



Spring 2019

SWAN Vancouver



SWANzine

PAGE 1

SWAN Services

PAGE 2

What to do if condom breaks

PAGE 3

Sexual assault
Update on health clinics

PAGE 4

Photovoice exhibition
Outreach Update

What is SWANzine?

The SWANzine newsletter is a guide to health, legal, social, employment, and community information for women engaged in indoor sex work in the Lower Mainland. English and Chinese versions are available. If you require SWANzine in another language, please let us know.



If there is a topic you would like to see in SWANzine, please send us your questions or comments.

What does SWAN do?

- Make bookings, provide accompaniment, and transportation to health appointments
- Deliver free condoms and lube
- Find you a lawyer
- Support with tenancy issues including illegal evictions
- Support with your immigration application (referral to a lawyer or immigration consultant)
- Provide information about paying taxes (referral to tax accountant)
- Answer questions on business license and by-laws
- Support if you have been arrested, detained or face deportation by Canadian Border Services Agency
- Support undocumented children to enroll in school
- Support to change occupation (if requested only)
- Assist with workplace issues
- Advocate on your behalf to seek accountability from police, city by-law officials, immigration
- Support in criminal justice proceedings
- Provide referrals to other community organizations if you move to a different city or country for work
- Support after a police raid
- Notify you of bad dates in your area
- Provide emotional support

We do monthly outreach to Burnaby, Vancouver, Richmond, Surrey and Langley. We go to Abbotsford and Tri-cities every 2 months. We have English, Cantonese and Mandarin speaking staff. You can contact us anonymously. We keep your information confidential. We are not affiliated with government, police, or religious organizations.

Hours: 9-5 Mon-Fri If you plan to drop in to our office to pick up supplies, please call or text ahead because sometimes staff is not in the office. We may be out on an appointment. Address: Ground floor – 1101 Seymour Street, Vancouver

SWAN VANCOUVER SOCIETY

Phone: (604)719-6343 (English) | (778)865-6343 (Cantonese, Mandarin)

Email: info@swanvancouver.ca | Website: www.swanvancouver.ca | Wechat: SWANnetreach

Mailing Address: 1101 Seymour Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 3N3 BN: 85317 6295 RP001



What to do when a condom breaks

Breaking a condom can cause anxiety so it is best to have a plan and be prepared. The following is information to prevent or know what to do if a condom breaks.

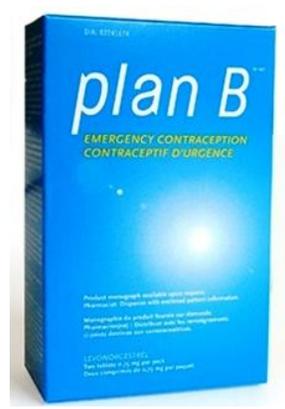
If a condom breaks and you are worried that you or your partner could get a sexually transmitted infection (STI) or become pregnant, see a health care provider. SWAN can arrange an appointment.

STI management

If you had penetrative or oral sex with someone who has a STI, see a health care provider as soon as possible. If your partner tests positive for a STI, it is important that you also have STI testing. Depending on the type of STI, you will be offered testing and may be given medications to prevent the STI whether or not you have symptoms. Also, getting tested will help you know for sure if you have a STI, even if there are no symptoms.

Prevent pregnancy

If a condom broke and you weren't using another method of birth control besides a condom, e.g., the pill, patch, IUD, you can use emergency contraception (Plan B) to prevent pregnancy. Taking Plan B as soon as possible and within five days of having unprotected sex will reduce the chance of becoming pregnant. Plan B is a non-prescription medication that's available over the counter in drug stores in the family planning section.



Copper IUDs are also a good option for emergency contraception and can be inserted up to seven days after unprotected intercourse. Contact us if you want to get an emergency IUD insertion.

Tips to prevent condoms from breaking:

- Check the expiry on the package
- Keep your condoms in a cool, dry place
- Check to make sure the tip is pinched when the condom is rolled onto the penis
- Be aware of sharp nails or jewelry as they can tear condoms
- Use water based or silicone lubes because petroleum or oil-based lubes weaken latex condoms

Myths about what to do when a condom breaks:

- Bathing in vinegar and warm water
- Removing as much semen from the vagina and rectum as possible by squatting down and squeezing your vagina muscles

These methods will not prevent STIs, HIV or pregnancy.

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Sexual Assault

Update on clinics

We only refer women to two health clinics in the Lower Mainland because of these clinics' accessibility and non-judgmental approach.

VANCOUVER

Women's Health Collective
29 West Hastings

Surrey

**Surrey North Community
Health Centre**
10697 135A St.

We have an arrangement with both clinics, so call SWAN to book an appointment. If you want to see a specialist, OB, ultrasound, you will still have to go to one of the clinics listed above to get a referral to a specialist. SWAN staff can translate, transport and accompany you to your appointments.



People who assault women who do sex work may think they can get away with it. You may have been told that it is 'part of the job'. This is not true. You are entitled to say NO to any sexual act. Other occupations do not accept being abused and assaulted as part of their job—so why should you? Women sometimes blame themselves for not stopping a sexual assault but here is the bottom line: You agreed to provide a service. It is the client who has broken the agreement by forcing something that is against your wishes. The client who is to blame, not you.



What can you do if you are sexually assaulted?

