

2023-24 Annual Report

July 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024 - (9-months)



Saffron

Centre

*I Believe
You!* *I believe
you!* *I Believe
You!* *I Believe
you ♥* *I Believe
you.*

*I believe
you!* *I Believe
you.* *I believe
you!* *I believe
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I believe you ♥ *I believe
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I believe you *I Believe
You!* *I Believe
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*I BELIEVE
YOU 😊* *I Believe
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you.* *I believe you*

*I Believe
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you!* *I Believe
you!* *I Believe
you ♥* *I believe
you!*

Hope and Healing for Those Impacted by Sexual Violence



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Board of Directors



**MIKE
SCHELLENBERG**
BOARD CHAIR



**BILL
TONITA**
VICE CHAIR



**LOREN
LONSBERRY**
TREASURER



**KEN
GLOVER**
SECRETARY



**ERIN
STROUD**



**NICOLE
ANDERSEN**



**DION
MATHESON**

Thank you to our 2023-24 Board of Directors for volunteering their time and wisdom in the oversight of Saffron Centre.

We extend our heart felt gratitude to retiring Board members, Mike Schellenberg and Ken Glover for their dedication and contributions to our board.

Executive Team



**ROXANE
TIESSEN**
EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR



**DEBBIE
FILLION**
DIRECTOR OF
COUNSELLING



**KIARA
WARKENTIN**
DIRECTOR OF
JUSTICE,
RESEARCH, AND
OUTREACH



Land Acknowledgement

With respect, and in the spirit of reconciliation and truth, we honour and acknowledge that here in Alberta, Treaties 4, 6, 7 & 8 are the traditional and ancestral territory of many diverse Indigenous peoples, namely: the Blackfoot Confederacy – Kainai, Piikani, and Siksika – the Cree, Dene, Saukteaux, Nakota Sioux, Stoney-Nakoda, the Tsuu T’ina Nation and the Métis People of Alberta. We acknowledge and are grateful to the many First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples who have lived in and cared for these lands for generations and whose histories, languages, and cultures continue to influence our vibrant community.





Vision

We aspire to live in safe communities, free from sexual violence where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

Mission

Providing compassionate and specialized counselling, education, and advocacy for those impacted by sexual violence as we journey together towards healing and justice.





Message from our Board Chair



**MIKE
SCHELLENBERG**
BOARD CHAIR

Dear Stakeholders,

As we reflect on the past year, I am both deeply moved and extremely proud of the remarkable work accomplished by our center. The journey of supporting survivors of sexual assault is one of immense challenge, but also of great hope and resilience. This annual report offers an overview of our achievements, challenges, and future aspirations as we continue to stand steadfast in our commitment to provide compassionate and comprehensive support to those in need.

Achievements and Highlights

1. Enhanced Counselling and Support Programs

We continue to enhance our counselling and support services through specialized training for our staff, allowing us to more fully meet the complex needs of our clients. We have also continued to offer new support groups for those clients needing ongoing support before, during and after their counselling sessions.

2. Advocacy and Policy Impact

Our advocacy efforts have been instrumental in driving change within our local community. We have been actively involved in shaping policies that better protect survivors and improve the legal process. Our successful campaigns have led to the implementation of more survivor-centered practices in local law enforcement.

3. Public Education and Awareness

This past year our public education presentations went through a major overview. As a presenting agency, we take seriously the privilege we have in being allowed into our school systems. To honor that privilege, we do our best to ensure those presentations remain current, accurate and relevant to those receiving them.

4. Fundraising and Financial Health

Despite the challenges posed by the economic environment, our center has successfully met our funding goals this past year. Thanks to the generosity of our donors and community partners, we have been able to not only maintain our level of services, but expand many of them to meet the growing demand.



Message from our Board Chair

5. Systems

No organization can thrive without healthy systems in place, and Saffron is no exception. This past year a great deal of effort and energy was put into the development of new policies for both our Board and Staff, along with the development of new set of Articles of Association. Along with this, a new software system was implemented to better handle the gathering and reporting of data.

Challenges and Areas for Improvement

While we celebrate our achievements, we must also acknowledge the challenges we face. The increasing demand for our services highlights the ongoing need for support and resources. We have encountered staffing shortages and space constraints that have at times limited our ability to fully meet the needs of every survivor.

Moving forward, our focus will be on enhancing our operational efficiency and exploring new funding opportunities. We are committed to addressing these challenges head-on to ensure that our services remain robust and accessible.

Future Directions

Looking ahead, our strategic priorities include:

- **Strengthening Community Partnerships:** We will continue to build and nurture partnerships with other organizations, healthcare providers, law enforcement and educational institutions to broaden our support network and improve service delivery.
- **Investing in Staff Training and Development:** We will invest in the ongoing professional development of our staff to ensure they are equipped with the latest knowledge and skills in trauma-informed care and advocacy.
- **Expanding Public Education and Awareness:** Our goal is to enhance public awareness campaigns to foster a more informed and supportive community for survivors of sexual assault.

Acknowledgments

None of our achievements would be possible without the tireless dedication of our staff, volunteers, and board members. I extend my deepest gratitude to each of you for your unwavering commitment to our mission. Your efforts make a profound difference in the lives of those we serve.

To our donors and community partners, thank you for your generous support. Your contributions are vital to our success and enable us to continue our essential work.

Conclusion

As my time on the Board comes to a close, I would like to add my personal thank you to each and every one of you who I've had the privilege of serving with. Your commitment to Saffron and its clients has been a huge encouragement to me and life changing for those we serve. The work we do together is difficult but so important. May each of us remain united in our mission to support survivors and advocate for a world free from sexual violence. Together, we are creating a brighter future for those who have endured unimaginable hardship.

