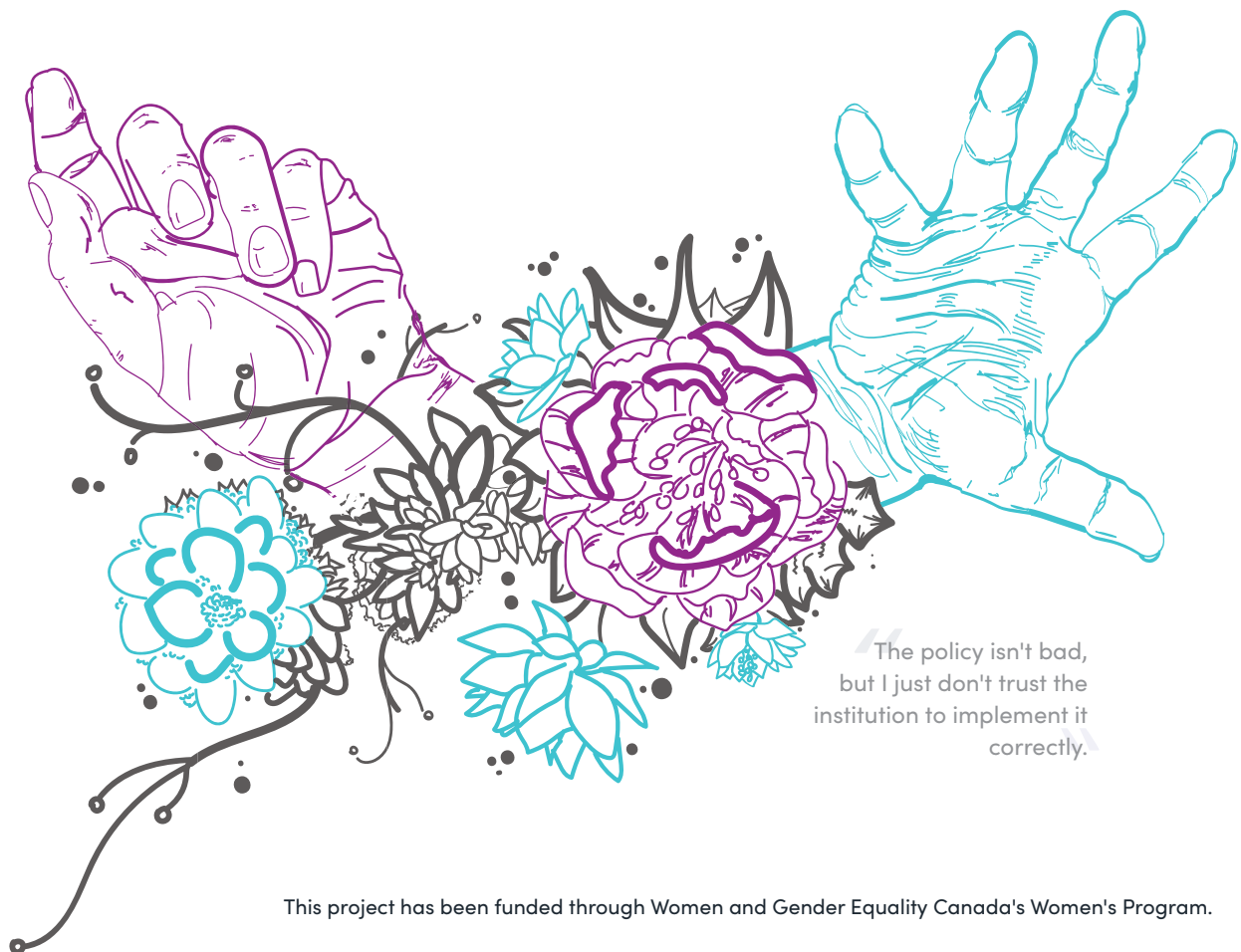


” “ STUDENTS FOR CONSENT CULTURE

CANADA'S NATIONAL ACTION PLAN TO END GENDER BASED VIOLENCE 10 PRIORITIES FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

GOVERNMENT SUMMARY REPORT



The policy isn't bad,
but I just don't trust the
institution to implement it
correctly.

This project has been funded through Women and Gender Equality Canada's Women's Program.



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Canada

WHO WE ARE

Students for Consent Culture Canada (SFCC) is an organization dedicated to supporting intersectional and grassroots anti-sexual violence advocacy on campuses across Canada. We serve as a hub of resources, tools, and institutional memory to support student engagement and leadership on ending gender based violence (GBV). As a part of the National Action Plan to End Gender Based Violence, since November 2020, Students for Consent Culture Canada consulted with a diverse range of key informants, organizations, and individual students from across the country, in interviews, group consultations and online surveys.

WHAT STUDENTS TOLD US

The students we consulted reported extensive failures to support and accommodate survivors, victim-blaming and discriminatory treatment, exclusion from meaningful consultation, and serious gaps between policy and practice. These experiences exacerbated the harms of GBV, eroded trust in their institutions, and in many cases led them to drop out of school. Survivors are calling for prevention, accommodation, support, consultation, and leadership in GBV that is inclusive and accessible to all.

This means coordinated, streamlined services and reporting mechanisms. It means more comprehensive and equity-informed training for students, staff and faculty, and an increase in direct financial support of student survivor advocacy and peer-led services. Student led initiatives are most often cited as having a positive impact on survivors, but are performed for little or no compensation. Most of all, mitigating and ending GBV calls for strong commitments from the government to fund prevention and support efforts, and to hold institutions accountable for fostering safe and accessible educational environments.

