

Mission

- ▶ To provide a secure network of support for those who have experienced or are experiencing assault, abuse, and/or harassment
- ▶ To inspire people to come forth and tell the story of their journey though trauma and recovery, particularly as it relates to cosplay convention culture
- ▶ To encourage inclusivity of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, ability; it doesn't matter who you are or how it happened. **We believe you.**
- ▶ To provide resources for those in crisis or those helping people in crisis: mental health and physical wellness as well as long-term solutions and other support groups
- ▶ To encourage qualified programs and trained individuals to respond to situations of this nature at conventions
- ▶ To treat survivors, their bodies, and their cosplay work with utmost respect and spread positivity

Resources

If you are in immediate danger, call 911 or your local emergency number.

In the United States

National Sexual Assault Hotline:
800-656-HOPE (4673)

National Street Harassment Hotline:
855-897-5910

National Domestic Violence Hotline:
800-799-SAFE (7233)

**State Dept. Emergency Hotline
(for Americans abroad):**
1-888-407-4747

Uplift Together:
uplifttogether.org

**Rape, Abuse, & Incest
National Network:**
rainn.org

Learn more at cosplayer-ssn.org
info@cosplayer-ssn.org

Help support the CSSN at:
patreon.com/Trickssi
ko-fi.com/Trickssi

To see how your money is used, visit:
<https://cosplayer-ssn.org/faq.php>

© 2018 CSSN



**Cosplayer Survivor
Support Network**

We Believe You.



Credit: Cristian Newman (@ismaelnieto) on Unsplash.com

“Cosplay is Not Consent” is Not Enough

If you've ever gone to a convention, you've probably seen signs warning attendees not to harass, often with "Cosplay is NOT Consent" prominently posted. Conventions, however, often fail to have comprehensive harassment policies to provide safety and support for victims. Worst of all, sometimes the staff at cons are the offenders, leaving survivors with nowhere to turn.

The goal of the CSSN is to encourage conventions to become role models in anti-harassment procedures through appropriate signage, consequences for offenders, support for survivors, and judgment-free spaces for open, honest communication.

What You Can Do to Help

- ▶ If someone confides in you that they have survived sexual violence or harassment, look them in the eye and say, "I believe you." "Fear of retribution or not being believed is a prime reason why so many people don't report."
- ▶ Act when you see harassment in the community. Depending on the situation and your abilities, that may mean getting the target of harassment to a safe area, verbally intervening, or getting another individual to provide needed assistance.
- ▶ Start conversations with your friends, family, fellow cosplayers, and convention staff about important topics such as consent and harassment. For information on how to do this, visit cosplayer-ssn.org/converse.php.
- ▶ Consider volunteering with the CSSN. This could mean writing an article, helping assist with a sponsored panel at a convention, or helping to provide training and resources.
- ▶ Speak up, when you can, for survivors who can't do it for themselves, but don't speak over them. Each survivor's experience and feelings are their own, and should never be invalidated.

From Our Founder

As a woman in the cosplay community, not only have I been harassed in costume, but I've heard many stories from fellow cosplayers who have had harassment and worse happen to them while they were at a con. Whether the stories were typed in public spaces or whispered to me over bathroom sinks, I understood that harassment occurs everywhere at anime conventions to the point where it's unfortunately expected. I can only speak for my personal demographic, but any type of cosplayer can be harassed, just as any type of person can be the offending harasser. I remembered the disapproving stares and catcalls when I wore skin-revealing outfits of favorite characters, and hurting, not just because I was treated as an object, but because the enjoyment I got out of the character connection was soured by the memory. Conflicts of harassment in this community are often painted as "drama" and dismissed or unexamined in an appropriate context.

It got me thinking: why does this happen? Why so often? Why do I never get through a single convention without experiencing or hearing about stories like that? I began to envision a for-us, by-us network of support for cosplayers that provides a nonjudgmental atmosphere and resources for recovery after negative events. This is why, in November of 2016, I put a shovel in the ground for the CSSN. I want to see how far we can go together to encourage our community to speak up for those who can't and help survivors on their paths to recovery and self-improvement.

- Trickssi