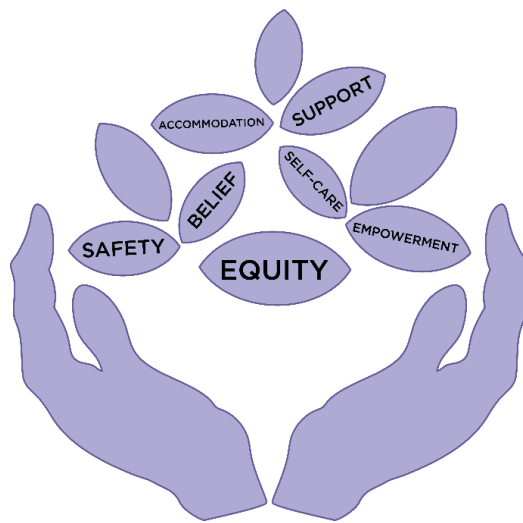


Carleton University 2021 Report on Sexual Violence

Presented to the Board of Governors



Equity and Inclusive Communities and Office of the Vice-President (Students and Enrolment)
May 26, 2022

Content Warning

As a content warning, please note that this report discusses incidents of sexual violence. We understand that reviewing the report can trigger strong reactions and we encourage the community to connect with [Carleton University's Sexual Assault Support Centre](#) and/or [Health and Counselling Services](#) for support. [Additional community supports](#) are also available.

Executive Summary

The Board of Governors approved the revised Carleton Sexual Violence Policy for a three-year period on April 25, 2019. After an extensive consultation and review with the Carleton community, a further revised Policy will be presented to the Board of Governors for approval at its June 9, 2022 meeting. The Policy and related legislation requires that an annual report be presented to the Board for information. In 2021, the Carleton University Sexual Assault Support Centre provided 53 hours of sexual violence prevention and response training to 1,912 members of the community. The majority of these trainings were offered online due to COVID-19. This is in addition to the numerous prevention, advocacy, and support efforts that have been developed and delivered across campus with various stakeholders. Since January 2021, there have been 92 disclosures seeking support services. Of the 92 disclosures, 2 cases proceeded to a formal investigation process as requested by the respective complainants. Of the 92 total disclosures, 67 are based on incidents that occurred within a year of the disclosure and 25 are considered to be based on historical incidents. When comparing these statistics to 2020, we suspect that changes in 2021 data reflect the growing impacts of COVID-19 and students partially returning to campus. This year, the intensity of support was significantly higher and is consistent with what we are seeing across the sector. Finally, Carleton University is in the second year of implementing the campus sexual violence prevention and education strategy entitled, "Honouring Each Other," which provides a three-year blueprint that focuses on prevention and education initiatives. A separate report on this strategy will be presented to the Board of Governors at its June 9, 2022 meeting.

Continued Impact of COVID-19

In 2021, Carleton University offered a combination of remote, hybrid, and in-person courses and service delivery due to the changing guidelines of the COVID-19 pandemic. We know from 2020 that sexual violence can be pervasive in remote learning and work settings and that it can present additional barriers for sexual violence survivors needing to access resources or supports outside of their homes. The ongoing uncertainty of the pandemic, restrictions and stay-at-home orders placed survivors in a precarious and isolating position. We saw an increase in requests for services, support groups, and programming for Carleton members to find and build community.

In order to be as responsive and supportive as possible, Carleton rolled out an updated Peer Support Program to a secure text and online chat service for survivors, modelled after Ottawa's Unsafe At Home. Carleton University also responded to these challenges by offering multiple support groups for survivors throughout the academic year, providing both in-person and virtual services and increased social media engagement on Carleton University Sexual Assault Support Centre (CUSASC) platforms. Finally, we adapted all of our trainings to reflect the accumulated impact of COVID-19 on sexual violence survivors so members of the broader community could learn how to best provide support.

Prevention, Education and Awareness Initiatives

In 2021, multiple campus partnerships were continued in order to provide sexual violence education and awareness services. Partners included:

- Centre for Indigenous Support and Community Engagement
- Office of the Vice President (Students and Enrolment) (OVPSE)
- Health and Counselling Services
- Department of Housing and Residence Life
- Office of Student Affairs

- Student Experience Office (SEO)
- Campus Safety Services
- Carleton University Students' Association (CUSA)
- CUSA Womxn's Centre
- Department of Recreation and Athletics

Carleton was also proud to partner with several organizations in the broader Ottawa community that seek to end gender-based violence in our city, including:

- Sexual Assault Support Centre of Ottawa
- City of Ottawa Women and Gender Equity Strategy Working Group
- Ottawa Coalition To End Violence Against Women
- Courage to Act: Community of Learning
- Ontario University Sexual Violence Network
- Ottawa Post-Secondary Sexual Violence Network

Training Statistics

The Sexual Assault Support Centre at Carleton University provided 53 hours of sexual violence prevention and response training to 1,912 members of the campus community in 2021. The majority of these workshops were held online and were geared toward residence students and staff, student organizations, as well as staff and faculty members.

