



Ontario Coalition of
Rape Crisis Centres

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Media Release: Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres responds to
Premier Wynne's Announcement: *It's Never Okay: An Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and
Harassment*

For Immediate Release: March 6, 2015

The Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres (OCRCC) is pleased to learn of the implementation of an Ontario-wide Action Plan, *It's Never Okay: An Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment*, including initiatives towards sexual violence prevention, education, and increased funding for supports for survivors provided by community partners¹.

OCRCC's membership includes 26 Anglophone sexual assault centres from across Ontario. These centres offer support to survivors of sexual violence and prevention education in local communities: services include counselling to survivors of recent and historical sexual violence, accompaniment to hospital, police and court, advocacy and crisis support. In one year alone, Ontario's sexual assault centres responded to 37,000 crisis line calls.

OCRCC has over 35 years of expertise working to address sexual violence in Ontario. As has been made clear in the announcement of *It's Never Okay: An Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment* today, we know it is a priority for Ontario's government as well. Plans to enhance education on sexual violence, including consent and healthy relationships, and increased resources to improve support for victims² is unprecedented. In the wake of recent high-profile incidences of sexual violence and a deepening awareness of the issue, the needs of sexual violence survivors – and Ontario's support of this population – has never been so timely.

"This initiative is ground-breaking," said Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres Chair Lenore Lukasik-Foss. "We are thrilled with the comprehensive nature of the plan. We look forward to being involved in all aspects of its implementation."

The previous Sexual Violence Action Plan (2011) was based on consultations with women survivors of sexual assault in Sarnia, Sudbury, Toronto, Ottawa, Guelph and Peel. This foundational work provides a strong platform from which to build Ontario's new initiatives—including those announced today.

Sexual assault centres deliver free and confidential crisis, advocacy and ongoing support to survivors of sexual violence throughout all of Ontario. If you or someone you know has been affected by sexual violence, please go to www.sexualassaultsupport.ca or contact the sexual assault centre in your community.

¹ Office of the Premier. March 8, 2015. *It's Never Okay: An Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment*. Online: <http://www.news.ontario.ca/opo/en/2015/03/concrete-measures-to-end-sexual-violence-and-harassment.html>

² Ibid



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