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Wednesday 1 April 2015

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Mercredi 1^{er} avril 2015

**Select Committee
on Sexual Violence
and Harassment**

Strategy on sexual violence
and harassment

**Comité spécial de la violence
et du harcèlement
à caractère sexuel**

Stratégie de lutte contre
la violence et le harcèlement
à caractère sexuel

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ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**SELECT COMMITTEE
ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE
AND HARASSMENT**

**COMITÉ SPÉCIAL DE LA VIOLENCE
ET DU HARCÈLEMENT
À CARACTÈRE SEXUEL**

Wednesday 1 April 2015

Mercredi 1^{er} avril 2015

The committee met at 1600 in committee room 1, following a closed session.

**STRATEGY ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE
AND HARASSMENT**

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Good afternoon, everyone. The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment will now come to order.

For the benefit of our visitors who are here today, I would like to state the mandate of our committee. Our task is to make recommendations to the Legislature regarding sexual violence and harassment. We are going to be listening to survivors, front-line workers, researchers and advocates in communities right across Ontario who are going to inform us on how to shift social norms and barriers that are preventing people from coming forward to report abuses.

I want to stress that your advice is going to help to guide us as we make recommendations to deal with systemic sexual violence and harassment. However, I should note that this committee does not have the power or the authority to investigate individual cases. That is better left to the legal authorities.

I want to warn you in advance that I am the time-keeper, so I apologize in advance if I may seem a bit abrupt, but I am keeping time to ensure that we get to hear from as many people as possible this afternoon.

SOUTH ASIAN WOMEN'S CENTRE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I welcome you for appearing before us. You have 10 minutes to speak, and that will be followed by some questions from our committee.

You may begin now. Start by saying your names.

Ms. Kripa Sekhar: My name is Kripa Sekhar. I'm with the South Asian Women's Centre. I'm the executive director there. I will be presenting.

I have two front-line staff members here. They are both settlement counsellors, at least counsellors—so they multi-task. They do a lot of intersectional counselling. They will be here to answer some of the questions you might have from front-line staff. I have Subuhi Jaffrey here, who works with the Urdu Punjabi-speaking com-

munity, and I have Sabita Saha, who works with the Bengali community.

Ms. Sabita Saha: Hi. Good afternoon, everybody.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Good afternoon.

Ms. Kripa Sekhar: Thank you for giving me the opportunity to present. I thought it was 15 minutes. That's what I was told.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Certainly you can have 15 minutes, and we'll reduce the number of questions.

Ms. Kripa Sekhar: Okay. Thank you.

Honourable committee members, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on behalf of the South Asian Women's Centre. As I already said, my name is Kripa Sekhar. I am the executive director of the South Asian Women's Centre.

The issue of sexual violence and harassment is a very complex one in the South Asian community. It is the story of newer immigrants in Canada, a story of two countries: the land of birth, steeped in traditions, and the land of settlement, described as the land of freedom and opportunity. Within that complex framework are the struggles, challenges and survival of South Asian women.

So how does one define sexual violence and harassment in the community that we serve? Violence against women is a global issue but manifests itself in different ways in different situations.

The violence that South Asian women face is no different than what any other woman faces. The unfortunate situation in the case of immigrant women is exacerbated because they are newer immigrants, and fear of reprisal, loyalty to family, loss of income, loss of family and community support, isolation and language barriers dominate their willingness to talk about these issues. A woman deals in silence with this.

Many women have actually said that the abuse they face as a result of the system is shockingly alarming and scary. A majority of South Asian women who face sexual abuse and harassment in the workplace don't even report it. They would rather walk away from it and resign from their jobs.

At the South Asian Women's Centre, almost 700 cases of abuse were reported last year alone. Many cases are still open because these cases take time to find resolution.

Based on casework and client feedback, SAWC has witnessed cases of marital rape as a result of forced marriage, incest and other forms of sexual violence.

What do we know based on the client profiles? There is a strong sense of family loyalty that dominates the unwillingness to out a family member because of the fear that the person will be punished or deported. This can cause tensions in the home country.

Quite often, mothers are also responsible for cautioning their daughters to put up with abusive spouses—and I will give you three quick examples later—or, in the instance of sexual abuse by a relative, to remain silent, to avoid being shunned by the community and other family members. It is also seen as a barrier that prevents a woman from being marriageable.

“Rape” is not a word that is commonly used in the community; there is a code of silence around this word. Many women do not wish to report abuse, and particularly sexual abuse, because they are not even aware that this is not right. Often they fail to understand that—gestures and emotional abuse are not characterized as abuse; they think only physical abuse is abuse. Often they will say to us, “I was not hit. He spoke like this to me, but he didn’t hit me.”

Another key factor in not wanting to report is the fear of being judged by a system that is new to them, as well as being shunned by family and community that feel stigmatized by media profiling—because often when a South Asian woman gets murdered, it becomes a South Asian issue, and the entire community gets labelled; there is that media profiling; and there is also the court system, which has changed considerably, particularly with what they call honour-related violence—because these cases are represented through a community lens.

In short, if South Asian women are to feel supported, there has to be a very strong framework that is based on understanding and addressing the issues of race, class, gender and immigration status, to name a few. Proactive measures rather than punitive ones are very important if there is a sincere desire to make the lives of immigrant women better.

I have kept my presentation rather broad, and I’m going to give you three quick cases.

We had a case which was very, very heartbreaking. There was a beautiful young woman who was married to a man who represented himself as the owner of a hotel chain. She was the only child of her parents, came from another country into this country and was married, to find out that he was working in one of the restaurants as a cleaner.

What ended up happening was, one day he took her and left her in a hotel, so she was raped by his boss. This continued. Finally, she didn’t know what to do, so she called one of her uncles and said, “I want to go back home.” She didn’t tell him what was wrong.

He said, “Go to the South Asian Women’s Centre and talk to somebody there.”

This was a client that we dealt with. She didn’t even want to come right into the centre, but she did. She didn’t want to show her face to anyone.

We called her parents. Her father came down; he didn’t know what had happened. She disclosed the story, and the father was so upset, and he wept. He took his daughter back.

In another story, however, in another case, there was a young woman who got married in India. Parents paid for the marriage, parents gave money; parents did everything. She is well-educated. She came here; she’s still here. But she came on what is known as a conditional visa, so she has to stay in her marriage for two years to prove that she is married.

What has ended up happening is, she has been abused emotionally, physically—in every way possible. Many times, she has tried to get out of the marriage. She has contacted her family at home, and her mother has essentially told her, “If you come back here, please don’t come back to our city and our home, because I have other children to get married.”

She has somehow struggled and stayed on, and we are continuing to support her. Her case is still not an open-and-shut case.

We have another case—I’m just giving you a few of the cases—of a young woman who got married and came to Canada. Again, the father paid for the marriage, paid for whatever the bridegroom needed—everything. At the airport, when she landed, after she got her permanent residency, she was essentially told, “Your husband has let us know that he has divorced you.” A young girl, 23; she has no connections in this country. Straight from the airport, she had one friend who she managed to contact. That was because the immigration officials contacted her.

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She ended up at SAWC. We tried to get her a lawyer to get an exemption etc. for the conditional visa—because she was also on a conditional visa—but she had no income. She had no way of representing herself. She didn’t know how to manage the system. She was a young, beautiful woman, and finally she went back because her father said, “I would rather protect her.”

These are the kinds of complexities that we’re seeing, and it’s very hard for us to deal with these situations. They are individual situations and need individual solutions.

Incest? Yes, that happens, where you find family members—it may be a father-in-law; it may be an uncle who has sexually abused a young woman—and they are very nervous to talk about it. When they talk about it, they’ll say, “Please, never mention this to my family.” I’m just giving you a picture of what is going on.

The South Asian Women’s Centre does not get funded to provide these services. We get a little bit of money from the Canadian Women’s Foundation, and Sabita has been hired under that program for two days a week. Subuhi is a full-time staff member through the Newcomer Settlement Program, as well as another program that we have.

