



# The Centre for Sexual Violence Response, Support & Education Annual Report

May 1, 2022 to April 30, 2023



## About the Centre

### We're Here for You.

#### OUR MISSION

Guided by the York University Policy on Sexual Violence, the Centre for Sexual Violence Response, Support & Education's (The Centre's) main principle is to provide support for survivors. This support should be provided at the survivor's own pace, in the ways they wish to proceed and in a way that enables them to make informed decisions.

#### WHAT WE DO

The Centre acts as a stand alone, single point of contact for integrated and holistic sexual assault response, support, advising, counselling, advocacy and case management services.

The Centre is staffed with qualified subject matter experts who operate with the highest levels of confidentiality and empathy.

#### The Centre Staff

**Director**

**Receptionist**

**Peer Trainer**

**Training & Education Specialist**

**Service & Supports Coordinator**  
2 positions

Supports offered through The Centre include:

- the coordination of academic accommodations
- facilitating access to medical services
- support with workplace accommodations
- providing information about reporting options
- safety planning
- emergency financial assistance
- access to our safe house for those escaping situations of imminent violence

# Highlights



Supported

**411**

unique disclosures



Managed

**36**

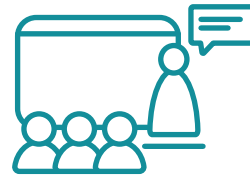
complaints of incidents of sexual violence\*



Achieved

**200+**

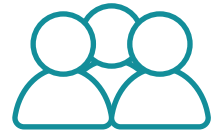
staff completions on training modules on sexual violence



Educated

**6,200+**

staff, students and faculty through presentations to the York community



Run by

**6**

staff

\* Incidents were reported through the [Policy on Sexual Violence](#)



## CELEBRATING THE CENTRE'S 5th ANNIVERSARY

Since the opening of The Centre's doors on July 4, 2018, there has been a steady uptake of our services as York's community develops a greater awareness of the supports and services offered. Through this anniversary, The Centre will use this opportunity to remind the community of the various types of work The Centre supports and encourage all community members to take an active role in contributing to a culture of consent.

## HIRING A NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES

In August 2022, Yukimi Henry joined York University as the Executive Director, Community Support & Services, which oversees various units, including The Centre. Henry possesses over 20 years of experience in the areas of sexual violence response, student conduct, crisis and critical incident responses and mental health services.

Prior to joining York, she was the Director, Student Support & Inclusive Learning at George Brown College leading and overseeing counselling and wellbeing, accessibility services, policy development, COVID-19 response, and investigations and adjudication of student conduct. Henry was also the Executive Co-Chair of the Ontario Counsellor Centre Directors Working Group, which brings together senior leaders in health services across post-secondary education in Ontario.

Henry brings extensive knowledge and skills in mental health, social services, legal services and education, as well as a strong commitment to supporting students through an equity and trauma-informed lens.

# Incidents of Sexual Violence reported through the Policy on Sexual Violence

The following is a breakdown of incidents of Sexual Violence reported through the Policy on Sexual Violence during this reporting period. Please note that the number of unique individuals that the Centre supports does not represent the frequency of services offered. On average, The Centre staff meet with the same individual 5-6 times and provide several services and supports and this can be over several months or even years.

## Statistical Information

**36** total complaints

- **8** complaints resolved through formal investigation/ adjudication
- **13** complaints resolved informally through a negotiated process
- **15** complaints determined to be outside the scope of the Policy. Supports and referrals to other services and resolution processes provided.

## Breakdown of Complaints

- 31** Student Complainants  
**26** Student Respondents
- 2** Staff Complainants  
**1** Staff Respondents
- 1** Faculty Complainants  
**0** Faculty Respondents
- 2** Non-community Complainants  
**9** Non-community Respondents



# Training & Education

York University and the Centre for Sexual Violence Response, Support & Education are committed to educating and training the York community about sexual violence to prevent sexual violence and improve supports to survivors.

This includes:

- Building awareness on the Sexual Violence Policy and informing the community, including members of the governing board, senior administrators, faculty, staff, other employees and contractors, and students, about the processes for responding to and addressing sexual violence
- Organizing educational initiatives for the University community to promote a change in the attitudes and behaviours that perpetuate sexual violence, as well as create a more supportive environment for survivors. The Centre's programming aims to address systemic issues contributing to sexual violence and challenge rape culture and other forms of discrimination and hate. These initiatives also adopt an intersectional and anti-oppressive approach to addressing the issue of sexual violence and recognizing different experiences of violence.



## DEVELOPING GREATER CAPACITY THROUGH TRAINING MODULES

Through training modules focused on policies and procedures pertaining to sexual violence response at York, students, staff and faculty are able to develop the skills and knowledge to support each other. Modules are accessible through The Centre's website.

