



**Legislative Assembly
of Ontario**

First Session, 41st Parliament

**Assemblée législative
de l'Ontario**

Première session, 41^e législature

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

Wednesday 20 May 2015

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Mercredi 20 mai 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

Hansard on the Internet

Hansard and other documents of the Legislative Assembly can be on your personal computer within hours after each sitting. The address is:

<http://www.ontla.on.ca/>

Index inquiries

Reference to a cumulative index of previous issues may be obtained by calling the Hansard Reporting Service indexing staff at 416-325-7410 or 325-3708.

Le Journal des débats sur Internet

L'adresse pour faire paraître sur votre ordinateur personnel le Journal et d'autres documents de l'Assemblée législative en quelques heures seulement après la séance est :

Renseignements sur l'index

Adressez vos questions portant sur des numéros précédents du Journal des débats au personnel de l'index, qui vous fourniront des références aux pages dans l'index cumulatif, en composant le 416-325-7410 ou le 325-3708.

Hansard Reporting and Interpretation Services
Room 500, West Wing, Legislative Building
111 Wellesley Street West, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Telephone 416-325-7400; fax 416-325-7430
Published by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario



Service du Journal des débats et d'interprétation
Salle 500, aile ouest, Édifice du Parlement
111, rue Wellesley ouest, Queen's Park
Toronto ON M7A 1A2
Téléphone, 416-325-7400; télécopieur, 416-325-7430
Publié par l'Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**SELECT COMMITTEE
ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE
AND HARASSMENT**

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

Wednesday 20 May 2015

Mercredi 20 mai 2015

The committee met at 0800 in the Crowne Plaza Kitchener-Waterloo, Kitchener.

**STRATEGY ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE
AND HARASSMENT**

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Good morning, everyone. The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment will now come to order. I would like to welcome the presenters who are here with us today and any guests who are here along with you.

Let me share with you the mandate of this committee as we start. We are here to listen to your experiences as survivors, front-line workers, advocates and experts on the issue of sexual violence and harassment. You will inform us on how to shift social norms and barriers that are preventing people from coming forward to report abuses. However, I do want to stress that this committee does not have the power or the authority to investigate individual cases. That is better left to the legal authorities.

We welcome you.

UNIFOR

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would ask that our first witnesses come forward, from Unifor.

Committee members, I'd also like to remind you today that we have a full schedule and we have gone to the 20-minute schedule.

Presenters, you will have 15 minutes to speak to our committee, and you will be asked some questions by our committee members. Our questions need to be very concise today. Please start by stating your names and your organization and begin any time.

Ms. Lisa Kelly: Good morning. My name is Lisa Kelly. I'm the director of the women's department for Unifor. I'll talk to you in a minute about who Unifor is.

Mr. Bill Gibson: Good morning. My name is Bill Gibson. I'm the area director with Unifor here in Kitchener-Waterloo.

Ms. Lisa Kelly: Unifor is Canada's largest private sector union. We have 305,000 members from coast to coast to coast. Our members really range in every occupation and every economic sector across Canada. We

come together several times a year in different forums to learn from one another about the issues that are going on.

I'd like to thank the members of the committee for this invitation to come and address this very important issue and lend some of our observations and some of the practices that we've developed within the union that have come from our experiences and the voices of our members.

If I asked each of you to close your eyes and think of a union member, I think that the majority of people would likely have a white male, maybe middle-aged, blue-collar worker in their mind. It might surprise you that a number of years ago, the women in unions in Canada tipped so that they outnumber men in unions in Canada. The unionized workforce is now predominantly women. Part of that has to do with the collapse of the manufacturing sector. In Kitchener-Waterloo, outside of London, we'll all have some experience with that.

We've got many female leaders in our workplaces who have come forward with their experiences that will inform our submission today. I know that you've received our submission. I'll just highlight a few things, and then we're going to try to focus our submission today on something fairly particular, which is the workplaces that we represent that either are open to the public, or are things like health care, where you are dealing with people in a home-like setting, either as home care workers or in long-term care.

You're going to hear from many, many people through your time about the aftermath of sexual assault, sexual violence and sexual harassment. We want to keep trying to bring your focus to prevention, as well.

In workplaces, the employer has a really important role in setting the tone of the workplace and in using the rules that the Legislature has put together in making a respectful workplace and a workplace that's open for men and women equally.

We want to emphasize that around sexual assault, sexual violence and sexual harassment it does skew towards women of colour, women with disabilities, LGBTQ women—I guess I have to skip the G in there. So we are looking at all the ways that the intersections of people's lives increase the potential of them being victims of sexual assault, sexual violence or sexual harassment.

Some of the highlights that we want to bring to you are things like our women's advocate program, our violence-against-women language, our joint investigation and anti-harassment training, as well as our employment equity reps. Before we get there, we want to talk about some of the problems that have been highlighted and that we've experienced within our workplaces.

We were one of the groups that was really active in bringing the Occupational Health and Safety Act amendments to bear—the Bill 168 amendments. We're quite happy that those happened but disappointed in the actual experience, in that they have not made the changes that I think we were all looking for and the changes that were focused by the deaths of Theresa Vince and Lori Dupont. There were inquiries into that. There were recommendations that came out of that and a lot of energy galvanized around changing the Occupational Health and Safety Act. But in reality, we haven't seen a huge difference. We have the Human Rights Code, which prohibits sexual harassment. Now we've got some health and safety language there, but we are still finding that there's a level of harassment and sexual violence in workplaces that is unacceptable.

I'd like to turn it over to Bill Gibson, who oversees health care as well as other workplaces in this area, to give you a little bit of maybe a change of some of the stories that you've been hearing when we talk about working with patients, working with clients and working with the public.

Mr. Bill Gibson: Thank you very much, Lisa, and good morning, committee. I too am very, very happy to be here and thrilled with the government initiative to take up such an important issue here at this particular time. Again, as Lisa has indicated, my assignment—a great deal of it, apart from being a director here in Kitchener—is also the health care assignment. I represent Grand River Hospital and St. Mary's hospital, plus a number of long-term-care and retirement homes.

I particularly want to focus on sexual harassment and violence in the workplace as it relates to health care environments. I want to say this very carefully, because we completely endorse and are completely happy with the fact that the province has developed a residents' bill of rights. We think this is a forward-thinking approach for the protection of seniors who are living in homes other than their home. But what it does is it creates a perception of power.

I can just relate to you a short story about a particular workplace where we had a president of a residents' council who, over the years, had continually assaulted young PSWs—personal support workers—in the workplace by fondling, inappropriate comments, patting—a number of the things that in the public realm would be reprehensible. Yet the perception of power—and his articulation to these younger workers was that he had a great deal of power in the home, that he had a great deal of property, for lack of a better term—created an environment with the workers that allowed this to go on for a great period of time, out of fear.

