

### In wake of Jian Ghomeshi verdict AASAS wants you to know that we believe survivors

—Sexual assault services in Alberta are here for survivors of sexual assault and sexual abuse—

**Calgary, Alberta** – March 23, 2016 –Tomorrow Canadians will learn the outcome of one of the most high profile and widely discussed sexual assault trials of the decade. Whether or not the presiding Judge determines if Jian Ghomeshi is guilty or innocent of sexual assault, the Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services (AASAS) and sexual assault centres across Alberta want all survivors to know that we believe you.

97% of sexual assaults go unreported in Canada. Of those sexual assaults that are reported to police, unfortunately many do not lead to charges and even fewer lead to convictions. Out of every 1,000 sexual assaults in Canada, 997 assailants walk free.

It takes a tremendous amount of courage for survivors to report a sexual assault to the police, and perseverance to navigate the criminal justice process if their report leads to trial. AASAS wants to remind Albertans that the choice to report always lies with the survivors themselves. Some survivors choose to report and many do not. From those who do report, we often hear about how important they feel it is to hold the perpetrator accountable, regardless of the outcome. Above all, as a society, we need to stop focusing on the behaviour of victims and turn our attention to holding perpetrators accountable for the crimes they commit.

For more comments on the Ghomeshi verdict:

**Who:** **Debra Tomlinson**, Chief Executive Officer, Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services  
**Danielle Aubry**, Executive Director, Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse

**When:** Thursday, March 24, 2016 at 1:00 pm (*Please Note If the verdict is delayed past 1:00 pm we will be commenting as soon as it has been released*)

**Where:** Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse  
Suite 700, 910 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW  
Calgary, Alberta

**Why:** To help create an environment where survivors feel safe to come forward to tell their stories and perpetrators are held accountable for the crimes they commit.

**Contact:** Tyler Knee, 403-237-6905 ext. 227

To locate sexual assault and sexual abuse services in your area visit <http://aasas.ca/get-help/>.  
For information on how you can support survivors of sexual assault and sexual abuse visit [www.ibelieveyou.info](http://www.ibelieveyou.info).