SSAIC

SASKATOON
SEXUAL ASSAULT
& INFORMATION
CENTRE

2020-2021 ANNUAL REPORT

2020-21 Annual Report

SSAIC

Saskatoon Sexual Assault
& Information Centre

"Working with Survivors of Past and Recent Sexual Violence"

Mission

SSAIC exists to be the primary provider of community leadership in addressing sexualized violence. We provide counselling and survivor services to survivors of sexualized violence and education and prevention services to the Saskatoon community.

Vision

SSAIC aspires to be part of a community in which individuals impacted by sexualized violence are believed and offered services to assist their healing, perpetrators of sexualized violence are held accountable for their actions, and future victims are protected. Together, we can mobilize to share responsibility for addressing sexualized violence to ensure that coordinated and evidence-based services related to sexualized violence are fully resourced.

Message from the Board of Directors

As Co-Chairs of the SSAIC Board of Directors, we are honored to support the work of the SSAIC staff who demonstrate excellence and commitment to serving the needs of survivors of sexual violence in our community. This year, we are especially proud of their superb dedication to providing high-quality, front-line service during the COVID-19 pandemic. We wish to thank the outstanding Executive Director, Faye Davis, and each SSAIC staff member for their professional and compassionate service to our community and survivors.

We are grateful for the ongoing financial support from the Ministry of Justice, Community Safety and Well-Being Branch through the Interpersonal Violence and Abuse Program and Specialized Victims Services funding; United Way of Saskatoon; City of Saskatoon Collaborative Funders Partnership Grant; Women and Gender Equity Canada; and Canadian Women's Foundation. We thank the Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools and Saskatoon Public School Division for their support of our "I'm the Boss of Me" program, as well as each and every individual donation from our community. We also acknowledge the support of the Saskatoon Community Service Village, which celebrates their 20th anniversary this year.

This year the BOD was able to undertake and complete our committee work plans by conducting our monthly meetings via video conference. BOD professional development was enhanced by the innovative programs developed and delivered by SSAIC staff, as well as by presentations from BOD members on topics in their areas of expertise. Our joint board member and staff committees implemented a number of successful new initiatives, including the establishment of an Indigenous Engagement Committee, an identified priority by both the BOD and staff. This committee worked to create terms of reference and sought the guidance of an Elder in the community, while the standing committees continued to innovate and revise BOD policies. This year we said goodbye to three members of our board, and welcomed six new members. We wish to thank all members of our voluntary board for their expert contributions and demonstrated commitment to the work of SSAIC.

Respectfully submitted,
Ev Burnett and Elise Matthews, Co-Chairs

Message from the Executive Director

One cannot report on this year without discussing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on our agency and community this year. We've worked tirelessly to smoothly transition our services while still adhering to the principles of ethical service provision. We developed new online resources and training programs, held virtual groups and meetings, and continuously delivered our counselling services remotely. While this year has been challenging, the need to think creatively has provided a positive push to evolve our services in ways we may not have. We won't simply return to business as usual post-pandemic; we will combine the best pieces of our prior work with our new programs to create a better-than-ever SSAIC.

I need to thank the staff of SSAIC who worked tirelessly all year, showed each other grace, and supported each other on those difficult "I can't do this anymore" days. Our Board of Directors are also second to none; these talented and committed community members supported me through countless critical decisions taken to keep our staff and clients safe. To our clients - thank-you for your understanding this past year. You've been gracious, patient, and kind to our staff and we can't thank you enough.

I owe a debt of gratitude to each of our funders, whose financial and emotional support never waivered. Last but not least, I want to thank our donors, both new and recurring; the donations we received this year far exceeded our expectations. The love and support we felt from the community and each and every donor provided a bright light on some of those darker days. Thank-you for your commitment to our work and to the survivors of sexualized violence in our community.