So where I want to go from there is the joint investigation piece that we would like to put forward here. Bill 168 was a tremendous piece of legislation, but there are a number of holes in it. When we get situations like this, it's imperative that both parties have a joint investigation. I'll tell you why: Quite simply, when there is a one-sided investigation paid for by the employer, it lends itself to bias. Now, we could challenge that bias in front of an arbitrator, but that often is a long, drawn-out procedure that sometimes takes years to have adjudicated, and all the while that worker is in limbo. So that is one piece of this legislation that we would really like to see beefed up in terms of mandatory participation on joint investigation where there is a union present in the workplace.

0810

The other issue, too, is with respect to education. There has got to be more—whether it's enforced or whether it's mandated, whatever the venue is—joint training on how to spot these types of issues. Because, again, it's a control issue for an employer, from our perspective. They don't want to let the public know that these issues could even arise in a workplace. Part of the reason for that rationale is, really, an attempt to sell their business. That's what it comes down to, especially with for-profit operators. We believe that there are a good number of well-meaning, well-intentioned for-profit operators out there, but it does lend itself to making sure that the bottom line is protected. In terms of a young worker in a workplace who could carry the scar around with them for a great deal of time, it's just something that's not appropriate.

We in our union have seen over the years the deaths of two health care workers because of intimate partner violence. Again, when you see a perception of power out there with respect to somebody, for instance, a physician, who has free rein of the workplace and there's no actual ability to track what this particular individual is doing—there are a lot of holes and a lot of opportunities for the predator-type behaviour you may see in those types of situations.

We're thrilled that we're here today discussing this important issue. We represent over 22,000 health care workers in Ontario; the predominant total of those are women. Again, this is something that they cry out in silence for some assistance with, and we thank you for being here today with this.

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

Ms. Lisa Kelly: I just want to then pick up on that to talk about some of the other elements that are particular to health care and particular to the women who are working there: that is, working with patients who have dementia, working with others who might otherwise be excused from their behaviour in terms of not having the cognitive ability or recognition of what they're doing. That doesn't change the experience for the health care worker. If you're being grabbed or fondled or propositioned, it may be that that person doesn't know what they're doing or doesn't really intend to do what they're

doing, but your experience coming to work every day and thinking that that's going to go on is still something that's got quite a big impact.

We have one example that we've put in our brief where the person did have a history of sexual violence in their life—they were a survivor of sexual violence—and this actually triggered them. It was not being dealt with by the employer, and they wound up having to leave their employment to go on stress leave. That is something that is particularly, again—and the whole range of things that you're dealing with, which are quite complicated—difficult for health care workers working with those with dementia.

The other thing that Mr. Gibson mentioned that I think is important is looking at vulnerable workers. Within health care we have a lot of young women who work. Age isn't necessarily a signal of whether or not you're vulnerable, but it does often speak to how much security you have in your employment. So I want you to keep in mind, when you're listening to people's stories and thinking about this issue—that you're also thinking about, “What are the things that we're doing in society to strengthen or weaken people's ability to resist and to speak out about what's going on?” And I would put right on the table things like temporary foreign workers, precarious work and other things like that. If you are already feeling vulnerable around your income security, you're unlikely then to name that something is going on if you don't feel that it's going to be investigated, treated seriously and taken on.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You have one minute remaining in your presentation.

Ms. Lisa Kelly: Okay. In terms of some of our examples, the Women's Advocate Program started in 1993. I think you've heard a little bit about it. We have 329 of them now across Canada. They've made a tremendous difference in women being able to seek out other women in the workplace for help. We've negotiated violence-against-women language, where if you are trying to escape domestic violence or intimate partner violence, you will have your job protected while you are seeking shelter. The joint investigation and anti-harassment training, you've heard a little bit about, and we've negotiated employment equity representatives in many of our workplaces that have assisted in the very serious issues of sexual harassment and sexual violence.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. We're going to give you some questions now. Our first questions for you are from our PC caucus, from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much for appearing here today. You made some good suggestions. I have a short period of time, so I'm going to be kind of direct; I apologize for that.

You brought up the long-term-care sector. In Peterborough, we had the issue of Camille Parent. It's quite out there in the news; it was on W5. His mother was abused. He had hidden cameras; he captured it. I know Camille personally. The workers were initially fired. They are unionized. I'm not going to tell you the union,

because I just can't remember off the top of my head; you might know it. His frustration is that they are back at work.

Now, the incident occurred at St. Joseph's at Fleming. I just want a comment about—it was on video; it was captured. In my opinion, those workers that abused his mother should not be back in the workplace, any workplace. I don't know if you know that issue, and I'm sorry I have a short time and I'm very blunt, but there you are.

Mr. Bill Gibson: Thank you for your question. I am familiar with the incident. What we're about is due process. Quite clearly, once a grievance is filed, it becomes property of the union. The union is required under the Labour Relations Act to do its due diligence in terms of investigating and not being arbitrary, discriminatory, or acting in bad faith.

I can't speak to the specifics of the investigation here because I'm not privy to them, but if there is overwhelming evidence that there was a violation, the union is well within its rights to act accordingly and not pursue the grievance. But the union's duty of fair representation is, first of all, to file that grievance and to make sure that all the relevant facts are out, open.

Quite clearly, we do not condone any abuse in a workplace. We cannot speak out of both sides of our mouth that way.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from our NDP caucus. MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you so much for coming and your presentation here this morning.

Last week at Queen's Park, we had a presentation from some lawyers who talked about the distinction made in the Occupational Health and Safety Act between sexual harassment and violence and the challenges that this creates because it separates those two issues. I wondered if you could talk a little bit about your experience. Has this been an issue for you in terms of pursuing issues of sexual harassment in the workplace?

Ms. Lisa Kelly: Again, I think we need to keep in mind the continuum that happens around sexual harassment and sexual violence. Within sexual harassment, I also would say that the Human Rights Commission and Human Rights Tribunal have recognized gendered harassment—that we often just think of it as being sexual in nature, but it is that gender continuum of thinking of feminine characteristics as being less, as being not worthy, that there's a power over people who are feminine or female.

So I would say that there is attention paid to violence, and not as much in terms of harassment under health and safety. Our main experience is that, without a real threat of an inspector coming to do anything, it's paper. Employers have quickly learned that they don't really need to pay attention to it. It hasn't been a great tool. It hasn't fulfilled its promise, for certain.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final question for you is from MPP Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you very much for being here. I'm going to go to the question myself. So what are some of the best practices that you would like to bring forward to see adopted?

Ms. Lisa Kelly: Certainly, again, we've put in our brief some language that could be put in around the Occupational Health and Safety Act to make sure that the inspectors have the power, the funding and the training to enforce that. Ideally, in the long term, we would like to have a joint investigation process written into the health and safety act, and a women's advocate. I know that that's beyond what the proposals are right now, but we are very heartened at the breadth of the approach of the action plan, the fact that it's starting with consent curriculum right up to workplace and survivor support. So if we're focusing just on workplace, those would be the three: Strengthen Bill 168; put in a joint investigation process that involves the union or, if not, worker representatives; and have a women's advocate in each workplace in Ontario.

