

## Celebrating Sexual Violence New Brunswick's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

*Supporting and advocating for survivors of sexual violence since 1975*



2025 marks the 50th Anniversary of Sexual Violence New Brunswick (SVNB), a community-based non-profit agency that has been advocating for survivors of sexual violence since 1975. SVNB has supported thousands of survivors over the past 50 years through low-barrier trauma-informed support line, counselling, legal and systems advocacy, and support groups. Alongside frontline services, SVNB leads education, prevention, and capacity-building initiatives across the province to strengthen community responses to sexual violence. The event will bring together current and former volunteers, staff, board members, and community partners for an evening of celebration in honour of SVNB's legacy of providing support to survivors of sexual violence.

The celebration will take place on Saturday, October 18, 2025, at the Beaverbrook Art Gallery situated on the picturesque Wolastoq River in Fredericton from 7pm – 10pm, with doors opening at 6:30. Wolastoqey Drumming group Pəkoholakənəl Witsehkehsolticik (Sisters of the Drum) and Under One Sky will open the celebration starting at 7:00pm. We are also very excited to have performances by local Drag Queens Freeda Whales, Hinky Dinky and Hellacious throughout the evening, as well as presentations, memorabilia, and art to commemorate the 50 years of SVNB's history supporting and advocating for survivors of sexual violence.

As part of the celebration, we are also hosting a silent auction in support of SVN's *Survivor Care Fund*, an initiative designed to remove financial barriers for survivors of sexual violence who need immediate, practical support. From covering transportation costs, groceries, safety planning costs, or access to trauma-informed wellness services—this fund ensures that no survivor is left without options. This is more than a fundraiser, it is a celebration of providing 50 years of service to our community!

Simultaneous interpretation in French and English will be available at the event.

### **Sexual Violence New Brunswick as a grassroots, feminist advocacy and support organization**

During the late 1960's, one of the issues that emerged out of women's consciousness-raising groups was sexual violence. As awareness of the pervasiveness of violence increased, Canadian women began to create the anti-violence against women and children movement. This movement included the development of shelters, crisis centres and support groups.

Grassroots rape crisis centres began springing up across Canada in the 1970s. Their emergence came as a response to the needs of rape survivors and as a resource and working space for women who were attempting to challenge the institutions that condone sexual violence.

Sexual Violence New Brunswick originated in the summer of 1975 from a Chimo Help Centre meeting. This meeting was called to deal with the concerns of local university and high school counsellors, the Fredericton Women's Centre and other citizens to establish the need for a resource group that could respond to rape crisis situations.

SVNB began as a grassroots movement informed and guided by those impacted by sexual violence. Like many rape crisis centres, SVN's founding members were largely white, middle-class and urban-based women who worked primarily with white survivors. In recognition of our history, we practice as an intersectional and trans-inclusive feminist Collective. Our work centers the experience of sexual violence survivors which informs our approach to building communities' understanding prevention and response to sexual violence.

Since then, the anti-sexual violence movement has grown to provide services in all provinces in Canada and New Brunswick now has 13 Community Based Sexual Violence Services (CBSVS) to meet survivors of all genders where they are all regions of New Brunswick.

### **Connection to Greater Trends Across Canada**

Despite the steadfast support and advocacy provided to survivors by centres like Sexual Violence New Brunswick, minimal financial support and the ever-changing political landscape can make it challenging for sexual violence specialized services to maintain stability. Recent announcements cuts to the Federal Department of Women and Gender Equality's (WAGE) budget and the pending instability of Independent Legal Advice (ILA) programs across the

country has left many survivors, advocates, and allies desperate for answers. Survivors of sexual violence deserve consistent, trauma-informed, and specialized care and services like Sexual Violence New Brunswick are committed to ensuring this need continues to be met in New Brunswick.

SVNB's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration is a moment to acknowledge the joy in remaining a stable haven for survivors of sexual violence throughout the last 50 years while re-affirming the commitment to continue advocating for a better world for survivors, and communities free of sexual violence.

### **Quotes**

"Over the past 50 years, SVNB has supported two generations of survivors and persevered in advocating for social change.," says Maggie Forsythe, Director of Interventions at Sexual Violence New Brunswick. "It truly is a time for celebration and honouring the past as we move into an ever-evolving future."

### **About Sexual Violence New Brunswick**

At Sexual Violence New Brunswick, our mission is to support those impacted by sexual violence and to lead systemic and social changes required to end sexual violence. SVNB supports victims of all genders and recognizes that sexual violence is a form of gender-based violence. We recognize that sexual violence can and does happen to anyone and happens disproportionately to marginalized groups including cis and trans women, children, 2SLGBTQ+ people, people of colour, Indigenous women, immigrant women, sex trade workers, and others.

**Thank you to our partners:** Community-Based Sexual Violence Services across New Brunswick, Pəkoholəkənəl Witsehkehsolticik (Sisters of the Drum), Under One Sky, Fergusson Foundation, Crowne Plaza, Rebecca Steeves Realty the Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Freeda Whales, Hinky Dinky, Hellacious, LJW Catering, the Rocky Lemon, Patrick Murphy Interpretation, City of Fredericton, Government of New Brunswick Women's Equality, the various business across New Brunswick who donated to the silent auction, and the countless SVNB volunteers, board, and staff members whose dedication makes this event – and the support of survivors – possible.

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