

OFFICE OF CAMPUS SEXUAL
ASSAULT SUPPORT & ADVOCACY

SVNB ANNUAL REPORT

2020 - 2021



ESSENTIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sexual Violence New Brunswick (SVNB) is located on the traditional unceded territory of the Wolastoqiyik, Mi'kmaq and Peskotomuhkati peoples and our work takes place throughout Wabanaki territory. This territory is covered by the “Treaties of Peace and Friendship” which did not deal with the surrender of lands and resources but established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations.

SVNB is an organization that began as a grassroots movement that was, and continues to be, guided by those affected by sexual violence. The founders of many rape crisis centres were largely white, middle-class and urban-based women who worked primarily with all-white survivors. In recognition of this history, we practice as an intersectional and trans-inclusive feminist Collective that functions from a survivor-centred, trauma and violence-informed perspective, whose primary goal is reflected in our work to build communities safer from the impacts of sexual violence.

We cannot participate in anti-violence work without recognizing the role of colonialism and other oppressive systems in causing and upholding violence. We strive to center and elevate the work of those most impacted by systemic oppression and violence. SVNB is committed to recognizing and honouring our collective responsibility towards Reconciliation and decolonization; a process that must centre Indigenous voices and work toward building meaningful partnerships throughout the province.

We credit the knowledge and work of trauma and violence-informed care to activists within the Queer and Trans communities, as well as Black, Indigenous, and racialized individuals who have persevered through extreme barriers to amplify messages of equity in our society. We are thankful for our partnerships throughout the province and we commit to taking an anti-colonial and inclusive approach to the work we do.



A MESSAGE FROM YOUR CSASA TEAM

CAPTION: WORKING FROM HOME VIBES



As we reflect on the last year, there is no doubt that it was a year that can only be described as unprecedented. 2020-2021 could easily be remembered for the impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic had on every aspect of our work, however, that would be a disservice to the growing movement of social activism and mobilization we saw this past year. From students protesting rape culture and the systems which fail survivors at Post-Secondary Institutions (PSIs) across New Brunswick to Black Lives Matter and the inquiry into the systemic oppressions of Indigenous Canadians, this year prompted a deeper perspective into experiences of sexual violence at large. We continue to reflect and engage in the development of more equitable and representative programming within our office.

In order to engage more meaningfully as allies, we centered our efforts on learning where we can do better. Our events and activities highlighted the experiences of and power within the Black, Indigenous, and other racialized communities. We continue to work on the cultivation of relationships and unlearning of colonial practices that have governed our work for so long.

This year challenged us to think creatively on how to reach staff & students both in our delivery of

support as well as in our education and prevention programming. Therapeutically, we offered virtual counselling services which enabled us to connect with and extend our services to students outside of our province during the school year and summer months.

We also focused on adapting many of our training opportunities into virtual delivery models. This evolution allowed us to continue providing learning opportunities through periods of lockdown and will enhance our accessibility through the years to come.

Our partnerships and collaboration with the Government of New Brunswick (GNB) and the team working on Courage to Act has continued to elevate the work we provide within the province and in our own tri-campus community. But most of all, we want to acknowledge and credit the work of anti-violence advocacy to Queer, Trans and racialized survivors who continue to labour toward making our campus a safer place to be.

Maggie Forsythe

Director of Post Secondary
Sexual Violence Programming

Hilary Swan

Campus Sexual Assault
Support Advocate

TRI-CAMPUS SEXUAL ASSAULT STRATEGY

This strategy and agreement formalized ties between Sexual Violence New Brunswick (SVNB), University of New Brunswick (UNB), St. Thomas University (STU), and New Brunswick Community College (NBCC) in Fredericton to address sexual violence at Fredericton PSIs. The uniqueness of the Fredericton Campus Sexual Assault Strategy emerges from the collaboration and partnership with community agencies. Each institution is contracted to contribute financially to SVNB, where the work will be housed as a team approach rather than resting solely on the shoulders of one office on campus. The data represented in this report reflects cases connected to all three institutions.