We did get some money to do some projects through Status of Women Canada. One was There is No “Honour” in Violence Against Women and Girls. We

have prepared an inter-agency strategy to try to remove the word “honour” from the word “violence,” because it is profiling certain communities negatively.

The other project is—I didn’t bring enough books, I’m so sorry, but I did pass around a few. We prepared this training manual, Forced Marriage as a Form of Human Trafficking. It’s revised from the original version. This was funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation. We have already started the training. In fact, 54 Division has requested additional training because they found that this was very useful to them. This is something that we do.

In addition, we have women survivors who are seniors who come to the centre, who are lonely women. Subuhi manages the group with them, and she has produced a cookbook that they have actually contributed to. This is one of our fundraisers, because we are trying to get the printing costs for it. The cover page has been done by Subuhi; she’s a painter and an artist.

I’m just presenting these things to you in terms of the work that we do. Every dollar that is given to us is spent valuably. We really get no funding to do the kind of work that needs to be done, but we do it because the lives of these women are very important. The commitment of the staff is—I really have to admire them for the fact that they’ll stay back until 7 o’clock and 9 o’clock, sometimes, waiting for an officer to come, or sometimes because they have to take this woman home or find her a shelter. It’s unbelievable the commitment that staff have.

Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. You are right on time. We do have time for questions from our members. Would you like to ask a question? From our opposition members—

Ms. Laurie Scott: That’s great. One question?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes, one question.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay, one question quickly: You mentioned 54 Division. Are they the division mostly in the area you serve? I guess what I’m asking, and trying to say it quickly, is what is it that you see that you need to let the local police know? Is your shelter big enough? How can you accommodate the referrals, I guess, to spread the message that you’re there, and what can we do to support you?

Ms. Kripa Sekhar: We were founded in 1982, but we serve the entire GTA, not just Toronto. Our office is located in Toronto.

Subuhi, you might want to answer, and you might want to answer. They will tell you clients come from all over. Am I right?

Ms. Subuhi Jaffrey: Yes. We have lots of Portuguese, Arab, Italian, Spanish, Hindi, Punjabi or Tamil clients.

Ms. Laurie Scott: So they would reach out to you more than, say, other women’s shelters is what I guess I’m trying to decipher.

Ms. Kripa Sekhar: We are not a shelter. We’re just a centre.

Ms. Laurie Scott: No, but—yes, a resource. Sorry.

Ms. Kripa Sekhar: And we work with shelters.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Yes.

Ms. Subuhi Jaffrey: We speak multiple languages. One staff speaks almost four, five, six languages. That’s how we are able to help.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you. That’s probably all I have time for, but thank you very much for coming today and for preparing that report.

Ms. Kripa Sekhar: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We’ll hear from our third party now.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for your presentation and for taking the time to come speak to the committee.

I’m really interested in your project that you mentioned, There is No “Honour” in Violence Against Women. There’s a similar project in London called Reclaim Honour that’s being led by the Muslim community. But I’m interested in knowing from you what kind of response you’re getting from the South Asian community, particularly men in the South Asian community, as you try to delink this concept of honour from violence, because they should not be together.

Ms. Kripa Sekhar: One of the things we want to do is really link up with more men, but also with more women, mothers particularly, in the community so that they raise their sons in a way that respects women, because we believe that’s where it starts. But we are also reaching out to men in the community. We find that some men are very responsive. They have called the centre, they bring food to the centre and they work with us. But there are many men who have actually called us.

We’ve also received hate calls. It’s not surprising, because there are men who are not open to it at all—not just men, but even women who will not accept the fact that women are prepared to move out of this abuse. They feel that it’s a shame on their household if a woman walks out of her marriage. So we’ve had those kinds.

We are trying to reach out to men. Under the same project, we did a youth group in Scarborough that was attended mostly by young men and was very well received. But it was very interesting. We are going to put the inter-agency strategy up on our website and you can read the responses.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. We’re going to take questions now from our government members.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: I know that you guys do a lot of great work and I want to thank you for all the great work that you do at your centre.

You’ve talked a lot about the South Asian community and about racialized communities and groups. My question is, what do you think is needed going forward? Do you think that we need more support groups or more prevention-type services available for these groups?

Ms. Kripa Sekhar: I think that it’s a combination. There needs to be a very strong intervention strategy that is actually flexible and allows for a community like ours to be able to support women with those individual needs. There needs to be a stronger legal system that also

provides services that are more flexible to help women go through the system. We are trying to work with the media as well. There needs to be a more sensitized system that is able to understand that the needs of certain communities may be greater than for others, than for those who have lived in this country and who were born and raised here. I think there has to be that sensitivity. In order for women in this community to come on par with women who have been born and raised here, it's going to take some time, so there need to be those additional resources, and resources for agencies like ours to be able to do this work.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ladies, I thank you very much for coming and informing this committee today.

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR EQUALITY

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would now call on our next witness, and that is Jo-Ellen Worden.

I don't see Jo-Ellen Worden stepping forward, so I will ask for our next group, the Canadian Association for Equality. Do we have the Canadian Association for Equality here? Okay. Could you please take your seats and begin? Thank you. Begin by stating your name, and you have up to 15 minutes to speak.

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Ms. Eleanor Levine: I'm sharing that with some people.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You are.

Ms. Eleanor Levine: My name is Eleanor Levine. I am a psychiatric social worker. I worked in the department of psychiatry, in-patient and outpatient, at UHN, Toronto General and Toronto Western hospital, for more than three decades.

Currently, I'm on faculty at the University of Toronto as faculty field liaison in the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work. In that position, I work with graduate students. I also have a private therapy practice, where I specialize in doing grief therapy. In addition, I work with families, couples, men and women.

I also work with men at the Canadian Centre for Men and Families.

Interruption.

Ms. Eleanor Levine: Many of the men report having been or currently being victims of physical, emotional or sexual abuse and/or harassment.

I'm also happily married. I have three married sons and seven grandchildren. I'm pointing that out because I'm not a man-basher or a woman-basher.

I'm introducing you today to several people who will share their stories of victimization in the context of the newer norm in victim/perpetrator assessment. I'm asking you to listen carefully as they demonstrate to you that not only women but also men suffer from these terrible acts.

We have three people making brief presentations. James suffered through childhood sexual abuse. Anne is a survivor of abuse at the hands of a female and also

facilitates a group for trauma survivors. Steve lived for two decades in a dangerous relationship with a physically and emotionally abusive wife. When he sought support and protection, he was ridiculed and dismissed by police and members of his community. He felt that he had no escape and remained living in fear.

We know that violence spans all ethnicities, ages and socio-economic situations. These testimonies show that violence happens to girls and women and to boys and men. We are here to urge this committee to stay true to its mandate to include all survivors of violence and not forget those victims who don't conform to the stereotype of what a victim is supposed to look like.

Our first speaker is James.

Mr. James Buffin: Hi. I was prepared to speak at 4:40, and I have an A/V presentation which, unfortunately, does not seem to be able to be presented. If there is an opportunity to share the link after I speak, I would appreciate that very much.

Thank you for the introduction. I'm so sorry that I interrupted that. Please forgive me.

I'm going to compose myself. I do actually have a four-minute verbal presentation that I can speak, which I will share with you. I did both. If the link can be shared after the fact, I would really appreciate it.

I'm a filmmaker. Storytelling is a huge part of the work that we do at the Gatehouse. It's incredibly important to be able to use A/V support because, as a survivor, what gets robbed is voice. Trauma is a thief of voice. You lose the expression to verbalize. That's why so many survivor experiences are not conveyed and not understood yet. That's why I work in the media: to counteract this, to use the tools of my trade to convey that in ways that use metaphor and other ways to convey those stories.

Sexual trauma, especially when it is inflicted on a child, is a robber of soul. It does not heal with time; it gets worse. It ricochets inside of you, continuing the harm, and is amplified over time, not diminished. The worst part is that you think that you're the problem. It becomes invisible and is only recognized in retrospect, like a pickpocket.

When I was 10 years old, my older brother committed suicide. Around that time, I became a member of a recreational group for children where we did overnight trips. I was in desperate need of love, attention and support, and what I got instead was sexually violated in ways the memory of which distress me to this day.

