



For Immediate Release

Sexual Violence Prevention Month aims to disrupt the sexual violence and addiction cycle

May 1, 2025 (Regina SK) - Every May, Sexual Assault Services of Saskatchewan (SASS), its member agencies, community partners, and the Government of Saskatchewan take action to prevent sexual violence through Sexual Violence Prevention Month (SVPM).

SASS is a non-profit organization that supports 13 frontline member agencies across Saskatchewan through research, education, and advocacy.

Saskatchewan has the second-highest rate of sexual violence among Canadian provinces - double the national average (Conroy, S., & Cotter, A., 2017). This startling statistic will persist unless the root causes are directly addressed. This year, SASS' is focusing its SVPM efforts on one such root cause: the cycle of addictions and sexual violence.

"Sexual violence and addiction are deeply intertwined—each can be both a cause and a consequence of the other," says Kerrie Isaac, Executive Director of Sexual Assault Services of Saskatchewan. "To break this cycle, we must address its components and their interaction."

In 2024, SASS member agencies' top concern was the cycle of addictions and sexual violence. Saskatchewan data reveals that 43.1% of sexual violence survivors reported an increase in their use of drugs, alcohol, and medication after being assaulted (Umereweneza, P., Lovrod, M., Findlay, I. M., & Giesbrecht, C., 2020). Additionally, human traffickers frequently exploit addictions to control others.

"Specialized sexual violence counselling and mental health & addictions supports are essential to prevention," continues Issac. "Experiencing addiction both increases the risk that someone will have sexual violence used against them, and that they will use sexual violence against others."

This Sexual Violence Prevention Month, SASS advocates for specialized sexual violence counselling alongside comprehensive mental health & addictions support through public education, resource distribution, and community engagement.. SASS calls on communities, organizations, and governments to participate in SVPM by:

- supporting their local centres that provide sexual violence and mental health & addictions counselling,
- attending SVPM events and webinars,
- implementing workplace sexual harassment policy,
- Wearing a SVPM Lotus Pin
- and sharing SVPM messages and materials on social media.

"It is time to prevent sexual violence before it begins," says Isaac. "Together, we can create a Saskatchewan where every person is free from threat, fear, or experience of sexual violence."

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

-30-

For More Information:

Tal Marsolais, Communications and Community Outreach
Sexual Assault Services of Saskatchewan (SASS)
306.757.1941
tal@sask.ca
sask.ca

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.

Sources:

Conroy, S., & Cotter, A. (2017). *Self-reported sexual assault in Canada*. Statistics Canada.

Umereweneza, P., Lovrod, M., Findlay, I. M., & Giesbrecht, C. (2020). *Sexual violence in Saskatchewan: Voices, stories, insights, and actions from the front lines*. Community-University Institute for Social Research.