Addressing the issue of sexual violence requires thoughtful planning and strategy. Communities would be remiss to only consider one side of the matter, such as interventions, without careful consideration of prevention, education, and strategic development.

This strategy was co-developed to address the following key outcome areas of:

- Strategic Development,
- Prevention and Awareness,
- Interventions and Response, and
- Education and Professional Development

With these key result areas, Fredericton PSIs will have a stronger approach to addressing this issue. The key outcome areas to this strategy are outlined through this report to highlight the ways in which the three PSIs have been working to address sexual violence on campus.



CAMPUS SEXUAL ASSAULT SUPPORT ADVOCATES (CSASA)

IN FREDERICTON

The CSASAs function as the recommended first point of contact or referral for any member of the university community who has experienced a sexual assault related to their campus experience. The CSASA provides initial and ongoing support including:

- confidential and trauma-informed counselling services
- consultation for students, faculty, and staff on issues of sexual violence
- referrals to other campus and community resources
- advocacy for support on campus
- support through complaints processes
- facilitate prevention and education activities
- consultation for policy development and reform
- collection of data related to sexual violence on campus

INTRODUCTION

This report covers the activities of the Fredericton CSASA over the reporting period of one full year, **July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021**. This report speaks directly to the cases related to individuals on Fredericton campus and although some have been connected to the criminal justice system, details of those cases are not highlighted here.

A YEAR IN REVIEW

TOTAL DISCLOSURES

Throughout this timeframe, almost 70 disclosures of sexual assault were associated with the three institutions. These disclosures come through self as well as third-party referrals. **Over 95% of those who were referred to our program sought follow-up support.**

As the CSASA office is the point of contact for all those looking to receive support for an experience of sexual assault as well as those who have received a disclosure, some of the violence described in these referrals occurred outside of our reporting timeframe. We are inclusive of all disclosures in this report.

INTERSECTIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Sexual violence is a product of the oppressions produced within the power systems that govern our communities. Sexual violence, in adulthood, is experienced predominately by those who identify as women, transgender, or other gender non-conforming categories such as two-spirit, non-binary, or agender (**93%** of CSASA clientele). Further, clients who identified their sexuality as being represented within the 2SLGBTQIAP+ spectrum (**37%**), as having a disability (**33%**), or as being marginalized by racism or colonization (**16%**) are highly represented within our program.

These insights provide us with consistent data that reinforces our need to create stronger preventative measures and cultural change. Equity initiatives and visibility for those who are pushed to the margins on our campus can start to make change in ways we haven't been able to before.



70 DISCLOSURES
OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

53% OF SURVIVORS
DESCRIBED COERCIVE
SEXUAL VIOLENCE

SEXUAL ASSAULT ON CAMPUS: A YEAR AT A GLANCE

JULY 2020 TO JUNE 2021

Sexual assault is any type of unwanted sexual act done by one person to another that violates the sexual integrity of the victim and involves a range of behaviours from unwanted touching to penetration (Criminal Code of Canada). Sexual assault is characterized by a broad range of behaviours that involve the use of force, threats, or control towards a person, which makes that person feel uncomfortable, distressed, frightened, threatened, or that is carried out in circumstances to which the person has not freely agreed, consented, or is incapable of consenting.

Throughout this timeframe, approximately **70** disclosures of sexual violence against members of the campus community (including UNB, STU and NBCC) were made to the CSASAs in Fredericton. Incidences vary with campus size and location.

Of the 70 incidences reported among the three campuses, 66% of referrals received by the CSASAs, were affiliated with UNB (Fredericton) and over **33%** were from STU. Numbers from NBCC are too low to report.