SWAN provides support and resources. If the sexual assault was recent, and if you are hurt, or worried about getting pregnant, a STI or HIV, contact SWAN and we can make a health appointment for you.

Vancouver General Hospital (VGH) has a sexual assault service team that is trained in working with sexual assault victims. VGH offers choices such as a check for injuries, STIs and pregnancy, and forensic evidence collection. Forensic evidence collection means that nurses will collect and preserve forensic (legal) evidence for use in legal proceedings if you decide to report to the police later.

Care including medication is provided to all including women who do not want to report to police or have forensic evidence collected. The nurse will support and respect whatever decision you make. You do not have to report to police. You do not have to press criminal charges. However, if you change your mind about proceeding with criminal charges, having the legal evidence and documentation taken at the time of the incident is crucial. SWAN can accompany you and provide support, translation and transportation.

WAVAW is an organization that provides support services to survivors of sexualized violence. They have a 24 hours crisis hotline 604-255-6344. Their website: <https://www.wavaw.ca/>

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SWAN's Photovoice Project Concludes

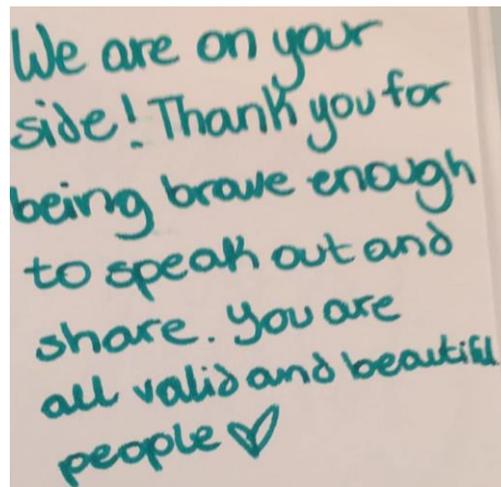
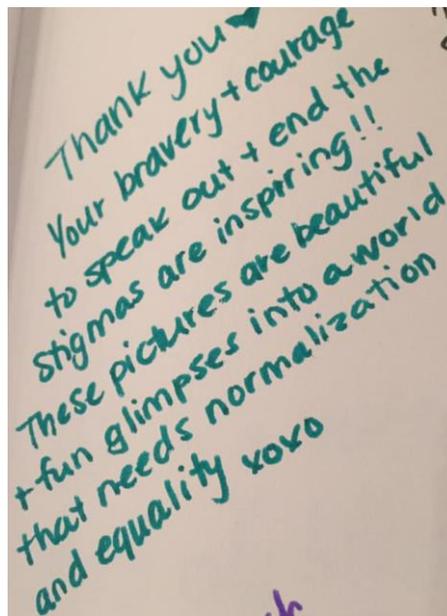
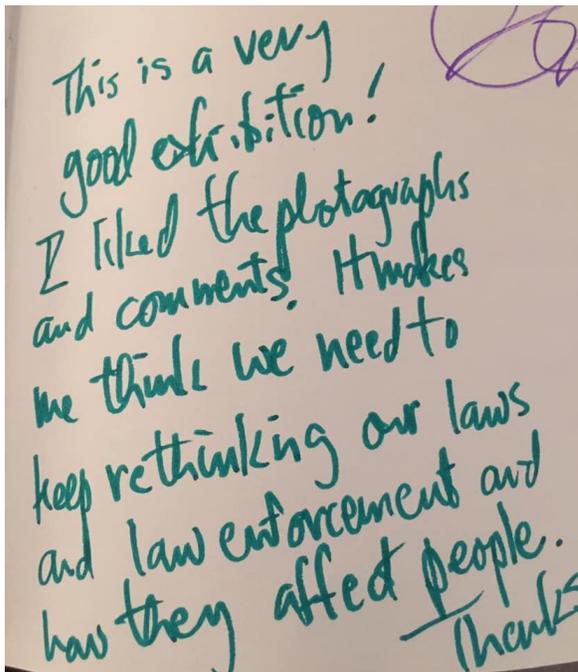


SWAN is very proud to have exhibited our photovoice project "Chocolate or Chicken Bones?" at the SUM Gallery in Chinatown, Vancouver. The exhibition showed snapshots taken by women about the non-work aspects of their lives.

Often when people think about the sex industry, they have a simple story in mind. This simple story is used to make laws, policies, and bylaws, which can have a harmful impact. We hope this project started conversations that shift public understanding and perceptions about the lives of im/migrant sex workers. The exhibition was from January 8 to February 5 and will hopefully travel to new locations in the future. We are extremely grateful for the hard work and energy of our participants.



Messages from the people who went to the exhibition:



Outreach Update

This month, we started new outreach to massage parlours in North Vancouver. We will go once a month. If you know women in North Vancouver who could use our services, please let them know we know do outreach there.



Mid-month delivery

If you missed us during our monthly drop-off, we can deliver mid-month supplies in Vancouver and Burnaby on Wednesdays. Unfortunately, we do not have resources to deliver mid-month in Surrey, Richmond, Tri-Cities and Abbotsford.

Alternately, you are welcome to come to our office Mondays-Fridays 9am-5pm to pick up supplies.

If you are not on our monthly outreach route, but would like to be added, or if you would like to stop by our office, please call or text us at 778-865-6343.

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