0820

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Kelly and Mr. Gibson, thank you both very much for coming and informing our committee today. We invite you, if you wish, to join our audience now.

SEXUAL ASSAULT SUPPORT CENTRE OF WATERLOO REGION

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenter: Sara Casselman, with the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region. Come forward, please. Good morning, Sara. It's very nice to see you. Please have a seat and make yourself comfortable. You will have 15 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed by questions. Begin anytime, and start by stating your name.

Ms. Sara Casselman: Good morning. My name is Sara Casselman. I am the public relations and operations manager at the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region. Thank you so much for inviting me to speak this morning. I've been looking forward to this opportunity to share and then also just to hear from others in our community and surrounding communities on this issue. I'm also really delighted to see so much representation from Waterloo region here: obviously, Daiene, and also Catherine and Kathryn. Good morning.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Don't forget Mike. There's Mike.

Ms. Sara Casselman: Oh, I'm so sorry. Wow. Everyone is here. I wasn't expecting so much representation, but I'm very happy to actually see so many.

I just want to talk a little bit about our centre. We've been a key resource for survivors of sexual violence in Waterloo region for 26 years. Since 1990, our core funding has come from the province of Ontario. We offer free, confidential services to people and their families who have experienced sexual violence. We provide individual and group counselling, a 24-hour support line,

and assistance navigating court, police and medical processes. We're also committed to preventing sexual violence through public education and social justice work.

Our centre is a member of the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres, also known as the OCRCC. I know that as members of the select committee, you're travelling across Ontario and you've heard and will hear from many of our sister organizations, as well as those directly representing the OCRCC.

In preparing for today, I really wanted to think about what I could share that you won't have heard. I hope that you do gain something new, but more importantly, I hope to reinforce the messages that our sister centres are sharing across the province, because their voices are really valuable.

I can't stress this enough: The expertise of survivors themselves, such as Dianne, who's scheduled to speak next, and those working in community-based sexual assault support centres across the province, many who will speak later today, should be at the heart of the province's plan. We are on the ground dealing with this issue every day.

Further to this, the voices of women from marginalized communities, such as indigenous women, disabled women, immigrant and refugee women, lesbian, bisexual and trans women, need to be prominent in these discussions about sexual violence. While sexual violence knows no cultural or social bounds, we know that marginalized women are often victimized at much higher levels. For instance, we know that indigenous women are five times more likely than other Canadian women to be killed as a result of violence. Given this, they need to lead strategies to address sexual and gender-based violence against them.

Sexual assault centres work with survivors in all their diversity. We know that, on average, only 10% of survivors report to police. This means that 90% of survivors do not engage our criminal justice system. We serve the 10% and the 90%. We serve those who were assaulted in adulthood as well as those who experienced child sexual abuse. Today I want to amplify the voices of those survivors.

This year, we all know that sexual violence has been in our nation's and our province's consciousness like never before with Ghomeshi and Cosby and many other high-profile cases making the news. The prevalence of and response to sexual assault on our college and university campuses has been highlighted in the media. A few weeks ago, a scathing report on the Canadian Armed Forces and a culture of sexual violence was released. And again, just this past week, the issue of female reporters facing sexual harassment in our communities has made international headlines. I believe this is a crucial time for the anti-sexual violence sector. Although the problem is not new, people are listening now. It's time we address this issue, and it's time for change.

On March 6, when the province laid out its plan to move forward with the new Sexual Violence Action Plan, I was impressed by the bold stance our government took

on this issue. As someone who has been working in this sector for 13 years, I was shocked and amazed when I heard our Premier speak of rape culture, misogyny, power and control being at the root of sexual violence.

I won't spend too much time framing the issue as systemic and pervasive and rooted in constructions of dominant masculinity, because I believe it has been established, and I know there are going to be many who are addressing this today. What I'd like to share in the time that I have are just a few key points, some of which I can expand on and some of which I can't due to time constraints.

The first point I just want to speak really briefly on is our criminal justice system. As I've already said, less than 10% of survivors access this system, for a variety of reasons. Of every 33 sexual assaults reported to police, only three result in a conviction. Again, I know Dianne, who's speaking next, will be addressing this issue as well.

Obviously, our criminal justice system needs work. We need to look at attrition rates and discover at what point cases fall off the system. We need to look at cases labelled "unfounded" by the police—and if you're not familiar with the term, that's basically classing something as "a crime has not taken place."

In your travels, you may hear about a model developed in Philadelphia to annually review all sexual assault cases labelled unfounded. I'm not an expert on this model, but I do know it has been supported by Human Rights Watch and it is worth looking into. It's likely that the executive director of the Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre will speak to this model in depth when you're in her community.

We need to develop enhanced prosecution models to improve the experiences of survivors, including having specialized training for crown attorneys. And, yes, we need to provide free independent legal advice to sexual assault survivors. I understand that the plan with the new Sexual Violence Action Plan is to have a pilot project of this. I'd also like to offer that many other survivors need legal advice as well, as only a minority of cases proceed to trial.

All that said, I challenge you to consider how our resources are allocated, given that 90% of survivors are not accessing this system. What services are most needed in our communities?

That brings me to my second point: Education and public discussion on sexual violence is critical. It supports prevention.

Before I address that, I just want to say that we certainly support the new sexual education curriculum and discussions around consent, online sexual violence, and healthy versus unhealthy relationships.

More broadly, education on sexual violence, including information on myths, misconceptions and attitudes informed by misogyny, goes a long way towards prevention. Public education promotes a focus on prevention of sexual assault, as opposed to catching and imprisoning offenders. The goal is to see less victimization in the future, not to build bigger prisons.

Public education contributes to creating a climate where survivors are actually safe to disclose their experiences without being shamed, blamed and doubted. Unfortunately, if Cosby and Ghomeshi taught us anything, it's that myths around sexual violence are alive and well. We've heard over and over this year—one case in particular—that women regularly lie about being assaulted. There's a misconception out there that false allegations of sexual assault are a common problem. In fact, they make up about 2% to 4% of reports, no different than any other crime. It's far, far more likely that a woman would never disclose or report her experience than it is that she would lie about it.

Sexual assault centres across the province provide public education in their communities and have incredible expertise in this area. We encourage the province to continue making funding for these programs a priority and to enhance centres' capacity to reach more of their communities.

I just want to take a moment to highlight a unique program we have in our public education department here in Waterloo region. You should have the brochure in front of you. It's called Male Allies Against Sexual Violence, or MAASV for short. In 2008, we were the first sexual assault centre in our province to develop a program to engage men as allies in the work to end sexual violence against women and children. Some other centres are now in the midst of developing similar programs in their own communities and searching out funds for this work. At 9 a.m., you're going to hear from Judah, who is one of our volunteers in this program, so I won't go into it too much right now other than highlighting it as innovative and an important component of the work that we do.

