

# Peer Support



**CHINOOK SEXUAL  
ASSAULT CENTRE**

## What is it?

Peer support is a supportive relationship between people who have a common lived experience providing an opportunity to connect with another person who has dealt with similar problems, or is perhaps still doing so. The focus is sharing knowledge and experiences, providing a sense of empowerment through an emotional and practical lens. **Peer support is not about counselling or giving advice**, but about sharing openly and honestly, and together learning from each person's experiences. Peer support members all commit to the equal involvement and participation. The experience builds confidence and self-esteem, provides an opportunity to help each other through your collective wisdom and care.

## Why Peer Support Groups?

Peer support increases hope, control and skills to effect positive changes in life. Peer Support Groups help people feel less alone and more understood. Members act as role models for each other. It can be beneficial in healing when we see others who are struggling with a similar adversity and are making progress in their lives. This can bring about encouragement and inspiration to better their own situations, thus helping to improve self-esteem and decrease anxiety. Peer support can empower people to work on their own problems. Members share information and receive authentic encouragement back.

A Peer Support Group is a safe place for someone who needs to talk about intensely personal issues, experiences, struggles, and thoughts. For some people, talking to a therapist or physician can be very intimidating as those relationships tend to place more power with the professional. In a Peer Support Group, members are equals; this can allow people to feel much more comfortable opening up about their situation.

**Chinook Sexual Assault Centre** Peer Support Groups are facilitated by staff, volunteers, or a combination of staff/volunteers. The peer support facilitators provide emotional and social support to participants understanding that each person is unique in their experience and path towards healing. Facilitators give individuals an opportunity and safe space to learn about their concerns, give and receive feedback, share information/knowledge, and have fun. Each peer support varies from group to group, and person to person, each group needs to decide what works for them and be flexible as the needs of the group grow and develop. Peer support facilitators can inspire hope and model the possibility of moving forward from trauma.



## CSAC Peer Support Groups

### Embracing Relationships Woman's Group

8-week psycho-educational peer support group for 18+ female identifying individuals. Dig into the topic of healthy relationships and explore different aspects such as consent, boundaries, trust/respect, communication and self-esteem.

### Asserting Boundaries Woman's Group

8-week psycho-educational peer support group for 18+ female identifying individuals. Dig into the topic of healthy boundaries and assertiveness, exploring each individual's personal boundaries and learn how to set these boundaries without guilt, fear and shame. This group will help to prioritize assertively saying no and welcoming yes on your own terms.

### Woman's Recovery Journey

10-week, psycho-educational peer support group for 18+ female identifying individuals in recovery from addiction after experiencing sexual violence.

### Men's Recovery Journey

10-week, psycho-educational peer support group for 18+ male identifying individuals in recovery from addiction after experiencing sexual violence.

### Hurting to Healing Men's Group

8-week, psycho-educational peer support group for 18+ male identifying individuals. Dig into topics of understanding trauma responses, shame and guilt, boundaries, healthy relationships, male pressures and belief systems.

### Relaciones Positivas (Spanish Group)

Este es un grupo de apoyo para mujeres que han sufrido abuso sexual en el pasado o presente. El propósito del grupo es que las participantes aprendan y discuten temas acerca de las relaciones. Los siguientes tópicos serán incluidos:

Consentimiento, Límites/Zonas, Comunicación, Confianza, Roles, Auto-cuidado, Auto-estima, Sanación/Recuperación.

### Moving Forward

Weekly, 2-hour drop-in group for adult survivors of sexualized violence offering a safe, supportive and caring environment to discuss healing after sexual violence, to learn about the effects of trauma and to give and receive support.

### Friends with Boundaries Peer Support

9-week group for ages 13-17. Youth participate in a psycho-educational peer support group on youth dating abuse allowing them the opportunity to support their friends or notice the signs of abuse before the situation becomes dangerous for themselves. This group teaches early interventions and what healthy relationships look like.

### Finding our Voices

6-week peer support group in partnership with *Sagesse* that provides support and opportunities to connect with peers while focusing on issues related to self esteem. Participants address the impacts of self image, effective communication, shame and compassion all while "Finding our Voices"

### Growth Circle

14-week with *Sagesse* that provides opportunities for women to connect with peers while working through topics of sexual violence, effects of abuse, shame, compassion, creating a healthy support system, building personal power and integrating new skills moving forwards.

## How to Register

Groups have **no cost** to attend. For more information about a particular group, to discuss suitability, or to register for the next available series, please reach out to [admin@csacleth.ca](mailto:admin@csacleth.ca) or call [403-694-1094](tel:403-694-1094) to speak to a System Navigator about intake.

Check our website [www.csacleth.ca](http://www.csacleth.ca) and social media for dates and times



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502, 740 4 Avenue South,  
Lethbridge, AB T1J0N9  
Tel: 403-694-1094  
Toll Free: 1-844-576-2512  
[www.csacleth.ca](http://www.csacleth.ca)

