

# Carleton University 2020 Report on Sexual Violence

Presented to the Board of Governors

Prepared by the Department of Equity and Inclusive Communities and the Office of the Vice President (Students and Enrolment): June 1, 2021



## 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. The Policy and related legislation requires that an annual report be presented to the Board for information. The Carleton University Sexual Assault Support Centre provided 63 hours of sexual violence prevention and response training to more than 1,700 members of the community. The majority of this training was offered online due to COVID-19. This is in addition to the multiple initiatives that have been developed and delivered across campus with various stakeholders in areas of prevention, advocacy and support. Since January 2020, there have been 67 disclosures seeking support services. Of the 67 disclosures, 4 cases proceeded to a formal investigation process as requested by the respective complainants. Of the 67 total disclosures, 48 are based on incidents that occurred within a year of the disclosure and 19 are considered to be based on historical incidents. When comparing these statistics to 2019, we suspect that changes in 2020 data reflect the new reality of COVID-19 and students being off campus. Although these statistics for 2020 are lower, the intensity of support was higher and is consistent to what we are seeing across the sector. Finally, Carleton University is in the first 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 initiative will be presented to the Board of Governors at its June 1, 2021 meeting.

## Impact of COVID-19

In 2020, Carleton University transitioned to remote course and service delivery due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result of this transition, we had to challenge the notion that sexual violence may lessen with public health restrictions involving physical distancing, remote learning and work. We know that sexual violence happens online, just as it happens in person; and we worked to ensure that survivors of online sexual violence or exploitation had access to resources and supports as soon as possible. Additionally, for those survivors who did experience physical violence, we worked to ensure that they did not feel an additional sense of shame or stigma due to the physical distancing restrictions. Finally, we faced the inevitable fact that for many survivors, sexual violence is happening in their homes, where they are unable to escape the violence in the current context of public health restrictions. This required developing new protocols for referring survivors to campus resources, as well as community resources, including Ottawa’s new text support line, Unsafe At Home. Carleton University responded with creativity to these challenges, engaging the use of new tools including videos and graphic offerings that will endure as public health restrictions ease and the eventual return to campus.

## Prevention, Education and Awareness Initiatives

In 2020, multiple campus partnerships were continued in order to provide sexual violence education and awareness services. Partners included:

- Department of Equity and Inclusive Communities (EIC)
- Office of the Vice President (Students and Enrolment) (OVPSE)
- Health and Counselling Services
- Department of Housing and Residence Life
- Educational Development Centre
- Office of Student Affairs
- Student Experience Office (SEO)
- Campus Safety Services
- Carleton University Students’ Association (CUSA)

- Graduate Students' Association (GSA)
- Department of Recreation and Athletics

Carleton was also proud to partner with a number of 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
- City for All Women Initiative
- Ottawa Coalition To End Violence Against Women
- Courage to Act: Can Justice Heal? Community of Practice
- Ontario University Sexual Violence Network
- Ottawa Post-Secondary Sexual Violence Network
- Ottawa Police Community Advisory Committee on Gender-Based Violence

### Training Statistics

Throughout 2020, the Carleton University Sexual Assault Support Centre provided 63 hours of sexual violence prevention and response training to 1,728 members of the campus community. The majority of these trainings were offered online, and targeted residence students and staff, fraternities and sororities, and athletes.

### Training Highlights

#### Moving to an online space

Due to required COVID-19 safety precautions and campus protocols, EIC worked quickly to innovate its training offerings to ensure the campus community still had access to sexual violence prevention workshops. This meant the conversion of 23 professional development trainings to synchronous formats accessible over Zoom or Microsoft Teams. As part of the collaboration with OVPSE on the Student Support Certificate, 3 workshops of Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence training were offered with 56 members of the community participating. Additionally, EIC created 6 resource and training videos on the topics of consensual online interactions, coping with triggers, and supporting one another during COVID-19.

#### Intersectional Support and Training

While 2020 brought COVID-19 to the world, it also provided a critical racial reckoning globally, and post-secondary environments were integral to that conversation. While EIC programming has always been intersectional, the focus, even more so this year, was on offerings that recognized individuals through multiple demographic identities simultaneously.

#### Communications

Ensuring that we were responsive to the online environment, EIC partnered with Health and Counselling Services to create a document entitled, "Trauma-Informed Tips for Working and Studying from Home," so that survivors in all spaces of the campus were able to access important information on productivity and the current online context, that also took into account their experiences of trauma. A self-care journal was also created, "I Choose Me: A Book for Affirmation and Reflection," in partnership with local Ottawa artist, Lucky Little Queer. This journal offers spaces for creativity, empowering quotes, illustrations of powerful community activists, grounding activities, and self-care checklists. The journal is

offered as part of self-care kits we create for survivors and will be available in the EIC office when we return to campus.