With sincere appreciation and hope,

Mike Shellenberg
Chairman of the Board
Saffron Center



Message from our Executive Director



**ROXANE
TIESSEN**
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear friends,

Our Annual Report demonstrates our commitment to transparency as we share with you the impact we make in the lives of those healing from sexual violence. As we celebrate our achievements and learn about the ways we continue to be challenged to grow and serve our community, I hope that you will see a glimpse of the courage demonstrated by our clients and be inspired by their strength to move forward when faced with incredible trials. Thank you for taking the time to care about our work and supporting us as we journey together towards healing and justice.

This fiscal year marked a significant step in establishing a strong foundation for continued growth. We transitioned our fiscal year-end to March 31 to align with our major grant funders and facilitate significantly improved reporting processes. This annual report reflects the activities of that nine-month period. During this time, we also made considerable efforts to prepare for the transition to a new custom software platform. The Izzy software platform facilitates a coordinated approach to service delivery bringing all client support services under one software program. We are also looking forward to improvements in accurate and timely reporting to our stakeholders upon implementation.

Building upon existing and developing new strategic collaborations was another key focus this year. Our working relationships with local and regional agencies allow us to expand our reach, supporting those in need of our services. Of our many partnerships, three key collaborative organizations stand out; Strathcona County RCMP, A Safe Place, and the Alberta Association of Sexual Assault Services (AASAS).

These are but a few of the many partnerships we have built upon this past year, many more of which you will read about in the pages ahead. We are proud of the relationships we have built with the many agencies and organizations in our area, and we are grateful for their commitment to supporting survivors of sexual violence.



Message from our Executive Director

Along with the continued growth of programs and services comes the challenge of outgrowing our existing space. We work creatively within our space, with most of our staff sharing offices. As we plan for the years ahead, we will be looking to ensuring that our space can continue to support our growth.

As a charitable organization, we rely on the generous donations, grants, and funding. We are incredibly grateful for our many funders including the Government of Alberta, Strathcona County, Government of Canada, United Way and many others who continue to provide resources for our cause. We also extend heartfelt gratitude to the many volunteers, private donors, corporate sponsors, and other passionate groups who make incredible contributions to our organization. It is because of all of these individuals and groups that we are able to continue our work.

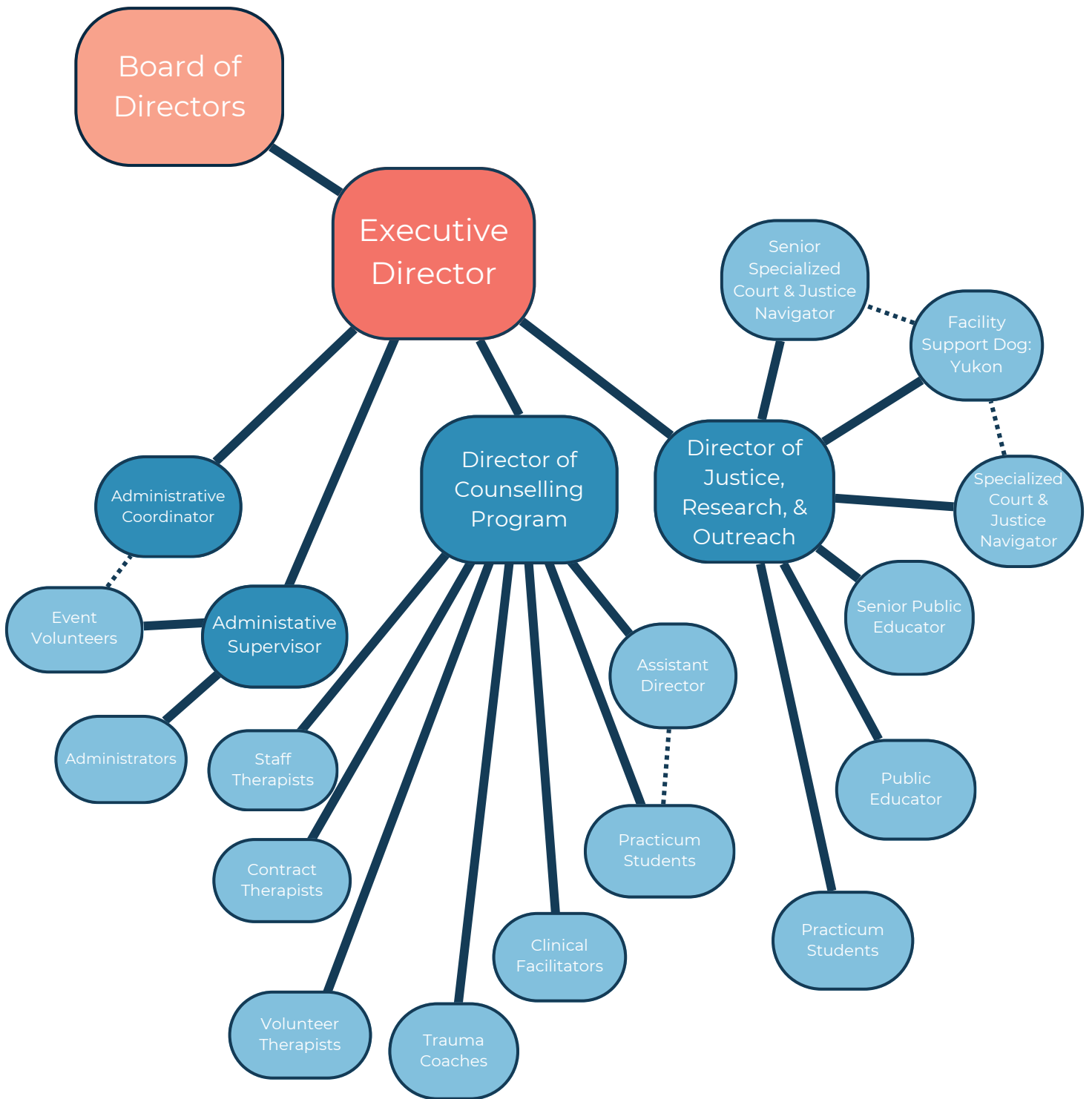
In this report, threaded beneath the numbers and the statistics are individuals who have walked through Saffron's front doors, and have received support through their journey to healing from our staff team. From our administrators answering the phone call from a client who is ready to tell their story for the first time, to our clinical facilitators finding the right therapist and program for the clients goals, to our therapists supporting strength, resiliency, and healing, to our educators who champion a culture of consent, and our police and court advocates who navigate the criminal justice system with their clients, we are all focused on responding to the lasting impact that sexual violence has had on individuals and communities and to bring hope and healing for all those impacted by sexual violence.