Respectfully submitted,
Faye Davis, Executive Director

Client Services Report

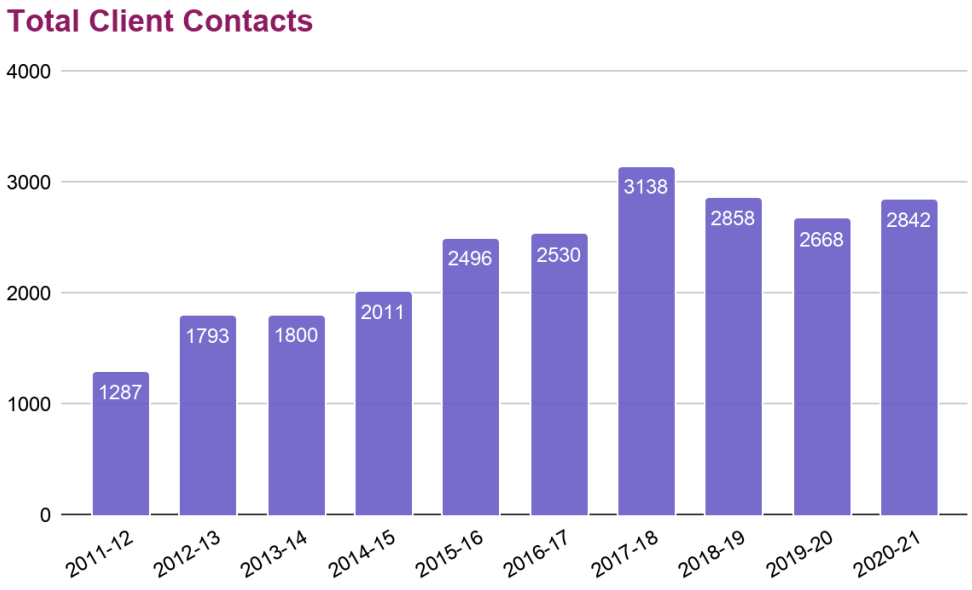
SSAIC offers free counselling and support services for survivors of sexualized violence (sexual abuse, sexual assault, and sexual harassment) and secondary survivors (a loved one who feels impacted by the survivor's experience). Our trauma-informed services are available to all people age 12 and older*. All genders, sexual orientations, ethnicities, cultural identities, creeds, and religions are welcome. We support survivors of recent sexual violence as well as violence that had occured in the past or in childhood.

We use a client-centred, empowering approach where the client is the expert on their needs. We never investigate the validity of anyones experience and we support client choice regarding medical care and the involvement of the legal system. Our goal is to support clients in recovering from the impacts of sexualized violence, which may include feelings of anger, sadness, shame, and anxiety. We work with clients by providing them with tools to manage and hopefully eliminate impacts to their physical and emotional health so that their overall well-being is improved.

We believe survivors and believe in their ability to heal from the trauma of experiencing sexualized violence.

The past year has been unprecedented as the COVID-19 pandemic changed the lives of people worldwide. Staff and clients of SSAIC demonstrated courage, grace, innovation, and perseverance while tending to the impacts of sexualized violence as well the pandemic. SSAIC clients were supported by the expertise and dedication of our Client Services Team, including our newest team member, Joelle Remezoff.

In the midst of adapting to telephone, virtual, distanced, and masked services, the Client Services Team provided crisis, counselling, and support services to **401 new clients** as well as **199 continuing clients** from previous years. Counsellors also provided an additional **165 information calls and referrals** for a total of **765 people served**. SSAIC provided **2,376 follow-up services**, including crisis support and individual and group counselling for a **total of 2,942 contacts** with survivors of sexualized violence and their support persons. **1,200** of those contacts were provided to adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse, making up **50.5%** of our counselling work load.



**SSAIC does not serve perpetrators of sexualized violence.*

"The SSAIC changed my life. It gave me the support I needed to heal and move forward. I feel like a stronger person because of it." - Survivor of Adult Sexual Assault

"Navigating the mental healthcare system is not easy...however, my experiences with the SSAIC have been remarkable. Every single person I met there was compassionate beyond belief and the counsellors I worked with were amazing listeners. Listening is just one part and the counselors were able to help me find practical solutions to the problems I encountered. I have learned invaluable lessons and feel so incredibly grateful that I was able to participate in the amazing things that the SSAIC is doing." - Adult Survivor of Child Sexual Abuse

In response to the pandemic, in-person group programming was suspended for the majority of this fiscal year. During this time, staff developed alternative online resources for survivors, including 9 **Virtual Group Sessions** as well as 3 Grounding and Visualization Videos, all of which were **viewed a total of 548 times.** In-person group programming resumed for a short time at reduced capacity: we were able to deliver an **8-week Women's Group** and a **7-week Teen Group**. Our **Trauma-Informed Yoga** was adapted to a virtual format and delivered twice for a total of **14 classes** in 2020-2021. A total of **39 clients** attended these in person and virtual group offerings.

