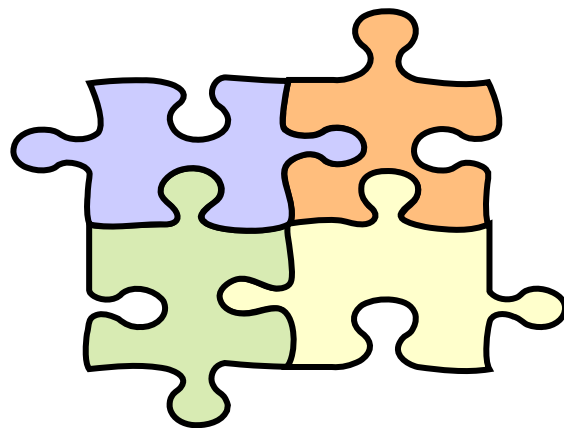




Renewal Growth Awareness



Strategic Plan 2008 to 2010

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Executive Summary

The Sexual Assault Centre of Hamilton and Area (SACHA) has been a leader in the fight to end sexual assault and other forms of violence against women locally and provincially through the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres. Opening in 1975 as the third rape crisis centre in Canada, SACHA has been supporting, improving and enriching the lives of women for over 30 years.

In the winter of 2006 SACHA engaged external consultants Adobe Consulting Services and began to plan for an organization wide strategic planning initiative. In the spring of 2007 under the direction of the Strategic Planning Committee the planning process commenced. The process was a collaborative effort which included community engagement strategies and the gathering of relevant data from a variety of sources, including interviews and consultations with other service providers, community stakeholders, funders, services users, SACHA staff, volunteers and the SACHA Management Committee (our Board of Directors). This intensive process also included assessing the social, political and economic environment in which SACHA operates through an environmental scan and an analysis of SACHA's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). Demographic considerations were another important part of the planning work given the rapidly changing demographic picture of Hamilton and surrounding area and what these demographics mean for an organization like SACHA that strives towards effective and responsive service delivery, access to service for all women and community collaboration.

The Strategic Plan will inform SACHA's priorities for the next three years – January 2008 to December 2010. Four strategic directions have been identified to guide the organization:

- Strengthen our core;
- Enhance and expand programs and services to increase accessibility and reduce barriers for racialized and marginalized groups;
- Raise community awareness and organizational profile;
- Increase sources of funding and fundraising.

We are a feminist organization that believes all women have a human right to live without violence.

To achieve this, women must have equal power in their personal lives and in society. We will work for women's equality by challenging discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, religion, class and other forms of oppression.

(SACHA 2006)

Vision and Mission

Vision

A world free of violence and oppression, where women have achieved equality.

Mission

SACHA is a feminist, non-profit organization of women operating within an anti-racist and anti-oppression framework. Through our programmes we will:

- Provide services to women who have experienced sexual violence at any point in their lives.
- Use a gender-based analysis of violence against women.
- Work to end violence against women through education, advocacy, coalition building, community partnerships and activism.
- Work to eliminate barriers that prevent women's equality.
- Work towards the equitable inclusion of all women.

SACHA will challenge social and political structures and systems that contribute to violence, oppression, and exploitation of women.

Context and Commitment

Context

SACHA acknowledges that on a global scale women experience multiple forms of violence and have unequal rights. We understand that it is not possible to look at the experience of sexual violence in isolation of other issues women struggle with on a day to day basis such as; income security, food security, homelessness, stress related to immigration and status, racism, ableism, homophobia and other forms of oppression.