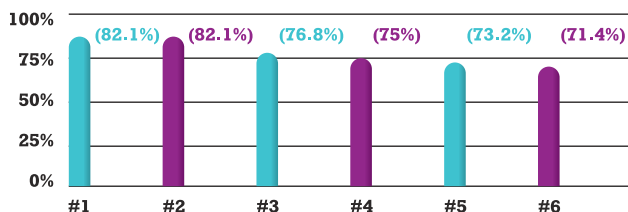
Principles for Action

Participants recommended six principles to guide GBV policy & practice at postsecondary institutions:

SURVIVOR-CENTERED AND TRAUMA INFORMED	MINIMUM STANDARD OF ACCESSIBILITY
INTERSECTIONAL AND CULTURAL COMPETENCE	TRANSPARENT AND STUDENT-SURVIVOR DRIVEN
EQUITY	MINIMUM STANDARD OF CARE

Statistics

(Fig #1) We surveyed students on the violence prevention measures they think work best on campuses. Here are their top six responses:



*The survey sampled students (undergraduates and graduates) across Canada. This survey was created by SFCC and ran from March 1st – March 31st 2021, with a total of 66 participants.

Priorities for Action

SFCC has developed a priority list for funding, legislation and policy that is founded on these principles and draws directly from the experiences of the students we consulted.

1. Create and oversee national, provincial and territorial standards for campus sexual violence policies.
2. Commit to long-term, system-wide investment in GBV education and training.
3. Decriminalise sex work in Canada, in consultation with sex workers, including students.
4. Foster and fund leadership of Indigenous community, staff and students in GBV policy and practice.
5. Centre the voices of all students living with disabilities in GBV policy and practice.
6. Mandate the creation and sustainable funding of trauma-informed Sexual Violence Response Offices.
7. Build institutional capacity to meaningfully foster equity and support a diverse range of student survivors.
8. Coordinate privacy law reform nationally to protect survivors and prohibit its use as a silencing tool.
9. Adequately resource campus support and accountability work, including student-led initiatives.
10. Meaningfully consult and fairly compensate students and survivors in policy, prevention and support work.

ACTIONABLE INTERVENTIONS

1. Create and oversee national, provincial and territorial standards for campus sexual violence policies

- Now that PSIs have GBV policies, they need oversight to ensure transparency, equity and consistency. For detailed recommendations, see SFCC's [11 minimum standards](#).

2. Commit to long-term, system-wide investment in GBV education and training

- Expand sexuality and consent education prior to entry into PSIs.
- Integrate anti-violence training and anti-oppression training.
- Offer consent, critical masculinity, bystander and healthy sexuality training for all PS students.
- Mandate annual training on disclosures, harassment, digital literacy for all faculty and staff.
- Implement evidence-based online/digital safety training and accountability processes.

3. Decriminalise sex work in Canada, in consultation with sex workers, including students

- Many postsecondary students engage in sex work to meet the high costs of education.
- Sex workers we spoke with advocate for a repeal of the Nordic model that criminalises their livelihood, and that they be full participants in the creation of new legislation that decriminalizes sex work.

4. Foster and fund leadership of Indigenous community, staff and students in GBV policy and practice

- Recognise and implement [MMIWG recommendations](#) with an emphasis on creating a National Action Plan, led by Indigenous communities and grounded in Indigenous legal systems.

5. Centre the voices of all students living with disabilities in GBV policy and practice

- Disability and GBV are linked in multiple ways: [Women and non-binary people](#) living with a disability are at greater risk of experiencing GBV, and surviving GBV often has its own [disabling impacts](#). All survivors require accessible, trauma-informed mental health support, reporting, accommodations.

6. Mandate the creation and sustainable funding of trauma-informed Sexual Violence Response Offices

- Offer streamlined, student-directed accompaniment through reporting, support and accommodations.
- Minimise or eliminate role played by policing and security in favour of specialised, survivor-focused staff.

7. Build institutional capacity to meaningfully foster equity and support a diverse range of student survivors

- Equity work should include racism, ableism, transphobia, homophobia, classism and anti-sex work discrimination.
- Students report a broad lack of cultural competency among counsellors and other staff and reject token measures (such as hiring one counsellor of colour without addressing systemic racism).

8. Coordinate privacy law reform nationally to protect survivors and prohibit its use as a silencing tool.

- Participants report the use of non-disclosure agreements and defamation lawsuits to intimidate and silence survivors and impede learning the outcomes of GBV complaint processes.
- Advocates worldwide condemn using these measures at PSIs under the guise of "privacy protection."

9. Adequately resource campus support and accountability work, including student-led initiatives

- We call for federal funding that moves beyond [symbolic commitments](#) to campus GBV support.
- Participants describe long wait times for counselling, and overworked sexual violence response staff with high turnover rates that students attributed to burnout. These issues are systemic.
- Seeing active and vocal survivors on campus was frequently linked with participants' feelings of safety.

10. Meaningfully consult and fairly compensate students and survivors in policy, prevention and support work

- Students tell us they often feel tokenised and silenced in institutional policy committees.
- Meaningful consultation means being open to student views and experiences, and making genuine efforts to improve the lives of student survivors in ways that are accessible to their participation. For many of the most marginalised students, improving accessibility would include paying for their time.

"I would like to see privacy laws reformed so that survivors can know the specific punishments/conditions levied against their abusers."

"Currently, many universities state they cannot share certain details of sexual violence investigations (as they are governed by provincial and federal laws; (they) additionally rely on the fact that investigations are not a legal process, but an "administrative" one."