



## Survivors of Abuse Recovering (S.O.A.R.)

*A Community-Based Peer Counselling Service for Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse in Hants, Kings & Annapolis Counties*

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NS Registered Not For Profit Society # 2483696

**Chairs Report 2019**

**October 23, 2019**

**Dear S.O.A.R. Members and Guests,**

I am honored for the opportunity to be part of “Survivors of Abuse Recovering (S.O.A.R.)” and to serve as your Chair of the Board of Directors. This year has been a year of growth, renewed strength and continuing the support of survivors of childhood sexual abuse throughout Nova Scotia.

I recognize the meaningful contributions of the Board of Directors, who put great effort into achieving our goals and moving S.O.A.R. forward, by sharing their talents and adding lasting value to the future growth of S.O.A.R.

Thank you to our Board of Directors; Mardi Burton, Karen Martin, Cathy Vey, Juanita Palmer, Joelle Caplan, Daisy Coleman, Sue McGoldrick, John Moore and Rhonda Young who is now our S.O.A.R. Coordinator. The Board of Directors accepted the resignation of Rhonda Young to allow her to accept the position of Coordinator. Rhonda has focused on engaging peer supporters by attending the monthly Peer Supporter Group, liaised with the Board of Directors, assisted in policy development, maintained a phone tree, keeping members informed of S.O.A.R. activities, creating transparency in our work, as well as taking care of her administrative responsibilities.

In 2019, the Board Of Directors worked tirelessly in revising and clarifying our guiding policies and procedures. The commitment of the Board of Directors to complete the necessary policies prepared us to accept the Department of Health and Wellness grant to continue work in building a community mutual aid network, and peer supporter training. The following policies were accepted and implemented by a membership vote:

- Harassment Prevention and Resolution
- Code of Ethics
- Social Media
- Code of Conduct
- Trainer Certification
- Peer Supporter Certification
- Volunteer Enlistment

The Board of Directors contracted Asha Croggan as the project manager of the Mutual Aid Services Project. The project is well underway with four organizations joining the

Mutual Aid Service Project prior to the summer hiatus. Additionally, Asha will lead the working group of Rita vanVulpen, Karen Martin, Rena Huntley and Rhonda Young to completion of a Peer Supporter Trainee Manual. The first draft of the manual is projected for delivery in November 2019.

In June 2019, Sue McGoldrick was posted to Ontario and the Board accepted her resignation. Sue put in a great deal of energy in the development and implementation of our policies, supporting peers in the Windsor area and offered the PC meeting at Seerenity Acres Family Ranch, where horses are used as a resource for therapy.

The Board of Directors reluctantly accepted the resignation of Karen Martin, Joelle Caplan, and Mardi Burton as their terms of office were completed. This is a grave loss to the Board of Directors. Karen Martin has been a source of strength and a wealth of knowledge, holding multiple roles within S.O.A.R. Mardi Burton has been a guiding force as Board Chair for the past four years and one year as Past Chair and facilitated a monthly support group. Joelle Caplan, as a retired Psychologist and private practitioner has brought a special perspective to the Board of Directors and we will miss her thoughts and knowledge of adult survivors.

As we look to the future, some of our key priorities for the coming year include:  
Completion of the Mutual Aid project in building a community support network.  
Providing a Refresher Peer Supporter training, which is part of our commitment to ongoing training and quality peer support.  
Recruitment of new peer supporters by providing peer supporter training that is planned for mid 2020.  
Increase the number of peer supporters on the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors will continue planning our 2019/2020 goals and encourage you to attend our November 6, 2019 meeting. Meetings are always open and take place the first Wednesday of the month at 6:00 pm at Open Arms.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I thank all peer supporters and members for your dedication to S.O.A.R. and I look forward to serving you in the coming year.

**Warm regards,**

**Sheri Dawson, Chair  
S.O.A.R.**

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