That betrayal completely altered the course of my life and damaged my overall sense of trust. I became self-isolating, yet I was ambitious. But the harder I tried to achieve my life goals, the further away they seemed to be because I was internally being pulled in two directions simultaneously. Yet I believed that if I tried just a little bit harder, then maybe I could get enough and maybe I could get through, but I wasn't looking in the right place. That's a horrible trap to live in.

People who are sexually abused as children are very vulnerable to being re-abused later in life. At age 21, I

was sexually abused again by a predator employer who took advantage of my vulnerability when I was temporarily homeless and in a full-leg cast. A decade later, I learned that he had AIDS. At that time, I went through the hell of getting tested after having gotten married and having a son.

Had I been educated about post-traumatic stress injuries, I might not have suffered through more than 30 years of panic, anxiety and hypervigilance, mistakenly believing that that's just the way I am.

We have brain-scan technology that proves the mental health extent of sexual trauma injuries, which impact learning, sense of self and sense of belonging. We know the relationship between child sex abuse and risks of suicide, substance abuse, self-harm, loss of productivity, low self-esteem, guilt, self-blame, social withdrawal, marital and family problems, depression, sleep disruption and eating disorders, but somehow this cause-effect relationship has not yet been widely accepted as true. Child sex abuse is at the epicentre of a public health crisis. Accepting this cause-effect relationship is key to moving forward.

The numbers are staggering. Between one third and one sixth of the total population are known to have been sexually abused in childhood but, because males are less likely to report, the real numbers are more likely to be at least one third of the total population.

The biggest underutilized key to making a difference in the area of child sex abuse right now, in my opinion, is conscious awareness. That involves waking up compassion. By doing that, "overwhelm" can be displaced and the potential for change awoken. We need role models to show that transformation is possible, that it's possible to heal.

Adult survivors of child sex abuse are the fulcrum of awareness that can help leverage this horrible situation into something better. I believe it's time to pick trauma's pocket; take it back. But this is something that needs to be done collectively. We need nothing less than to shift the context. One of the best ways to initiate that is by having conversations like this one.

Ms. Anne Lee: Hello. I'm not sure what the protocol is, but I'll say hello, Madam Chair and Madam Vice-Chair and members of the committee. I'm here today to speak about female-perpetrated sexual abuse, or FSA, as a survivor, and as the owner of a support group for trauma survivors. I'd also like to speak on behalf of other survivors of FSA who don't feel able to.

I'm here to speak especially to your mandate of inclusion and prevention, because I think that's so important. I've been told I only have three to four minutes. That's barely enough time to scratch the surface, so I've brought handouts—lots and lots of handouts.

1630

If you only look at two documents in there, I hope you will look at the first two. This is from a site—these are written by two survivors of female-perpetrated sexual abuse, FSA, one male, one female. They really poignantly tell the story because this is an invisible issue and

shouldn't be. By the way, the red folder within is Canadian research: Canadian cases, Canadian articles or references to Canadian researchers.

In 2011, a fellow FSA survivor, another woman, and I crashed the ATSA conference. ATSA is the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers. We attended the poster board sessions and we talked to every researcher on FSA we could find. We took one of them out to dinner.

This was one of the posters that was presented at the poster board session; it's in your handouts. This is a blow-up of part of that, what I think is very important. It says, "According to the BJS"—which is the Bureau of Justice Statistics in the US—"3% of all sex offenders are female." However, "when relying on victim reports it is estimated as many as 63% of sex abusers may be female.... The disparity between these numbers may be accounted for by the nature of female offending and cultural perceptions."

As I said, this is an invisible and silenced topic. This is really difficult, to come out myself. I'm hoping to raise your awareness of this and put it on the agenda.

On the distribution list for this poster was a fairly high-ranking executive in law enforcement in Ontario. I've been waiting since 2011 to see if this information was introduced anywhere into the lexicon and I'm still waiting, which is really typical. No one wants to talk about this.

Ever since I outed myself as a survivor, I've been astounded at the number of personal stories I've heard. This is a huge and invisible problem with such tragic consequences that no one wants to talk about. I won't go into my story here, not in a public forum, but in the articles that I've included, parts of my story are there. I'll just say that the damages are severe to both men and women, and they're compounded—very much compounded—by stigma and disbelief.

On to the topic of prevention: From my position running a support group for trauma survivors, I think it's true that every sex abuser started out as a child who was trained to violence. If we really want to prevent violence at all, particularly sexual violence, we have to treat children. Even if we're only talking about male abusers of women, we have to treat those male abuse victims before they become abusers. The same is true for female.

For myself, I spent my whole life looking for services for FSA, and there are none. When I've attempted, I've been met with ridicule, denial, derision, mocking and disbelief. In order to get services, I've lied about the gender of my abuser or I have picked another incident of harassment. This is common, so the statistics are going to be skewed because you have a number of people who have been abused by women in what appear to be services for victims of men.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Your group has one more minute to go. However, we can extend it by another five minutes if our committee members agree not to ask questions.

Ms. Anne Lee: Okay. I'll speed up. Sorry.

Why am I here with CAFE? They don't discriminate, and they're willing to hear what I have to say and give me a place to speak about it. In my group, we've just kicked off a subgroup for child victims of torture. We have five members who stepped up out of a meeting of 14, two men and three women. In our group we have pretty much every demographic, who sit together and heal together. The abusers of those two men and three women were three mothers, one father, a male and a female relative, a number of male neighbours and two female babysitters. What that says to me is that this isn't about gender. We talk about it as gender; when we do that, we silence three quarters of the victims. We need to get all of those people on the table if we're truly going to prevent violence.

If I could ask anything of you, it would be to please don't discriminate when you're looking at victims and when you're looking at offenders. Try to provide services for everyone. It's very difficult.

Mr. Steve Dolk: Good afternoon, Madam Chair, the committee and everybody who's here from all walks of life. I want to thank every one of you for the opportunity and your patience, as I, myself, and my colleagues, make ourselves publicly vulnerable in briefly describing my own life's experience.

As a young boy I was the victim of repeated physical abuse and assaults by a woman who was my care provider. This would have a tremendous impact on my perception of girls and women, as I would be intimidated by their presence.

As an adult I would marry a woman with whom, for more than 20 years, I would endure domestic violence and harassment. It would only be one week after our honeymoon when this would all begin. For almost 22 years I would be struck by her in a car, stabbed in the chest with a pen, punched repeatedly, scratched, kicked, cursed and sworn at. She would make numerous threats to kill me.

The first attempt I made to reach out was to my church community, and I was told to be a man and take it.

The police would be involved on many occasions but only to look at me, a bigger-built guy—when I put it into perspective, about 10 years ago I was about 276 pounds; I was a substantially larger man—they would flat-out deny that this could possibly be happening to me, even with cuts and blood evident. One officer who responded to an incident returned to my home after interviewing my former spouse, closed the door behind himself, walked up to me and said, "How would you like to pick on someone your own size?" He then further filled out a report that was all one-sided, making me to look like I was an abuser.

In another incident, I went to the police department to report another assault. With my neck bleeding and cuts on my arms and hands, pictures would be taken, along with my video statement. After interviewing my spouse, their decision was not to press charges on the grounds that they were not present when the assault took place. I asked the officer what their actions would have been if

the tables were turned and she had the injuries. He replied to me, "That's easy; we'd arrest you and put you in jail." Pointing out the flaw in the logic, he simply stated, "That's just the way it is."

Recognizing that there is no protection and that no one was willing to believe my situation—especially back then—can even make the strongest of men, or heart, feel weak. I isolated myself and kept it all behind closed doors. I developed anxiety and depression. I would be diagnosed in 2005 with post-traumatic stress disorder. I showed all of the symptoms, and there, for the first time in many years, I broke. I told him everything; he was the first person that I would tell and plead with in years. It made sense to him, and although I would see him for help, I wasn't willing to leave my wife. I still believed that all of this that was happening must somehow be my fault.

I can appreciate that recognition is crucial to identity. This is an absolute. Recognition gives each of us our place in society. It allows us to experience our sense of self-being, our self-actualization. It involves tolerance, respect and a willingness to understand.