"The small group made it easier to get comfortable with the others in the group. It was a great escape during this time. It helped me grow, learn, and socialize safely." - Women's Group Participant

"It brought me peace in a safe space. I felt comfortable enough to cry if I needed to. I'm more interested in yoga and want to continue it as it makes me feel more confident and in control of my body. I felt I belonged and was comfortable in the group and felt less alone." - Trauma-Informed Yoga Participant

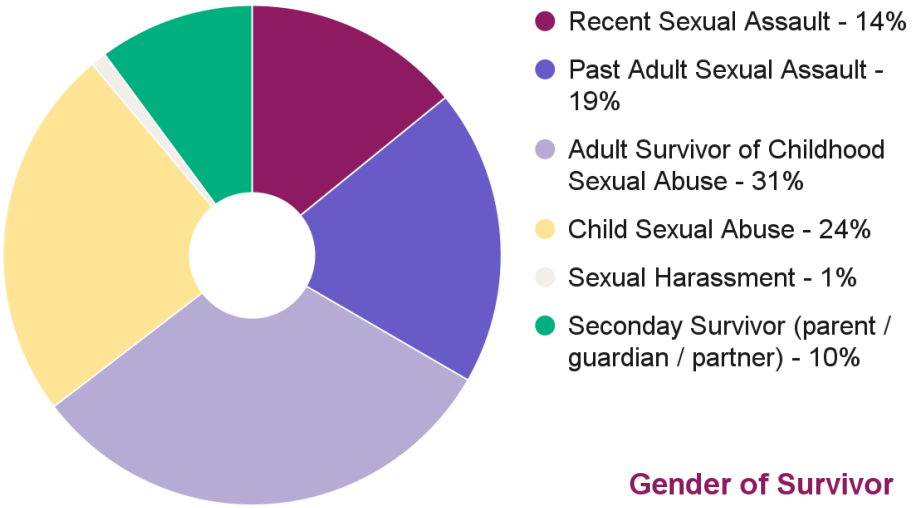
I'm grateful for all of the agencies who contribute to providing high-quality services to those impacted by sexualized violence in our community. Thanks to Saskatoon Crisis Intervention Service and their staff who once again provided after hours coverage of our 24-Hour Crisis Line. Your care and expertise are appreciated. Thank-you to all SSAIC staff for the warmth and excellence you bring to this work every day and for the extra efforts made to support survivors of sexualized violence this past year.

Respectfully submitted,
Megan Sawyer, Client Services Coordinator

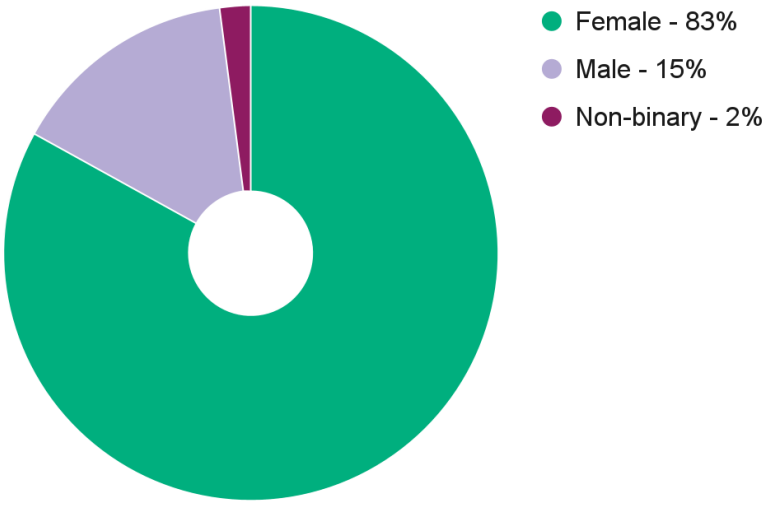
Statistics of New Clients in 2020-21

(Note: Many clients report experiencing multiple sexual instances of sexualized violence across the lifespan; this is not reflected the below data)