Sexual assault is a form of gender-based violence whereby sexual aggression or acts are used to exert power or control over someone else. Incidences disclosed to the CSASA program range on a continuum of sexually aggressive and abusive behaviour, including unwanted sexual touching, non-consensual sexual penetration, to repeated sexual abuse. In the cases reported to the CSASA, the respondent knew the complainant **69%** of the time and the assailant was in a position of authority on campus, **60%** of the time.



INTERVENTION BEYOND THE NUMBERS

STRATEGY

The office of CSASA offers feminist and trauma-specific counselling of up to 12 sessions for those who have experienced sexual assault related to their campus experience. This approach focuses on creating safety, teaching emotional regulation, processing trauma, as well as providing options for medical, legal, and campus needs. We also offer advocacy within the campus structures to support their identified goals.

A DEEPER LOOK

Depending on the nature of sexual violence, many types of interventions are required. A survivor may need emergency and ongoing health care, police services, crisis intervention, counselling, community programs, advocacy, as well as victim and court support services. The CSASA office is one link in the extensive chain of support available to survivors. Our focus has been to mitigate the secondary wounding that occurs through the process of a person reaching out for help, to offer support, and provide effective response in a timely fashion.

IMPACT

Sexual violence is unique to other forms of hardship that students may experience. Anxiety over being around others, particularly their offender, often hinders their ability to go to class, the library, or meal halls. Intrusive thoughts may get in the way of concentration, being attentive in class, or finishing homework. Secondary wounding due to responses from peers or school administration often cause survivors to avoid classes, transfer to other institutions, or drop out altogether.

When asked about their experience with the CSASA program, clients have shared feedback such as: *"I felt supported, listened to, and motivated to work on myself and to give more thought to things I wasn't considering before"*.

INTERVENTIONS

BY THE NUMBERS

86%

CSART SUPPORT

Over 86% of survivors sought more than one support from the CSART to increase success and safety in their lives on campus

“What someone else does in response to my boundaries is a reflection of them and not a reflection of my own failures.”

- A client's most impactful takeaway from counselling

CAMPUS SEXUAL ASSAULT RESPONSE TEAM (CSART)

The Campus Sexual Assault Response Team (CSART) consists of campus service providers, such as Counselling, Health, Residence Life, and Security, who have abilities to intervene in support of a survivor disclosing sexual violence. Though many survivors did not wish to undertake the disciplinary process, over 86% of clients successfully sought informal resolutions through the CSART to help them feel safe and empowered at UNB. Interim measures that were taken include:

- Academic Appeal and Accommodation for the complainant
- Residence alterations for safety
- No-Contact Orders
- Trespass orders

Interim measures or informal resolutions were often chosen in lieu of formal complaints as clients were more interested in pursuing safety and empowerment rather than making themselves more vulnerable through administrative systems.

INTERVENTION ACTIVITIES

- Provided advocacy and support to students from a trauma-informed perspective.
- Connected students to trauma-specific counselling, support groups, and/or crisis support services.
- Helped survivors access medical care and follow-up services in a timely fashion.
- Provided support and advocacy through the court process.
- Worked with the CSART to support survivors of sexual violence, receive accommodation, and consider trends in existing disclosures.
- Advised faculty on survivor-centred handlings of disclosures.
- Facilitated access to services through the use of disclosure cards.

260+
SESSIONS

Over 260 virtual and in-person therapeutic sessions were utilized by campus survivors of sexual violence

95%
OF REFERRALS
ACCESSED SUPPORT

Of the referrals that were received by the CSASA office, 95% of survivors wanted counselling or advocacy support

Sexual violence has one of the lowest police reporting rates for all criminal offences, often less than 5% to legal authorities (Statistics Canada, 2014). Complainants often feel frustrated, blamed, and shamed by society, stalling their ability to achieve justice and support.

There are three levels of formal help-seeking on campus:

- Disclosure, where the complainant seeks support but no further action;
- Informal Complaint, where the complainant wishes certain steps to be taken but does not wish to enter into a formal process that could lead to discipline against the respondent; and
- Formal Complaint, where the complainant wishes to bring formal charges against the respondent (under the Student Discipline Code or under appropriate staff/faculty policies).

