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for everyone

CREATING A CULTURE OF ACCOUNTABILITY:

*A Toolkit for Data & Reporting on Sexualized Violence Response and Support
at Public Post-Secondary Institutions in British Columbia*



A photograph of a forest path. The path is made of dirt and gravel, winding through a lush green forest. Large trees with thick trunks and exposed roots are visible on the right side. The ground is covered with fallen leaves and ferns. The overall scene is a dense, natural woodland setting.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This work is taking place on and across the ancestral traditional territories of many First Nations. We recognize that sexualized violence is one form of violence that continues to marginalize First Nations, Métis, and Inuit. We are committed to active practices of reconciliation and lifelong learning as we strive to end sexualized violence at our public post-secondary institutions and in our communities.

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Background

This toolkit was developed collaboratively by the Sexualized Violence Data and Reporting Working Group, made up of staff from British Columbia (BC) public post-secondary institutions and representatives from the BC Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills. The working group was established as an outcome of “The Moving Forward Together Forum: Building Capacity to Prevent and Respond to Sexual Violence on Campus”. To learn more about the history of the working group, please see [Appendix A](#).

The working group initially investigated whether all public post-secondary institutions could adopt the same data collection policies and practices, so that annual reports could be directly comparable across BC. However, after careful review this approach was not feasible. This was due to the distinct community contexts and characteristics that impact an institutions’ policies and practices – including how institutions collect and report data. These challenges are outlined in [Appendix B](#).

Toolkit

Purpose

This toolkit was created to assist staff and administrators responsible for implementing stand-alone sexualized violence policies in preparing and disseminating their institution's annual report. Institutions are required under the [*Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy Act*¹](#) to make an annual report to their board. It was developed to support public post-secondary institutions in the process of collecting and reporting sexualized violence data in ways that acknowledge the unique context, policies, and practices of each institution. This toolkit also supports actioning sexualized violence prevention education and response efforts at BC public post-secondary institutions. It is not meant to be directive or prescriptive, as public post-secondary institutions have unique policies and practices that have been developed to support and respond to the needs of their own communities.

Guiding Principles

Sexualized violence impacts members of our communities in diverse ways. In particular, students, staff, and faculty from diverse and intersecting identities are at a greater risk of experiencing sexualized violence. These communities include First Nations, Métis, and Inuit, Black and people of colour, transgender and gender diverse people, people living with disabilities, people living in rural and remote communities, immigrants and newcomers, and sex workers.

Each post-secondary institution has its own unique capacity to report on their work to address, prevent, and respond to sexualized violence within their community. While conducting this work, it is important to recognize that there are increased calls for transparency and accountability not only by the communities that public post-secondary institutions serve, but by the public at large.

The guiding principles in this toolkit help to support a consistent approach to data collection and annual reporting. Although not all public post-secondary institutions are able to collect data in the same way, these principles help set the stage for a stronger approach that can benefit all institutions, and foster transparency, accountability, and understanding.

The key goals are to establish an approach to help inform:

- 1. TRANSPARENCY**—be clear on what data institutions can and cannot share, and why.
- 2. ACCOUNTABILITY**—be as responsive as possible, within the context and limitations under which public post-secondary institutions operate, to the needs of partners.
- 3. UNDERSTANDING**—develop annual reports that are informative and meaningful by educating partners on what data is and is not shared and the reasons why.

¹ Section 6.2, states that “[e]ach year, the president of a post-secondary institution must report to the governing body on the implementation of the post-secondary institution’s sexual misconduct policy”. Retrieved from https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/16023_01#section6

TRAUMA AND VIOLENCE-INFORMED

Trauma and violence-informed practice is a way of working that emphasizes safety, trustworthiness, choice, connection, collaboration, strengths, resilience, and resistance. Trauma and violence-informed practice assumes people may have past and/or current experiences of trauma and violence. It centres the survivors' visions for healing and justice, including the development of approaches to education, training, and resources that minimize the potential for harm and re-traumatization, and enhances safety, control, and choice for all people seeking support. Trauma and violence-informed practice recognizes the pervasiveness of sexualized violence in society, and includes an understanding of the social, systemic, and structural roots of violence and trauma, including the replication of harm that can occur in response to violence.