0830

My third point is around funding Ontario's sexual assault centres and other support services adequately, so we can better respond to sexual violence in our communities. I'd like to preface this point by sharing our appreciation to the province for the funding that has been provided to sexual assault centres. I believe we can hold that appreciation while also laying out the needs of centres. Simply put, funding for services has not kept up to meet the growth of population or inflation for many years, and we're seeing the impact of that.

I'd like to use our community as an example. With a population of 570,000, Waterloo region has been one of the fastest-growing urban areas in the province for many years. We're also incredibly diverse, with one in four of our residents being born outside of Canada. Last year, I crunched some numbers to better explain the funding shortfalls we're facing. Using the Bank of Canada's inflation calculator and considering our community's growth, I calculated that we're now operating with 60% of the per capita funding that we did 20 years ago.

Because of this, waiting lists for our services have crept up in recent years, and as of yesterday, in our community there were 29 women and two men waiting for counselling. A few years ago, that number reached an

all-time high of 45 survivors waiting. In response, we poured our fundraising and donation revenue into our counselling programs, and we've launched a concerted effort to find additional core funders. A number of other centres in our province are in similar positions.

I asked one of my colleagues, Tamara—she's a counsellor in our counselling department—what she wanted to communicate today. She said that in a time of searching for efficiencies and models of standardization, she's worried that she'll eventually see a model where survivors are only offered, say, 12 counselling sessions and then they're sent on their way. I'm worried about that, too.

Right now, our funding allows flexibility to meet the individual needs of survivors. Many only receive 12 sessions of counselling, but others, including those who have been impacted by multiple assaults over many years—many survivors of childhood sexual abuse—may need longer-term support. This kind of support can be life-changing, and it's sometimes the difference between life and death. The fact that we can offer this is one of the most valued aspects of the work that we do, and many survivors would be in a very different place in our communities if they didn't have access to this kind of support. Again, I know that Dianne will be speaking to this when she speaks next.

Just a few final points: In order to really address sexual violence, we need to shift the conversation away from reporting issues alone. The focus should not be on encouraging women to report; it should be on creating communities where they're actually safe to do so—safe because public attitudes have shifted and they're not shamed, blamed and doubted when they disclose their experiences; safe because they have access to timely expertise and support in their community; and safe because they won't be revictimized by the systems we have set in place. These are the kinds of changes that will help survivors who do not engage in formal reporting structures, as well as those who do.

I wish there was one thing I could sit here and tell you we need to do to actually make change on this issue, but the solution needs to be multi-pronged. I do believe, from reading the Sexual Violence Action Plan, that the province actually understands that this is not a simple issue and that we need to come at it from many different ways.

If history tells us anything, it's that systemic change and cultural shifts on human rights issues are entirely possible.

Thank you for your commitment to consultation with stakeholders today, and we look forward to continuing to work with you throughout this process.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much, Sara. The first question for you is from our NDP caucus, from MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you, Sara. First, I want to commend you on the male allies program. It has gotten provincial attention for good reason, because it is a model to go forward on.

I do appreciate you raising the issue around funding, because obviously you need the resources to help the people. You referenced specifically a needs-based funding model, for instance, because there's no cookie-cutter model of funding based on the needs of clients. Is there a jurisdiction that actually has put what you would regard as a progressive funding model in place, so that this committee could look at that?

Ms. Sara Casselman: A jurisdiction like another province or a state?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Or a state, yes.

Ms. Sara Casselman: I'm not aware. I do know that in Ontario we actually have more services than some of the provinces across Canada, but the need is so much greater and our population is so great in our community. I'm sorry I don't have an answer.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Okay. I'm not looking for a dollar figure either—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'm sorry. I'm going to have to move on to the next question.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thanks a lot, Sara.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from our Liberal caucus, from MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you, Sara, for coming. It's great to see you again. You've done some great work over the years.

One question I have is, what do you think is the root cause or one of the root causes or some of the root causes of sexual violence and harassment in our community?

Ms. Sara Casselman: Sexual violence, for the most part, is around power and control. You know, you hear about someone losing control and assaulting someone, but in fact sexual violence is a means of control. So a lot of it—often, it's a gender issue in terms of men and the issue of masculinity and how they look at femininity and the need to have power and control.

So when we're doing prevention programs like our Male Allies Against Sexual Violence program, it's a really positive program that actually encourages men to adopt different kinds of—to look at diverse emotions and to not need to look at men in terms of being in a position of power and control over women. But that's certainly the root. Anything that we do to actually improve women's position in our society has the impact of reducing sexual violence.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final question for you is from MPP Harris.

Mr. Michael Harris: Thanks, Sara. You mentioned that 90% of women don't access services because of lengthy court delays as one of the points, perhaps. We've got a mega courthouse here in the region of Waterloo. You probably speak with—

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Oh, come on.

Mr. Michael Harris: Eleanor, please let me get the question out before you make judgement. When talking with your colleagues across the province, are we doing things better here because of the new courthouse, in the way we handle victims and support services that could be

replicated across the province, perhaps? I'm not sure you can speak to that.

Ms. Sara Casselman: Yes. I would just say that 90% of survivors don't come forward, but it's not necessarily because of long wait times in courthouses.

Mr. Michael Harris: It could be a factor, though.

Ms. Sara Casselman: It could be, but I would say that's not up there in the top factors. A lot of it has to do with whether they feel they're going to be believed; whether or not they're living in fear of the person; whether or not they've had negative experiences with our criminal justice; whether or not they feel their families are going to support them; and whether or not they want all the information about their personal lives out there for the public knowledge.

I do think we have a number of amazing resources in our community that are connected with the courthouse. I co-chair the Sexual Assault Response Team of Waterloo Region, which is made up of 20 community partners. We sit together at the table and work on these issues. But I don't think the courthouse in any way really impacts whether survivors are coming forward.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Sara Casselman, thank you very much for your information today, and thank you for all the work that you do in this committee—or rather in this community and this committee.

MS. DIANNE PILUK

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'd like to now call on our next presenter, Dianne Piluk, to come forward. Good morning.

Ms. Dianne Piluk: Good morning.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Please have a seat. Make yourself comfortable. Pour yourself a glass of water, if you'd like.

Ms. Dianne Piluk: Thank you. I came prepared.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And you've got your tissues. Wow, you're all set. Dianne, you're going to have 15 minutes to speak to our committee. Then we will ask you some questions. Please start, for the record, by stating your name. Begin any time.

Ms. Dianne Piluk: Good morning. My name is Dianne Piluk. Thank you for giving me this time to speak. I'm not a professional speaker; however I have something to say worth hearing. I'm a survivor of childhood sexual abuse, sexual assault. I was abused by a family member who was not from my father's side of the family.

When I initially reported the abuse I was a minor. I was blamed for what had happened to me. I received no treatment or compassion. I grew up thinking I was a bad kid. I felt like I was put on earth to be sexually abused. No one cared for me.