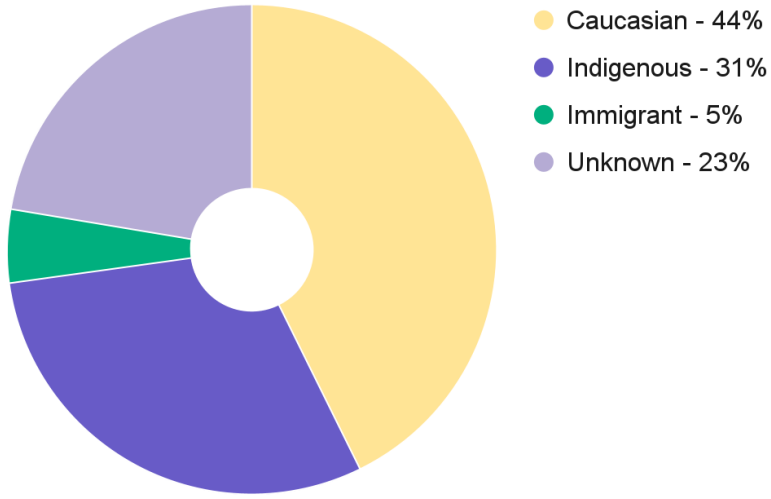
Type of Sexualized Violence



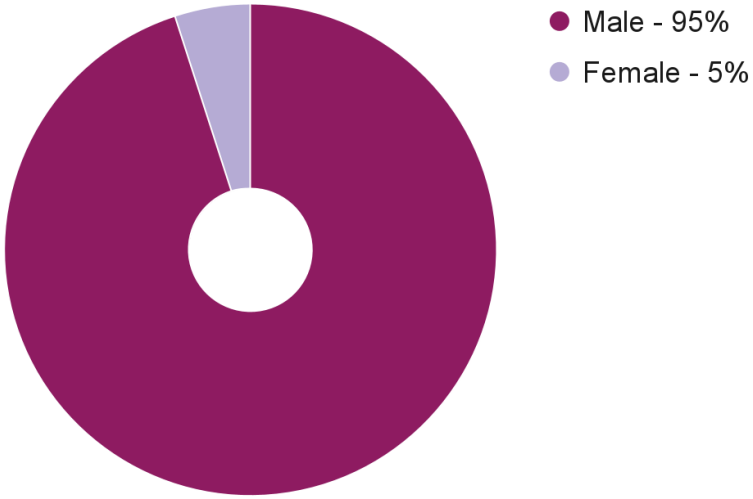
Gender of Survivor



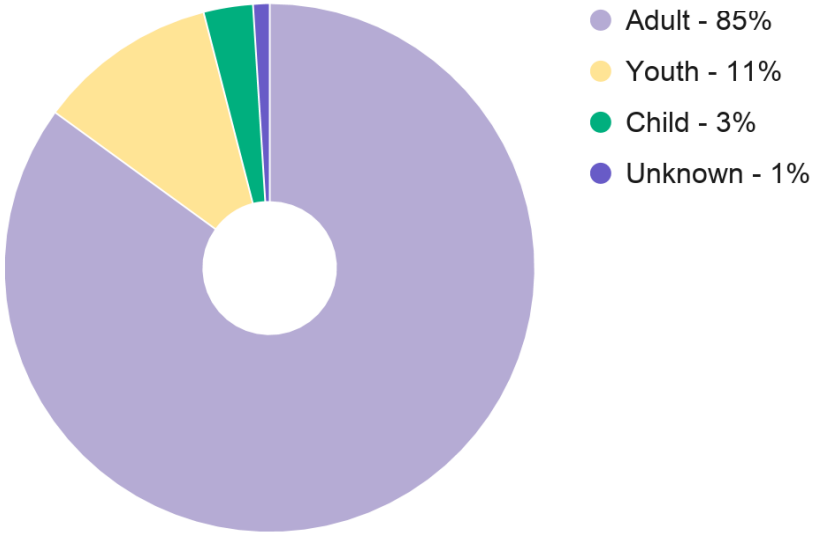
Cultural Status of Survivor



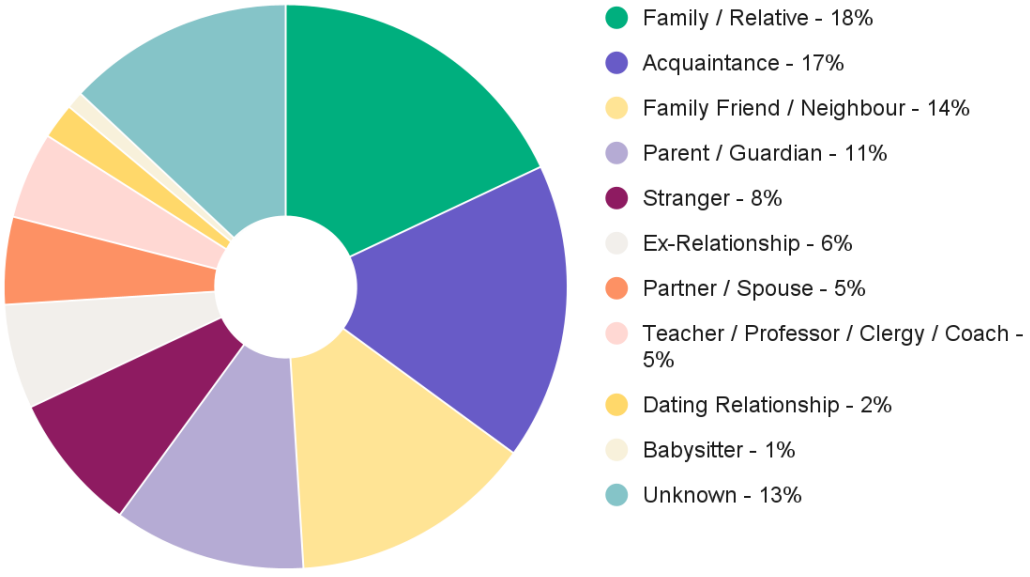
Gender of the Offender



Age of Offender



Relationship to Survivor



Education Report

With the move to virtual operations for the entirety of this fiscal, the way we delivered our public education had to evolve and adapt. SSAIC took this opportunity to branch into the digital world and expand our public education services in several ways, successfully delivering **339+ hours of public education in the midst of a global pandemic; the most SSAIC has ever achieved.**

Our child sexual abuse prevention and education program for Grade 4 students, **"I'm the Boss of Me"** (ITBOM), also required adaptation to a virtual modality. We were successful in the delivery of our 15th season of the program utilizing video conferencing tools, a high-quality recording of the puppet show, and as always, a dedicated group of volunteer facilitators.

- We presented to **126 classrooms**, an increase from last season.
- We booked presentations in **100%** of Saskatoon Public Schools (a goal we'd never before reached), including affiliate school Charles Red Hawk (48 of 48), **37%** of Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools (16 of 43), and Saskatoon Christian School.
- We operated with a dedicated team of **7** volunteer facilitators, one part-time program assistant, and one full-time program coordinator.
- We were able to reach **2,885 students** in our ten weeks of shows (our highest yet!), and have now presented our puppet show to over **31,000** Grade 4 students since 2007.

This virtual modality of presenting ITBOM has permanently impacted the way we will deliver this programming in the future. We are looking forward to continuing to utilize the videoconferencing tool for schools outside of the Saskatoon city limits, as well as keeping our volunteer circle small and strong. Thank-you to our amazing and adaptive volunteer facilitators this year. Without your dedication to ITBOM, the program would not be a success; we share our gratitude and successes with you. Additionally, thank-you to Don Selby at dms photography for helping to create the ITBOM video with care and polish.

In April 2020, we focused on the development and implementation of a home-grown replacement for "First Responder to Sexual Assault Training," an Albertan program that we previously contracted with them to facilitate. SSAIC's version is titled **"Supporting Survivors of Sexualized Violence Training"** (SST), and is offered in both a full-day interactive training as well as a condensed two-hour lecture-style presentation. The same concepts are communicated in both versions, and participants of both versions receive a Participant Manual to record their thoughts and keep the learnings long after the training. We were able to provide **4 training sessions** this fiscal (2 two-hour trainings and 2 full-day trainings) to a total of **66 participants** in our community who may work with or support survivors of sexualized violence.

