



Anti-Racism, Equity &  
Human Rights Services

**SASV** | SEXUAL  
ASSAULT  
**RESPONSE** | SEXUAL  
VIOLENCE  
CONSENT — GET IT!

# SEXUAL VIOLENCE EDUCATION & PREVENTION

ANNUAL TASK-FORCE  
REPORT TO THE  
BOARD OF  
GOVERNORS  
FOR 2019/2020

A stylized illustration of a diverse group of people, including men and women of various ethnicities, holding a large white banner. The banner has the text "We are here to support you" in blue. The background is a solid blue circle.

**We are here to support you**

Released  
December 2020

# Contents

- **Background and context**
- **Lessons learned from the survey**
- **Student training program overview**
- **Reports, complaints & investigations**
- **Community of practice**
- **Policy review**
- **Student focus groups**
- **Next steps**

# Background and context

---

To ensure greater safety and support to members of post-secondary institutions with regard to Sexual Violence, in 2016 the Government of Ontario established the Sexual Violence and Harassment Plan. Among the many requirements laid out in this plan was the expectation that each post-secondary institution would create an independent sexual violence policy, inclusive of supports for survivors and a structure outlining the steps which will be taken to address complaints of sexual violence.

In March 2019, the Government of Ontario enacted further requirements for all publicly-supported Colleges and Universities, requiring the creation of a task-force on sexual violence at each institution. Each task-force was to have diverse representation from across the college community, was to work collaboratively to address the issue of sexual violence on campus, and was to generate an annual report to the Board of Governors and the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities. George Brown College is dedicated to supporting a culture of consent on our campuses and among all members of our community.

# LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE SURVEY

In 2018, the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities generated and conducted the Student Voices on Sexual Violence Survey.

With the support of CCI Research Inc., the survey was distributed to all students attending a public post-secondary institution, or private career college in Ontario. The purpose of the survey was to gather information about how student respondents perceive, understand, and respond to sexual violence, as well as to better understand students' level of satisfaction with their institution's sexual violence supports and services.



**In March 2019, the ministry released a report sharing the survey's findings. Based on the results from George Brown College Respondents here is some of what we learned**

- For the most part, students have an intellectual understanding of consent. 84% of student respondents disagreed with negative or potentially harmful opinions, attitudes, and beliefs about consent. However, the meaning of consent may be less clear in real life situations, including those with potentially confounding variables (e.g. alcohol or drugs).
- 48% of survey participants indicated experiencing one or more incidents of sexual harassment since the beginning of the academic year
- 22% of student respondents indicated one or more experiences of stalking. Understanding that the online context matters, 48% of those reported experiences of stalking took place online.
- The survey results indicated that only 50% of the students who responded to the survey (in 2018) were fully aware of the services available to them.
- Of the student respondents who indicated having an experience of sexual violence, only 41% indicated that they had told someone about it. Within that group, 90% of respondents indicated that they spoke to a parent, friend, or romantic partner about it.

**Based on this information we know that we have work to do to increase awareness about sexual violence services available at George Brown College and have developed the following goals:**

- Increase student awareness of reporting options and available supports. This includes increasing awareness of the reporting process, and orientation to survivor supports, such as using a trauma informed approach for all interactions.
- Increase access to technology based resources so that information is easily accessible and available to all members of the community, including those who may receive a report of sexual violence. This will support those individuals to direct the concerned party to the qualified resource, the Sexual Violence Response Advisor, in a timely way.
- Boost the competence and confidence of bystanders to intervene when necessary.

# Student Training Overview

At George Brown College we are committed to fostering a culture of consent on our campuses. This requires us to connect with our students in a variety of different ways so that we can support them as they learn. One of the key points in our strategy to connect with students is our sexual violence and consent training. To ensure that we are providing sexual violence education in a way that remains current, our training was reviewed and revamped in January 2020.

Our new training materials focus on sharing critical information with students in a way that is both accessible and easy to engage with. Our goal was to create training that would engender students with a feeling of community, agency and shared responsibility.