Over the course of this reporting period, **seven** formal complaints have been forwarded from our office to the campus administration responsible for the respondent. As we do not adjudicate these files, this number may not be inclusive of all those who sought the administrative process at UNB-F, STU, or NBCC-F.

FORMAL COMPLAINTS



PREVENTION BEYOND THE NUMBERS

STRATEGY

Through the tri-campus sexual assault strategy, prevention and awareness activities include information booths, annual awareness campaigns, support to student committees, events and activities, and presentations.

A DEEPER LOOK

Awareness is crucial to enhancing our response to sexual violence. In order to decrease the amount of sexual violence on campus, a cultural shift away from sexual assault myths, victim-blaming attitudes, and the objectification of women and gender non-conforming individuals needs to occur. Further, without a dismantling of colonial and white supremacist systems and structures, sexual minorities, Indigenous, and racialized folx will always be oppressed through sexual violence. Greater community awareness of these dynamics leads to a greater understanding of the issue and a dismantling of the structures that facilitate this type of violence.

With students not physically on campus, we focused on improving our reach to students through our social media accounts and virtual events. Navigating our own social media presence throughout this time allowed us to engage in forms of advocacy and education that we hadn't attempted before this year.

PREVENTION

BY THE NUMBERS

4100+
ENGAGEMENTS

We were able to reach over 4100 people through the various prevention and awareness activities on campus.

Facebook Page Likes

426

Instagram Followers

365

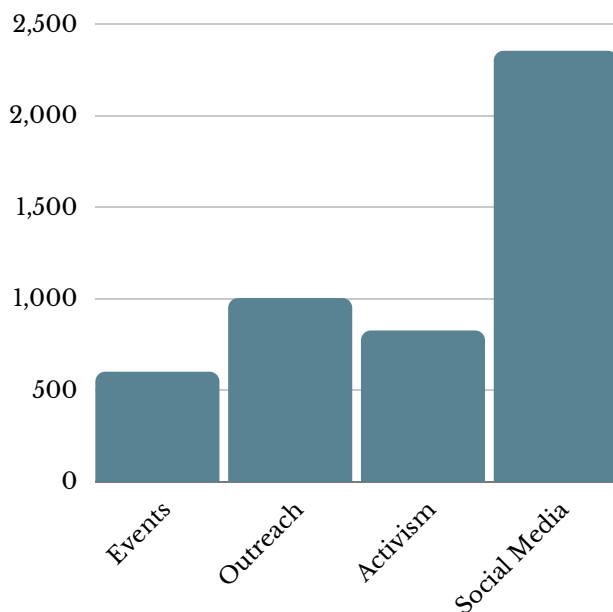
Age & Gender



Age & Gender



PARTICIPANTS PER ACTIVITY



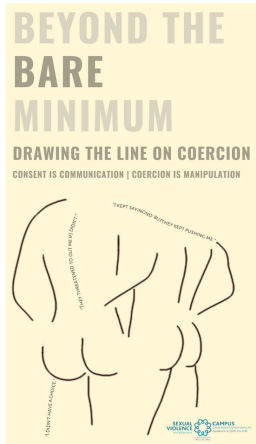
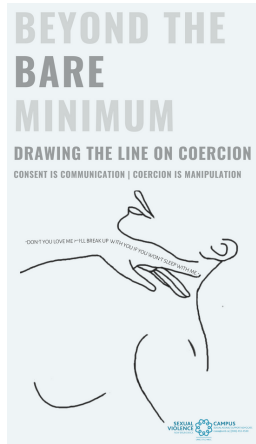
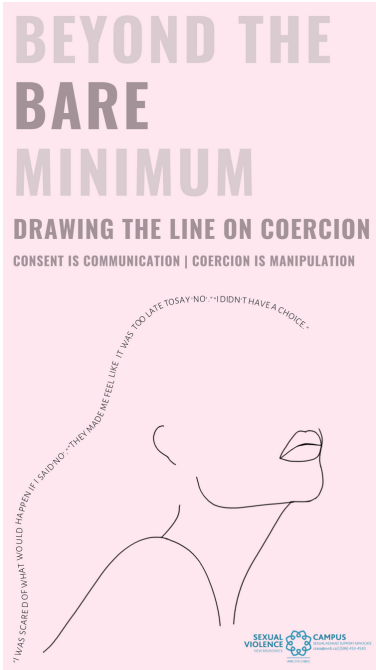
STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Each year, we strive to work closely with student groups and give paid opportunities for students to practice their advocacy. Our summer student was tasked to think of creative ways to engage with a completely online population of students and created an awareness strategy that included a deconstructed video panel series to be hosted through Zoom, social media content and personally designed posters about sexual coercion. Our Winter student helped our office work closely with the International Students Offices, conducting focus groups with students to help curate programming specifically for international students. These learning opportunities offer us an incredible connection to the needs of students and allow us to offer students new learning opportunities.