Promoting an awareness of the identity of the woman is valuable. Educating others about the obstacles and barriers that pose a threat, diminish or destroy the dignity of identifying oneself as woman is vital, and can be a proactive measure in putting an end to sexual violence and harassment.

Take, for example, the gay community. It was not too long ago that many remained in perpetual hiding. If discovered, they faced violence from both men and women, harassment, ridicule and even imprisonment, but as those who were strong enough to speak up, to let their voices be heard—as more and more came out and boldly stood for their dignity, society began to listen and to accept their reality.

The media, when not used carefully, errs in its ways to show issues like terrorism, which implicitly associates religious communities as a threat. But I have personally witnessed the fervour of certain religious communities proactively involved in peace and social harmony as they stand for their dignity while calling Canada their home.

Violence and harassment is real but it does not discriminate and can make anyone a victim from anyone who is a perpetrator. But when I see a video such as #WhoWillYouHelp, I begin to ask: What about others? What about transgenders or gender-neutral, who are the most vulnerable to sexual violence, violence and harassment, caused by men and women?

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What about domestic violence, sexual violence and harassment within same-sex households?

What about aboriginal women, who have been the most marginalized and vulnerable to assaults and murders, where it is only being recognized and accounted for since 1995 with a recent awareness of over 1,200 aboriginal women murdered or missing?

If I were to posit the woman as my transgressor at the other end of the spectrum of human existence, if I turned

the tables of the differing genders within the video #WhoWillYouHelp and make her my perpetrator, I do nothing more than make the woman my enemy.

I am asking, as a man, as a victim of domestic violence, as a victim of violence at the hands of a woman when I was a child, to consider—may we consider—devising initiatives in a concerted effort rather than creating programs or tools that are more potentially divisive.

Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Mr. Dolk, thank you very much for coming and informing this committee, and to the members of this committee. Thanks again.

DR. JO-ELLEN WORDEN

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would call on our next witness, and that is Jo-Ellen Worden. When you are ready to begin, state your name. I would ask that you lift the microphone up, the one that has the red light in front of it. You have up to 15 minutes to speak to our committee. Thank you.

Dr. Jo-Ellen Worden: Okay. Thank you very much. My name is Dr. Jo-Ellen Worden. I am a researcher doing national security research on law-enforcement-officer-involved domestic violence in the Canadian context.

Ladies and gentlemen of the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment, honourable ministers, members of the opposition and third party members and other honoured guests and fellow speakers, I thank you for your collective efforts in establishing this committee and conducting much-needed public hearings pursuant to improving the government's response to Ontarians who have experienced sexual violence and harassment.

Before I proceed further, I wish to acknowledge the unyielding support and encouragement from Lisa Webb, Carole Morrison, Karen Knight and Gamila A. of the Ban Righ Centre at Queen's University in my pursuit of what I have come to affectionately entitle Deborah's law.

On January 31, 2007, I provided a deputation before the Standing Committee on Justice Policy of this Legislature. I made recommendations to the committee with regard to Bill 103, the bill introduced into the Ontario Legislature that amended the Ontario Police Services Act pursuant to the inquiries and recommendations outlined in the LeSage report. I have been pleased to see that some of my recommendations were indeed incorporated into a form of the legislation that received royal assent, and for the convenience of the respected members of this committee, I refer the members to the Hansard transcript of my deputation, dated January 31, 2007, of which I can email a copy to Mr. Short.

During that deputation, I cautioned the committee and, by extension, the government of Ontario, that if the government did not take seriously the escalating threat that police-perpetrated domestic violence posed to victims—and I quote from the transcript: “if there is not a legislated acknowledgment of this epidemic, I guarantee

that there will be victims of police-perpetrated domestic violence who have been sentenced to a lifetime of abuse and revictimization by these officers and the existing complaints process.”

For those of you members of the committee on sexual violence and harassment who may be unfamiliar with the term “police-perpetrated domestic violence,” it is a syndrome referred to in a document sent to me by the Ministry of the Attorney General's office in 2006 that describes the domestic violence and sexual violence that occurs at the hands of men and women who have been trained in the tactical manoeuvres of intimidation, interrogation, manipulation, deception, power and control. It is a category of violence that has now been expanded to include not only police officers as violent offenders but also those military personnel who choose to engage in intimate-partner violence. As such, this phenomenon is now referred to as officer-involved domestic violence, or OIDV. When there is a sexual component, it is referred to as officer-involved sexual violence, or OISV.

OIDV and OISV refer to workplace violence, sexual violence and sexual harassment as well as the domestic violence, often sexual in nature, that occurs at the hands of the very officers bound by oath to serve and protect and uphold the law.

In 2008, I hand-delivered a package of evidence and an accompanying request-for-assistance letter to John Tory, now mayor of Toronto, outlining in detail the threat that OIDV and OISV pose to victims.

I cautioned the government of Ontario again in 2008, when I provided a deputation before the Standing Committee on Social Policy about the escalating threat that this type of violence posed to colleagues and family members of violent police and military officers.

I cautioned the federal government as well in 2008, when I petitioned the House of Commons to conduct comprehensive research into law-enforcement- and military-officer-involved domestic and sexual violence in the Canadian context.

I provided written submissions to the Department of Justice in 2013 as well as attended meetings with the head legal counsel of Canada's Department of Justice in the spring of 2014 and the Ministry of the Attorney General's office in 2014.

In each case, I was explicit in outlining the types of violence, which included officer-involved sexual violence and sexual harassment. I've brought with me an exhibit list that I provided to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy, which I'll hand in to Mr. Short before I leave.

I have made seemingly countless phone calls and have written likely over 200 letters to numerous ministries within the government of Ontario and the federal Department of Justice, beseeching involved agencies to please address OIDV and OISV—which again include sexual violence in the Canadian context—in a safe and expeditious manner.

I was pleased to hear of the creation of this committee and hope that this committee will not only address the

sexual violence and harassment that occurs within the broader societal context, but has jurisdiction to tackle the issue of sexual violence and harassment that occurs within Ontario's law enforcement entities.

Since providing my first recommendations to the Standing Committee on Justice Policy in 2007, no less than four female RCMP officers have made public their experience of sexual violence and sexual harassment involving their RCMP colleagues. Additionally, I understand that the chief of the Belleville police department came forward after experiencing years of violence at the hands of her police officer husband.

Further, in 2009, the Marian Evans verdict came down, in which Honourable Justice S.J. Chapnik of the Ontario Superior Court of Justice, in *Evans v. Sproule*, made it explicitly clear that the Toronto Police Services Board was vicariously liable for the sexual misconduct of its member, who was the assailant in that case.

I ask this committee rhetorically why, then, did three male members of the Toronto Police Service, albeit allegedly at this point, believe it was even remotely appropriate to gang-rape a colleague member of the Toronto Police Service?

In order to combat the ever-increasing occurrences of police sexual violence perpetrated against fellow force members and family members, it is imperative for legislatures and policy-makers to understand that corruption and sexual violence within Canadian law enforcement entities is not an individual aberration of an incidental nature that can be readily combatted with the momentary embarrassment that comes from media disclosure or the temporary slap-on-the-wrist, suspended-with-pay measures of the most recent gang rape allegations involving three members of the Toronto Police Service, or even quasi-judicial investigations like the LeSage inquiry and the resultant opening of the Office of the Independent Police Review Director—which, by the way, has no accessible mechanism to address sexual violence and harassment that occurs within the law enforcement community and within law enforcement families.

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Rather, the sexual violence and sexual harassment that occurs within Canadian law enforcement entities needs to be understood as an intentionally cultivated form of deviant police behaviour that is deeply embedded and accepted within police culture, practices, norms and traditions. I have references to that effect if you folks need them.

Sexual violence within police and military organizations happens because it is tolerated, it is encouraged and it is usually covered up. The concealment of sexual violence—

Interruption.

Dr. Jo-Ellen Worden: Sorry; excuse me.