In addition to our static programming, SSAIC provided 30 presentations to 799 various community members and professionals in Saskatoon, including service users, university students, community organization staff, and legal professionals. Many of these presentations were part of a new initiative called the **Online Learning Workshop Series**, wherein each season brought a fresh series of free webinars available to the public on topics related to sexualized violence (think "Understanding Sexualized Violence", "Consent 101", and "Sexualized Violence in the Classroom"). The recordings of these webinars have reached an additional 325 viewers, bringing our total reach to **1,124 community members that learned about sexualized violence**.

Outreach & Fund Development Report

As a new position to SSAIC, we focused this year on outlining the goals of an Outreach Coordinator with SSAIC and worked on designing action steps to meet those goals each year. Starting off the year in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, our outreach work looked a little different than we imagined. Most of April was spent tending to our website: updating all of the information, giving it a refresh, and adding in newly developed content. Priorities were streamlining the user experience of the website, drawing more traffic to this resource, and making both finding information and donating to SSAIC as simple as possible.

Together with the counselling team, **The Survivor's Toolkit** was developed and added to our website late April to provide our clients with a sense of connection to SSAIC during lockdown. Shortly thereafter, the Virtual Group Sessions were filmed and added to this resource to give our clients (and client services team) a sense of normalcy associated with attending our groups.

Empty halls in the Saskatoon Community Service Village also provided us an opportunity to create a **Virtual Office Walkthrough**, a video that would allow future clients and visitors to see our office before accessing our building for the first time.

May brought us **Sexual Assault Awareness Week**, and we went full steam ahead with our planned campaign and merchandise launch. Highlighting three themes that we hear constantly in our line of work ("Believe", "Resilience", and "Non-Consensual Sex"), SSAIC designed and debuted t-shirts, mugs, and a social media campaign featuring art based around these themes. This campaign was received with incredible positivity and the merchandise continues to spread awareness more than a year later.

Another goal identified for the Outreach Coordinator was to build strong relationships with other community agencies and nonprofits, which also became more challenging as agencies focused their time on adjusting their

services in response to the pandemic. Despite the barriers, SSAIC staff received three presentations from other community groups: police-based Victim Services, the Saskatoon Police Service, and a joint presentation from the Parole Board of Canada and Correctional Services Canada. We also attended two virtual information fairs: USSU Sexual Violence Awareness Week and USSU Pride Centre Sex Week. Several of our public education presentations were co-presented with fellow community service providers related to the world of sexualized violence, including a police officer, a crown prosecutor, a director of a safe house, and educators from fields such as HIV awareness, sexual health, inclusivity, and more.

Victims & Survivors of Crime Week 2020 was postponed to November this year and adapted to a virtual event. SSAIC hosted a discussion with Sgt. James Repesse from the Saskatoon Police Service, who answered questions regarding the reporting and investigations processes of sexualized violence, and we shared a pre-recorded webinar with Board Member and Crown Prosecutor Linh Lê on the prosecution side of sexualized violence. We also launched one of our new resources, "What to Expect when Reporting a Sexual Assault", during Victims & Survivors of Crime Week 2020.

For years, SSAIC has attempted to find and retain loyal donors without a consistently-implemented plan. This fall and winter, SSAIC focused on establishing a **Loyal Donor Recognition & Retention Program** with the goal of finding, engaging, and retaining at least 300 individual donors who donate to us repeatedly and believe in our mission and work. This program is built upon three pillars: donor recognition, donor reporting, and donor "asks". The design of this program was completed in time to meet our goal rollout date of April 1st, 2021. We hope that, over time, this program will foster a closer relationship between SSAIC and our donors. In this pandemic year, our donors were incredibly supportive, donating a total of **$37,915** to SSAIC to ensure that we could continue our work. We are so grateful for your generosity and we commit to always use this money for survivors wisely.

Communications Report

Like most of our programming, our communications efforts experienced a huge shift as a result of the pandemic. In the early stages of this fiscal year, SSAIC's website was fully refreshed and updated, ensuring we were offering the most up-to-date information to our community. We utilized a newly developed online store to begin marketing our merchandise in May, as well as automating the selling of registrations to our "Supporting Survivors of Sexualized Violence Training". Our website averaged **2298** users per month and saw a total of **30,667** unique users and **117,706** page visits this year; a **345% increase** in use compared to last fiscal year. Interestingly, several of our top performing webpages were newly created or updated in this fiscal and highlighted through our social media pages. Our newsletters and blog became standardized this year as well, and featured on our homepage. At **1059**, our subscriber list saw an increase of **301** new subscribers this fiscal year.