On behalf of our who organization, I would like to express my immense gratitude for our volunteers, Board members, and funders, generous donors, and our community. Your unwavering support continues to make our work possible.

Roxane Tiessen
Executive Director



Organizational Chart 2023-2024



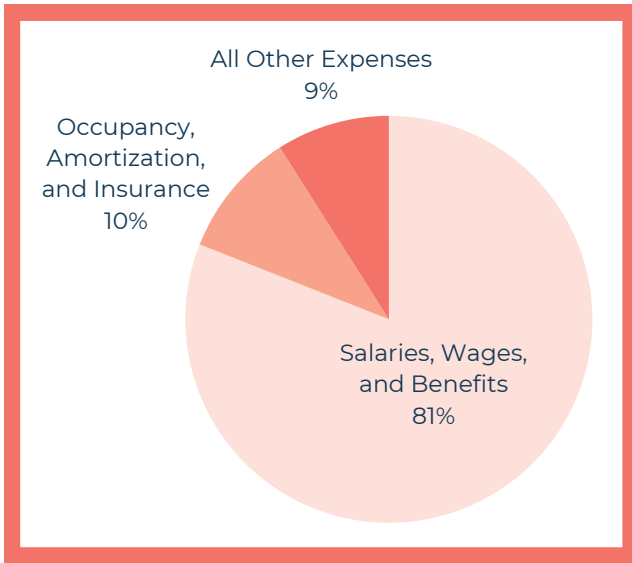


Financial Report

July 2023 - March 2024 (9-months)

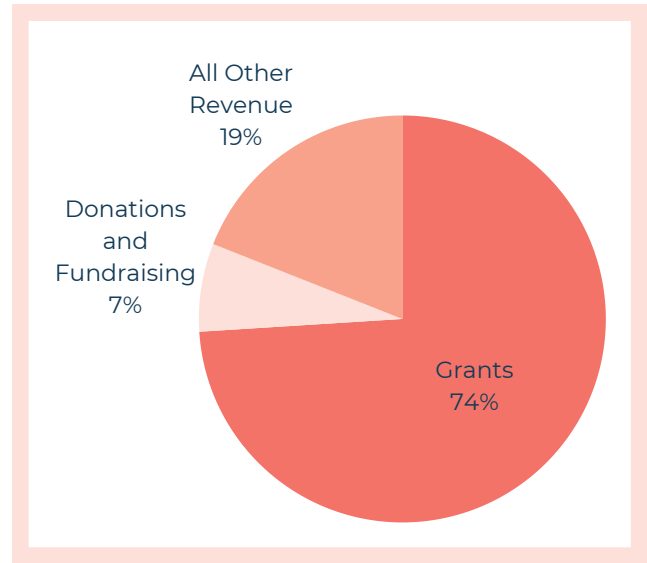
Expenses

Total Expenses \$1, 066, 443



Revenue

Total Revenue \$1, 123, 638



Funders Who Make Our Mission Possible



Women and Gender Equality Canada

Femmes et Égalité des genres Canada

Community Services Recovery Fund





Counselling Department

Overview

The Counselling Department is dedicated to providing highly trained counselling supports to our clients. We offer a variety of programs designed to promote healing and personal growth for those impacted by sexual violence. We appreciate the trust our clients place in our team, and we work hard to provide a safe space for them to do this difficult work. Our department now offers 4 individual and 4 group counselling programs, tailored to meet diverse client needs. This year, we would like to draw a picture of how our clients and team members work together. We highlight the journey of a fictitious client, “Casey”, as an example of how someone might successfully navigate through our counselling programs. Their story exemplifies the impact our services have had when a person reaches out for support.

A Client’s Journey

1. Registration

Casey's journey began with the registration process. They reached out to our centre seeking support for recovering from the emotional impact of sexual violence. With a warm and welcoming tone of voice, our admin team member guided Casey through the initial steps to set up a file and schedule an intake appointment. For Casey, this was the first time they ever told another person that they experienced sexual violence. The staff member reassured Casey that they will not need to share any details of their experience until they are working with a therapist who is trained to help people with traumatic experiences, and even then, only when they are ready. Casey felt welcomed and supported from the very beginning

Program Updates:

Over the last year, our registration process was reviewed, with the primary focus of helping the caller feel safe and informed. We also checked that we were only asking essential questions, and that parents/guardians understand what may be involved in order to consent for therapy.