Restorative Justice Training

The Department of Equity and Inclusive Communities (EIC) partnered with Elder Albert Dumont to provide members of the Sexual Violence Review Committee training on restorative practices in response to sexual violence. Through storytelling and group discussions, the training covered critical elements of restorative justice, non-punitive accountability, and how to center survivors in this process.

Procedural Fairness Training

EIC collaborated with experts and authors Karen Busby and Joanna Birenbaum of the book *Achieving Fairness: A Guide To Campus Sexual Violence Complaints*, to provide Procedural Fairness Training for members of the Sexual Violence Review Committee. Through examples of Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy, case studies, videos, and more, the training focused on ensuring that formal complaint processes of sexual violence are procedurally fair and trauma-informed.

Continuing in a Virtual Space

In keeping with COVID-19 safety precautions and campus protocols, EIC continued to offer training in a virtual format to ensure the campus community still had access to sexual violence prevention workshops. As part of the collaboration with the Office of the Vice-President (Students and Enrolment) on the Student Support Certificate, 3 workshops of Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence training were offered with 91 members of the community participating. As safe meeting and social distancing protocols began to ease at Carleton, EIC delivered two in-person training sessions titled: Creating Consent Culture on Campus. With the gradual return to campus underway, we look forward to delivering both virtual and in-person workshops for the community.

Communications

EIC created a video in 2021 to offer updates on the prevention strategy work plan, particularly as it relates to programming and trainings. Six additional videos will be released in 2022 to promote Honouring Each Other. EIC also hosted an Instagram Live to explore the ways in which the LGBTQ2SI+ community is disproportionately impacted by sexual violence.

Information on Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy – including how to disclose an experience of sexual violence (in both an emergency and a non-emergency situation) and how to file a formal complaint – continues to be posted on the Current Student website and in the Carleton360 Student Portal as a supplement to other ongoing promotions. The Sexual Violence Policy consultation and review process was communicated across a variety of channels including email, newsletters and social media. A website was maintained with a complete record of all communications sent during this consultation process.

Carleton University Sexual Assault Centre CHAT

Due to required COVID-19 safety precautions and campus protocols, EIC worked quickly to innovate its long-standing Peer Support Program into a secure text and webchat service for students, now branded as Carleton University Sexual Assault Support Centre CHAT (CUSASC CHAT). The program is staffed by peer supporters responsible for monitoring the web/text chat service where students can anonymously connect with a trained volunteer for support, referrals, and resources.

Following the relaunch of the program, we saw a considerable increase in the number of community members seeking support. Conversations regarding healthy relationships, sexual health, academic accommodations, and reporting options were some of the common inquiries. EIC, Health and Counselling Services, CUSA, The Sexual Assault Support Centre of Ottawa, and others were among the referrals provided in 2021.

Sexual Assault Awareness Week 2021

Hosted annually, EIC collaborated with several on-campus partners to bring six different online events to the Carleton community. This included the keynote address with Chanel Miller, author of "Know My Name," about her experience as a sexual assault survivor, and Eternity Martis, author of "They Said This Would be Fun." This was a sold-out online event, with over 300 people attending for the evening. The special conversation was opened with poets from CUSA's Womxn's Centre and featured Carleton students sharing their stories of survival and support. Additionally, a joint workshop on traditional medicines for Indigenous students was developed in partnership with the Centre for Indigenous Initiatives, a series of yoga videos for survivors was launched and we offered a Netflix Watch Party of the movie, "Clueless." The self-care kits were a major success, also reaching maximum capacity for registration after only 48 hours online – more than 350 kits were mailed to students.

Carleton also launched a virtual support group for survivors of sexual violence, in partnership with the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Ottawa. This was a new support offering for survivors in EIC, and the response from the community has been excellent.

#CuriousAbout Campaign 2021

The fourth year of the #CuriousAbout Campaign continued in a virtual format in 2021. This initiative is a six-week campaign beginning at the start of the Fall term. The campaign is timed to coincide with a critical period on university and college campuses. According to studies, the first six to eight weeks of classes at most post-secondary institutions see a spike in sexual assaults and other forms of gender-based violence. #Curious addresses this by hosting a weekly event for the first six weeks of classes, beginning after Fall Orientation week concludes. The goal is to have open conversations about sexual violence prevention, consent, support, and self-care as well as inform incoming Carleton students of the resources that are available on campus.

