



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, July 21st, 2020

WAVAW Rape Crisis Centre Launches WAVAW Connect – an Online Text and Chat Service for Survivors of Sexualized Violence

(Vancouver, BC) — WAVAW Rape Crisis Centre is pleased to announce the launch of **WAVAW Connect**, a text and online chat support tool that allows survivors of sexualized violence to receive accessible and confidential crisis support. The innovative new resource will act as an extension of WAVAW's existing Crisis and Information Line. WAVAW Connect will remove barriers that survivors of sexualized violence face when picking up the phone to seek emotional support, information on WAVAW's programs and services, and referrals to community resources.

"The COVID-19 Pandemic brought to light the various obstacles that survivors may face in calling our Crisis Line. Obstacles like living with the person who has harmed them, or being surrounded by family members who may not affirm their gender identity," says Dalya Israel, WAVAW's Executive Director. "The online disinhibition fostered by WAVAW Connect provides a buffer for shame, increases privacy, and creates an inroad for survivors to access critical support services.

WAVAW Connect Features:

- Text and online chat service available Monday – Friday 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM.
- Safe, accessible platform with encrypted technology ensuring conversations are confidential and secure.
- Trained Victim Service Workers provide emotional support, information about WAVAW's programs and services and community referrals
- Available to all survivors ages +14 with shared experiences of gendered-oppression including cis and trans women and all trans, non-binary and Two-Spirit survivors.

WAVAW's Executive Director, Dalya Israel, encourages folks across Metro Vancouver to share WAVAW Connect widely with their networks. "Supporting survivors is a shared social responsibility, and survivors deserve access to the support they need when they need it.

WAVAW Connect provides survivors of sexualized violence with a secure, supportive tool that will connect them with immediate support. If you've been harmed, we are here for you."

WAVAW Connect

Text (604) 245-2425

Chat Online: www.wavaw.ca/connect

**WAVAW's 24-Hour Crisis Line is Available
Nation-wide: 604-255-6344**

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