As I grew into adulthood, my issues surrounding the abuse were surfacing faster than I could stuff them back down. The first time I asked for help I was 18. I set up counseling. I was not allowed to choose the gender of the counselor. I was scared but knew I needed help. I ended

up with a male counselor here in Kitchener. He hit on me in our first session. He put his hands on me. That confirmed it for me: There was something terribly wrong with me. I was clearly doing something wrong. I was unhelpable and not worthy of help.

0840

Without proper help, I became a dependant in various ways on our social system. I was relentlessly bullied as a child. I had a baby at 18. I had a physically abusive relationship that I fled from. I stayed in a shelter for a short time. I collected social assistance. When I found work, it was minimum wage, and I lived in housing. I saw doctors repeatedly for depression, never quite getting the exact help I needed. Had I received help for sexual abuse, sexual assault when I disclosed, I would not have been the draw that I was on our social system.

After 12 years of suffering and stomping and shoving down my emotional pain over the abuse, I met a man worth having a relationship with. In this relationship, I felt safe and secure for the very first time in my life. Now in my thirties, I felt safe enough to test the waters and seek some kind of resolution: justice for that little girl in me.

I spoke to police. I gave a three-hour statement. I was treated and spoken to kindly and felt believed. I was really surprised to be believed. I was told that the accused would be charged with numerous offences. He was arrested and held in jail. Once in custody, he had a stroke.

Due to the effects of the stroke and the outright refusal to seek treatment, several competency hearings were held. Each hearing focused on the well-being of the accused; never was my well-being ever taken into consideration. The case abruptly ended when the accused was found mentally unfit to stand trial.

Seeking help and yet again not getting it sent me into a terrible depression. With all my emotions spewed out, I was a mess. I just didn't have the energy to stuff them down again.

During my court case, I was caring for two little ones and soon had a fourth. I never left my kids with a babysitter. I could not take a chance that they, too, would be hurt the way I was. I cared for them.

I spoke to a woman from Healthy Babies. I shared with her my lack of trust, and she suggested I connect with the Sexual Assault Support Centre, an organization that saved me, saved my life. It cared for me in a way I had never experienced. Even though I felt cared for, it took a long time for me to develop a deep enough trust to get me to where I am today. I was abused at preschool age until I was kicked out of the house as a teen when I reported the abuse and was not believed about the abuse.

The Sexual Assault Support Centre never put a time limit on my healing. I was encouraged to disclose as much or as little as I wanted. While helping me build my self-esteem and develop healthy boundaries, I was finally in control of myself, thus enabling me to finally accept care and help, and finally begin a healing journey.

Once my healing began, I felt enough strength in myself to finally tell my counsellor, family, doctor and husband that I in fact had been sexually abused, sexually

assaulted by two separate offenders. I had, in all my years, never once spoken of the first abuse, as I was so young and had believed I was to blame. With almost no one believing I was abused by one person, certainly no one would believe that it had happened by two people.

Again, I reported to police. I met with two SASC volunteers, where they were required to give their personal info to the police. The volunteers were there for support before and after my appointment. This time I felt much more scrutinized. I did not feel like I was believed. I felt the detective was new to this field and may have lacked experience. I was asked at the beginning of questioning to tell the truth. I internalized this as a feeling of not being believed and supported. While this was not the case, I definitely needed some compassion at that time.

So at this time I ask this group to say “penis.” That’s my thoughts exactly. If this room of people does not want to say “penis” for no reason, then why would I? Why would anyone? Of course, I was at the police station to tell the truth. After some time—months—several charges were laid against this man. It took a year for the case to get to trial, a year where I put my life on hold. I was always looking over my shoulder, as I had already experienced retaliation from my family before. I was extremely nervous, and required medication to reduce my anxiety.

When the trial date finally arrived, the trial was switched, without my input, from a trial to a pretrial. This triggered an anxiety uproar for me. I was not in control. I had no input. While in court, the judge decided to break for lunch. The defence lawyer asked the judge if he could ask me just one question, and she agreed. The lawyer yelled at me—ah, yes, one of his many tactics to shake me of my truth. The judge found enough evidence to proceed with a trial, yet another year of my life being put on hold.

For four days following the pretrial, my house, where my kids live, was under surveillance. I tried to ignore the odd movements of the person inside the car. When my kids expressed their discomfort, I called the police. Coincidentally, the car recklessly drove off, blowing the stop sign on my street, once police had been dispatched.

I continued to fear for my life, and feared retaliation from my family. Because of the surveillance and the defence lawyer yelling at me, I asked Victim/Witness about getting a lawyer. I was told that even if I could afford a lawyer, the lawyer could not interfere. They could do nothing for me.

Again, I felt out of control. I did not want to be on the stand and yelled at again. It was abuse, and it re-victimized me all over again. I was so upset over the abusive manner in which I was treated in our archaic court system—notice how I didn’t call it a justice system. I was so upset, I wanted to back out.

I researched what would happen if I did not show up to court, and quickly realized I was not actually a person in the archaic eyes of the court; I was just a witness. If I as a witness do not show up for court, I could be charged with contempt of court. The person—me, the victim in

this violent sex crime—was actually taken or removed from the crime, removed from the process. I was again not real, not a person. I didn’t count.

I expressed my concerns by contacting the Ombudsman from the Ontario government and my counsellor. My counsellor’s response was assuring me she would be present in the courtroom. At the urging of the Ombudsman and my counsellor, I spoke with both Victim/Witness and the crown. That meeting did not go well. To my surprise, I was told that if my counsellor showed up to court, she would be asked to leave. The reason given was perception: How can this be good for me? My husband could not be in court at all times as he cared for our kids, so I could focus on what I had to do. I was left with literally no one on my side. I would have to attend court alone—alone while the accused was surrounded by a dozen of our family members staring at me, glancing, whispering, snickering and, yes, even threatening me in the courtroom.

To make matters worse, the defence lawyer was very well-versed in intimidating witnesses/victims: throwing his weight back in his chair, making crashing noises, sucking his teeth, sighing loudly, clearing his throat, clicking his pen, shaking his papers. When I complained, one court-associated person described him as “animated.” As described by me: a bully.

I managed, through resourcefulness, to get supports in place. I was surprised at how quick my testimony was, compared to pretrial. On the day of the verdict, I was optimistic. When the judge presented his findings, he said he found me to be truthful. The judge acquitted the person who sexually assaulted me on all charges. I was in a daze, in complete shock. The judge believed me, but acquitted this monster of all charges. It made no sense.

In my daze, I looked around the room to see a different staff member of the Sexual Assault Support Centre tear up. For the first time, I felt worthy of compassion, worthy of mourning what had happened to me and mourning all that I lost and continue to lose—that yet again, I would not receive justice. I felt like I was and had been fighting a losing battle, that things would always be as they had been.

0850

What does one do with all their pain? I’m going to take this terrible, awful pain, and I’m going to talk about it until I’m heard. I want to make sure I do everything I can to make it easier for the next person who reports sexual violence. I want to make sure this person is responded to appropriately.