2. Intake

Later that week, Casey participated in an intake session with one of our clinical facilitators. During this phone call, the clinical facilitator made sure to explain the process at every step. Special care was taken to ensure that Casey understood what could and could not be kept confidential, and to get their informed consent to collect their information. Casey shared some basic demographic information, provided a brief idea of their current challenges, and what they hoped to get out of therapy. The clinical facilitator collected just enough information to help Casey understand which of our counselling programs would be the best fit to address Casey's needs, and assist our team with matching them with the most appropriate therapist, based on struggles they are facing, goals, insurance needs or other factors such as personality. The clinical facilitator also took this opportunity to find out if there are any other resources or referrals that Casey might need, and supported Casey with completing a Victim's Assistance Program funding application. Casey was nervous at the beginning of the phone call, but the clinical facilitator was able to pick up on this and offered them some suggestions to help feel more grounded. Casey ended this call feeling believed and supported. They were aware of their rights, and given an idea of what to expect moving forward.

Program Updates:

As we were preparing to onboard a new client management system for the 2024 year, our team took this opportunity to review our intake questions to ensure we are only gathering just enough information to help us connect clients with the best fit for a program and a therapist.



100% of clients who completed a follow up survey report feeling closer to their healing goals.





Program Updates:

After offering our Foundations of Healing program for the previous 3 years, we used what we learned from providing this program along with feedback from the participants themselves to refresh the content of this group. Some topics were removed and others added. Strategies that appeared the most successful for our clients were kept and new ones introduced. Feedback has been very positive so far.

3. Foundations of Healing

Casey and their clinical facilitator both agreed the best place for them to start was to get enrolled in the Foundations of Healing group program, which is designed to provide clients with essential skills and knowledge to begin their healing journey. Through a series of group sessions, Casey learned about the impact of trauma, grounding strategies, mindfulness techniques, managing difficult emotions, and the importance of self-care. When they were not able to attend the group, they instead met with a clinical facilitator individually to learn the material and explore how they might apply it in their life. Since this group focuses on education and developing skills for the present, no one was sharing information about what they experienced in the past. Casey found it validating to hear that they were not the only one who felt the way they did. They also gained a great deal by trying out and practicing several of the strategies learned in the group. This program laid the groundwork for their subsequent therapy sessions.

- 100% of clients surveyed noted feeling less alone since starting the group.
- 83% felt supported and understood by the other group members and group facilitators.
- 67% described that the group met some or all of their expectations.



- 100% of client feedback was that the information and skills they learned in group are used in their every day life.
- 67% feel more in control of their lives after participating in a group.



Program Updates:

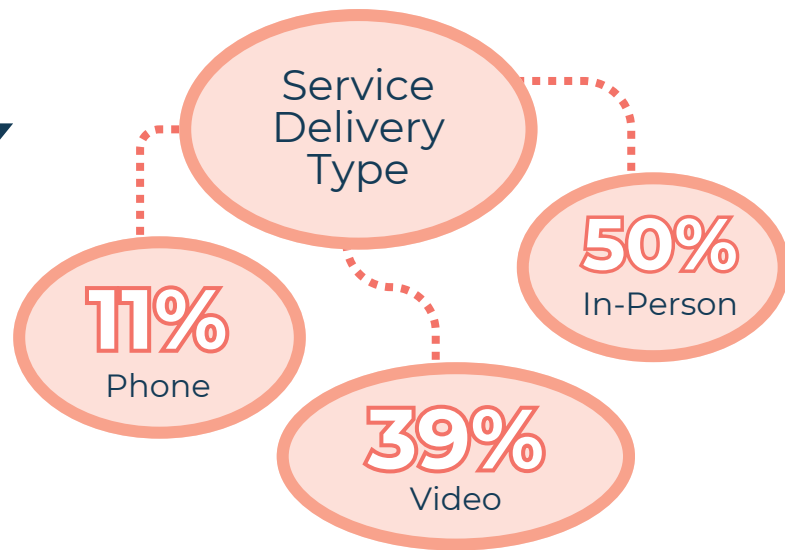
This last year, we were able to make some changes to our session limit policy. Previously, we had a 20-session lifetime limit on individual trauma therapy sessions. This revision now allows clients who have reached their session cap to re-engage with our services after a six-month hiatus, or in specific extenuating circumstances. This change ensures ongoing support and reinforces our commitment to long-term client well-being.

4. Individual Therapy

With a solid foundation in place, Casey began individual therapy sessions. At the first couple of meetings, Casey and their therapist talked a bit about their history, what brought them to Saffron, what has been working for them so far, and what they are still wanting to address. They discussed what some achievable goals might be for their work together, and which therapeutic approach might be a good fit to achieve this. Casey decided to meet with their therapist in person, once a week. These one-on-one meetings with their therapist allowed them to delve deeper into their personal experiences and work on specific issues. They worked with their therapist to develop a deeper understanding of how their experience impacted them, and processed some of the traumatic memories that was still causing problems in their life. Over the course of several months, Casey made significant progress in managing their emotions, developing healthier thought patterns, and building resilience.

Other Individual Counselling Programs Available:

- Support Person Counselling
- Court Support Counselling
- FOH Individual support
- Coming soon -> TRAILS Program



An overwhelming 100% of clients felt heard and supported.



5. Special Topic Groups

To further support their growth, Casey had the option to participate in special topic groups. The DBT (Dialectical Behaviour Therapy) skills for self-regulation was a good fit for Casey's overall treatment plan. In addition to benefiting from the group topic, the group setting provided Casey with a sense of community and the opportunity to share their present-day experiences with others facing similar challenges as they began using their new skills in their lives. Casey also found that taking this group to continue building their present-day emotional regulation, distress tolerance and interpersonal skills allowed them to focus their individual sessions more on making deeper connections and healing from the traumatic memories.

