

2018-2019 Annual Report

Office of the Campus Sexual Assault Support Advocates

9-11-2019

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Campus Sexual Assault Support Advocate (CSASA)

This marked the second year of the tri-campus Sexual Assault Strategy, signed June 2017. This strategy and agreement formalized ties between Sexual Violence New Brunswick (SVNB) formerly (FSAC), University of New Brunswick (UNB), Saint Thomas University (STU), and New Brunswick Community College (NBCC) for a three-year endeavour to address sexual violence on campus. The educational institutions, in Fredericton, co-exist in close proximity, therefore it is understood that there will inevitably be overlap within disclosures of sexual violence. UNB, STU, and NBCC already share some core student services which provided easy guidelines for support around sexual violence. Where the CSASA position was piloted during the 2016-2017 school year, the institutions acknowledged that simply “responding” to sexual assault is not enough. With guidance from SVNB, the Campus Sexual Assault Management Team (CSAMT) worked to create a strategy that was a multifaceted approach emphasizing collaboration and addressing several key areas: Policy Development, Prevention and Education, Interventions and Response, and Research and Evaluation. These key areas and their activities are expanded upon later in this report. This strategy and partnership made national headlines this past year as the CSASA was invited to sit on the Federal Advisory Committee on the Framework to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence at Post-Secondary Institutions.

The signing of this strategy and agreement holds all three institutions and SVNB to activities outlined within each key area. 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. In Saint John, the CSASA performs these responsibilities as part of her regular duties as a member of UNB Saint John Counselling Services. The data represented in this report only reflects cases connected to UNB students.

This report covers the activities of the Fredericton CSASA over the reporting period of one full year, July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019. This report speaks directly to the cases related to individuals on all three campuses and although some have been connected to the criminal justice system, details of those cases are not highlighted here.

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. The CSASA provides initial and ongoing support including confidential consultation and assistance in accessing other services and resources both on and off campus. They maintain confidential records of incidents of sexual assault and assist in the creation of educational resources and in policy development.

SEXUAL ASSAULT ON CAMPUS: A PROFILE

Sexual assault is a label defined by a wide range of behaviours. UNB’s Sexual Assault Policy uses the Canadian Criminal Code definition of sexual assault, which reads: *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 any unwanted touching to penetration. 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.*

Disclosures of Sexual Assault: Statistical Information

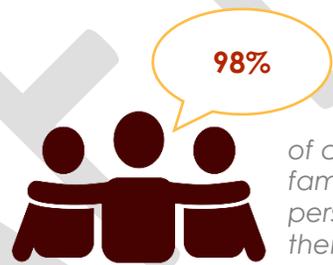
Throughout this timeframe, approximately **60** incidences of sexual violence against members of the campus community (including UNB Fredericton & Saint John, STU and NBCC Fredericton) were disclosed to the CSASAs in Fredericton and Saint John. Incidences vary with campus size and location.

Of the 60 incidences reported among the four campuses, referrals received by the CSASAs included almost **40** complainants affiliated with UNB (Fredericton and Saint John). Of this client base, **25** sexual assault incidences were described to have occurred **during this reporting timeframe**. The average span of time between incident and support seeking was **56** days.

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. From unwanted sexual touching to non-consensual sexual penetration. Disclosed incidences can be generally divided into three categories: non-consensual sexual touching (**26%**), non-consensual sexual penetration (**53%**) and sexual harassment (**21%**). In almost every case reported to the CSASA, the respondent knew the complainant and the assault took place in a home known to them (**69%**) of the time.

This year we noted an increase in cases of sexual violence between parties in long term or casual relationships. **24%** of our clients experienced violence in consensual sexual partnerships. These cases were increasingly complex as abusive tactics continued to manipulate, threaten, and interfere with complaint or interim processes on campus as well as the ongoing safety and lifestyle of the survivor.