The concealment of sexual violence within police and military agencies can take the form of threatening the victim officer's continuing safety or threatening their job if the victim member discloses.

This committee's mandate includes the consideration of ways to shift social norms and other barriers which

prevent people who have experienced sexual violence and harassment from coming forward. Many victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment at the hands of police and military officer colleagues or family members have tried to come forward. Their disclosures have fallen on furious ears. They're ignored, humiliated and ridiculed that their timing is suspect. They are thrown into metal boxes with loudspeakers that scream the musical lyrics of—please excuse my language—"You're a crazy bitch. You're a crazy bitch." Some police sexual assault survivors are threatened with being gang raped again, and their reputations are intentionally denigrated. Some have their children abducted and forcibly confined.

What is particularly dangerous for colleague officers is that they become persona non grata within the involved police service and abandoned by fellow officers in the field, or active attempts are made to indoctrinate them in order that they believe that the incident never happened or that they're making a big deal about nothing.

Police sexual assault victims who are family members are threatened: "Do you really want to poke that bear?" or "No one will believe you."

I can affirm before this committee that there is no question in my mind that involved police agencies believe victims are being truthful upon disclosure. At times, compassionate and understanding fellow officers will sit in the living rooms of victims and sob along with them, saying, "I am so sorry that this has happened to you," but at the same time be paralyzed with fear for their own lives and safety were they to effect an arrest of the assailant officer.

At other times, sexual assault victims of OIDV and OISV are advised by the executive director of the Ontario Victim Services Secretariat that their matter is unfortunate but will fall through the cracks of the justice system, which is simply not equipped to deal with OIDV and OISV. Honourable members of this committee, I am of the view that OIDV and OISV victims are not falling through the cracks of an ill-equipped justice system, but rather those victims are actively shoved through the cracks of a system that, since the Marian Evans verdict, is more concerned about civil liability than the fact that police officers are sexually assaulting their colleagues and their family members.

It should be noted that police sexual misconduct and subsequent cover-ups are persistent and constantly recurring hazards internally generated by police organizations and even facilitated by inadequate justice and oversight bodies that become complicit in such recurrent, socially constructed safety sector failures.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You have one minute left.

Dr. Jo-Ellen Worden: Thanks.

In respect of attempting to eradicate sexual violence and harassment within law enforcement communities, it needs to be stressed that the OIPRD is not an effective mechanism. The OIPRD is not available to police service members who have been sexually assaulted or harassed by colleague officers. Further, when the alleged sex

offender is a police officer who has sexually assaulted an intimate partner, or, worse, their own child, it is a conflict of interest to refer the matter back to the involved police service, which is what the OIPRD does during their first step.

In no other societal context is an alleged sex offender provided with disclosure of the complaint and accompanying evidence against them in advance of an arrest. Not so when the assailant is a police officer in the province of Ontario.

The OIPRD cannot guarantee that a victim's disclosure and evidence to this oversight body will not be provided to the assailant officer in advance of laying charges. Not only is—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you, Ms. Worden. We're going to take some questions now from our government members—rather, from our third party.

Do you have any questions you would like to ask Ms. Worden?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Yes. Thank you very much for your incredible advocacy over the years. You've really taken this on and really have pushed for changes, so thank you for that.

The question I wanted to ask: Sexual harassment in the RCMP was a huge story. It caught everybody's attention—the women officers' experiences. I wondered: Through your research, have you heard of efforts that are under way to try to change that culture within that police force?

Dr. Jo-Ellen Worden: Within that particular police force?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Or just generally. That shone a light on the issue.

Dr. Jo-Ellen Worden: Yes, it did, as did the chief of the Belleville police department's brave disclosures as well as the young lady in January, I believe it was, of this year.

I just finished a comprehensive systematic review of the literature involving law enforcement, officer-involved domestic violence, which includes colleague officers. There has been no comprehensive Canadian study that addresses this issue. There's nothing in the literature. There is one study that has been commenced through a university in western Ontario—not the University of Western Ontario—where they're finally looking at the systemic responses to law-enforcement-officer-involved domestic violence in the province of Ontario. That study is not yet complete, so to answer your question, no, there's nothing.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Questions from our government side?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: First of all, I want to say thank you for being here. The advocacy that you're displaying or telling us about is very passionate, so I'm happy to hear you today.

As we are looking into the issues of sexual violence and harassment, you're bringing a perspective that we might not have fully contemplated. Having said that, there is still a systemic situation where women, regard-

less of the environment they're working or living through, do not report here in Ontario, in Canada or around the world, as we heard.

I'm going to ask you: What are the extra challenges when investigating or living through police-perpetrated domestic violence?

Dr. Jo-Ellen Worden: Oh, wow. That will take another deputation. I can finish.

First of all, we can't go to police—they can't; we can't. We can't go to police because the assailant is a police officer, and the wagons tend to circle. So number one, although we're believed or victims are believed, police officers are of the view that we or the victims would be hard-pressed to find a fellow officer that's willing to lay charges against one of their colleagues. So that's number one.

Oftentimes, victims can't go to shelters because the police know where the shelters are. There's a victim relocation process and a victim witness assistance program. I was advised by a member of the Attorney General's office that victims of OISV are not really eligible for that program unless they're willing to cut off all contact with family members, unless they're willing to relinquish their children, or unless they're willing to provide disclosure to, in one case, a police service that had a conflict of interest. So they're denied access to services and supports that may be available to other folks.

1700

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. A quick question now from our PC side.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you very much. I just have one quick question. You mentioned disclosure of evidence to the assailant at the time of allegations, and it surprises me that—

Dr. Jo-Ellen Worden: That is correct.

Mr. Randy Hillier: So maybe if you could just explain that a little bit more. If somebody has an allegation of abuse, and they take that to the police, you're saying that that information is then provided to the—

Dr. Jo-Ellen Worden: Alleged assailant.

Mr. Randy Hillier: —the alleged assailant?

Dr. Jo-Ellen Worden: Yes. It's where the disclosure—that occurs when someone comes forward alleging OIDV or OISV. If they come forward to the police, that information is provided off the record, under the table.

What I was referring to specifically was, when an individual cannot get assistance from police, they are able to file a complaint with the OIPRD, which is the Office of the Independent Police Review Director.

First of all, if the victim is a police officer, they can't go to the OIPRD, so that avenue is not available to them. If they do provide disclosure and evidence to the OIPRD, part of step one in filing a complaint is that you are advised that the information and evidence is sent to the chief of the involved service and the assailant officer. They cannot—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much, Ms. Worden. I appreciate your coming here today

and speaking to this committee and informing us of your views. Thank you very much.

Dr. Jo-Ellen Worden: May I have consent to email Jocelyn, I think it was, the rest of the deputation, just so you folks have it? Is that okay?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Absolutely. Thanks again.

Dr. Jo-Ellen Worden: Thank you for your time.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): To our committee members: I have some new information to pass on to you. Our next witnesses, which are—

Interjection.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Following Boost Child Abuse Prevention and Intervention, looking at 5:20, we have some people who have arrived from Hamilton who have asked to speak to us in camera, to speak to us privately. So I am asking you, at 5:20, with your approval, if we are able to clear the room in order to accommodate the two individuals who wish to speak to us in private. Do I have agreement on that? Agreed. Thank you.

BOOST CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): All right. I would invite Boost Child Abuse Prevention and Intervention to come forward. Please state your name, and you have up to 15 minutes to address the committee. Thank you.

Ms. Karyn Kennedy: Thank you. My name is Karyn Kennedy, and I'm the executive director of Boost Child Abuse Prevention and Intervention and the Boost Child and Youth Advocacy Centre in Toronto. Good afternoon, Madam Chair and committee members. I'd like to thank you for this opportunity to speak before you today.

I have more than 30 years' experience working with child and youth victims of sexual abuse, and their families. I have worked with hundreds of children and youth, supporting them at the time of their initial disclosure, providing therapy and offering assistance through the criminal justice system. I have seen first-hand the pain and the suffering, as well as the courage, the strength and the resilience that these individuals possess.