Groups offered over the year:

- Caregivers Assisting Healing
- DBT Skills Group

Program Updates:

Both the Caregivers Assisting Healing Group and the DBT Skills group were both new additions to our group programming this year. Both have been well received, and are now being offered to our clients 3-4 times a year.

Program Updates:

Our Healing and Beyond group continues to be offered on two different evenings, once a month. Most of these groups are online, but 4 times a year, there are in-person meetings.

6. Healing and Beyond Group

As Casey's individual therapy sessions were wrapping up, they joined the Healing and Beyond group. This once-a-month program is designed for clients who have made substantial progress and are looking to maintain their well-being and continue their personal development. In this group, Casey engaged in advanced therapeutic activities, peer support, and ongoing skill-building exercises. From time to time, Casey would notice old symptoms trying to creep back in. Attending this group allowed them to process these situations, and refresh their skills to cope even more effectively.

7. Conclusion

Casey's journey through our counselling programs provides a picture of our comprehensive approach to mental health and well-being. Several staff members are involved in helping support our clients along their healing journey, but ultimately the progress and achievements they make highlight the strength and perseverance of our clients. We are proud to have been a part of their path to recovery, and look forward to supporting many more clients in the coming year.

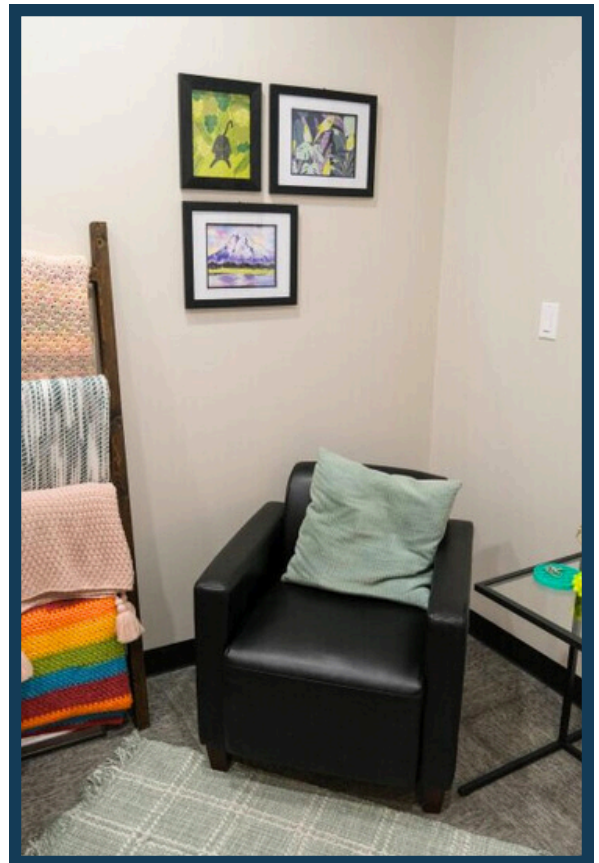


Counselling Department

Strategic Collaborations

Our partnerships have flourished, notably with the City of St. Albert, A Safe Place in Sherwood Park, and Indigenous Psychological Services. These collaborations have broadened our reach and deepened our community impact.

- City of St. Albert – A grant with the City of St. Albert allows us to meet with residents of St. Albert in person within their community. Over this year, 3 therapists have supported clients at the FCSS offices in St. Albert.
- A Safe Place in Sherwood Park – a collaborative grant with A Safe Place has helped us find new and innovative ways to help support their clients with stabilization after traumatic experiences. They have received both individual and group support using the Foundations of Healing program.
- Indigenous Psychological Services – We have worked collaboratively with Indigenous Psychological Services to support Student Intern Therapists at both of our agencies. The Student therapists have expressed appreciation for the exposure to the two different agencies, having a wider variety of experiences and having several experienced therapists to learn from. Our clients benefit as their student therapist will have advanced training in cultural awareness and a strong team of clinicians behind the scenes making suggestions for therapeutic options. As an agency, we have created stronger relationships with community partners to whom clients may be referred to.





Looking Ahead

In the coming year, we will continue to build on our achievements, seeking innovative ways to support our clients and expand our services. Our new client management software is being launched with the goal of streamlining service delivery within the agency. New groups are under development by our therapists. And our new counselling program for children 11 and younger who are displaying concerning sexual behaviours will launch in the summer of 2024.

With a solid foundation built this year, we eagerly anticipate the opportunities and challenges of the coming year. We remain steadfast in our commitment to providing exceptional care and support to those in need.

At the end of the 2023-2024 year, number of staff members and their roles:

- Director of Counselling - 1
- Assistant Director of Counselling - 1
- Staff Therapists – 3
- Contract Therapists – 7
- Volunteer Therapists – 1
- Student Intern Therapists – 3 (4 total)
- Clinical Facilitators – 3
- Field Placement Students (BA) – 2 (4 total)
- Volunteer Clinical Admin Support – 1 (2 total)



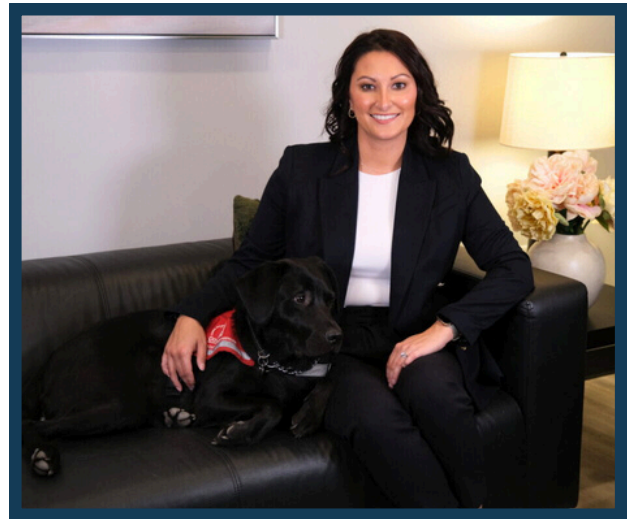
A commendable 1701 hours were donated by students and volunteers to the counselling program.