While it is standard to organize data in relation to sex/gender, it is essential that there is an understanding of gender identity when analyzing the data. The category, Gender-based violence, highlights aggression that is targeted at individuals based on their gender identity, gender expression or perceived gender (Status of Women Canada, 2018). Sexual violence in adulthood is a gendered crime as it is experienced predominately by those who identify as female (**86%** of CSASA clientele). This past year we also saw an increase in clients who experienced violence in consensual partnerships **24%**. Furthermore, Canadian research shows transgender individuals are at a further increased risk of many forms of violence and harassment, including sexual violence (Longman, Scheim, Bauer, & Redman, 2013). UNB Gender Diverse and Transgender students made up **7%** of the CSASA client base, highlighting their increased risk to this type of violence and a need to create stronger preventative measures and cultural change. While students that identified as 2SLGTBQ+ made up **40%** of our caseload.



98% of complainants were familiar with the person who assaulted them.

Those who have been identified to have perpetrated sexual violence (considered “respondents”) are overwhelmingly gendered as well, with **96%** of disclosures identifying male respondents. This statistic is important to highlight as we continue to shape prevention strategies and cultural awareness. Trends of gender roles, privilege and oppression, and consent should all be tailored with the goal of dismantling the cultural norms that facilitate these crimes.

ADDRESSING SEXUAL ASSAULT ON CAMPUS STRATEGY

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 and others. The following five key result areas: Policy Development, Prevention and Education, Interventions and Response, and Research and Evaluation are pillars that form a sturdy foundation for addressing sexual violence on campus. With these key result areas, Fredericton post – secondary campuses will have a stronger approach to addressing this issue. The pillars to this strategy are outlined below to highlight the ways in which UNB has been working to address sexual violence on campus.

Interventions and Response to Sexual Assault Disclosures

Sexual violence has one of the lowest police reporting rates for all criminal offences (5% to legal authorities (Statistics Canada, 2014). Complainants often feel frustrated, blamed, and shamed by society which in turn silences their hopes in achieving justice and support.

The Sexual Assault Policy creates three levels of disclosure:

- 1) Disclosure, where the complainant seeks support but no further action;
- 2) 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
- 3) Formal Complaint, where the complainant wishes to bring formal charges against the respondent (under the Student Discipline Code or under appropriate staff/faculty policies.

Of the total incidences of sexual assault disclosed during this timeframe, **over 20** name respondents associated with UNB (students or employees) and to whom UNB's Sexual Assault Policy applies. **3** incidences, not all incidences from this reporting period, were filed as formal complaints through the applicable disciplinary process at UNB. Sanctions for files where the respondent was found to have breached the UNB Sexual Assault policy included writing requirements, suspension from locations on campus, and dismissal from employment.



84% of counselling clients indicated that since seeking support, they felt less isolated and less overwhelmed by emotions

Depending on the nature of the sexual violence, many types of interventions are required. A complainant may need emergency and ongoing health care, police services, crisis intervention, counselling, community programs, advocacy, as well as victim and court support services. Our focus on campus has been to mitigate the secondary wounding that occurs through the process of a person reaching out for help, to offer support, and

effective response in a timely fashion.

Much of the therapeutic support offered through the CSASA office is situating violence within a feminist perspective of the social structures that create gendered crimes. One client described appreciating having a counsellor that **"listens to everything I have to say and truly believes it is not my fault and doesn't try to tell me how to live my life."** Understanding dynamics of violence and experiencing less isolation is important in healing from sexual violence. Running a support group for sexual assault survivors on campus proved to improve both aspects. One client shared **"I know that myself and other students in the group felt very supported and validated - and some of us still keep in contact which is beautiful. I hope that you continue to make this group available for students on campus because I think that it's incredibly helpful to be with others who understand when you feel alone in your experiences."**

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 complainant disclosing sexual violence. Though many complainants did not wish to undertake the disciplinary process, over **30** 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
- Suspension from locations on campus



30+ Of complainants successfully sought out and received interim measures to create safety in their lives.

Interim measures were often chosen in lieu of formal complaints as clients were more interested in pursuing safety and empowerment rather than to discipline their respondents.

Activities for Interventions and Response:

- Provided **advocacy and support** to students from a client-centred, trauma-informed perspective.
- Connected students to **sexual trauma-specific counselling**, support groups, and/or crisis support services in Fredericton.
- Helped complainants **access medical care** and follow-up services in a timely fashion.
- Provided **support and advocacy** through the court process.
- Facilitated **a support group** over the academic year.
- Supported complainants through the **complaints and adjudication** procedures.
- Worked with the **Campus Sexual Assault Response Team** to support students coming forward with complaints of sexual violence and consider trends in existing disclosures.
- **Advised faculty and staff** on survivor centred handlings of disclosures.