Boost is committed to eliminating abuse and violence in the lives of children and youth. The centre is a registered charity and has provided programs and services to children, youth and their families, as well as to professionals in the community, for the past 34 years.

Boost believes that all children and youth have a right to grow up in a safe, healthy and nurturing environment, and is dedicated to the prevention of child abuse and violence through education and awareness and through collaborating with our community partners to provide services.

Boost currently has a staff of 26 full-time and five part-time employees and provides programs to more than 3,000 children, youth and adults every year.

In October 2013, Boost opened Toronto's first child and youth advocacy centre, the CYAC. The CYAC is an

innovative community response to child physical and sexual abuse investigations. It's a partnership between community and government agencies, and it brings together in one location all professionals involved in child abuse cases.

The CYAC is child-friendly, accessible and safe for children, youth and their families. The goal of the CYAC is to ensure that children and youth who are victims of abuse receive the very best child-focused investigation, treatment, support services and advocacy under one roof.

Since its opening just about a year and a half ago now, the CYAC has conducted more than 1,500 investigations of child abuse in Toronto, approximately half of them sexual abuse or assault.

The CYAC is a centre of excellence, providing a leading-edge response that is setting the benchmark for child abuse investigations and interventions. By drawing upon interdisciplinary expertise and ongoing collaboration with the Child Welfare Institute, the CYAC is conducting innovative research that will allow for the evaluation and implementation of best practice standards and evidence-based multidisciplinary practices, programs and services.

The CYAC is a model for the province, providing multidisciplinary training and consultation to similar centres in Ontario and across the country. The CYAC in Toronto houses 18 Toronto police officers, 20 child protection workers, a team of five advocates, a nurse practitioner and five mental health workers who collaborate to provide investigation, treatment and support in a child-friendly location.

I'd like to take a few minutes now to talk specifically about the sexual victimization of children and youth, and to share some relevant statistics on children and youth and sexual violence. Children and youth are five times more likely than adults to become victims of sexual offences. Almost 60% of all victims of police-reported sexual assault are children under the age of 18. The 2004 General Social Survey on Victimization found that eight in 10 youth between the ages of 15 to 17 who had been victimized did not report to police. The rate of sexual assault amongst children and youth is 1.5 times higher than that of 18- to 24-year-olds.

Girls continue to be victimized more frequently than boys, and among children under 18, girls are at the greatest risk of sexual assault—almost five times more likely to be sexually assaulted than boys. The majority—over 80%—of child and youth victims of sexual offences are female. Across all ages, females are the victims of sexual offences at a higher rate than males. The rate for girls peaks at 14 years old and the rate for boys peaks at eight years old. Males are the accused in 97% of sexual offences that are reported.

We can't ignore these shocking statistics, and we must take further action to prevent the sexual violence and harassment of girls and women, particularly when it affects children and youth. In order to effectively address these issues, a plan that includes both a comprehensive prevention and intervention strategy is required and

needs to begin with primary prevention education for adults, youth and children.

Historically, the focus of sexual violence and harassment prevention efforts has been on educating victims to protect themselves from violence and aggression. We don't put enough resources into the primary prevention of violence. Intensive primary prevention programming addresses violence and relational aggression by providing children and youth with skills to build healthy, mutually rewarding relationships and reduce victimization.

Boost has delivered primary prevention programs in Toronto schools for many years and has trained teachers and social workers in several boards across the province to deliver our programs. Boost's I'm a Great Kid! programs build skills in children that make them less vulnerable to abuse and violence. Our evidence-based primary prevention programs introduce children to basic concepts: self-esteem, communication, making good choices, respect for self and others, touch, and how and where to get help. These skills assist them to develop and strengthen healthy relationships and acquire skills and attributes that lessen their vulnerability to abuse and bullying, as well as their likelihood of becoming abusive. The programs are taught to children beginning in grade 2 in the classroom over a six-week period to allow time for children to practise the skills so that they're reinforced and easily recalled.

David Finkelhor, a world-renowned expert in child sexual abuse, references a study by Gibson and Leitenberg that was based on a survey of 825 college students that concluded that adult women who had not participated in a school prevention program during childhood were about twice as likely to have experienced sexual abuse as those who had participated in a program.

The province of Ontario has already recognized the importance of sexual health and relationship education in the new elementary curriculum. Boost's school-based primary prevention programs complement and expand on this work. Additionally, our newly developed program for grades 7 and 8 addresses healthy relationships from both sides of the spectrum, with the goal of preventing victimization as well as aggression and violence.

There's a great deal of work that needs to be done to provide accurate information, change attitudes and correct myths related to the sexual victimization of girls and young women. Schools across Ontario provide an ideal opportunity to educate all children and youth and to teach them skills to prevent violence.

1710

Boost is also actively involved in raising public awareness and frequently provides workshops and training in the community and across the province to professionals, as well as community members, including parents and young adults.

While prevention and education must be the cornerstone of any plan to prevent sexual violence, there also needs to be easily accessible and timely interventions for victims of sexual violence.

The child and youth advocacy centre model provides a comprehensive, coordinated, seamless response to chil-

dren and youth who have been sexually abused or assaulted. The CYAC is a multidisciplinary service where a team of highly-skilled and trained law enforcement, criminal justice, child protection, medical, mental health, and advocates coordinate and collaborate on child abuse cases. It integrates a continuum of services from one central hub that includes investigation, protection, victim support and advocacy, medical and mental health assessment and treatment, and follow-up care in a sensitive and supportive environment.

The overall goal is to effectively coordinate the system's response so that children and youth who are victimized by abuse or violence can receive services in one location and not endure further trauma or revictimization.

In addition to the investigative, medical and mental health services that are offered, an innovative advocacy program was designed and developed that provides ongoing support to children, youth and families throughout the process, beginning with the investigation and through to the end of the criminal justice system. An advocate is assigned to the child or youth as soon as they enter the CYAC, and this person serves as a shepherd to support and guide them throughout their experience in the system, making referrals, providing crisis support, accessing information, and building bridges.

I'd like to share an example of how the child and youth advocacy centre made a difference in the life of one young girl who was the victim of a sexual assault. This girl was 15 when she was violently sexually assaulted by her stepfather. Immediately following the assault, the stepfather left the house and the girl called her mother to tell her what had happened. This in itself was somewhat unusual, as many children and youth do not tell right away when an abuse or assault occurs. The girl's mother left work and went home to her daughter. Upon arriving home, she found her daughter distraught and called the police.

The call was transferred to the child and youth advocacy centre, where a detective received, the information, consulted with a child protection supervisor and an investigative team, consisting of a police officer and child protection worker, was assigned. The team was then expanded to include an advocate and a nurse practitioner.

The mother was contacted immediately and asked to come in to the CYAC with her daughter, where they were met by the advocate, who explained what would happen while they were there, gave them a brief tour and then took them into a quiet, comfortable room, where she introduced them to the investigative team.

Interviews were conducted separately with both the girl and her mother and were digitally recorded. The advocate remained with them while the interviews were taking place to support whoever was not being interviewed at the time.

Following the interviews, the team met briefly, determined that a medical exam was required and the police made a plan to go to the home to collect evidence and then to arrest the stepfather.

The nurse practitioner was introduced to the family, and it was explained that the medical examination could happen at the CYAC. The girl was seen by the nurse practitioner, and the advocate remained with the mother to provide support.

Given that the home was a crime scene, the advocate helped make arrangements for the girl and her mother to stay elsewhere. It took several days for police to locate and arrest the offender. During that time, the advocate stayed in close touch and served as liaison to share information with the family and team members.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Kennedy, you have one minute.

Ms. Karyn Kennedy: The advocate arranged for both the mom and the girl to each see a mental health worker for crisis intervention.

Once the offender was arrested and it was determined that it was safe for the family to return home, the advocate was able to work with victim services to have a cleaning crew go to the home, remove traces of the crime and put the bedroom back together with new linens and bedding.

Once the crisis settled, both the girl and mom received ongoing mental health services and were referred for court preparation. The advocate has remained involved as a support and will do so for as long as the family requires, and the team will continue to be available for any further planning.