Justice, Research, and Outreach

Justice: What We Do

Saffron's Specialized Police and Court Support program was established to serve individuals who have been impacted by sexual violence and are navigating the investigative and criminal justice systems in Canada. Our team of Specialized Criminal Justice Navigators provide a variety of services that are designed to inform, equip, and support survivors of sexual violence through the process of reporting and attending court. Our team ensures that no one accessing Saffron's services feels alone navigating the criminal justice process.



The Specialized Police and Court Support team comprises a variety of professionals who offer a range of services catered to the needs of each person we serve. **Our program is trauma-informed and survivor-led, and our team applies these two lenses to every aspect of the work we do for clients.** We assist with police reporting and providing statements about sexual violence that occurred, whether recently or historically. The SPCS program takes clients who live across Central Alberta, including the City of Edmonton and all surrounding Counties. All services through SPCS are offered free of charge to clients.

1446

hours spent working with clients
navigating the criminal justice system





Expanding Police Reporting Options for Survivors

Saffron has a Supported Reporting Protocol in place with the Strathcona County RCMP detachment to ensure that individuals and families reporting sexual violence feel empowered and ready to tell their stories. We provide information and support through the investigative process, liaising with Police on behalf of our clients to ensure they receive updates on the status and outcome of the criminal investigation about their experience.

32

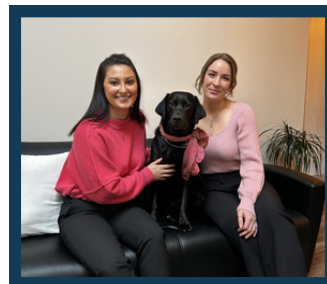
client accompaniments to police interviews and court dates

129

clients served in Specialized Police and Court Support program

Offering Survivor-Led Court Support

The SPCS program also provides court-related services, preparing, orienting, and accompanying clients to court dates involving their sexual violence matters. We have heard from families how frustrating it can be to go months without any contact from criminal justice support. Saffron’s SPCS team maintains contact with our clients as long as they are engaged with our service to ensure they always feel connected and supported. As part of our survivor-led process, we begin preparing clients for court when they feel ready and offer as many sessions as are necessary to help them feel comfortable with the process of having to give testimony.





Highlights from the Specialized Police and Court Support Program

The evolution of the SPCS program this year involved several key collaborations with organizational partners that made navigating the investigative and criminal justice system more efficient for Saffron's clients.

Renewed Commitment with RCMP

This year, Saffron renewed the Supported Reporting Protocol we share with the Strathcona County RCMP. Our joint protocol was first signed in 2021 and gives survivors of sexual violence in Strathcona County additional reporting options that they may not otherwise have access to, including the choice to have a Saffron SPCS Navigator present with them during their police statement, or the choice to give the RCMP their statement in the Saffron Centre's reporting room instead of at the detachment. Saffron has been hosting police statements at the Centre since the protocol was signed and successfully expanded the principles of the protocol into other RCMP and Edmonton Police Service jurisdictions.

Partnership with Victim Services

In the face of change surrounding Victim Services across the Province, Saffron has taken a proactive approach in collaboration with the Strathcona County Victim Services Unit to establish a framework for partnership and referral that streamlines support available to survivors of sexual violence. In December, Saffron and Strathcona County Enforcement Services signed an agreement to create a referral process for sexual violence survivors to access the Specialized Police and Court Support program at Saffron. The referral process reduces duplication in services and empowers survivors by allowing them to choose the advocacy and support resources they wish to access.





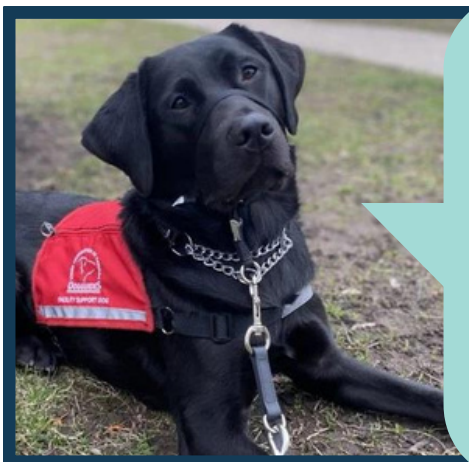
Working Groups

Saffron's SPCS team is proud to be contributing to driving change in the province. This year, we joined several new working groups focused on creating new opportunities for survivors of sexual violence. Saffron is a proud member of the Centering Relationships to End Violence tri-association between the Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services (AASAS), the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters, and the Alberta Native Friendship Centres Association. The Centering Relationships initiative explores the improvement of services for Indigenous survivors of gender-based violence. We were a member of AASAS' Primary Prevention of Sexual Violence and Third Party Reporting Committees. We also had the opportunity to begin participating in Alberta's Sexual Assault Investigation Review Committee, which conducts regularly scheduled reviews of sexual assault files that had been closed by RCMP in Alberta for unfounded claims or not having enough evidence to proceed. From these reviews, Saffron and other partners on the Committee make recommendations to RCMP about the files and whether any additional trauma-informed practices could be implemented in the future to ensure survivors feel believed by the Police.

A Year With Yukon

Saffron wouldn't be the same place without our Facility Support Dog, Yukon. We received our placement with Yukon in April 2022 from the Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides, and she continues to support clients both in-centre and off-site in court and police detachments.