SURVIVOR-CENTRED

Survivor-centred prioritizes the rights, needs, safety, and choices of survivors in all processes and responses to sexualized violence. It is an approach that treats survivors with dignity and respect, and it encourages their interests and agency by creating space for survivors to make decisions about the extent of their participation and whether to file an official report/complaint. Survivor-centred approaches are grounded in the lived experiences of survivors of sexualized violence and use supportive strategies that assume survivors are present in all situations, while ensuring training initiatives and resources include the input and experiences of survivors.

A trauma-informed and survivor-centred approach to collecting intersectional data recognizes the importance of granting a survivor agency over whether to share personal information, such as their gender identity/expression, race, Indigeneity, sexual orientation, disability, etc., while making a disclosure or report/complaint.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability means “taking responsibility and taking action to repair the harm and to prevent it from happening again” (Pranis, 2018). In the context of public post-secondary institutions addressing, preventing, and responding to sexualized violence, accountability means being responsive to the needs of the community. Collecting and reporting out on data is one mechanism to help ensure that institutions take appropriate actions and meet their responsibilities and commitments to their communities. Institutional accountability recognizes that many different, and potentially conflicting expectations, from diverse partners (e.g., students, staff, faculty, administration, Government, funders, community members, other public post-secondary institutions, etc.) exist and seeks to be answerable, transparent, and responsive to them.

Institutional accountability further recognizes that public post-secondary institutions must comply with privacy legislation.



Writing an Annual Report

Regardless of whether a public post-secondary institution has been developing and sharing an annual report since the implementation of their sexualized violence policy, or if this is the first one, there are several questions to consider in the preparation of the institutions' next annual report.

- In addition to the institution's governing body, who is the intended audience?
 - What is the institutional community interested in learning about?
 - How does the information shared align with the institution's sexualized violence policy and the *Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy Act*?
 - What key terms are included in the annual report? Are these terms clearly defined (e.g., "disclosure", "report", "consultation with community member")?
 - Does the institution have a central intake and education office or are different offices involved in intake, support, and education?
- » If different offices are involved, who is responsible for reporting on behalf of the institution?
 - » How does the institution ensure data collection is rigorous (i.e., only counting an incidence once) and consistent?
- Do institution staff know why some information can or cannot be shared? Is that rationale clearly written in the annual report?
 - How will the institution use the information presented in the annual report to address gaps and challenges and support emerging opportunities?
 - What is the plan for communicating within the institutional community that the annual report has been released?
 - Where is the report located? Is the report accessible and available to a wide range of readers?
 - How is the institution going to use the data collected and shared in the annual report to help inform the work moving forward?



Data Collection & Purpose

It is important to ensure that the individuals the institution serves, and the larger public post-secondary institution community, understands that the institution is maintaining annual data, what information will be shared, and how and why those data are going to be used.

PROMISING PRACTICE

Toronto Metropolitan University's Consent Comes First Office states: "Our office maintains annual statistics on both disclosed and reported incidents of sexual violence on campus.

The data does not include any information that would identify a community member.

We do this for the purposes of community education and required legislated reporting."

The annual report can be used to measure the goals set out in each public post-secondary institutions' sexualized violence policy and highlight how the policy is being implemented. A key consideration is to present the information in a way that helps to meaningfully guide education campaigns and initiatives at each institution as well as ensure that those who have reached out for support (e.g., clients, survivors, respondents) are protected and their information and experience are kept confidential.

Key Data Points

As public post-secondary institutions engage in annual reporting, central aspects in sexualized violence data and reporting are survivor safety and privacy. Some public post-secondary institutions clearly state the threshold needed for reporting to occur to prevent inadvertently identifying any individuals.

PROMISING PRACTICE

Simon Fraser University's annual report clearly articulates that reporting by categories will only occur when the number of incidences is greater than five to prevent inadvertently identifying individuals.

