

Herstory

The Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region (SASC), formally known as the Kitchener Waterloo Sexual Assault Support Centre (KWSASC) began in the spring of 1989 with the purpose of establishing a rape crisis centre in Waterloo Region. The Region had been without a rape crisis centre for 11 years since the Waterloo Rape Distress Centre was forced to close when its funding was cut in 1978. Community women began to share ideas for establishing a 24-hour crisis line for women survivors of sexual assault. Many of the women involved were survivors of sexual violence and recognized there was inadequate support for survivors in the area. They were determined to build a strong grass roots based Centre for women that could truly respond to the needs of the community.

Donations were received from individuals in the community. Two pagers and airtime from a message service were also donated. A Crisis and Support Line was established with 10 volunteers working endless shifts during the first eight months.

In June 1990, in response to the massacre of 14 women in Montreal, Mutual Life of Canada (now Clarica) formed an Anti-Violence Committee which donated \$30,000 to SASC to assist in the establishment of the Centre. Office space was rented and a staff person hired. Funding was then received by Ministry of Solicitor General and Correctional Services of Ontario.

There are more than 60 women doing volunteer work for SASC at any given time. Volunteers assist with the Crisis and Support Line, resources and office work, Public Education, committee work and the Board of Directors. As well, we have grown to six full time staff.