“*The type of work I got to do was super meaningful and fulfilling for me as an international student knowing that CSASA is making sure their programs and resources also include our needs.*”

- Testimonial from a work-study student

BUILDING AWARENESS



EXPLORING COERCION IN 2SLGBTQIAP+ LIVES

Cassidy Wilson, Med., CCC
She/her



Tri-campus
LGBTQIA2S+
Wellness Coordinator

Erin Fredericks, PhD.
She/her



Professor of
Sociology at St.
Thomas University



THE EXPERIENCE OF COERCION FOR BLACK WOMEN



FrederictonCSASA

PREVENTION ACTIVITIES

The CSASA office works in collaboration with members of the Campus Sexual Assault Prevention Team including the 2SLGBTQIAP+ Wellness Coordinator, Student Unions from UNB and STU, NBCC Counselling, Muriel McQueen Fergusson Centre for Family Violence Research (MMFC), Campus Security, Residence Life, and the Office of Human Rights and Positive Environment Office at UNB. This team discusses themes of sexual violence and plans initiatives to address sexual assault on campus. This year, our campus-wide sexual assault prevention team chose the topic of sexual coercion as the issue to address with our awareness activities. This campaign, called "Beyond the Bare Minimum"; Drawing the Line on Coercion" focuses on broadening our perspective of what can be experienced as sexual violence. While speaking about the nuances of sexual violence, we strove to highlight the ways those nuances intersect with the lived experiences of different populations and hosted events with our 2SLGBTQIAP+ wellness coordinator, Cassidy Wilson and Dr. Erin Fredericks (Professor of Sociology at STU), as well as Felomena Deograssias with Black Lives Matter Fredericton, and Dr. Karla O'Regan who discussed the legal challenges between consent and coercion.

EDUCATION

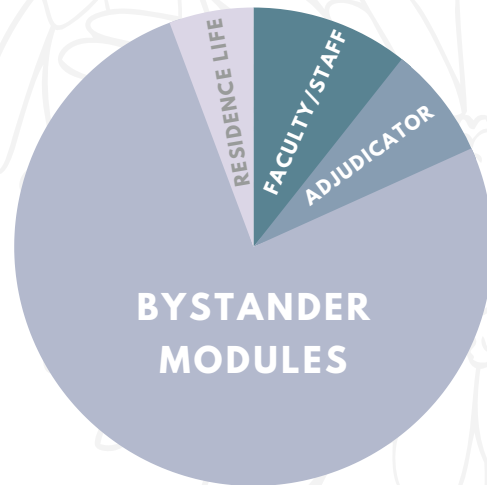
BY THE NUMBERS

PARTICIPANTS PER ACTIVITY

276

ACTIVE LEARNERS

Through our virtual and in-person trainings, we were able to engage with 276 individual learners.