The Office of the Vice-President (Students and Enrolment) also featured the Education and Services Coordinator in EIC on the Carleton Pathway Podcast on the eve of Sexual Assault Awareness Week 2021 to talk about the events and activities planned for the week and programming offered year-round. 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 MyCarleton Portal as a supplement to other ongoing promotions.

### [#CUrious Campaign 2020](#)

In 2020, the third year of #CUrious moved to an online space. This initiative addresses a critical time of year on university and college campuses. Studies show that the first six to eight weeks of classes are when most post-secondary institutions see a spike in sexual assaults and other forms of gender violence, sometimes referred to as “The Red Zone.” #CUrious addresses this by offering an event each week for the first six weeks of classes, launching after Fall Orientation week ends. This year, it was important not to overlook this important time, simply because students were not physically on campus.

EIC hosted three online events, including online yoga, self-care crafting sessions, and bystander training workshops. They also partnered with the Ottawa Post-Secondary Sexual Violence Network (Ottawa University, Algonquin College, and La Cité) to host an #IBelieveYou Day.

### [Consent Is Not Cancelled 2020](#)

Consent Is Not Cancelled is a partnership between Carleton University, Ryerson University, and Wilfred Laurier University. This campaign included three major offerings: a speaker series, Curiosity Labs, and a keynote event featuring Chanel Miller and Eternity Martis as part of Sexual Assault Awareness Week 2021.

The Speaker Series included six essential discussions for the movement to address and prevent sexual violence. Presented by leading experts on some of the timeliest issues facing campuses today, including police abolition, “consentful tech”, alternative accountability approaches, and misogynoir, the hour-long sessions offered insightful advice and nuanced conversation.

The Curiosity Labs were monthly experimental spaces offering students an opportunity to learn together, ask questions and share ideas. Each of the 45-minute labs gave space to discover, test and build on relationship skills on topics like flirting and sexting, apologies, boundaries, and sitting with rejection. This project was also cited in a January 2021 article by [Flare Magazine](#).

### [Sexual Assault Awareness Week 2021](#)

This year, EIC worked 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.” An online registration for self-care kits was launched and kits were mailed to survivors throughout the week as an additional form of support and joy while many students felt isolated at home. 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 is also excited to have launched a virtual support group for survivors of sexual violence, in partnership with the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Ottawa. This is a new support offering for survivors in our office, and the response from the community has been excellent.

## 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.

Based on these categories, and from January-December 2020, there have been 67 disclosures seeking support services. Of the 67 disclosures, 4 cases went to a formal investigation process as requested by the respective complainants. Of the 67 total disclosures, 48 are based on incidents that occurred within a year of the disclosure and 19 were considered to be based on historical incidents. Further, of the 67 disclosures, 36 disclosures involve a respondent who is a member of the Carleton community and 23 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:

- 40 cases of sexual assault
- 16 cases of sexual harassment
- 4 cases of stalking
- 0 cases of indecent exposure
- 0 cases of voyeurism
- 3 cases of sexual exploitation

Beginning in 2019, we are also collecting statistics on consent education meetings as part of our alternative resolution work. In 2020, EIC provided 12 sessions for consent education, 6 of which were mandated by the Sexual Violence Review Committee, and 6 that were voluntary conversations.

When comparing these statistics to 2019, the changes in the 2020 data reflect the new reality of COVID-19. Although these statistics for 2020 are lower, the intensity of support was higher and is consistent with what 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	2019	2020
Informal disclosures	124	63
Formal reports	6	4
Total:	130	67

**Table 2: Disclosure Breakdown**

Measure	2019	2020
Recent cases	75	48
Carleton University Respondent	56	36
On-campus incidents	45	23
Consent education	12	12

While we strive to one day have a campus free of violence altogether, at this time, these numbers confirm that our services and programming are supporting survivors on campus.

## Policy Review Process

The Sexual Violence Policy is scheduled for revision and renewal in 2022. Carleton is committed to implementing a holistic and transparent consultation process as conducted in 2018-19 and has already initiated discussions to determine the best approach. Consultations will begin in Fall 2021, in order to meet the 2022 deadline. The Board of Governors will be provided with updates throughout this process.

## 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. However, we did form three sub-committees under the Sexual Violence Prevention and Education Committee (SVPEC) which serves as the university's task force on sexual violence. 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 2021 and update it to reflect the likelihood of a mixed program delivery model. A report outlining updates on the implementation of *Honouring Each Other: Building consent cultures on campus, together*. Both reports will be presented to the Board of Governors at its June 1, 2021 meeting.

## What Has Been Learned

2020 was a year that presented many unforeseen circumstances to us. We learned that our services are flexible, adaptable, and resilient. It was also reinforced to us that intersectional support is critically important when offering care to sexual violence survivors. We continue to innovate and take new approaches when it comes to support offerings for survivors on Carleton's campus, and we know that moving forward, this past year will only have made our services stronger.