EIC mailed over 400 self-care kits to Carleton students, facilitated a Bystander Intervention Training, and hosted an affirmation art workshop. They also partnered with the Ottawa Post-Secondary Sexual Violence Network (University of Ottawa, Algonquin College, and La Cité) to host a virtual panel discussion with experts on the impacts of cyber-sexual violence.

Abundant Approaches 2021

EIC hosted an inaugural speakers series, Abundant Approaches: Exploring Inclusive Healing for Sexual Violence. The series re-examined how healing and advocacy around sexual violence is defined and the different pathways to healing for survivors. It provided professional development workshops to frontline sexual assault support workers and advocates to learn and unlearn what inclusive practices to healing can look like.

Each moderated session included advocates, researchers, activists, counsellors, and more. Five panel events with 700 registrations from across Canada were hosted throughout 2021 covering topics on:

1. Healing Spaces for Racialized Survivors
2. Exploring Healing through Accountability
3. Healing While Queer
4. Creating Accessible Healing Spaces
5. Finding Solace in Spirituality

Abundant Approaches was co-organized by Carleton University's Sexual Assault Support Centre, Algonquin College's Project Lighthouse, and the Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women (OCTEVAW).

We Deserve Healing Not Harm: Building Community Responses to the Criminalization of Gender-Based Violence Survivors 2021

We Deserve Healing Not Harm is a partnership between Carleton University, Toronto Metropolitan University (formerly Ryerson University), and Wilfrid Laurier University. Through five monthly panels and keynote events, the speaker series focused on intersecting systems that can harm survivors. Presented by leading experts and community leaders, session topics included the criminalization of domestic violence survivors, restorative justice pathways for accountability, and transformative justice approaches to responding to gender-based violence. Through a live collaborative notetaking document, the series allowed participants to learn with one another, share resources, and generate calls to action. Each event drew hundreds of registrations and received positive feedback from the community.

Begin by Listening: Student Activism on Sexual Violence Symposium 2021

The Ontario University Sexual Violence Network organized the first annual Begin by Listening: Sexual Violence Student Activism Symposium which was held virtually for students across Ontario. The work of graduate and undergraduate students' research, art, activism, and advocacy on sexual violence and consent was featured in this virtual symposium. The symposium's goal was to highlight the work of student leaders from across Ontario who are working to prevent sexual violence and support survivors in their communities. Speakers covered topics on consent culture on campus, the #MeToo Movements of France and Quebec, queering sexual violence prevention and education, and much more.

We Heal Together 2021

Carleton University and Toronto Metropolitan University (formerly Ryerson University), worked in partnership on We Heal Together, a support group for Black survivors of gender-based violence looking for alternative healing methods. Throughout the Fall 2021 term, students attended a five-week workshop series facilitated by Dr. Jiselle Griffith N.D, a naturopathic doctor. The series focused on the impact of trauma and stress, self-care strategies, and ways to find resilience and strengthen compassion for our well-being. Each workshop covered expressions of self-love, the connection between our nervous system and emotional wellbeing, boundaries, and daily practices of joy. The program was well-received by students and additional workshops were scheduled for Winter 2022.

EIC also collaborated with award-winning illustrator Ashanti Fortson to create a colouring book for the students registered with the program.

Annual Statistics

Carleton University continues to collect and report on statistics related to sexual violence through six broad categories. These categories are sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, indecent exposure, voyeurism, and sexual exploitation.

There have been 92 disclosures seeking support services based on these categories from January to December 2021. Of the 92 disclosures, 2 cases went to a formal investigation process as requested by the respective complainants. Of the 92 total disclosures, 67 are based on incidents that occurred within a year of the disclosure and 25 were considered to be based on historical incidents. Furthermore, 60 of the 92 involve a respondent who is a member of the Carleton community and 36 incidents took place on campus.

The breakdown of disclosure statistics that are based on the six broad categories of sexual violence (not including formal complaints) are as follows with some disclosures falling into two or more categories:

- 71 cases of sexual assault
- 21 cases of sexual harassment
- 3 cases of stalking
- 0 cases of indecent exposure
- 1 case of voyeurism
- 5 cases of sexual exploitation

Beginning in 2019, we began collecting statistics on consent education meetings as part of our alternative resolution work. In 2021, EIC provided three sessions for consent education, one of which was mandated by the Sexual Violence Review Committee and two that were voluntary conversations.

