



The Centre for Sexual Violence Response, Support & Education Progress Report

May 1, 2020 to April 30, 2021

Overview

York University created the Sexual Violence Response Office in 2017 to provide sexual violence prevention support and resources to all students, staff and faculty. In 2018, in response to feedback from community consultations, the University created a standalone centre as a single point of contact for integrated and holistic sexual assault response, support, advising, counselling, advocacy and case management services.

The Centre for Sexual Violence Response, Support & Education (The Centre) opened in July 2018. Guided by the York University Policy on Sexual Violence, our main principle is to provide support for survivors and that this support should be provided at their own pace, in the ways they wish to proceed, and in a way that that enables them to make informed decisions. All our supports and educational/training initiatives operate from a feminist and anti-oppressive lens.

York University's Sexual Violence Advisory Committee provides advice and recommendations to the Vice-President Academic & Provost (VPAP) and the Vice-President Finance & Administration (VPFA) with respect to York University's efforts to prevent sexual violence, support survivors and address reports of sexual violence.

The Centre is staffed with qualified subject matter experts who operate with the highest levels of confidentiality and deep empathy. Supports offered through The Centre includes the coordination of academic consideration, referrals to medial services, referrals to workplace accommodations, information about reporting options, safety planning, emergency financial assistance and access to our safe house for those escaping imminent situations.

The Centre Staff

Director

Administrative Assistant
& Receptionist

Service & Supports
Coordinator

Training & Education
Specialist

Peer Trainer



About The Centre



We're Here For You



◀ Established the Sexual Violence Response Office in 2017.

H.E.R.E

◀ H.E.R.E to Help, Educate, Respond to and Empower survivors and the York community at large.



◀ Established The Centre for Sexual Violence Response, Support & Education (The Centre) in 2018.



◀ Staffed with qualified subject matter experts who operate with the highest levels of confidentiality and deep empathy.



◀ York University's Sexual Violence Advisory Committee provides advice and recommendations.



◀ Provide supports for survivors and at their own pace.



Training and Education



We offer training modules, focusing on policies and procedures pertaining to sexual violence response at York, for students and staff and faculty.



505 certificates generated.

▲ Step one, Sexual Violence Response & Awareness, is an introductory course that provides information about policies and procedures.



2,485 certificates generated.

▲ Step two, Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence, uses scenario-based interactive learning to evaluate effective response to disclosures of sexual violence.



Building Awareness for Faculty, Staff and Students



◀ Building Safer Spaces Toolkit was created to support our student community when organizing online events. It serves as a tool to ensure all mechanisms of support are considered.



◀ Consent Week & Sexual Violence Response Education Week in the Fall and Winter built awareness of all of the resources and supports available, starting with referrals to the Centre for Sexual Violence Response, Support & Education.

74
94
+4,390

training events

unique training sessions

staff, students and faculty that were delivered presentations



◀ Partnership with the York Federation of Students led to all club leaders having the opportunity to be trained in the Active Bystander Program.

Training & Education

York University and The Centre for Sexual Violence Response, Support & Education are committed to educating and training the York University community about sexual violence. The Centre offers training and education to the University community aimed at preventing sexual violence and improving supports to survivors. This includes:

- Building awareness of the Sexual Violence Policy, including processes for responding to and addressing sexual violence, for members of the governing board and senior administrators; faculty, staff and other employees and contractors; and for students.
- Education initiatives for the University community to promote a change in the attitudes and behaviours that perpetuate sexual violence and to create a more supportive environment for survivors. These initiatives will take an intersectional and anti-oppressive approach to addressing the issue of sexual violence and recognize different experiences of violence. Programming will aim to address systemic issues contributing to sexual violence and aim to challenge rape culture and other forms of discrimination and hate.

The Centre offers training modules, focusing on policies and procedures pertaining to sexual violence response at York University, for students and staff and faculty.

Step One – “Sexual Violence Response & Awareness” is an introductory course on The Centre’s website that provides information about policies and procedures. In 2020-2021, 505 participants completed this training module.

Step Two – “Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence” is a course that uses scenario-based interactive learning, engaging the participant in identifying and evaluating effective responses to disclosures of sexual violence. In 2020-2021, 2,485 participants completed this training module.

Step Three (New) – “Active Bystander” is an online training module coming late-Fall 2021 to help student, staff and faculty understand and learn how to be an active bystander and contribute to a culture of consent at York University.

COVID-19 Pandemic

During the global pandemic, The Centre team pivoted to exclusively online formats to deliver 74 events and 94 unique training sessions, reaching 4,390 students, staff and faculty. All presentations were facilitator-led with interactive components for deeper discussions and to synthesize information.



Statistical Information

Below is a statistical report of disclosures and complaints. On average, The Centre meets with the individuals five to six times and provides a number of services and supports over a number of months or years. The number of individuals that The Centre supports does not represent the frequency of services offered.

Disclosures

195 individual cases of care and support



- This number does not capture the community members that receive ongoing supports and reported in the 2019/20 period.
- This number predominantly represents historical cases that pre-dates the survivor being a York University community member.
- In most cases, the respondent is a non-community member.

Complaints

33 total complaints



- 13 complaints forwarded for a formal investigation (6 resolved, 7 active).
- 18 complaints resolved informally.
- 2 complaints on hold (waiting for external process to conclude).