North Island College's sexualized violence policy states that when the numbers of disclosure are fewer than ten, they will not be reported in their annual report for reasons of privacy.

Note: the minimum number may depend on the size of the institution and recommendations made by their public post-secondary institution community.

The following are key data points that could be highlighted in the institution's annual report. Over the years, and as public post-secondary institutions accumulate more data, they can share year-over-year numbers so that the larger public post-secondary institution communities can better understand how the work has evolved and responded to the clients and community needs over time. Institutions should use the terms outlined in their sexualized violence policy.

THE INFORMATION IS BROKEN DOWN INTO TWO SECTIONS: A) SUPPORT & RESPONSE AND B) EDUCATION & OUTREACH.

SUPPORT & RESPONSE

- **NUMBER OF INTAKES:** Number of disclosures, reports/complaints, and consultations with community members.
- **REPORTING:** Number of reports/complaints submitted under the policy, number of investigations in progress and completed, and outcomes of those completed (e.g., informal resolution agreement, voluntary resolution, formal reports, and findings of breach of policy).
- **TYPES OF SEXUALIZED VIOLENCE:** Key themes of the disclosures made (e.g., technology-facilitated sexualized violence, sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking).
- **SUPPORT PROVIDED:** Number of disclosures, reports, and consultations with community members and main types of assistance provided.

It can also include academic accommodations, counselling referrals, safety planning, and affiliation type to the public post-secondary institution, including student, staff, faculty or undisclosed/anonymous.

Guiding questions to inform additional content or data:

- Does the institution provide support services to individuals regardless of where or when the incident(s) took place (e.g., off campus, online, outside of policy's authority, historical experiences of sexualized violence)? How does the institution account for this work in the annual report?
- How does the institution capture data on clients who started working with support staff before the data collection period and are still engaged with support services/reporting? Is this addressed in the annual report?
- Does the annual report outline the types or themes of sexualized violence experienced by clients and survivors? If not, provide a rationale.

PROMISING PRACTICE

The University of Victoria clearly outlined in their 2021-2022 Annual Report several "limitations to UVic's ability to count and report on sexualized violence statistics". These include:

- **FIRSTLY**, being survivor-centred and trauma-informed in the collection of data means only collecting the necessary information to help individuals access support and options. Many individuals do not feel comfortable sharing their demographic information and we support people to do/say whatever feels best for them.
- **SECONDLY**, demographic data can only be collected voluntarily; incomplete data sets can lead to skewed results that only accurately reflects those most comfortable sharing demographic data.
- **THIRDLY**, it is likely that disaggregating data by demographic groups (e.g., Indigenous and/or Indigenous and having a disability) may result in individuals being identifiable because of the relatively small overall numbers; this in turn would breach individuals' anonymity and confidentiality. In line with privacy legislation, UVic does not report on disaggregated demographic categories where there are fewer than five data points.
- **FOURTH**, there is a robust literature that identifies those individuals and groups who experience intersecting oppression in relation to sexualized violence. For example, Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people who, due to their social location, experience simultaneously the impacts of sexism, racism, and in some cases, homophobia and/or transphobia.

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

- **WORKSHOPS, WEBINARS, AND ASYNCHRONOUS TRAINING:** The number of participants and their relationship to the public post-secondary institution (e.g., student, faculty, staff, administrator, etc.).
- **SOCIAL MEDIA:** If the institution hosts virtual campaigns on their social media channels, engagement and metrics could be highlighted.
- **EVENTS:** Summarize key events and partnerships that took place throughout the year.
- **OTHER:** Outline the educational programming that does not fit into the categories above. This could include engagement by and through a peer program or the development and launch of an asynchronous training.
- **GOALS:** Provide the institution's education and training goals for the following year.
- **LESSONS LEARNED:** Describe lessons learned from the previous year and any feedback obtained through surveys (e.g., the impact of workshops/training, opportunities for improvement).

Getting the Word Out!

Now that the heavy lifting is done, it is time to get the word out. Develop a communications plan, key messaging, and a graphic to help promote the release of the annual report on social media. Here are some key steps to consider:

- Ensure the annual report is written in [*plain language*](#).
- Finalize the report into a well-organized document using the institution's templates and branding guides.
- Choose an appropriate place on the institution's website to host the current, past, and future annual reports (e.g., the central sexualized violence office's website, the policy authority's website).

