

SARAH Volunteer Recruitment Info Sheet

www.survivors-hope.ca

Survivor's Hope Crisis Centre Inc. is a charitable organization that actively addresses the issues of sexualized violence and relationship abuse in eastern Manitoba. Approximately 40,000 people live in eastern Manitoba, covering 35,000 square kilometres. We are the only organization in the region offering sexual assault crisis intervention programming. Survivor's Hope maintains a dedicated group of sexual assault crisis intervention workers who are called on to provide support to victims of sexualized violence, whether that violence happened yesterday or years ago. We connect with victims when we are called out by RCMP or hospital ER staff. We also provide drop-in support at our two offices.

RCMP open between 80 and 100 sexual assault files in the region annually. Two thirds of these cases originate in our First Nation's communities. Given that only 6 to 10% of sexual assaults are ever reported to authorities we estimate hundreds of incidences of sexual violence go unreported in our region annually. Our SARAH Program meets the needs of victims whenever needed 24/7 and has been operating in the region since 2003.

A SARAH volunteer is compassionate and non-judgmental, with the ability to think on her feet and work well with other service providers (i.e. RCMP, hospital staff).

All SARAH volunteers are required to complete 40 hours of sexual assault crisis intervention training. The majority of training takes place in Pinawa (5 sessions) with one additional session in Winnipeg. Volunteers are also expected to attend the regular May and June SARAH in-services for all volunteers with the program.

Our next training sessions will take place over four weekends. Weekend training dates are: **April 16 & 17** (Saturday & Sunday), **April 24** (Sunday), **April 30 & May 1** (Saturday and Sunday), and **May 14** (Saturday). Trainees must attend all weekend sessions. Beyond initial training the volunteer is required to attend at least 50% +1 scheduled SARAH in-services during the year, and one listening shift at Klinik in Winnipeg. Volunteer in-services are scheduled once a month in Beausejour and Powerview Pine Falls. Volunteers generally attend the meetings in their community but can attend meetings at either of the locations.

While the training is provided free of charge to the volunteer there is considerable cost to the organization to train volunteers. The expectation is that the trained volunteers will stay with the program for at least one year in exchange for training. The training certificate will be awarded to you after one year of volunteer service.

There is an established sexual assault protocol for the region, monitored and maintained primarily by the SARAH Program. The sexual assault protocol describes the roles and responsibilities of those service providers generally involved in the support of victims of sexual violence - SARAH, RCMP, CFS, IERHA Hospital staff (nurses, nurse examiners, doctors). It is important that the SARAH volunteer become familiar with protocol so that she can provide guidance to those services she encounters during a call out. The SARAH volunteer on a call out is the eyes and ears of the Executive Director for the program and reports back to the program after every call out.

A SARAH volunteer called out to support a victim offers emotional support as well as information on support services in the region. While being compassionate and understanding the volunteer is required to assess a number of things - such as suicidality, safety plans, sexual assault trauma, child welfare, mental health, etc. These topics are covered in training and are reviewed throughout the year at our SARAH meetings.

Call outs can be intense, usually lasting three to six hours. Our relationship with the victim is brief but very important. It is our job to start the victim out on a healthy path to recovery. Our motto is "**I believe you, it is not your fault, I will support you any way that I can.**" We are crisis intervention workers, not therapists or counsellors. The victim is encouraged to seek further support from other systems in the region. After the initial call out a program worker will follow up with the client by phone to answer any questions at that time.

There is an application process to become a SARAH volunteer. The application process must be completed at least one week prior to the start of training. The process includes two interviews, completion of the application form, 2 reference checks, criminal records/vulnerable sector check provided through RCMP, a child abuse registry check, and adult abuse registry check. There are also policies that need to be reviewed and acknowledged: confidentiality, conflict of interest and diversity/anti-racism. The application process must be completed by April 8th.

For more information call 204-753-5353, email holly@survivors-hope.ca, drop by our Powerview Pine Falls office Monday afternoons at Winnipeg River Learning Centre, or drop by our Pinawa office (call first) Monday to Thursday at Lewis Business Centre.

Holly Parcey
Executive Director