The training teaches students about critical concepts such as understanding what is meant by sexual violence. This is accomplished by stepping outside the common understanding of sexual assault and increasing awareness of a breadth of different behaviours and actions which would be included in a broader understanding of the concept of sexual violence. In addition to sharing information about sexual violence, the training provides a thorough orientation to George Brown College's Sexual violence response services and the complaints resolution framework, followed by an engaging conversation about what constitutes sexual consent. Additionally, this training includes a component designed to help students navigate conversations about consent. It is clear, from the data contained in the Student Voices on Sexual Violence Survey, as well as from conversations with students that many have an academic understanding of consent, insofar as there is an understanding that consent must be present, there is, however less knowledgeability about how to actually engage in consent-based conversations. Our new training focuses on providing helpful information about how to engage in the ongoing practice of consent. Throughout the training participants are encouraged to engage in critical thought and self-reflection, drawing attention to the ways in which sexual violence and victim-blaming can be normalized within our society.

**In the winter of 2019, 8 student trainings were completed with a total of 152 participants**

**In Spring 2020, 5 student trainings and events were completed with ~ 110 participants**

In the 2020/2021 Academic year, our goal is to increase access to student training by offering monthly training sessions, for which students can self-enroll, as well as a 30-minute self-directed e-module, orienting students to the sexual assault and sexual violence policy and the support services offered at George Brown College.

# REPORTS COMPLAINTS & INVESTIGATIONS

---

In 2016 the Government of Ontario's Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan came into effect, requiring all Publicly funded post-secondary institutions to develop a Sexual Violence policy that clearly articulates expectations for conduct and the steps which will be taken to address disclosures of sexual violence.

In compliance with the Action Plan, George Brown College created the Sexual Assault and Sexual Violence Policy and began to develop and facilitate sexual violence prevention programming on campus. In 2019 the Act was amended requiring Post-secondary institutions to make an annual report to their board of governors reflecting the number of official complaints related to sexual violence made within the year.

The Sexual Assault and Sexual Violence Policy at George Brown College makes a distinction between a report of sexual violence and an official complaint, thus providing a higher level of self-determination for survivors with regards to initiating the complaints resolution process.

## The Policy defines Reports and Complaints as follows:

### Report

"To share information about an incident of sexual violence with the College for the purpose of receiving support, counseling, or other services or to obtain information about how to make a complaint."

### Complaint

"Sharing information about an incident of sexual violence with the College to initiate a formal process by which one or more respondents can be held accountable"

# Accounting of Formal Reports & Complaints

The information in the chart below has been categorized to reflect the definitions of Report and Complaint articulated in the Sexual Assault & Sexual Violence Policy.

## 2019/2020 Official Disclosures of Sexual Violence

	Sexual Assault	Sexual Harassment	Stalking	Indecent Exposure	Voyeurism	Sexual Exploitation	Totals
Reports	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Complaints	3	22	0	0	0	0	25
Investigations	3	6	0	0	0	0	9

Please note, the numbers represented above indicate the number of Reports/Complaints made as well as the number of investigations that took place. It is important to note however that there are several instances where multiple complainants came forward to Report/Complain regarding the same matter which resulted in a single investigation where appropriate. These instances include two matters with 5+ complainants, which were each addressed with a single investigation. In some instances, a single complainant Reported/Complained of behaviour in more than one category which is also reflected above



# Community of Practice

---



A crucial step to ensuring early and effective intervention is to broadly promote awareness about supports and resources across our George Brown College community consistent with the College's policy on Sexual Assault and Sexual Violence that came into effect on January 1, 2016, and which was updated in 2019.



The Office of Anti-Racism, Equity, and Human Rights Services has developed a two-phase plan to deliver a Sexual Violence Awareness and Resources train-the-trainer program tailored to the needs of the various centers, schools, and departments across our college.

This initiative is structured as a unique professional development opportunity, inviting employees from across the College to collaborate in the development of a brief presentation for delivery to colleagues in their areas. Participants include a balanced representation of employees from across campuses, centers, schools, and departments.