The family commented on the high level of compassion and professionalism they experienced from each and every professional they encountered at the CYAC. They felt that walking through the front doors into an unmarked building was beneficial for the youth, as she did not feel labelled. They commented on how important and beneficial it was for her to be greeted and moved directly into a quiet and safe area. They were especially amazed that the nurse practitioner from SickKids came to the girl for examination and she didn't have to go to the hospital.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Could you conclude, please? Thank you.

Ms. Karyn Kennedy: In closing, I would like to urge the committee and the provincial government to look to models, such as the one I've described, that combine both prevention and intervention to create a comprehensive, coordinated response to victims of sexual abuse and assault. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much, Ms. Kennedy. We are going to have some questions for you now by our government members. Yes, MPP Dong.

Mr. Han Dong: Ms. Kennedy, thank you very much for the presentation. As a committee member, and also a parent to a pair of young children, I applaud you for your work and thank you for standing up for the most vulnerable. In particular to your evidence-based primary prevention programs, I think this sounds very innovative.

Our recent introduction of the sexual education curriculum has faced some challenges—resistance or criti-

cism, whatever you call them. What's in your mind? What's your response to the new proposed sex education curriculum for our schools? What's your response to that?

Ms. Karyn Kennedy: We applaud the new sexual health curriculum. It has been something that we've been advocating for, for a long time. We think that it's age-appropriate, the material being taught to children when it is. It certainly helps our work because it gives children language to be able to describe what's happening to them.

Mr. Han Dong: That's very important. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. From our PC side.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Thanks for your presentation. I'm actually familiar a little bit with Boost. I'm really impressed with the interdisciplinary model that you have taken on. I apologize if I missed it, but who are you funded by?

Ms. Karyn Kennedy: That's a good question. We're funded by all three levels of government: a number of different provincial ministries—the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, as well as the Attorney General—and we do receive some funding from the federal government and from the city of Toronto.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Good for you.

Ms. Karyn Kennedy: Thank you.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: My question relates to—you have three offices. You said that most recently, the Toronto one opened, in 2013. Similar models in Peterborough and Barrie?

Ms. Karyn Kennedy: No, unfortunately, not yet. The Peterborough and Barrie models just provide child victim witness support for children who are required to testify in court.

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Can I keep going?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. And from our third party?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: Is it a pilot project?

Ms. Karyn Kennedy: In Peterborough and Barrie?

Ms. Sylvia Jones: In Toronto.

Ms. Karyn Kennedy: In Toronto? No. We're working on expanding across the whole city. Right now, we're just in part of the city, but it's here to stay.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Before you created this multi-disciplinary team that involves education, health care, justice etc.—was that based on evidence from other jurisdictions? What brought the team together in the first place?

Ms. Karyn Kennedy: Yes, I'm so glad you asked that. There are actually 900 child advocacy centres across the United States. Up until five years ago, there were two in Canada, one in Niagara Falls and one in Edmonton. Funding was provided through the federal government on a short-term basis. Now there are over 25 centres across Canada. Six of them are in Ontario, and there are more that are developing.

There are best-practice guidelines that we've developed for Ontario that are now being adapted to use

across the country. Ontario has really been a leader in the development of this model for other provinces and territories across Canada. It's really the way of the future, I think.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Kennedy, I want to thank you very much for coming and informing this committee of your important work. Thank you.

Ms. Karyn Kennedy: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would now ask all of the members in our committee room now if they could clear out and return in 20 minutes. We are about to conduct some private hearings now. Thank you.

The committee continued in closed session from 1719 to 1746.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you for your patience, everyone. We are now back into our public session.

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR EQUALITY

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our final presenters today are the Canadian Association for Equality. You have up to 15 minutes to address our committee. You can go right ahead.

Mr. Justin Trottier: Thank you very much to the committee for allowing us to present today. I should say that some of those who presented at the 4:40 time slot or just before are also here if you still had questions for them.

I wanted to start by saying how much we're heartened by this committee's mandate to advance our understanding of violence in ways which break old stereotypes and do away with dangerous myths. We actually—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'm sorry to interrupt. Can you please state for the record your name?

Mr. Justin Trottier: Yes, it's Justin Trottier.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you.

Mr. Justin Trottier: No problem.

We have a video that we wanted to share with you which we think helps in that effort of shattering stereotypes. I do want to warn you that it may be triggering. It's a comedian. The video is called Why Rape Is Sincerely Hilarious.

Robert?

Interjection.

Mr. Justin Trottier: While we're trying to figure that out, let me continue. I wanted to state at the outset that we support all the major objectives of this committee, which seeks to include diverse voices and which seeks to find ways to break social norms and other barriers preventing people who have experienced sexual violence and harassment from coming forward and getting help.

I think one major barrier—which we'll see in the video if we get it working—relates to stereotypes which may prevent us from sometimes seeing all victims. Reflecting the makeup of Ontarians, violence spans all ethnicities, ages and socio-economic status, but we're

here to tell you that it also spans all genders and sexual orientations.

According to many government studies and peer-reviewed publications included in your handout, and from the personal stories you've heard today, one in six boys and men have been sexually abused or assaulted. That's almost one million Ontario men. I encourage you to visit the site 1in6.ca for some of the sources on that.

There's also the federal government's own Badgley commission, which in 1984 discovered that 31% of males had been sexually abused; 7% had been abused multiple times.

Sexual assault can and really does happen to anyone, and it's never okay—not when the victims are women; not when the victims are men. I'm very glad that this committee is considering all victims, which breaks the stereotype: male victims, female victims of female-perpetrated violence, and victims of violence in same-sex relationships.

We were, I should say, disappointed to receive correspondence from Premier Wynne, in which the Premier justified her neglect of these innocent victims by stating that "99% of sexual violence or sexual assault is committed by men, male-on-female." We were never given a source for that rather extreme piece of data, which is wildly inconsistent with all the evidence on the subject, but it is being used to sideline over one million victims of both genders and sexual orientations.

This committee is tasked with representing all Ontarians. It is your mandate to protect the safety of all. That can only be done through evidence-based, rather than ideology-fuelled, public policies. That's why I'm so thankful to those brave men and women who presented earlier this afternoon and are here behind me today. These are survivors who are not supposed to exist.

Yes, of course, the story of violence against women needs to be told and it needs to be tackled head-on, but I'd like to share with you some additional stories which also need to be heard, starting with the story represented in this video. Again, I warn you: It may be triggering.

Robert?

Video presentation.

Mr. Justin Trottier: Thank you.

We're going to share a few other stories, which are also shocking. There's the case, for example, of a Barrie, Ontario mom named Elaine Campione. Elaine complained to police that her husband, the father of her children, was violent. As a result of the subsequent arrest of the dad, the girls were left in their mother's care without the protection of their falsely accused father. Elaine Campione subsequently murdered her two girls. She was convicted in 2010.

At trial, Campione freely acknowledged that she killed her children to prevent them from having contact with their father. Chillingly, the judge in the case condemned this innocent father, who had just lost his two children, for causing the death of his girls by mistreating his wife. Some myths, it seems, die hard.

Then we have the outrageous Penn State sexual abuse scandal, where boys were groomed, along with their

parents, to have complete trust in a serial pedophile. We have a multitude of religious institutions involving sex abuse cases, largely against boys, which have been well documented.

We have in this province a long history of government programs, like the residential schools program, which have left children—both girls and boys—in highly vulnerable positions, where they were abused and taken advantage of by predators. In juvenile correctional facilities such as those run in this province, women have power over boys. The current juvenile residential jail system is a place where young boys are routinely sexually assaulted by both male and female supervisors. I would point to a 2012 US Department of Justice study which found that a full 10% of boys in juvenile facilities had experienced sexual assault.

We agree that sexual violence is not about sex, nor about violence per se. It is about power, and in individual situations either a man or a woman can be in a position of power over another. Power and control in various kinds of relationships are relationship issues; they're not reducible to a gender binary. They are more complicated than a simple cleavage along gender lines. When women are in positions of power and authority, such as in those juvenile facilities, and increasingly in the workforce, we see that women are no different than men, and some small percentage will use that power in unethical ways.

