



An Update from CAEFS on the Revision of our Organizational Positions

October 6, 2022 (Ottawa, ON): The Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies (CAEFS) was founded in 1978. Since then, our organization has continued to evolve, along with our positions and approaches to advocacy. We are not the CAEFS that we were three, ten, or forty years ago – but we are answerable to the decisions and positions that were taken at those times.

At our AGM in June 2022, our membership passed a unanimous motion to review all positions held by CAEFS prior to ten years ago. Included in these positions is our position on Sex Work, which called for an implementation of a model that criminalizes aspects of Sex Work.

Over the past several years we have been working with our membership, learning from Sex Worker rights organizations and collectives, and are now taking our first public step towards this necessary change – one that necessarily aligns with our overall vision of working toward a world without prisons with strong and well-resourced communities for everyone.

Publicly acknowledging the review of our position on Sex Work is particularly important at this juncture as we watch the constitutional challenge to Sex Work criminal laws make its way through the Ontario Superior Court, and as we continue to hear of the harms that the criminalization of Sex Work has on women and gender diverse people's lives. CAEFS recognizes that our past position on Sex Work – and advocacy that has stemmed from this position - has caused harm to the very communities we seek to be in solidarity with and work alongside.

We look forward to continuing to work with our membership, with Sex Worker rights organizations, and with the broader sector to update and action a newly revised position as soon as possible.

For Comment:

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