**

We will now be offering a series of one-evening information sessions on various topics related to the healing process after sexual violence. These one and a half-hour sessions require minimal participation from women and are intended to provide greater understanding around key issues that often arise during the healing process. Pre-registration is necessary. Topics include Trauma, Managing Intense Emotions and Boundaries.

### **Information Sessions for Non-offending Parents**

Numbers permitting, a series of 2-3 information sessions are offered to the non-offending parents of children who have been sexually abused. The purpose of these sessions is to provide information and support to help parents through this difficult time. These sessions are offered in partnership with the IWK Health Centre. Topics include: coping with the emotional impact on parents and helping the child to heal.

### **Individual Counselling**

Professional female staff provide short-term individual counselling to adult women (aged 16 and over) who are survivors of sexual violence, past or recent. Avalon places great importance on timing and pacing in relation to the counselling process, and a consultation is required to determine whether a client's needs can be met at Avalon.



### **Workshops for Partners of Survivors and for Couples**

Numbers permitting, we offer one evening workshops for partners and couples to discuss the relational effects of sexual abuse, trauma and ways of best supporting the healing process.

### **Legal Support and Advocacy Services**

Our Legal Support and Advocacy Worker provides information, support, advocacy and referrals. The focus of her position is to present options and emotional support to victims/survivors and non-offending parents through the criminal justice system, the police process and medical care, better enabling clients to make informed decisions.

Court support and accompaniment is available to survivors of sexual violations aged 16 years and older, and to non-offending parents of sexually abused children who are involved in the court system.