I must stress that the current court system, which I call archaic, is deeply flawed for victims of sexual violence. My first example is—and we hear it all the time—when we hear of sexual violence against women, we hear, “Let the courts decide.” It in fact means the accused is innocent until proven guilty and the victim is lying until proven truthful—he was innocent, and I was lying. “The accused is innocent until proven guilty” means the victim is lying until proven truthful.

Then what happened? What failed in my case? The judge found me to be truthful. Why was the accused not

found guilty? Both cannot be truthful in this accusation. I accused him of sexually assaulting me, and the judge found me to be truthful, and yet he shall never be held responsible for what he did to me. Only I am left to deal with what he has done to me—only me. I'm responsible.

Our court system is not designed to deal with truth. Our courts are clearly not concerned with truth; otherwise, defence lawyers would not be allowed to coach the accused. You don't need coaching if you tell the truth. The accused was clearly coached, repeating the same canned answers. Truth and justice are not concerns of the court.

Women don't come forward with their abuse experience because my experience is the norm. If the protection of a lawyer for all victims of sexual violence is in place, then in court I would not have been yelled at. Intimidation antics would have been halted. My support would not have been removed from court. This case would have focused on me and what I experienced. If I had a lawyer, my house would not have been under surveillance. The defence could focus on the case and not my sexual history and the victim compensation board—which I have not applied for.

In closing arguments, the crown called me a pensive, combative witness. I was offended by this description. This is the crown, supposed to be on my side. I was so offended that I felt the need to look up these words, to make sure I understood what he meant. What I saw in my head when I was called pensive and combative was a sad yet angry Tinker Bell punching people. While the crown claimed this name was not designed to hurt me, it did. I feel the need to say I did not punch anyone during this case. I wonder if a man would have been called combative for standing up for himself.

Because the defence lawyer focused so much of his thoughts on how my only reason for coming to court would be for my own financial gain, I must tell you what I lost. I lost everything that I should have been, could have been, would have been. I must tell you that I lost my entire childhood, my innocence, my right to be safe, to feel happy and loved, to have a life as a teen, young adult and adult free from the effects of sexual abuse and sexual assault. Each time I had court, my husband missed time from work. We are still, to this day, trying to catch up for the loss of pay.

No victim of sexual violence should ever have to absorb any costs to attend court. Lawyers should be provided for the protection of all victims of sexual abuse and sexual assault at no cost to them.

I needed to remain a person during trial. Sexual history is still being brought up in court, even though this is not allowed. This must be stopped.

The crown is too concerned with doing all things proper, allowing abusive questioning to continue. Defence is not at all concerned and will do what they feel they can get away with.

There is no balance in court. A limit on supporters for the accused in court needs to be put in place. Supporters who partake in staring, noises and threats should be removed and not allowed back into the courtroom. Court

needs to stop allowing antics. I deserved to testify in a safe place.

Police need to question victims less like an interrogation. Professionals, like judges, police, doctors, court staff and politicians, need to seek more education on the effects of trauma. Education shows a willingness to learn for change, not bias.

The persons who abused me didn't limit how many times they abused me. After care should not be limited in these cases. Specific counselling should be accessible and free of charge. How can counselling sessions be limited when the side effects of sexual assault are this large? Depression, anxiety, panic, shyness, social isolation, stomach issues, sexual dysfunction, agoraphobia, cutting, drinking, drugging, emotional eating, bingeing, purging, starving, inactivity, unexplained full-body pain, relationship issues, poor sleep, insomnia, confusion, dissociation, poor boundaries, poor self-esteem, low education, low earnings—these are just some of the side effects.

Lastly, there is a case recently before the courts in Ontario, actually rather close to home, where a worker was physically assaulted on the job by a non-worker. Co-workers attended court with clothing identifying themselves as a co-worker, as they were sending a message to the judge. No one was warned about perception. These supporters—and there were many—were not removed from the court. I suggest to you that sexual assault victims and domestic violence victims are being discriminated against by our courts. Thank you very much for your time.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Piluk, thank you very much for sharing your experiences with us. I want you to know that this committee is listening to you.

Committee members, in the interest of hearing Dianne's full story, we've gone a little over time. We have three minutes remaining. Perhaps some very brief comments, if not questions, starting with MPP McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Thank you for coming.

Ms. Dianne Piluk: Thank you for having me.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I applaud you for your courage. We all do. I'm sorry you didn't feel believed. I'm sorry you didn't feel helped, and we're here to try and fix that.

Ms. Dianne Piluk: Me too.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I know, and thank you for that. Everyone here thanks you.

Can you, in addition to what you already said which has been so helpful, add anything else to what would have made your obviously very difficult and traumatic experience easier for you?

Ms. Dianne Piluk: It would have been a lot easier for me had all the grown-ups, when I reported the abuse, been held accountable for not getting me help. There were more than 20 adults who knew what had happened. I continued to tell relatives, family members, friends of family, my friends' parents. I think that grown-ups need to be accountable for what they hear. If you've heard someone is affected by abuse, you have to remove your-

self from it and how it will affect you, and you need to report it and be held responsible if you don't.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I just want to thank you for your bravery in coming here this morning. These are the stories we want to hear because we do have to fix the system.

You were eventually helped by the local sexual assault centre?

Ms. Dianne Piluk: Yes, Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Who spoke before.

Ms. Dianne Piluk: Yes.

Ms. Laurie Scott: So I thank them for listening to you and for helping you.

When you went through the judicial system, and I don't know how long ago that was, were they able to make the report that you were not treated fairly? Did someone report to the hierarchy of the justice system that you were not treated fairly?

Ms. Dianne Piluk: The court case that I just attended ended in October. Are you asking specifically about my support being removed from court?

Ms. Laurie Scott: Yes.

Ms. Dianne Piluk: I've not dealt with that yet. I'm not letting it go, even though it was months ago. I'm gaining strength. It was just a few months ago for me. It needs to be dealt with, though. It's extremely important that this doesn't happen to someone else who isn't strong enough to get a second support in.

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

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our final question for you is from MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you, Dianne. Today you said, "I'm going to talk about all this awful pain until I'm heard," so I want to let you know that you were heard, I'm sure, by everyone, including the audience.

I just want to leave you with one message. The most powerful thing for us, I think, is listening to your experience through the court system. You said that for you the court system was not a justice system. I just want to let you know that, going forward, we're going to try to address that. Thank you very much for your courage today.

Ms. Dianne Piluk: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Dianne, thanks again for coming and sharing your experiences with this committee. We invite you now, if you wish, to join our audience.

MR. JUDAH OUDSHOORN

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will now call on our next presenter, Judah Oudshoorn, to come forward. Good morning, Judah.

Mr. Judah Oudshoorn: Good morning.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Make yourself comfortable. Pour yourself a glass of water, if you like.

You're going to have 15 minutes to address our committee and then we're going to ask you some questions. Start by stating your name and any titles you want to give us, and begin anytime.

