

Recommendations to the Review of Yukon's Police Force

November 2010

Submitted by: Yukon Sexual Assault Response Team

Canada Justice Victim Services Program, Medical profession, Yukon Government Victim Services, YG Women's Directorate, YG Family and Children Services, and Kaushee's Place, Yukon Women's Transition Home Society. Yukon

Please note: The RCMP and Canada Justice Federal Public Prosecution Services representatives on SART did not participate in the November SART meeting with the Review of Yukon's Police Force Co-Chairs, and are excluded from this document.

The Yukon Sexual Assault Team consists of government and non-government workers that respond or offer services to victims of sexualized assault.

Recommendations from SART to improve police service dealing with sexual assault complaints:

1. Create a designated team of RCMP officers with specific training in how to respond to victims of sexual assaults including; interviewing of children, youth, persons with FASD and other mental health disabilities.
2. The RCMP designated team be trained to respond to all sexualized assaults in the Yukon with the intention to increase the capacity for police to provide professional and informed responses to sexual assault victims in the communities.
3. When RCMP are conducting interviews of sexual assault complainants, offer victims a soft room. A soft room offers more space, comfortable chairs, good lighting, and does not have the cold institutional ambience of an "M" division interview room.
4. From the team of designated and trained RCMP offer the victim a choice of female or male officers to interview and investigate, in uniform or plain clothed.
5. RCMP to clarify the role of VAV's as in other jurisdictions, support workers and/or volunteers play an important role in the stability, care and experience of a victim. We recommend bringing a Victim Assistant Volunteer to support and be available to the victim and/or family members. They will ensure that the victim has basic needs met such as other clothes to change into if theirs are being entered into evidence, a safe ride home and safe place to stay, referral to other agencies such as Kaushee's Place.
6. Make available sexual assault evidence kits (sometimes referred to as "rape kits") that have integrated all of the recommendation and co coordinate training for first responders in the collection and storage of evidence. Provide training for all officers on the use and procedure for the "Kits on Ice".
7. Ensure RCMP has resources to send a designate to participate consistently on the SART team, and to relay the work, actions and collaboration to other RCMP they work with.