

# ISJ PHONE LINE SUPPORT LETTER

Dr. Florizone,

This is a letter calling on Dalhousie University to continue to support the Dalhousie Student Union's Sexual Assault and Harassment Phone Line. This service is a necessary part of combating rape culture and supporting survivors on our campuses. 1 in 5 women will experience sexual assault during their time at university. Women experience harassment every day. Disabled, Queer, Trans, Indigenous, Black and racialized students experience assault and harassment at even higher levels. We have to remember that even though it hasn't been in the news recently, sexual assault and harassment are still prevalent on our campuses.

The Sexual Assault and Harassment Phone Line is a confidential, 24/7, peer-to-peer, non-judgemental, active listening service for anyone who has been affected by sexual assault and/or harassment. Survivor centered support is imperative to the healing of the many students who will face this sort of violence during their time at university. Unfortunately, we know students do not trust the university when it comes to disclosing sexual assault because of years of being silenced and shamed in the interest of the university's reputation.

The only way to prevent sexual assault is by shifting our culture. The Phone Line plays a part in that shift; it tells students "we believe survivors", it starts conversations about safety on campus everywhere that our materials are displayed and the training builds the capacity of students and community members to engage in those conversations with their peers to make that shift one person at a time. The pilot project has begun this work and now we must sustain it.

Investing in this collaboration between the Student Union and the University is an opportunity to re-build trust and participate in something that benefits the community, the institution and its members. Show us that Dalhousie is sincere in participating in a culture shift to make this campus and our community a safer place for everyone.