- **Module one: Sexual Violence Response & Awareness.** This introductory course provides information about policies and procedures.
- **Module two: Responding to Disclosures of Sexual Violence.** Through scenario-based interactive learning, participants engage in identifying and evaluating effective responses to disclosures of sexual violence.

### Next Steps

New training on the Ontario government's new policy on sexual misconduct, the *Strengthening Post-Secondary Institutions and Students Act*, will launch in fall 2023. This module will teach Faculty, staff and students on how to be an active bystander and contribute to building a culture of consent at York University.

## SPREADING THE WORD

During training sessions, The Centre seeks to deliver training in a way that is interactive, while providing an opportunity for everyone to learn and unlearn. Unique training sessions were conducted in classrooms for departments and among student groups and various staff. The Centre also hosted a number of events in various formats, whether in-person or virtually.

## Leading unique programs to build awareness

### ACTIVE BYSTANDER PROGRAM

Our Active Bystander program aims to educate our community members to intervene when witnessing any form of sexual violence. Through training programs and initiatives, the program aims to create a community that is educated on what sexual violence is and how consent can be incorporated into our daily lives. It also strives to empower individuals to say something or do something when witnessing different forms of sexual violence.

Students, staff and faculty who received this training can disrupt conversations that engage in rape culture, provide resources and support to individuals and be equipped with the tools to be an active bystander.

The Active Bystander Program leverages the invaluable asset of peer to peer learning through the delivery of educational sessions by Centre trained peer facilitators who are York U students.

Thanks to our partnership with the York Federation of Students, all club leaders had the opportunity to be trained in the Active Bystander Program, with a specific focus on various scenarios club executives may face.

#### Partnering with the Lasonde School of Engineering

A curated Active Bystander Training was provided to all first-year engineering students in partnership with Professor James Smith, a faculty member of the Lasonde School of Engineering. During the summer of 2022, participants in Smith's class were educated on how to intervene when witnessing any form of sexual violence, consent and intersectionality.

Informed by the industry-wide issue of sexual violence and discrimination within the STEM field, this pilot partnership aimed to take preventative measures through education on research and create spaces where engineering students can understand the support resources available.



Trained **all first-year engineering students** through a unique partnership with the Lasonde School of Engineering



Trained **500+ student leaders** at the Orient the Leader training conference



Provided training opportunities to all of York's **student club leaders**



Trained York's **varsity athletes** and all **students living in residence**

### TEACHING CONSENT THROUGH THEATRE

During Orientation's welcome ceremony in September 2022, all first-year students had the opportunity to watch *This Moment in Time*, a play that explores consent, boundaries and how to navigate healthy relationships. Created in collaboration with Vanier College Productions, the play focuses on different ways consent and sexual violence can be addressed in our lives and where York's students can access support and resources on campus, whether a situation occurred on- or off-campus.

The mission of this 20-minute play is to help build connections for students who may be experiencing or witnessing situations for the first time and to help them understand how different events in the world around them can shape their lives. This play strives to reinforce how to connect with one another in meaningful and healthy ways and how compassion and kindness can guide us all.

# Hosting various events and launching educational campaigns

Various events and campaigns were held throughout the year to address sexual and gender-based violence through an intersectional lens, with a specific focus on how these issues impact Black and Indigenous community members.



The Centre co-facilitates three distinct support groups with Student Counselling, Health & Well-being throughout the year:

- **The Men's Support Group:** Supporting men who have experienced sexual violence in all forms.
- **The Survivor Support Group:** Allowing York's students to meet and feel supported in their healing journey.
- **The Processing Group:** Providing a space to continue engaging students who previously accessed counselling services.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### Consent Action Week – Fall 2022

To support building connections across communities, the fall Consent Action Week aimed to raise awareness, facilitate training and provide support resources catering to wellness for the York community. Through virtual and in-person events, the York community were welcomed to engage in difficult conversations, push past their discomfort and have meaningful engagement to find ways to collaborate.

This year's partners included Full Circle, Planned Parenthood, Dr. Aditi Paul (a mixed-methods researcher and the author of *The Current Collegiate Hookup Culture: Dating Apps, Hookup Scripts, and Sexual Outcomes*), Debbie Owusu-Akyeeah (Executive Director of the Canadian Centre for Gender & Sexual Diversity), Nicole Brown Faulknor (Founder of Wounds 2 Wings Trauma and Embodiment Association of Ontario), Luna Matatas, Prinka Singla, SHARE and the Greenhouse.