0900

Mr. Judah Oudshoorn: Good morning. My name is Judah Oudshoorn. Honourable Chair Daiene Vernile and honourable committee members, thank you for the opportunity to present to you this morning. It's actually especially an honour to speak after Sara and Dianne, two people I have a tremendous amount of respect for and who give me a lot of hope that meaningful change is possible.

Although my expertise on the topic of sexual violence has a professional foundation—I am a professor in community and criminal justice; I've worked for many years with survivors of sexual abuse, both male and female; I've worked with people who have offended sexually; I've worked as a restorative justice mediator, facilitating dialogue between victims and offenders in cases of sexual abuse—today I represent myself. I identify as male; you will see why that's important a little later on. I also identify as someone who grew up in family violence, a victim of child abuse. Today, I also speak as a volunteer with the Male Allies Against Sexual Violence program of the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region.

I have three recommendations to make to you today. I'll list them now and then go into further detail on each one.

My first recommendation is that the Ontario government should acknowledge that sexual violence is a form of gender-based violence; that the problem, the root cause, is largely male violence.

My second recommendation is that the Ontario government should focus efforts on prevention by engaging men and boys in ending sexual violence.

My third recommendation is that the Ontario government should provide new sustainable funding to local sexual assault support centres to do the work of prevention, of engaging men and boys.

I know your mandate goes beyond prevention. Indeed, we do need to improve our responses in the aftermath of sexual violence, as we've just heard from Dianne. We need better funding supports for survivors and we need to make our legal system less an instrument of harm and more one of justice and healing.

We know that one in three women and one in six men will experience some form of sexual violence in their lifetime. At some point, we have to go downstream and do more work to stop sexual violence from happening in the first place. Prevention, for me, is a hopeful topic. We know the scope of the problem: It's an epidemic. We know the primary source of sexual violence: It's mostly men.

We have some evidence-based ways to fix it. We know that if we engage men and boys, we can change the culture that promotes unhealthy, violent versions of masculinity. Prevention is a hopeful topic, but I've often thought that there's no political will to actually take

meaningful steps to prevent sexual violence. We live in an age where the politics of fear reign. We are led to believe that we can incarcerate our way out of crime; that we can punish our way to safer communities. We can't.

A tough-on-crime approach is wrong-headed, but I've also been wrong-headed. I've made a gross assumption that political leaders don't care about prevention, yet you, this committee, are here today as leaders in our province with a mandate to consider the prevention of sexual violence. Together, let's get tough on root causes. In the Waterloo region, we call this "getting smart on crime."

Recommendation number 1: The Ontario government should acknowledge that sexual violence is a form of gender-based violence; that the problem, the root cause, is largely male violence. The primary root cause of sexual violence and harassment is men, male perpetrators. The primary reason for this is rape culture: boys and men being raised with permission to act out their sexuality in violent ways. We know that sexual violence affects all genders; however, we also know that women are more likely than men to be survivors of sexual violence.

Statistics at universities and colleges are troubling. Approximately one in four women will experience completed or attempted rape over the course of a college career—sexual and ethnic minorities even more so than white, heterosexual women. As many as 13% of women attending college are victimized by stalking. The Change Project, an initiative between the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region and Wilfrid Laurier University, released a report earlier this year indicating that approximately 40% of students surveyed, which was over 500, had experienced some form of sexual violence—gendered violence—during their tenure as students.

Although all genders are victims of sexual violence, when it comes to perpetrators, the statistics are skewed in the direction of men. Men are hurting women, transgender people, children and other men at epidemic rates. Statistics about male violence at universities and colleges are also troubling. Multiple studies across multiple decades have consistently found that 35% to 50% of college men indicate they would likely perpetrate rape if they knew they would not get caught. In fact, a nationally representative sample of college men in the United States found that 25% of college men had sexually assaulted someone since the age of 14. This estimate has been remarkably consistent over time, starting with studies in the late 1980s.

A recent 2014 study found that approximately 10% to 15% of male college students report that they have perpetrated sexual assault in the last year.

The problem is not isolated to college settings. Similar rates exist in community samples: 83% of violence committed against women in Canada is perpetrated by men. Female rape victims report 98% of perpetrators as male. Female stalking victims report 80% of perpetrators as male. Male rape victims report predominantly male perpetrators. I think you get the point.

If all the world is a stage, as Shakespeare famously scripted, masculinity is being performed as violent. Even

though, in the words of Shakespeare, a man plays many parts, all appearances indicate that there's a dominant script that many men are following. The masculine script is strongly linked to sexual violence. When one considers male attitudes about sex, sex is too often blurred with violence. It is about taking without consent. It is harmful.

Researchers have examined the ways that college men often talk about sex. The metaphors used are about power and control, not consent and healthy relationships. Sex is described by men as a game, a hunt, a conquest, a war and a triumph. Women are described as possessions and objects in the service of men.

I want to make a bold statement to you: It is time to acknowledge that the primary risk factor for perpetrating sexual violence is being male, being a boy or man raised in a culture of rape. But my message is not anti-man. I identify as a man, after all. My message is simply honest. My message is not that men are bad; it's that we as men have work to do. We have a responsibility to stand up and speak out about male violence. Anti-violence educator Jackson Katz says it like this: "We're not guilty because we're men. We're responsible—because we're men—either for speaking out or for not speaking out about other men's violence."

My message is not that boys and men can't be victims of sexual violence—they are—nor that women can't be perpetrators—they too are, although not nearly as often. My message is that we need a gendered analysis. Don't allow cries of "Not all men are violent" or "What about male victims?" to distract you from getting smart about the root cause, which is male violence.

My message is also not about individual problem men. Our society as a whole supports male violence. We live in a rape culture. Rape culture means (1) that male violence is widespread; and (2) that male violence is normalized, as if acting violently is what it truly means to be a man, as if it is normal for sex and violence to be blended together.

I've asked hundreds of men what they think society expects them to be as men. The most common words that I hear are "tough," "powerful," "in control," "wealthy," "muscular," "aggressive," and then I also ask them, "What are you not supposed to be as a man?" and I hear "a woman," "a girl" or "gay." We have a lot of work to do with men.

The third element of rape culture means that victims are blamed and doubted when they report. We hear questions like "What was she wearing?" or "She had sex with him before, didn't she?" or "She shouldn't have been out alone." There are all sorts of ways rape culture blames people who are victimized, placing emphasis on what she must have done wrong, as if people bring on sexual violence to themselves.

All of these are elements of rape culture. Rape culture gives permission for men to use violence and to blame their victims for it when they do.

Some might argue that highlighting the issue of violence in gender terms limits the discussion, pitting men against women and women against men.

0910

My aim here is not to create a divide between genders, between women and men. Ultimately, people are people, however they identify. My hope would be that someday we can just talk about the issue or the problem, which is violence, and focus less on the gender component, but we aren't there yet. Talking about violence as a gendered phenomenon is one step towards ending it.