IMPACT

Members of the larger SVN team partnered to facilitate educational opportunities such as:

- workshops that address why sexual violence happens (including education on myths and stereotypes, gender roles, privilege and oppression, as well as consent and coercion) and how to support a friend;
- tri-campus "Trauma-Informed Offices" training for faculty and staff receiving disclosures of sexual violence;
- training for receiving and handling disclosures for residence life student staff at UNB and STU;
- training for those adjudicating sexual assault files as UNB and STU;
- and online modules for bystander intervention skills, awareness of sexual violence, consent, how to receive a disclosure, and support one's own wellbeing from the impacts of trauma.

“ I feel so much more comfortable about the idea that I might receive a disclosure and handle it gracefully ”

- Participant after receiving the training for faculty and staff.



STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT BEYOND THE NUMBERS

STRATEGY

The office of CSASA supports the tri-campus community in the evaluation and updating of their current sexual assault policies. Although the responsibility is not on the CSASAs to perform policy updates, the information, research, and experience from this office is offered to support institutional endeavours. The office of CSASA supports the tri-campus community through coordinating and collaborating on research of sexual violence issues, policies, and programs to inform the work of this strategy. The office identifies appropriate evaluation methods to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of this strategy, and uses the results to inform future actions.

A DEEPER LOOK

Institutional policies and protocols outline the vision, stance, and structure from which sexual violence is addressed. While each institution may vary on the details of how reports of sexual violence are handled internally, it is essential that there is a cohesive perspective through which sexual violence is understood. Policies need to be clear and relatable to campus community members so that individuals can see themselves within the definition of sexual violence and know where to go to receive support or file complaints. UNB began their official sexual assault policy review which was facilitated by the MMFC and involved the CSASA office in many consultations to provide recommendations to the President's Office for review.

EXTERNAL GROWTH

GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIPS

This September saw the introduction of the online bystander training modules, a pilot initiative meant to be offered provincially in the coming years. This pilot was a large success with many groups mandating the learning for the upcoming years. In November 2020, a movement began at Mount Allison University (MTA) and rippled across the province to elevate the voices of survivors at many institutions. Survivors began taking to social media platforms demanding justice, accountability, and change within the systems at PSIs in New Brunswick (NB). With this wave came a heightened interest by GNB and the initiation of several forums for conversation between government, survivors, and the PSI community. SVN and the CSASA office took part in many of these conversations and advocated for the needs of survivors.

Our provincial partnerships include the Women's Equality Branch, Post-Secondary Training & Labour, and other provincial stakeholders who are participating in the GNB Roundtable for Campus Sexual Violence such as the NB Student

Alliance, Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners, and representatives from all provincial PSIs. We are also thrilled to participate in a GNB collaboration to develop a network of CSAsAs across the province and one where advocates from other Atlantic provinces connect to support one another.

COURAGE TO ACT

This past year, the CSASA team worked with Possibility Seeds to create tools based on the recommendations from the Support & Response section of their Courage to Act report (2019). We worked on resources to aid with PSIs interested in partnering with community organizations, preparing faculty and staff to receive disclosures of GBV, centring campus wellbeing, and developing centralized GBV offices. In addition to these, we produced a tool for guiding trauma-informed practices for medical professionals who were supporting individuals affected by GBV. Within this tool is a list of 30 recommendations and a workbook for survivors to utilize with a therapist in preparing for interactions with the medical system. This resource will be piloted across Canada over the next year.

IN CONCLUSION

Despite the upheaval of the COVID-19 pandemic, SVNБ was able to stay connected as a continuous resource for those who have been affected by sexual violence during their PSI experience.

SVNB's post-secondary sexual violence programming has become recognized nationally for the innovative partnerships that are working to create safer campus communities. Our Fredericton office of CSASA is one piece of the approach to addressing the impacts of sexual violence in the Fredericton post-secondary community, and we appreciate all the partnerships that come together to make a united front on this issue.

For more information or to contact your office of CSASA, please...

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