As we've said, we agree with the committee's efforts to shift social norms and break barriers that prevent victims from getting help. But when we ignore victims because they fail to conform to our preconceived beliefs of what a victim is supposed to look like, we instead consolidate social norms. We leave victims stigmatized. We leave children in danger. Discounting male victimization because the perpetrator is sometimes of the same gender amounts to victim-blaming.

The initiative here is, #WhoWillYouHelp? The answer must be, "Every innocent victim," so here are some suggestions which we believe will expand protection, reveal all victims and take away nothing from the committee's important work to also strengthen support for female victims:

(1) When research is undertaken to study sexual assault and harassment and domestic violence, do not make assumptions going in as to what you expect to find. When a study begins by eliminating an entire group from consideration, there's not much we can draw from that study's conclusions if they show that there are no male or LGBT victims of violence.

(2) When we break assumptions, we can help boys. Take ChildLine, for example, a UK distress centre. They instituted a proactive program to encourage boys to report sexual abuse, and the rates of boys versus girls reporting skyrocketed. ChildLine's executive director said that "by listening to the direct and authentic voices of abused children," we "shattered common myths about sexual abuse." It does happen to boys.

(3) We must change police reporting procedures. The committee's mandate is to streamline support for all

victims of violence. We agree with that. We have a recommendation that may assist. Because the current guidelines require police to engage in sexist discrimination, I refer you to the Handbook for Police Responding to Domestic Violence, which requires Canadian police to apply a gender lens, which is really just gender profiling. Police are encouraged not to treat female perpetrators as real perpetrators. We believe that children are best served by being protected from either violent parent.

We have men who have contacted our men's health facility, bruised and bleeding. They are still removed from their houses, arrested and thrown in jail as though they are the guilty party. So we recommend that police arrest any individual where evidence shows that person to have been guilty of a crime.

(4) Let's follow the precedent that has been set by more progressive jurisdictions in places like the US, Australia and Europe, behind which Ontario is lagging. There are places which have done what we're encouraging the committee to do, and they have broken down barriers impeding innocent victims from getting help. California, for example, has actually set up domestic violence shelters specifically for men.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Mr. Trottier, you have one minute left.

Mr. Justin Trottier: (5) Ontario hospitals currently ask female patients entering emergency rooms whether they have been victims of sexual assault. We would like to see that extended to all those entering the emergency rooms.

Lastly and most challengingly, we must all work together to change cultural attitudes. We still make male victims the subjects of mockery and humiliation for not living up to the strong stereotype of what a man is supposed to be. We impose institutional sexism through our justice system, and we fail to provide social support and shelters as a last resort.

Education is where it begins, so we fully support changes to our curriculum around consent and violence. But let's not inadvertently reinforce stereotypes by treating men as only perpetrators. People are much more complicated than that, and this requires evidence-based public policies and a commitment to the principles by which this committee is bound: to support all victims, regardless of shape or size; to break all stigmas that impede people from getting the help they need; and to do away with all myths and all ideology that distract us from doing what is right.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much—

Mr. Justin Trottier: By my reckoning, we still have five minutes, and I was going to have my colleague Brad, here, from an allied organization use that time to provide some of his comments.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We will certainly take your comments, and we will reduce our questions. Go right ahead, sir.

Mr. Brad Hutchinson: Thank you, Madam Chair and committee members. My name is Brad Hutchinson. I'm from the Gatehouse in Toronto.

In 1997, Arthur Lockhart, founder of the Gatehouse, filled a room at Humber College with people with his vision. He started off by saying, “I want to create and rebuild a dilapidated, broken-down house on the southeast corner of Kipling and Lakeshore and have a space for child welfare workers and police officers to investigate children who have been survivors of childhood sexual abuse, so that the investigation doesn’t re-traumatize the child.” The crowd cheered.

He said, “Next, I want to have a space for adult women survivors of childhood sexual abuse and run programs so that they can find their voice and become healthy and strong again and tell their stories.”

The questions around that revolved around, “Aren’t there other places for women? And why do you want to do this in this house? Don’t other places have these programs?” He said, “Not like this one.”

His third vision was for adult males surviving childhood sexual abuse to be in the house. The crowd went silent. Then the hostility began: “You can’t do that. You can’t put men in the same house with women and children. Men are perpetrators.” He said, “That’s what I want to do.”

They pulled their funding. Some people in that audience pulled their funding. They said, “You’re not doing this.” He said, “Thank you for sharing,” and he moved on. His tires were slashed, but he continued on.

On June 20, 1998, the Gatehouse opened. Since then, thousands upon thousands of children, youth, men and women have been supported and have transformed their lives because of the peer-to-peer support program that the Gatehouse provides.

In your work that you’re doing—thank you very much for doing what you’re doing. This is very difficult work to do. You guys are stepping into it, and it’s really, really good that you’re doing it. It’s difficult and it’s important. So I want to thank you from the Gatehouse, from all the survivors, from all of the people who will be helped by your efforts as you continue this work.

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I would also like to encourage you to make sure you take self-care. The stories that you will hear may be disturbing and hard for you to do—you have to deal with your self-care and work on your self-care while you’re doing this work. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you kindly. Our first questions are from the NDP.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Thank you for your presentation. Just one thing that jumped out at me was the statement that through the—you referenced the Handbook for Police Responding to Domestic Violence. I see that it was an initiative through the RCMP. You referenced that police were trained not to treat female perpetrators as perpetrators. Could you just elaborate on that? It just doesn’t sound—

Mr. Justin Trottier: Yes. The justification for that is that the police don’t want to remove a child from a mother. They don’t want to separate a mother from a child. Even if you have a woman who is a violent, abus-

ive woman to her husband, she may still be a good parent. She may still be a strong, loving parent. So it is better to leave the child with this mother—this dangerous, violent individual—than to separate her from her mother. It’s specifically the mother and the child that’s referred to. There’s no mention of the father-child bond.

Again, our position is: If there’s a violent criminal act taking place, then it’s important to protect a child from that situation. Maybe my colleagues want to speak to that as well. I can refer you to the document. It is on our website.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: I’ve got it right here. I’m going to read through it.

Mr. Justin Trottier: Okay. Page 8.

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Page 8.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. A question from MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you very much. Just so you’re aware, this committee’s mandate is to hear from a large variety of perspectives, including men. So this committee has not been mandated to look at one thing or another.

I do want to reassure you, too, that there’s a lot of work going on in other ministries right now regarding sexual abuse of children and aboriginal women. There is an increased awareness of PTSD, and work is going on there as well. We’ve learned to look at a variety of perspectives, including all members of society.

For the purposes of this particular committee, I just wanted also to say that this government does fund the Support Services for Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse Program, and it provides specialized services regarding counselling, peer support and referrals to other appropriate community support services.

My question to you, in the one minute that we have, is: How can we, as a society, change behaviour to put a stop to sexual violence and harassment to all Ontarians?

Mr. Justin Trottier: Brad, do you want to take it?

Mr. Brad Hutchinson: Just by doing what you’re doing here. The only way that sexual violence and harassment stays active is through silence, especially with children. Giving children, through the government mandate to get into the schools and the report—giving children language, as you heard from Boost earlier, giving children the tools, the language, the knowledge, is really, really important, and understanding healthy boundaries, building healthy relationships. This needs to be taught in school. This awareness needs to grow. So it’s breaking the silence. It’s really important.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: So you’re very supportive of the sex ed curriculum.

Mr. Brad Hutchinson: Yes.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final comment from our PC members.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you for appearing here today. You certainly brought forward subjects that I didn’t realize that were—especially in education related to police and related to, in your eyes, discrimination. So certainly I think we all appreciate that side being brought

forward, and will look further into the education, especially of the police forces. I think that you made some very interesting points that need to be highlighted.

I don't really have any specific questions. Both the presentations today were very good. Thank you.

Mr. Justin Trotter: Thank you very much. Thank you to all of you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you to all of our presenters, to all of our visitors in our committee room and to our committee members. We will be meeting again, the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment, on Wednesday, April 8. We will see you then. Thank you.

The committee adjourned at 1805.

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