Breakdown of Complaints

11 ongoing complaints



8 Student Complainants	0 Staff Complainants
2 Faculty Complainants	1 Non-community Complainants
8 Student Respondents	0 Staff Respondents
3 Faculty Respondents	0 Non-community Respondents
0 Not enough information/dismissed	

22 resolved complaints



17 Student Complainants	1 Staff Complainants
0 Faculty Complainants	4 Non-community Complainants
13 Student Respondents	0 Staff Respondents
0 Faculty Respondents	0 Non-community Respondents
9 Not enough information/dismissed	

Campaign Highlights

The Centre for Sexual Violence Response, Support & Education created and launched five campaigns from January 1, 2021 to March 15, 2021. Events specifically addressed issues related to sexual violence that impact Black and Indigenous community members:

Discussing Implications of Institutionalized Sexual Violence

A panel discussion in light of the “Broken Dreams, Broken Lives” Merlo Davidson Class-Action Settlement Agreement report. The report highlighted the ongoing sexual violence within the RCMP and made 52 recommendations to address the systemic sexism and homophobia embedded in the RCMP’s culture.

The Issues and Impacts of Misogynoir: Voices of Experience

A two-part session to share experiences and challenges addressing misogynoir, and a supportive space dedicated for Black women to address issues and impacts of misogynoir. Event was held in collaboration with The Centre for Human Rights, Equity & Inclusion (CHREI), WomenatthecentrE, and York Federation of Students (YFS).

Toward Therapeutic Conditions: Racial Trauma with BIPOC Communities

Featuring Dwayne Brown and Joseph Smith of Generation Chosen, this session involved transparent and authentic conversations about Racial Trauma, Microaggressions, Post-Traumatic Stress Symptoms (PTSS), Impostor Syndrome and the state of mental health amongst members of the Black community.

Information on Sex Trafficking

Presented by the Native Child and Family Services of Toronto, this session focused on sex trafficking, prevention-work and supporting survivors of exploitation at all stages of their healing journey. The session covered intersections between colonialism and trafficking, how human trafficking effects Indigenous community members in the GTA, and the Bekaadendang (Being Peaceful) program approach to service provision.

Shades of Our Sisters Digital Exhibit & Film Screening

In collaboration with the Centre for Aboriginal Student Services (CASS), the Centre hosted the Shades of Our Sisters Digital Exhibit Opening and Film Screening in commemoration of International Women’s Day.

Founded by the Cywink and Carpenter Families in 2016, Shades of Our Sisters is an exhibit which includes the stories of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, Trans and Two-Spirit People (MMIWGT2S) as told by their families. Named by the families, Shades of Our Sisters originates from an Ojibwe story. Within this teaching, Shades are said to be what is left behind on this earth when a person’s spirit passes to the land of their Ancestors.

The exhibit exists with the purpose of honouring MMIWGT2S and giving Families space to celebrate the lives of their loved ones. Shades of Our Sisters is unique in its grassroots approach which centres MMIWGT2S Families and puts all storytelling, artistic direction and control into their hands. This exhibit provides space for Families and community members to honour the lives of MMIWGT2S while confronting anti-Indigenous racism and violence.

Building Awareness

Active Bystander Program

Ongoing training equips students, staff and faculty with the tools to be an active bystander. This includes learning how to intervene when witnessing sexual violence, disrupting conversations that engage in rape culture, and providing resources or referring individuals requiring support.

A partnership with the York Federation of Students (YFS) enabled The Centre to train more than 500 student leaders with a specific focus on scenarios club executives may face and beyond.

Consent Talks

An online play, produced in collaboration with Vanier College Productions, about sex and consent, focusing on the university experience during the COVID-19 pandemic. Themes included virtual hookups, sexual violence, online harassment, and the impact of social media and physical distancing rules. The play was screened during the social orientation of all first-year students and incorporated in class talks. A Q&A was also held for groups, clubs and community members throughout the year.

Consent Week & Sexual Violence Response Education Week

Hosted Consent Week in the fall term and Sexual Violence Response Education Week in the winter term to educate the community on sexual violence, gender-based violence, and the resources and supports available through The Centre.

Building Safer Spaces Toolkit

Created to support the student community when organizing online events and ensure that mechanisms of support are considered. The Building Safer Spaces Toolkit assists in getting the message across about consent, understanding navigating boundaries and ensuring that support resources are available.

Other Supports and Services

Offered support groups and art therapy to support survivors who are students, staff and faculty.

Summer 2021 Events

Momming Through the Pandemic

Mothering has been frontline work during this pandemic. To provide a safer space for moms, The Centre is hosting weekly sessions for moms to share, connect, support, build community and discuss coping strategies.

Dadding Through the Pandemic

Fathers have had a lot on their plates during this pandemic. To provide a safer space for dads, The Centre is hosting weekly support groups starting on Father's Day to connect, converse and share coping strategies.

Pride 2021: Artists & Activism

York University Pride 2021 is celebrating and honouring Artists and Activism in the 2SLGBTQQIA+ community. The week of Pride is being organized by SexGen, with the support of The Centre and CHREI.





We're here for you.
Reach out to us.

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