When comparing these statistics to 2020, the changes in the 2021 data continues to reflect pandemic-related stressors. We can infer that the accumulated impacts of COVID-19, particularly the changes in public health restrictions, stay-at-home orders, and the return of in-person gatherings have contributed to the increased number of disclosures. The increase in support from new and returning clients was also much greater in 2021 and is consistent with the general trends we are seeing across the sector.

A comparison table has been provided for reference to show the year-over-year comparison.

Table 1: Total Disclosures

Measure	2020	2021
Informal disclosures	63	90
Formal reports	4	2
Total	67	92

Table 2: Disclosure Breakdown

Measure	2020	2021
Recent cases	48	67
Carleton University Respondent	36	60
On-campus incidents	23	36
Consent education	12	3

We also consider these statistics to demonstrate the continuing efficacy of our outreach efforts on campus. Specifically, last year, 23 incidents on campus were reported, while this year 36 were reported. Additionally, 48 of the disclosed cases were considered recent in 2020 whereas in 2021 we saw 67. Not only do these numbers indicate greater trust in the capacity for institutional response, but it also means more members of the community are able to gain timely support.

Policy Review Process

After a robust consultation process in 2018-2019, Carleton University reviewed and made significant revisions to the Sexual Violence Policy. Beginning in October 2021, the Office of the Vice-President (Students and Enrolment) and Equity and Inclusive Communities undertook an extensive consultation and review of the Sexual Violence Policy to fulfill the provincial mandate as per Bill 132 and to ensure our policy is as responsive and supportive to the community as possible.

During the listening phase of the consultation work plan, a total of 21 information and feedback sessions were scheduled for members of the Carleton community which were a combination of open sessions for the general population as well as closed sessions for groups who traditionally experience oppression and marginalization. In total, 13 people participated in these consultations. Overall the limited amount of feedback received and participation in consultation sessions reflects the maturity of the Policy and the overall satisfaction of the community with the Policy.

A draft of the policy was released to the Carleton community for additional feedback. During the drafting and fine-tuning phase of the consultation work plan, three additional information and feedback sessions were scheduled as well as several stakeholder meetings. Feedback was also provided by email and through an anonymous online form. A report outlining the feedback received throughout the consultation process and an ongoing record of all community outreach activities throughout the consultation process has been made available on the [consultation website](#).

Many of the feedback items identified in the feedback on the Sexual Violence Policy will be used to contribute to the Campus Sexual Violence Prevention Strategy: *Honouring Each Other: A blueprint for building consent cultures on campus, together*. This three-year strategy was created by the Sexual Violence Prevention and Education Committee (SVPEC) and serves as their work plan. The SVPEC continues to be committed to providing sexual violence training and information to members of the university community.

The revised Sexual Violence Policy will be presented to the Board of Governors for approval at its June 9, 2022 meeting.

Honouring Each Other: A blueprint for building consent cultures on campus, together

As with all other programming in 2020, Carleton's prevention strategy required multiple adaptations to respond to COVID-19 circumstances. A number of the strategic objectives in the prevention strategy have been amended so they can be delivered in a virtual format, while some new deliverables have been added to the document. Two of the three working groups under the Sexual Violence Prevention and Education Committee (SVPEC) have also been restructured to better reflect the new work plan and timelines.

Additionally, we updated the terms of reference for the SVPEC to reflect the provincial protocols for sexual violence task forces at universities. We will review the activities of the prevention strategy in 2022 and update it to reflect the likelihood of a hybrid program delivery model. A report outlining updates on the implementation of *Honouring Each Other: Building consent cultures on campus, together* will be presented to the Board of Governors at its June 9, 2022 meeting.

Reporting Adjustments

The Ministry of Colleges and Universities has advised the University on February 28, 2022, that the deadline for submitting annual reports has been changed to November 1 for all future reports. As such, we will be adjusting our annual reporting timelines from the calendar year (January – December) to the academic year (May – April) for all future reports. Comparable statistics will be provided.

What Has Been Learned

2021 was another year that presented many challenges as the COVID-19 pandemic continued to evolve. With the gradual return to campus and offerings of in-person courses for students, we ensured that our services remained adaptable and flexible to suit the needs of sexual violence survivors. With the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, we saw a substantial increase in community members seeking support and an increased need for intersectional programming. As we look ahead to 2022 and the return to regular in-person activities, we will continue to innovate and take new approaches when it comes to support offerings for survivors on Carleton's campus.