Our Feminism

As a feminist organization we understand that our centering feminism as a framework for providing our services may be perceived by some as a barrier to all women accessing or feeling comfortable using SACHA's services. It is to that end that we share what our feminism is about. Our feminism is about the right to live free from violence and abuse and that all women equally share in that right. It is the right for women to be supported in the choices they make and that choices are made available to all women. It is about respecting the need for family and the importance of the men that women value in their lives as husbands, partners, brothers, nephews, and sons. It is about respecting and celebrating difference, acknowledging and working to end oppression and discrimination. It is about access to services that make sense to women, creating services and supports that reflect and respect various cultural, community and religious values and beliefs. Our feminism acknowledges that there are many forms of feminism, womanism and woman centred, woman-led movements around the world all of which are valuable. Our feminism is about critically looking at what we do, why we do it and learning about ways to do it better.

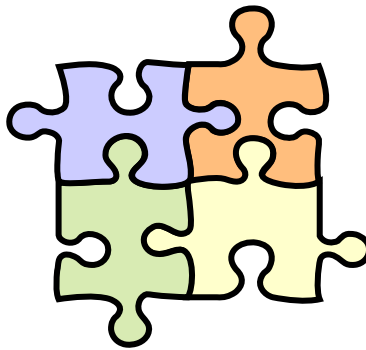
Commitment

SACHA will continue to provide safe, respectful and responsible services and supports to our service users. We will be accountable and responsive to women's needs and the needs in the larger community.

Strategic Directions

Four strategic directions will guide the work of SACHA over the next three years.

Renewal Growth Awareness



1. Strengthen our core.

The core of SACHA is our people, our structure, systems, processes and our physical site. We understand that in order to achieve our strategic directions we must first ensure that our core is strong. SACHA is committed to remaining an organization with equitable and inclusive practices that fosters the growth and development of its human resources. We are committed to internal review and assessment ensuring that our practices are in line with our mission.

SACHA will review, document and strengthen our collective model of management to ensure transparency, access and inclusivity for all staff. We will build the capacity of volunteers, staff and the Management Committee through training and development. We will better utilize the existing skill sets of our staff and volunteers to create a learning organizational environment. We will review and enhance our policies, procedures, systems and foundation documents to support our vision, mission and strategic directions. We will strive to ensure none of our organizational activities isolate or marginalize women within the SACHA structure. We will undertake an assessment of our current physical space to ensure it meets our needs and allows us to carry out our work.

2. Enhance and expand programs and services to increase accessibility and reduce barriers for racialized and marginalized groups.

SACHA has been a leader in the community creating new and innovative programs that reflect the needs of racialized and marginalized women. We understand and accept that we can do better. The need for programs and services that respond effectively and appropriately to the complex and layered issue of sexual violence in a holistic way within an integrated anti-racist anti-oppression framework is significant. SACHA acknowledges that there are significant gaps in service for women with disAbilities, immigrant and refugee women, women of colour, transwomen, sex workers, women with addictions, girls, young women, older women and men seeking sexual violence services.

We will enhance our capacity to monitor, document and evaluate all of our current programs and services. SACHA will determine program and service priorities based on established need, identified gaps and our capacity to respond. SACHA will improve our efforts to consult with the women we serve, racialized and marginalized women in community, sector allies and racial/ethno-culturally specific organizations serving women to ensure their needs are better addressed. We will continue the expansion of the Diverse Communities Outreach Programme, the Public Education Programme and look for ways to diversify and enhance direct counseling services. In addition we will explore and pursue additional opportunities for family, youth, girls and men's programming.

3. Raise community awareness and organizational profile.

SACHA and the issue of sexual violence are well known and understood within the violence against women and allied sectors. However, we have identified that awareness of SACHA as an organization and an understanding of the issue of sexual violence against women does not necessarily extend out to the broader mainstream and secular community. We recognize that it is our responsibility to ensure that SACHA is known as an essential community service and the issue of sexual violence, workplace harassment, rape as an act of war and childhood sexual abuse is present in the public discourse.

We will work with community partners, coalitions and allies to participate in public policy consultation to ensure that sexual violence and women's equality rights agendas move forward. SACHA will develop and implement an awareness campaign to get our message out and direct people to our organization. We have made a commitment to make ourselves more visible in forums, arenas and public spaces where our presence has been lacking.

