

2017-2018 Annual Report

Office of the Campus Sexual Assault Support Advocate

7-27-2018



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Campus Sexual Assault Support Advocate (CSASA)

This marked the introductory year of the tri-campus Sexual Assault Strategy, signed April 2017. This strategy and agreement formalized ties between the Fredericton Sexual Assault Centre (FSAC), University of New Brunswick (UNB), St. 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 equal opportunity to 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 FSAC, 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 gained national attention as the three institutions and FSAC were invited to facilitate five different presentations at the Annual National Conference of Campus Sexual Assault in Toronto, November 2017. Presentations ranged from how to support students through the complaints process, to the tri-campus strategy and STU’s panel on adjudicating sexual assault complaints.

The signing of this strategy and agreement holds all three institutions and the Fredericton Sexual Assault Centre 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 the Fredericton Sexual Assault Centre, where the work will be housed as a team approach rather than resting solely on the shoulders of one office on campus. This approach differs from the approach UNBSJ adopts for their differing needs and client population.

This report covers the activities of the Fredericton CSASA over the reporting period of one full year, July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018. This report speaks directly to the cases related to STU and although some have been connected to the criminal justice system, details of those cases are not highlighted here.

The CSASA functions 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. STU’s Sexual Assault Policy defines sexual assault as *any type of unwanted sexual act committed by an individual against another that violates the sexual integrity of the individual to whom it is directed. 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, and/or threatened. It is carried out in circumstances in which the person has not freely agreed, consented, or is incapable of consenting to the act.*

Disclosures of Sexual Assault: Statistical Information

Throughout the 2017-2018 school-year, over **40** incidences of sexual violence against members of the campus community were disclosed to the CSASA’s office for all institutions.

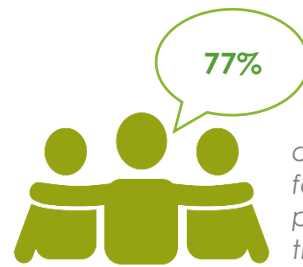
Incidences disclosed to the CSASA program range on a continuum of sexually aggressive and abusive behaviour. From unwanted sexual touching to non-consensual sexual penetration. Disclosed incidences can be generally divided into two categories: non-consensual sexual touching (**22%**) or non-consensual sexual penetration (**78%**).

These incidences most often occur between people who know each other (**73%**) and in a home known to them (**64%**).

Of the referrals received by the CSASAs, **11** were survivors affiliated with STU who disclosed sexual violence occurred against them. Of the **8** sexual assaults reported to have occurred against STU students during this reporting timeframe, the average span of time between disclosure and support seeking was **62** days.

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. Sexual violence in adulthood is a gendered crime and is experienced predominately by those who identify as female (**85%** of CSASA clientele). 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). Though numbers are too small to disclose without releasing identifying information, the STU Trans population is represented within the CSASA client base, highlighting their increased risk to this type of violence and a need to create stronger preventative measures and cultural change.

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



of complainants were familiar with the person who assaulted them.



of disclosed incidences of sexual assault occurred in someone's home.

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 STU has been working to address sexual violence on campus.

Interventions and Response to Disclosures of Sexual Assault

Sexual violence has one of the lowest reporting rates for all criminal offences (5% to legal authorities (Statistics Canada, 2014) and **16%** to Campus Administration (CSASA, 2018)). Complainants often feel frustrated, blamed, and shamed by society which in turn silences their hopes in achieving justice and support.

The Policy on Sexual Violence creates two types of disclosure within the university environment:

- 1) Disclosure, where the complainant seeks support but no further action;
- 2) Formal Complaint, where the complainant wishes to bring formal charges against the respondent (under the Non Academic Misconduct Policy or under appropriate staff/faculty policies)

Of the total incidences of sexual assault disclosed during this timeframe, more than 1 but fewer than 5¹ filed formal complaints. Of those that filed formal complaints, all were investigated and adjudicated. Sanctions for files where the respondent was found to have breached the STU Sexual Assault policy included writing requirements, suspension from locations on campus, and limitations on campus involvement.

Informal measures were often chosen in lieu of formal complaints as students were more interested in pursuing safety and empowerment rather than to discipline their respondents, or when the respondent was not a member of the STU community.

It is our goal to make this journey easier for those who need to navigate it. Through our feedback process, one client says ***"[my counsellor] did an outstanding job, I came in with very little faith in the system due to past events and now feel confident in the system and like people actually are there/here to help with problems."***



62.5% of clients indicated that since seeking support from the CSASA office, they felt less isolated

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. The CSASA office was fortunate to have had the support of an MEd. Counselling intern, during the academic year, who provided extra counselling support to the campus population under CSASA supervision. One client described the interventions she received as ***"an eye-opening experience, and as hard as it is to do, it challenges me to reflect on what has happened to me as opposed to pushing it to the back of my mind."*** Furthermore, clients identified the things that have impacted them in a positive way from CSASA counselling as ***"being able to identify that the life I live at present can be changed for the better"*** and ***"the fact that someone listens to everything I have to say and truly believes [the assault] is not my fault"***.

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 an ***"understanding of the magnitude of not only my experience, but of rape culture as a whole. It is difficult to accept, but it helps me understand the situation better."*** Understanding dynamics of violence and experiencing less isolation is important in healing from sexual violence. Running two support groups for sexual assault survivors on campus proved to improve both aspects. One client says ***"This group has reassured me that I am not alone and has helped explain why I feel the way I do sometimes. It has also helped me be able to talk about it more without feeling shame."***

The Campus Sexual Assault Response Team (CSART) consists of campus service providers, such as Student Services, Counselling, Health, Residence Life, Registrar, 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, 9 clients successfully sought interim measures to help them feel safe and empowered at STU. Interim measures that were taken include:

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



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

¹ More than 1 but fewer than 5 is used as a range to help maintain anonymity when reporting numbers are small.

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 **two support groups** over the academic year
- Supported complainants through the **complaints and adjudication** procedures.

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 STU Student Union, faculty, Residence Life, and student groups to create and facilitate activities addressing issues of sexual violence. This year, the STU student union made sexual violence a key goal in their portfolio, facilitating several events and initiatives to address the issue.

ACTIVITIES FOR PREVENTION & EDUCATION:

- Worked with **Sexual Violence Prevention Team** to create and monitor prevention activities
- **Awareness booths** at student orientation activities
- **Promotion** of CSASA program with STU 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 residence life student staff.
- Coordination of the **Bystander Intervention Training workshops**
- Prevention **campaign**: Defining Rape Culture in partnership with the STU Student Union.
- 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.
- Facilitated the (Week long) **Counselling Survivors of Sexual Violence training** for campus counsellors.
- **White Ribbon Panel** on Sexual Harassment during "Climate Change" Week
- **What were you Wearing?** Clothing Exhibit
- **Take Back the Night** preparation, promotion, and coordination
- Student led poster making and rally for **Take Back the Night**
- Support to **student union initiatives** such as the Invisible Theatre in JDH and the Clothesline Project

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. STU has continued to work to update their sexual assault policy and procedures, educating staff and students on the parameters of what STU can do for complainants of sexual violence. Furthermore, STU has presented twice, nationally, on adjudicating sexual assault complaints at educational institutions.

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 and development of **sanctioning procedures** for breeches of the sexual assault policy.
- Initiated research into potential **restorative processes** for community rehabilitation post disclosure.

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 at STU.
- Elicited feedback from clients about their **experiences with the CSASA**.
- Collaborated on ways to **evaluate prevention** strategies for the coming years.