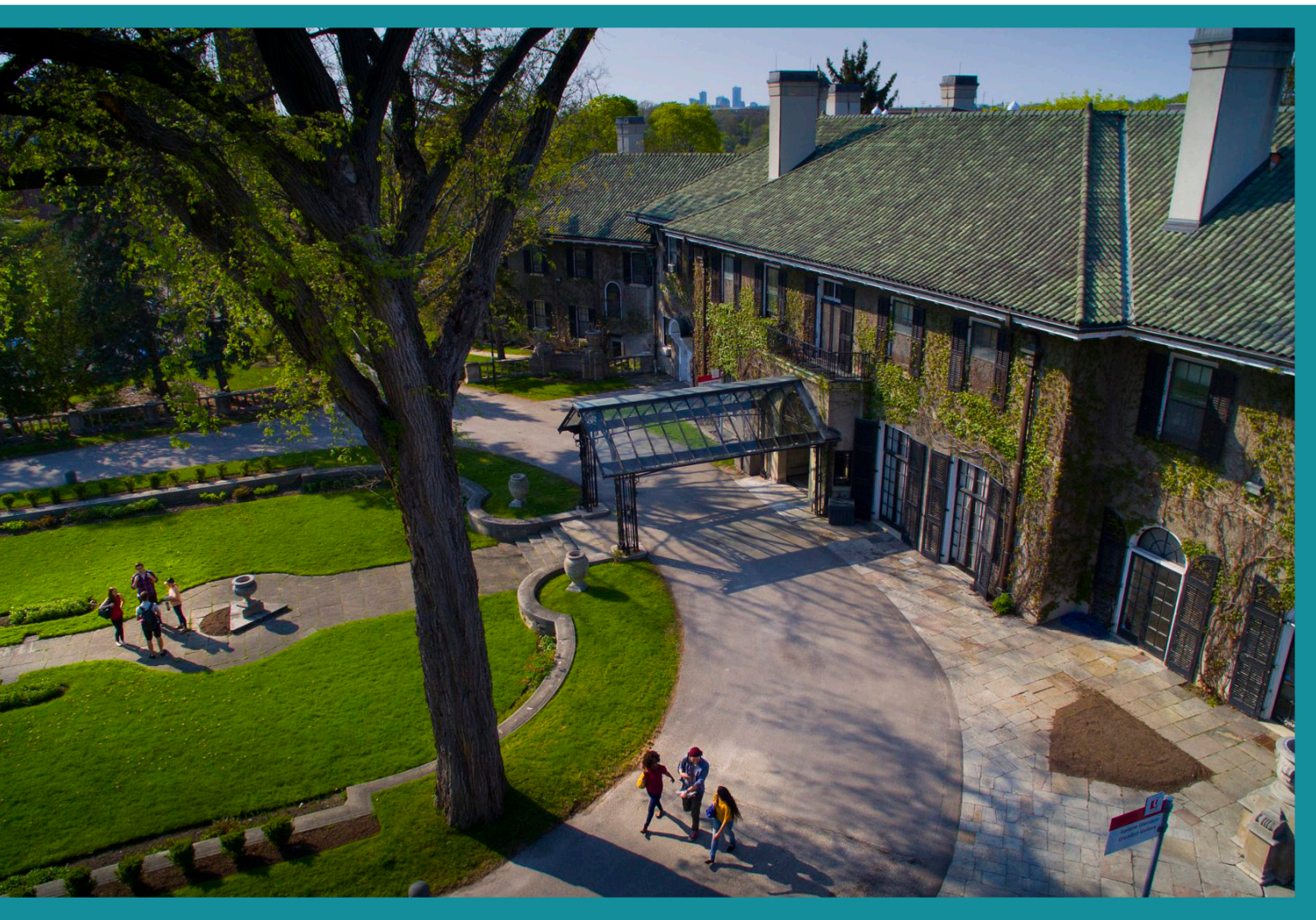
### 16 Days of Activism – November 25 to December 10, 2022

This 2022 campaign continued the previous year's theme of ending femicide by spotlighting certain groups of women who are more vulnerable. A collective effort is needed across the country and worldwide to address violence against women and girls. The Centre supports those affected by gender-based violence, which has serious implications for members of various marginalized communities. A ceremony was held to honour missing and murdered Indigenous women and members of the LGBTQ+ community, including transgender women.

### Consent Action Day – January 26, 2023

The Centre organized events to raise awareness about mental health, well-being, recovery, self-care and advocacy. York community members were informed about the various supports and services offered by The Centre's staff, peers and external partners.

Through this campaign, The Centre encourages the York community to make a commitment to advocate, listen and support survivors and recognize that we all have a role to play in ending violence against women and girls.



## We're here for you.

If you require support or information, please **reach out to The Centre.**

**Phone:** 416-736-5211 (24/7)

**Website:** [yorku.ca/thecentre](http://yorku.ca/thecentre)

**Email:** [thecentre@yorku.ca](mailto:thecentre@yorku.ca)