- Ensure that the website is easily searchable through the public post-secondary institution's and external search engines (e.g., Google).
- Develop a communications plan that includes timelines, key audiences, promotional messaging—like draft email text, newsletter text, social media posts—and a list of communications partners (i.e., other offices, departments, units who can help share the news).
- Create a graphic to help amplify social media posts, newsletter entries, etc.

PROMISING PRACTICE

The [University of Victoria](#) and [Simon Fraser University](#) have detailed annual reports which may serve as template models (in part or as a whole) for other public post-secondary institutions. The [Sexualized Violence Data and Reporting Working Group](#) does not endorse one model or template; rather, it provides resources to support each institution in producing their own annual report within their own capacity and unique context.

If institutions are interested in learning about promising practices in preventing and addressing gender-based violence at public post-secondary institutions visit the [Courage to Act](#) project for more tools and toolkits.

Resources on Data Collection and Reporting

Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) (November 2021). *Guide for Post-Secondary Institutional Policies on Sexual Violence and Harassment*. Last accessed, June 19, 2023: <https://cupe.ca/guide-post-secondary-institutional-policies-sexual-violence-and-harassment>

Rempel, A. & Rogers, K. (August 2020). *Data Collection, Reporting, and Institutional Accountability: A Student Submission on Standards for Data Collection and Reporting of Campus Sexualized Violence Policy Utilization and Implementation*. Last accessed, May 25, 2023: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5a825096914e6b88f5457393/t/5f3f6ce304eaf44868e21077/1597992182328/Student+Submission+on+Campus+Sexualized+Violence+Data+and+Reporting+Requirements-+Final.pdf>

Spicer, C. & Spencer, C. (October 2019). *Moving Beyond Potential: Building Justice for Students in British Columbia: A Call for Action on Campus Sexual Violence*. Students for Consent Culture. Last accessed, May 25, 2023: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5bc4e7bcf4755a6e42b00495/t/5e4c54619acc280f29211ba1/1582060641594/BCadvocacyLegislatorsGuide.pdf>

References

Pranis, K. (2018). *Individual and Collective Accountability in a Restorative Framework*. Last accessed, May 25, 2023: <https://ariallsites2020.icjia.cloud/Pranis-RestorativeJusticeOnTheRise-Individual&CollectiveAccountability.pdf>

Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy Act (2016) https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/16023_01

Toronto Metropolitan University's Consent Comes First Office's Consent page. Last accessed, February 27, 2023: <https://www.torontomu.ca/sexual-violence/get-support/confidentiality/>

Appendix A:

The History of the Sexualized Violence Data and Reporting Working Group

THE SEXUALIZED VIOLENCE DATA AND REPORTING WORKING GROUP was established as an outcome of “The Moving Forward Together Forum: Building Capacity to Prevent and Respond to Sexual Violence on Campus” that was held June 4–5, 2019.

The initial purpose of the group was to bring institutional representatives together to discuss their practices and perspectives on sexualized violence data collection and reporting standards. This work was in response to concerns over how public post-secondary institutions collect meaningful data on sexualized violence and how they report information out to the broader internal and external community.

Due to the initial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on institutional resources, personnel changes at the Ministry, and the challenges of trying to establish

a common data collection process and reporting framework, this Working Group was put on hiatus from January – July 2021.

A smaller Working Group reconvened in Summer of 2021 with new and returning representatives from public post-secondary institutions and the Ministry. This group, recognizing the challenges already identified, hoped to develop strong practices around data and reporting and to explore whether a standard set of guiding principles could help BC public post-secondary institutions report out on their annual sexualized violence data. This revitalized group established an updated *Terms of Reference* and sought to build transparency and trust with students and employees at each public post-secondary institution and in the broader community. The work reflected in this toolkit was developed through this collaborative project.