Phase one, which is currently underway, prepares participants to present information to other employees about their responsibilities under the Sexual Assault and Sexual Violence Policy, as well as sharing crucial information and best practices with regards to responding to disclosures of sexual violence.





The upcoming second phase will be directed towards sharing information and resources with students in a way that is designed with their needs in mind. The participants will be supported to design a presentation that is mindful and inclusive of issues and information which are relevant to students with regards to sexual violence prevention and response. Participants in the second phase will include representatives from different programs and areas of the college to ensure that our community of practice will be representative of our community and will have the ability to share the material in a wide variety of spaces across campus and online.

Employees who participate in each phase of the training will become members of a community of practice, will receive a certificate of completion, and will be invited to meet 2-3 times per year as a team. They will work collaboratively with George Brown College's Sexual Violence Response Advisor within the Office of Anti-Racism, Equity and Human Rights Services (OAREHRS) to support one another in the delivery of the content moving forward. The development of this community of practice will significantly increase our ability to share information with the college community, raise awareness about the Sexual Assault and Sexual Violence Policy, and response services, while simultaneously increasing community capacity to appropriately respond to disclosures of sexual violence. In Spring 2020, Phase one of the Community of Practice, inclusive of 33 members and two facilitators, met five times to create the training presentation and prepare members to deliver the material.





# Policy Review

---

In 2019, in accordance with Bill 132, the Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan Act & the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities, our Sexual Assault and Sexual Violence Policy was reviewed by a diverse group of stakeholders representing different areas of the college community. Representatives from the areas of Academics, Public Safety and Security, Administration, Human Resources, Counselling, and Support Services, as well as the Student's Association and students themselves, were involved in the review. Based on information gathered throughout the review process and feedback from the Office of Anti-Racism, Equity, and Human Rights Services the policy was updated. The new policy took effect and was posted publicly in December 2019.

Some of the improvements include a higher level of clarity and transparency with regard to the complaints resolution processes and structures, and the language of the policy. Furthermore, the policy now more clearly outlines roles and expectations for members of the College community.

## Student Focus Groups & Student Companion Guide

---

At George Brown College student voices are of critical importance. In our work to foster a culture of consent, we encourage a sense of personal responsibility and agency to create-change for our students and employees.

In 2019, in conjunction with the review of the Sexual Assault and Sexual Violence Policy, the Office of Anti-Racism, Equity, and Human Rights Services engaged with students to gain an understanding of how students interact with and understand the SASV policy, and the supports available.

Students provided feedback by engaging in a focus group-like series of interviews which were later transcribed.

Based on the information provided by students it became clear that, while students were able to read and understand the policy, they would appreciate having a way to learn about the contents of the policy and the resources therein, in a way that was more accessible and used less formal language.

As a result, and with input from George Brown College students, a companion guide was created. The companion guide provides information about the policy in a less formal format using clear and simple language. This companion guide was used to form the framework for a set of digital and print informational documents to help students and employees learn about the policy and relevant sexual violence support services available at George Brown College.

# Next Steps

**We have accomplished many things already, but there is still a great deal of work to be done to establish a culture of consent on our campus.**



- Continue to increase the resources and profile of the Office of Anti-Racism, Equity and Human Rights Services, including the Sexual Violence Response Advisor, and collaboration across the college.
- Engage in early education and interventions through new student orientation and student communications channels.
- Develop a social media strategy to increase the visibility of campaigns within the student population.
- Reduce barriers and make resources more easily available.
- Leverage the knowledge community at George Brown College, most specifically our Office of Anti-Racism, Equity and Human Rights Services team, Student Success team, and employee and service areas where students are likely to disclose.

**“More should be done – and more will be done.  
We will continue to listen to our students’ experiences  
and learn how to reduce violence and support survivors.”**

Anne Sado, GBC President Message to all employees and students March 22, 2019

The images in this report were created for OAREHRS Informational materials by Designers Lori Endes & Jennifer Masters, & Student Designers Lee Jong, Rami Shouk, Stephanie Ho & Youjine Lee