



For Immediate Release

Saskatchewan marks historic milestone with first-ever Sexual Violence Prevention Month

May 7, 2024 (Regina SK) - Every May, Sexual Assault Services of Saskatchewan (SASS), its member agencies, community partners and the Government of Saskatchewan recognize Sexual Violence Awareness Week (SVAW) to raise awareness of issues relating to sexual violence in Saskatchewan.

This year marks the first time Saskatchewan has proclaimed the month of May as Sexual Violence Prevention Month. This transformation, led by Sexual Assault Services of Saskatchewan (SASS), represents the shift from awareness-raising to proactive prevention strategies in addressing the pervasive issue of sexual violence within our province.

For over a decade, Sexual Violence Awareness Week has served as a platform for raising awareness and fostering dialogue around the prevalence of sexual violence. However, recognizing the pressing need for more action, SASS has moved beyond awareness and into exploring strategies to stopping violence before it begins.

"The transition to Sexual Violence Prevention Month signifies a pivotal moment in our commitment to ending sexual violence," said Kerrie Isaac, executive director at SASS. "Awareness alone is no longer sufficient. We must mobilize resources, engage in meaningful dialogue, and implement preventative strategies to create a safer Saskatchewan for all."

Sexual violence occurs in a range of contexts including private and public spaces, community centres, workplaces, educational institutions, on virtual spaces, in playgrounds, in sports arenas, in camping grounds, and in our places of worship. To stop sexual violence before it occurs, we have to address the risk factors, cultural and structural conditions that enable violence perpetration.

"Sexual violence is an issue that we need to speak about and by recognizing this month we can help spark discussion, raise awareness, and help stop violence in our communities," said Minister Responsible for the Status of Women Office Laura Ross. "The Government of Saskatchewan is committed to working with many partners such as SASS to find solutions and support victims. Speaking out against all forms of sexual violence is our collective responsibility to building safer communities for all."

Sexual Violence Prevention Month is a collaborative approach that unites communities, government agencies, and advocacy groups in a shared mission to end sexual violence in Saskatchewan. SASS extends an open invitation to all residents, institutions, and businesses of Saskatchewan to actively participate in Sexual Violence Prevention Month. Whether through attendance at SASS SVPM events, sharing messages on social media, or taking part in local initiatives, everyone is encouraged to join forces to embrace the vision of a violence-free Saskatchewan.

"We cannot remain passive bystanders any longer," said Isaac. "Prevention begins with education. By equipping ourselves and our communities with the knowledge and skills to recognize, prevent, and respond to sexual violence, we can create transformative change. It is possible to create a Saskatchewan where every person is free from threat, fear, or experience of sexual violence—and it will take all of us working together."



For more information about Sexual Violence Prevention Month and to explore opportunities for involvement, please visit sassk.ca.

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SASS is a provincial non-profit organization that works collectively with front-line agencies, community partners, and governments that provide support and advocacy for those affected by sexual violence in Saskatchewan.