Yukon's job is unique. She brings comfort and support to clients of all ages as they navigate some of the more difficult days in their healing and justice journeys. While our Specialized Police and Court Support team can sit beside clients to provide emotional support as they give testimony to the court, Yukon lays with her head on their feet, a short reach away to provide a grounded touch and warmth. Her impact is unmatched, and the results are in the research: dogs slow breathing, lower blood pressure, and help lift people out of their natural trauma responses of flight, fight, freeze, or fawn. Yukon's handlers witness these breakthroughs firsthand:



I accompanied a young client and their parent to the Crown Prosecutor's office to prepare the family to attend a trial in a few days. Our client was very nervous to give testimony to the court and to have to review the statement they had given to the Police on video before the trial began. I offered to have Yukon rewatch the statement with them, and the client accepted. I placed Yukon on the floor in front of the client's chair and left them in the room. Later, I went to check on them both. When I popped my head into the room, I saw that the client had rearranged space on their small armchair to make room for Yukon, and she and the youth were cuddled into a ball together in the chair watching the footage. We ended up using Yukon through the entire trial for the youth.



Justice, Research, and Outreach

Public Education: How It Works

Saffron Centre's Education team provides comprehensive teaching to end sexual violence in our schools, workplaces, and communities.

Prevention education on sexual violence, including sexual assault, abuse, exploitation, and harassment, can lead to impactful change in our communities. We provide presentations and training sessions for school-aged children as young as 4 and adults that cover a wide variety of topics. From teaching children about how to express their boundaries and understand consent to helping adults know what to say if a colleague or family member discloses sexual violence to them, we are here to put an end to sexual violence in our communities.



92%

of students increased their
knowledge





A New Approach to Violence Prevention

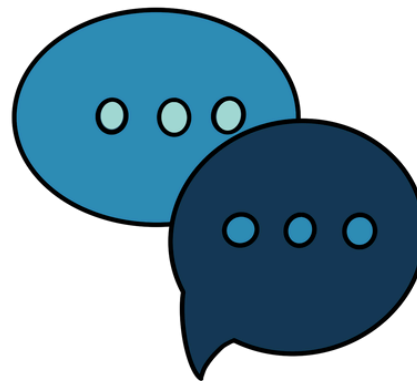
Last year, Saffron heard from our school and community partners about how online sexual violence is an increasing problem among children and youth. Issues like sexual exploitation, scamming, sextortion, and unsolicited image sharing have been rising in prevalence across Canada. They can affect anyone with access to the Internet, regardless of age or circumstance.

In response to this trend, Saffron's Education team embarked on a project to build a new curriculum for internet safety and online sexual violence prevention for all ages. Funded in partnership with the Government of Alberta, our team released 3 new presentations focused on internet safety alongside the rest of our new curriculum for youth in September 2023. By the end of our fiscal year, Saffron had delivered 157 new internet safety presentations – 36% of our total presentation volume for the year. Other curriculum topics released by our team included healthy relationships, sexual violence prevention, and trauma education.

435
presentations given

12,135
youth participants

13,502
total participants





Community Education

Saffron also spent a significant amount of time delivering education to our community last year, including sports teams, parents, and other professionals. Our notable collaborations included the Sherwood Park Kings Athletic Club, A Safe Place Shelter, the North Central Teachers' Convention, and the Bridge Wellness Hub for Youth.

We are excited to embark on two new educational projects for our community this year. Work began at the end of the fiscal year to develop an online, module-based course for parents and caregivers to help them understand and navigate problematic sexual behaviours in children. Our team has been diligently researching this topic, understanding that there is a gap in services in Alberta for children who display problematic or harmful sexual behaviour, and many adults are actively looking for information. The TRAILS online course launches in the Fall of 2024, alongside a new clinical program.

Lastly, in response to an increased demand from schools and community groups, Saffron has developed a presentation on consent in sports with funding from the Edmonton Community Foundation. Consent in Sports focuses on the issue of sexual violence within all sports, the impact it has on athletes, and how to prevent it by creating a culture of consent. Saffron has partnered with the Sherwood Park Crusaders hockey team to launch Consent in Sports in September of 2024.



92%

of students increased their knowledge

87%

of students learned new skills

91%

of students said they would change their behaviours



Justice, Research, and Outreach

Research and Outreach: An Overview

Each year, Saffron's staff, students, and volunteers complete hundreds of hours of research and outreach work on behalf of our organization. Research projects are based on the needs of the clients and organization and contribute to the effectiveness and efficiency of core programming. Outreach and community engagement are focused on lowering barriers to accessing services and creating a warm pathway for survivors to enter the organization in a trauma-informed and supported way.



4464
social media followers

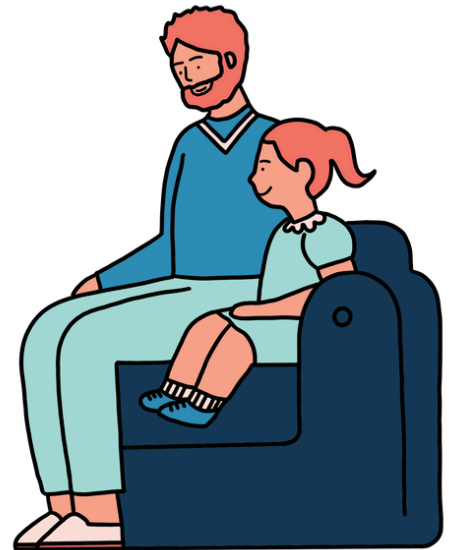




A Year of Research

Last year, Saffron’s team completed research projects on a variety of topics to support our clinical and educational programs. Projects included evidence-based best practices for educating children and youth about the prevention of sexual violence and examining the demand for educational programming in the communities we serve. Students also completed projects for the clinical team, analyzing the applications of our Facility Support Dog in counselling sessions.