Our social media accounts also saw some new strategies, as well as a new platform. Our Instagram account was launched in April 2020, and now has a total of **713** followers and a **6,013** unique reach. Our Facebook account continued to grow during quarantine, reaching a total of **2,209** followers (**479** new) and **215,988** unique users (a **137% increase** from this time last year). With the help of four design volunteers, we began creating original content for SSAIC's social media platforms, website, and newsletter through Canva. This allows SSAIC to completely customize our content, messaging, and branding to create a cohesive agency voice.

The final area of our communications and outreach work that SSAIC put a focus on this fiscal year is our resource development. We shared approximately 385 paper resources with our community partners, with another 122 of these resources downloaded from our website, bringing this total to **507 shared resources** without seeing clients in our space for the majority of the year. Throughout the year, we developed four new resources to add to our electronic and printed repertoire:

1. **The Survivor's Toolkit**: created during the early stages of lockdown to provide support from afar, this digital tool includes downloadable versions of our most-utilized resources and tools for survivors. Racking up a total of **3,909 downloads** this fiscal year, tools inside include a trigger log (474 downloads), a list of coping strategies (403 downloads), a description of trauma and the nervous system (335 downloads), a flashbacks factsheet (292 downloads), and an infosheet on dissociation (244 downloads), to name a few.
2. **Parenting a Child who has been Sexually Abused**: created for guardians who are caring for children that have already been victimized. Content includes impacts their child may be experiencing, information on grooming, and how to cope for guardians.
3. **Prevention Work with your Child**: created for guardians who want to help protect their child as much as possible through education and open conversations. Content includes breaking the cycle of grooming, safety tips for the whole family, and the signs of child sexual abuse.
4. **What to Expect when Reporting a Sexual Assault**: designed to answer survivor's most common questions or misconceptions about the criminal justice system and reporting process in Canada.

Thank-you to Cing Zun, Mackenzie Loewen, Madison Prosofsky, and Sumer Stevenson for your volunteer hours, design creativity, and generosity in our pursuit of building an exciting and engaging user experience.

Respectfully submitted,
Morgan Price, Education & Outreach Coordinator

Staff Members

Faye Davis	Executive Director
Katherine Jones	Office Manager
Debbie Gsell-Danilkewich	Office Manager
Megan Sawyer	Client Services Coordinator
Kathie Pruden Nansel	Counsellor
Stephanie Locke	Counsellor
Sarah Pedersen	Counsellor
Morgan Price	Education & Outreach Coordinator
Joelle Remezoff	Intake Counsellor
Jennifer Lake	Assistant Coordinator, “I’m the Boss of Me”
Irene Hildebrandt	HR Payroll Assistant (Term)

Board of Directors

Ev Burnett	Co-Chair of Board & Governance Committee
Elise Matthews	Co-Chair of Board & Governance Committee
Shirley Kloeble	Treasurer & Chair of Finance Committee
Renee Breckner	Chair of Nominations Committee
Meghan Seidle	Chair of Human Resources Committee
Sandra Paulsen	Chair of Fundraising Committee
Linh Lê	Co-Chair of Indigenous Engagement Committee
Tamara Paulsen	Co-Chair of Indigenous Engagement Committee
Blair Weimer	General Member
Marcie Dupuis	General Member
James Repesse	General Member
Sarah Alford	General Member

“I’m the Boss of Me” Volunteer Facilitators

Ashley Voinorosky
Jenny Besenski
Kenzy Horudko
Brittany Eberle
Cing Zun
Lisa Poon
Nikaela Lange
Wandie Velasquez

Funders & Donors

Interpersonal Violence and Abuse Program, Ministry of Justice, Government of Saskatchewan
Specialized Program, Victim Services, Ministry of Justice, Government of Saskatchewan
United Way of Saskatoon & Area
Community Initiatives Fund
Saskatoon Collaborating Funders Partnership Project, City of Saskatoon
Victims and Survivors of Crime Week Grant, Department of Justice, Government of Canada
Capacity Grant, Department of Women and Gender Equity Canada (WAGE), Government of Canada
COVID-19 Emergency Funding Grant, Canadian Women's Foundation, Government of Canada
Saskatoon Public School Division
Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools
& our loyal individual donors – we thank you!