Appendix B: Challenges

1. Lack of consistent definitions in policies across public post-secondary institutions.

When the *Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy Act* was passed in 2016, the legislation did not outline standard definitions or require standardized policies and practices. Each public post-secondary institution was asked to define terms like “report”, “disclosure”, and “community member” in consultation with key partners including students, staff, faculty, as well as broader community members. The intent was to allow institutions to create definitions, policies and practices that reflected the realities of each public post-secondary institutions’ unique operational and community context and characteristics.

This reality complicates the ability to compare data between institutions across BC. For example, a “disclosure” at one institution may mean “disclosing to any staff member at the institution” while at another institution a “disclosure” may mean “disclosing to a member of a specific office.” While having community-based definitions that reflect each institutions’ unique context is important, this also means that direct comparisons cannot be made between one public post-secondary institution and another.

2. Varying institutional practices in data collection.

Institutions are diverse and possess varying complexities in collecting data, based on their size, mandate, processes and procedures, and community needs. As a result, it became clear that there was a wide range of collecting and reporting

occurring across the public post-secondary institutions in BC. Some institutions have been developing and making annual reports publicly available since the inception of the *Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy Act*. For example, including data markers and set definitions (e.g., reporting, disclosure, etc.) as they relate to their own institutions’ unique work, policy, procedures, collective agreements, and community population. However, other public post-secondary institutions have not yet had the opportunity nor the resources to undertake this work.

3. Institutional uniqueness, resourcing, and complexities.

Not all institutional resources are equal in terms of staffing or budget. Some public post-secondary institutions have stand-alone sexualized violence prevention and support offices while others rely on one staff person who supports this portfolio alongside other responsibilities. Each public post-secondary institution has a unique institutional community to consider with large, mid, and small-sized communities, and others with multiple campuses across a region or BC. Additional diversity of public post-secondary institutions includes whether they have student residences, rural and/or urban campus location, percentage of international versus domestic students, and variability of programming, including whether they have a graduate program. Some public post-secondary institutions have fraternities and sororities while others do not. Policies at certain public post-secondary institutions focus solely on sexualized violence as it is experienced by student populations, while others encompass students, staff, and faculty.

4. Concerns regarding the communication and public interpretation of data.

Public post-secondary institutions have expressed concerns with confidentiality and privacy as it relates to making public the number of disclosures and reports made to the institution. This concern is largely because these institutions have not received enough reports to publicize aggregate data without jeopardizing the privacy of those impacted by sexualized violence. Additionally, disclosures of historical sexualized violence, not related to the institution, may still prompt survivors to seek support services and/or accommodations at the institution. Releasing disclosure or report numbers without any context may lead to assumptions that all reported numbers mean sexualized violence occurred at the public post-secondary institution when this may not be the case. To properly interpret data, context needs to be provided to avoid incorrect assumptions being made.

5. Data collection and reporting constraints due to privacy legislation.

Each public post-secondary institution is governed by privacy legislation at the provincial level. The [*Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*](#) governs data collection and personal data sharing at each institution and how the institutions' privacy office interprets the legislation helps guide the work of the public post-secondary institution and those responsible for annual reporting. Because of this, personal information such as an individual's identity (e.g., gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, dis/ability) may not be collected or shared publicly.

6. Annual reports are limited to the data institutions can collect.

There are often requests for public post-secondary institutions to provide their communities with "evidence-based" data and analysis of the work they are doing to respond, prevent, and address sexualized violence in their communities. However, annual reporting is limited to the data institutions can collect. As a result, annual reports focus on the presentation of response and prevention work engaged with at each institution, including data on the number of clients supported, educational programming offered, etc. By sharing the numbers of disclosures or complaints and reports, institutions can at most speculate as to why the numbers are small or large in any given year.

Importantly, statistics and numbers of interactions only capture a small piece of a larger whole. They cannot capture the true extent and impact of sexualized violence on and in public post-secondary communities. An annual report is not meant to replace existing and ongoing research and community-based sexualized violence response and prevention work. These resources are better positioned to bring attention to the systemic nature of sexualized violence, the specific forms it takes, and the ways it shows up and impacts unique communities.





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