At the beginning of 2024, Saffron launched one of our largest research projects ever, which informed the creation of a new clinical service and educational program for children between ages 4 and 11 who demonstrate problematic or harmful sexual behaviours. The educational program, based on evidence conducted in the USA, UK, Australia, and Canada, is designed for parents and caregivers of children who would like to learn more about what problematic sexual behaviour looks like at different ages and stages, and what to do when a child requires redirection. Programming launches in the Fall of 2024. For more information, visit www.saffroncentre.com/trails-program.





Lunchtime Outreach Program

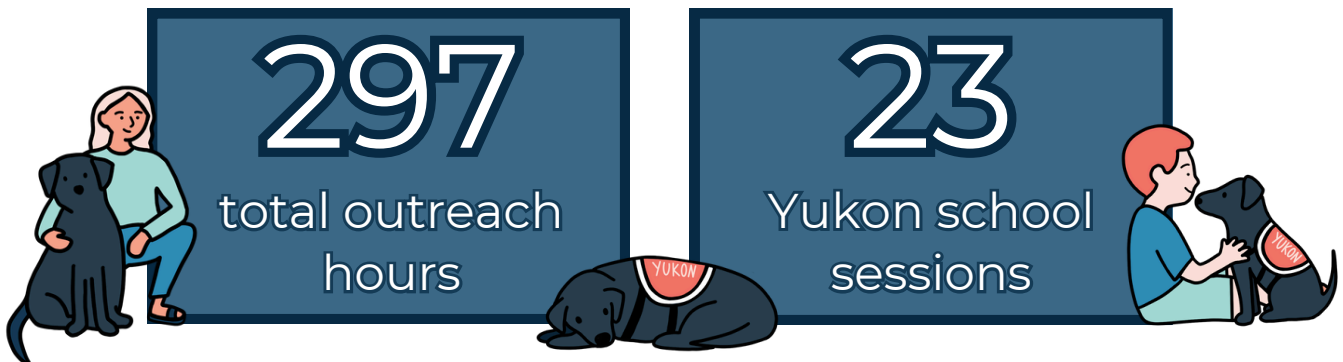
Saffron’s Justice, Research and Outreach team completed another successful year of lunchtime outreach with 3 school partners, offering monthly school engagement to students and school administrations. Students played games with our staff and engaged with Facility Dog Yukon during their lunch breaks, learning about boundaries, consent, healthy relationships, and internet safety. We would like to thank our partners at M.E Lazerte High School, J. Percy Page High School, and F.R Haythorne Junior High School for their collaboration with our outreach team this year.



We also partnered with several new schools for student Wellness Day outreach, participating in wellness and mental health fairs, booths, presentations, and activities. Our team and Yukon discussed the importance of mental health and well-being, including setting boundaries and talking to trusted adults when needed.

Comment from students about what they learned about last school year:

“I learned what true consent is.”





Telling Our Story: A New Brand

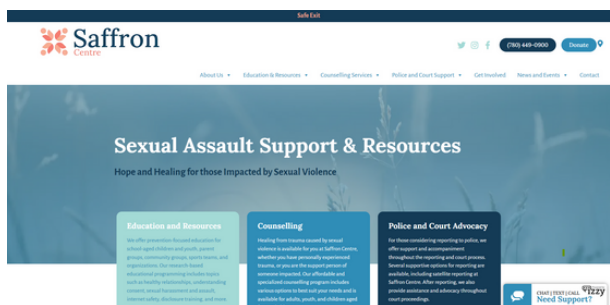
How we tell our story is an important part of creating connection with our client’s and our community. Saffron Centre’s 2023-2026 Strategic Plan includes the goal to generate broad public awareness of Saffron Centre and its services. The Marketing Plan developed at the beginning of this fiscal year moves us toward achieving this goal. Key to this plan was aligning Saffron’s outward professional image with the high level of expertise and professionalism that we provide in the delivery of sexual violence support services.

The Marketing Plan identified that updated logo, brand, and website would capture the true spirit of the organization. A bright, lively image with a fresh approach was designed to be peaceful, and calming, and evoke feelings of collaboration and partnership.. Through our new branding and professionally designed website, we are connecting with more individuals and help them find the hope and healing everyone deserves.

The new brand serves as a visual representation of our growth and adaptability, but it is our enduring commitment to compassion and support that defines Saffron Centre and ensures that every individual we serve knows they are not alone on their path to healing.

From old to new...

The new logo and colours symbolize safety and strength in community. The four flower petals represent four pillars of client services and support: Counselling, Education, Police and Court Support, and Administration – all here to walk alongside our clients as they heal from sexual violence.



Our new website was carefully designed to improve access to information about Saffron’s services and allow the community to find what they need with ease. Full functionality on mobile devices, ease for donations and secure web based submissions, and ease of use for updating were critical features along with a calming design.



Volunteers & Events

Events

Each year, Saffron hosts events that assist us with raising awareness about sexual violence in the communities we serve and collecting funds to support our programs and services.

Fall Tea and Silent Auction

In October last year, our organization hosted a Fall Tea and Silent Auction fundraiser at Remedy Café in Sherwood Park. Thanks to our many donations, our organization was able to raise over \$4,000 to support our programming.



Saffron Centre would not exist without the dedication and commitment of the board, staff, students, and volunteers. These people walk with clients on a journey of healing and hope and engage with communities to work collaboratively toward ending sexual violence.

Thank you 