Prevention & Education

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 minorities needs to occur. Greater community awareness, of the dynamics that facilitate sexual violence and the strategies we are implementing to address these, leads to a greater understanding of the issue and a dismantling of the secrecy that isolates those who experience violence. We used education with students and staff to strengthen awareness of the issue as well as fortify response measures through individual mandates. The CSASA office worked very closely with the UNB Student Union, faculty, Residence Life, and student groups to create and facilitate activities addressing issues of sexual violence. SVNB offered **24** UNB specific prevention and education activities which included outreach within various faculties and groups, booths, presentations, and professional trainings.

ACTIVITIES FOR PREVENTION & EDUCATION:

- Worked with the **Sexual Violence Prevention Team** to create and monitor prevention activities
- **Awareness booths** at student orientation activities
- **Promotion** of CSASA program with peer mentors, athletes, and incoming students
- Provided **workshops** for students 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.
- **Professional Training** for board of deans & residence life staff.
- Coordination and delivery of the **Bystander Intervention Training workshops**
- Prevention **campaign**: Defining Rape Culture video and posters in partnership with the UNB Student Union.
- Re-Defining Rape Culture **Paint Night, Panel Discussion & Art Exhibit**
- Spilling the Tea on **Rape Culture Event & Video launch**
- Prevention messages through social media channels (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram).
- Monitored the **Facebook page** titled Campus Sexual Assault Support and Advocacy that promotes campaigns, events, and articles about sexual violence on campus.
- Created new **CSASA awareness posters**.
- Revised the **Bystander Intervention Training** that orientation and student leaders receive in the Fall.
- **White Ribbon Panel** on Sexual Harassment
- **Take Back the Night** preparation, promotion, and coordination
- Student led poster making and rally for **Take Back the Night**
- **Slut shaming article** written for student newspaper

- Co-facilitated **Inclusivity Training**
- Workshop at the Mi'kmaq-Wolastoqey Centre for **Aboriginal Student Orientation**
- Partnered with White Ribbon Fredericton to host an **event on positive masculinity** within the Engineering Faculty.
- Workshop with **International Students Office** about sexual assault policy and the procedures for filing formal complaints.

Policy Development

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. We have continued to work to promote the new UNB sexual assault policy, educating staff and students on the parameters of what UNB can do for complainants of sexual violence. The new procedures for filing a formal complaint and their subsequent adjudication procedures were piloted throughout the academic year.

ACTIVITIES FOR POLICY DEVELOPMENT:

- Elicited feedback from students and staff on the **functionality** of the sexual assault policy.
- Gained **feedback** from students considering the complaints process as to barriers within the policy.
- Collected and stored suggestions from students and staff on **potential updates** for the policy upon revision.
- Performed ongoing research as to **best practices** at post-secondary institutions across North America.
- **Compiled suggestions** from research on best and promising practices.
- Offered feedback, from the perspective of supporting members within the policy, as to potential **adaptations and improvements**.
- Initiated research of **sanctioning procedures** for breeches of the sexual assault policy.
- Initiated research into potential **restorative processes** for community rehabilitation post disclosure.
- Provided feedback and shared best practices to **the National Advisory Board** on the Framework to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence at Post-Secondary Institutions

Research & Evaluation

Research is an important step in fully understanding the complexities and impacts of sexual violence on complainants and campus communities. Research is the foundation of building innovative and effective responses, policies, and prevention strategies to ultimately end sexual violence. It is important to monitor and evaluate the progress when implementing strategies to determine if they are achieving their mission of preventing and responding to sexual violence on campus.

ACTIVITIES FOR RESEARCH AND EVALUATION:

- Collaborated with campus members to initiate conversations around developing an **evaluation framework** for the campus Sexual Assault Policies.
- Collected and **compiled data** coming from the CSASA workload to give a picture of the issue of sexual violence on campus.
- Elicited feedback from clients about their **experiences with the CSASA**.
- Collaborated on ways to **evaluate prevention** strategies for the coming years.

- Interviewed and compiled data from the **Campus Sexual Assault Response Team** on best practices and areas for growth.

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