4. Increase sources of funding and fundraising.

As a non-profit organization, SACHA must depend on a variety of funding sources to sustain and continue to enhance our programs and services. We have identified that due to the current social and political environment in which SACHA operates we understand that some of these sources have or will become less reliable.

SACHA will develop new funding opportunities to increase our current funding base. We will develop and implement a fund development strategy with the goal of achieving secure, sustainable funding relationships; acquiring new public and private funding sources and increasing our revenues. We will also seek to generate revenue engaging the private sector through our Public Education Programme. As part of these processes SACHA will also review our branding and marketing strategies and undertake initiatives aimed at better promoting the organization and the issue of sexual violence.¹

¹ The text for strategic directions two and four was adapted from a sister agency Nellie's Strategic Plan 2007-2009, Adobe Consulting Services and DA Falconer and Associates. Like SACHA, Nellie's makes a solid commitment in policy and practice to meet the needs of multiply marginalized women.

Appendix

Our Services

We provide support to adults, primarily women, who have experienced sexual violence at any time in their lives. Services are confidential and free of charge. We respect the right to safety and privacy.

We attempt to respond to the needs of all women. We recognize women are diverse in their racial or ethno-cultural background, sexual orientation, physical or intellectual abilities, and other experiences. We will provide information and support so women may make their own choices and decisions.

Support services are for women 16 years of age and older

We provide support to male survivors of sexual violence through our 24-hour Support Line.

Appropriate referrals will be offered to those who are not within the scope of our services.

24HourSupportLine

The Crisis/Support Programme (CSP) offers a free, confidential and anonymous 24-hour telephone support line to survivors of sexual violence/child sexual abuse and their family, partners or friends. CSP also offers accompaniment services for women, 16 years of age or older to the:

- Hospital's sexual assault care centre
- Police station when reporting either a recent or past sexual assault/abuse

We offer assistance with transportation if required.

Counselling&Advocacy

The Counselling and Advocacy Programme (C&AP) offers confidential support services for women, 16 years of age and older, who have experienced sexual violence at any point in their lives.

C&AP's services include:

- Individual counselling
- Group counselling - open and closed groups.
- Drop-in services – Thursday s noon to 3 pm
- Information and referral appointments
- Advocacy
- Accompaniment to sexual assault related appointments
- Anonymous reporting to police
- Practical assistance (childcare, bus tickets)

C&AP seeks to offer supports that are responsive to the diverse needs of women. Cultural interpretation and American Sign Language interpretation are available upon request.

DiverseCommunitiesOutreach

The Diverse Communities Outreach Programme (DCOP) offers supportive programming for women from Hamilton's diverse racial and cultural communities, in particular women who are Aboriginal, immigrant, or refugees. DCOP services include:

- Women-Helping-Women groups in a variety of languages.

Communities that have been involved in the past include:

- Vietnamese
- Spanish-speaking
- Serbo-Croatian
- Arabic-speaking
- Canadian Aboriginal and Métis
- Zimbabwean
- Farsi Speaking
- South Asian
- Filipino

- Individual support
- Information and referral
- Advocacy and accompaniment
- Community events, including the annual International Women's Day annual event in March
- Practical assistance (childcare, bus tickets)

DCOP seeks to offer supports that are responsive to the diverse needs of women. Cultural interpretation and American Sign Language interpretation are available upon request.

Public Education

The Public Education Programme (PEP) offers educational presentations and training workshops on issues related to sexual violence and woman abuse. PEP services include:

-One-on-one or group sessions. Topics include:

- Sexual assault, childhood sexual abuse
- Dating violence, date rape, rape drugs
- Sexual Harassment
- Violence against women with disAbilities
- Anti-oppression

-Presentations in Arabic and Spanish

- Community events, including the annual Take Back the Night event in September

PEP seeks to offer supports that are responsive to the diverse needs of women. Cultural interpretation and American Sign Language interpretation are available upon request