Again, the Ontario government should acknowledge that sexual violence is a form of gendered violence. The question then becomes, how do we get there? How do we work to get at this root cause?

My second recommendation is that the Ontario government should focus efforts on prevention by engaging men and boys in ending sexual violence.

There are some exemplary evidence-based programs that engage boys and men in ending sexual violence. One of these that you've heard a little bit about today already is the Male Allies Against Sexual Violence program of the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region, of which I've been a volunteer since 2008. The Male Allies program, or MAASV for short, is a public education program. It provides training for men around issues of sexual violence, concepts of masculinity, how to respond to disclosure of sexual violence, and how men can be active in ending violence against women, including exploring these subjects with young men.

Once men receive this training, they are equipped to go into the community as volunteers to educate and actively work with men and boys in their personal lives to end sexual violence and help young males learn, grow, and develop positive relationships and a good self-image.

The Male Allies Against Sexual Violence program is about:

- men and boys actively working to end sexual violence;
- men and boys learning and growing in their knowledge of healthy relationships and healthy masculinity;
- men as role models offering the counter story to the dominant story of hyper-masculinity and toughness;
- men providing opportunities for young males to engage in activities and discussions that develop a positive self-image and healthy relationships;
- men and boys spreading the violence prevention message in their families, workplaces, peer groups and communities; and
- a network of males providing ongoing support and opportunities for learning.

The motto of the Male Allies Against Sexual Violence program is "Stand up. Speak out." I've come to believe that, as men, we do need to stand up and speak out. I figure that as men, when it comes to sexual violence, we're either violent, we're silent or we're meaningfully engaged.

Speaking of meaningfully engaged, the program director of the MASSV program, Stephen Soucie, has delivered over 250 workshops to 4,000 people in the region of Waterloo in the past few years, most of those young men and boys.

Finally, my third recommendation: The Ontario government should provide new, sustainable funding to local sexual assault support centres to do the work of prevention and engaging men and boys. I would like to see male-allies programs exist right across this province. I'd like every young boy, during his formative years, to have an opportunity to be engaged in discussions about healthy masculinity, about consent, about healthy sexuality and about ending violence.

It's important that this funding be new funding. I don't want money to be taken from support services for survivors, which are already underfunded.

It's important that this funding be sustainable.

It's important that male-allies programs be either embedded in or accountable to sexual assault support centres. These organizations have been at the front lines of ending sexual violence for decades. They know the issues. Their gendered analysis is necessary. Their experience is necessary. Their finger is on the pulse of the needs of local communities. Their leadership is necessary.

We are at a crucial point in Ontario's history where we have the opportunity to stem the epidemic of sexual violence that exists in our communities. Prevention is our smartest choice. We know that engaging men, educating them and involving them works. Let's work towards encouraging a kinder, gentler version of masculinity from our boys and men. Please support this type of prevention effort. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you, Mr. Oudshoorn. Our first question for you is from our PC caucus, from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much for being here today. Thank you for being part of the male-allies program in your community, and thanks again to the local Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region for being a pioneer probably in a program like this.

We have a short time so I can't ask a lot of questions, but when you mentioned about the number of seminars that have gone on, how did that get initiated? Did that man go into the community? Did the community come to him? Is there a model there that you could expand on just a little bit of how you did the outreach to men?

Mr. Judah Oudshoorn: Sure. That's a good question, and it's a little bit of both. Initially how it started was, there was training that was offered for men like myself to come and be trained. Then we started to advertise to the community that we could go out and speak to community groups.

Lately, Stephen Soucie has been doing a lot of work in schools and doing multiple sessions. One of the things that we've learned is that the evidence tells us that you can't just go in once and have a one-off conversation about this topic. He's going in and doing boys' groups with grade 7s and grade 8s and talking about masculinity, healthy relationships, consent and all those sorts of things. So it's a bit of both: The communities come to us, and we've outreached a little bit as well.

Ms. Laurie Scott: So your school board was no problem—going into your school board?

Mr. Judah Oudshoorn: It's been fine going into the schools, yes.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Excellent.

Mr. Judah Oudshoorn: I don't know if they went through the school board or through individual schools.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from our NDP caucus: MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you, Judah, for today. Thanks for saying you can't punish our way to safer communities. I completely agree with you.

But around the male allies—and this sort of builds on Laurie's question. We have to go where the kids are, really. You've asked for specific new funding for new programming around male allies. Can you just draw a picture for us of what that would look like? Hopefully, though, it would have an educational component to it.

Mr. Judah Oudshoorn: Absolutely. I think one of our most important places to be is in the school. However, the evidence demonstrates to us that oftentimes, it works better and it's more sustainable if it's a community group going into the school and doing this. So I would imagine, again, something similar to what we're doing in this region, where you fund an organization like a sexual assault support centre to have a staff person who can train volunteers who can go into schools and can engage with young men and boys. It's also important that young boys have young men that they can look up to and listen to, and be trained by men.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final question for you is from MPP Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you very much. I have to say, I don't know if you've given us your presentation, but I'm sure that we as committee members would love to have a copy of your presentation.

Mr. Judah Oudshoorn: Sure.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: It's very, very to the point, today, I think of what we're looking for in terms of recommendations.

As you know, we're moving forward with a new sexual education curriculum, and I just wanted to have your input as to what you're saying in terms of prevention. When we talk about our sexual education curriculum, we talk about consent and making sure that we're addressing maybe not exactly the concern that you're raising—but how can we tie both of them together?

Mr. Judah Oudshoorn: It's a hugely important question, and I think Sara highlighted this in her presentation, that it has to be multi-pronged. I've talked about one sliver that we need to address, right? The other part for me that is very important in the new sex education curriculum that's coming out is they start talking about consent in grade 2. I have a daughter who's in grade 2, and I'd be very pleased for her to be having conversations around consent. I think all of that fits together. We have to come into 2015 and have conversations about healthy sexuality at all layers and all levels, so having a quality, evidence-based sex education program is a very important part of that.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We thank you very much for coming and speaking to our committee today.

As MPP Lalonde mentioned, we would like to get a copy, either a hard copy—or email your notes to our Clerk's office.

Mr. Judah Oudshoorn: I can do that.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I invite you now to join our audience if you wish to.

ONTARIO FEDERATION OF LABOUR

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenter, from the Ontario Federation of Labour, Nancy Hutchison, to come forward.

Please have a seat; make yourself comfortable. You will have 15 minutes to speak to our committee, and that will be followed by questions.

Ms. Nancy Hutchison: Will I have a couple minutes' warning?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Absolutely. I will give you a one-minute warning, how's that?

Ms. Nancy Hutchison: That would be wonderful, thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): So Nancy, begin any time.

Ms. Nancy Hutchison: Thank you very much. My name, as you mentioned, is Nancy Hutchison, and I'm the secretary-treasurer of the Ontario Federation of Labour. I appreciate the opportunity to speak to all of you today about this very, very important subject.

The Ontario Federation of Labour is the central labour body for Ontario. We're the largest provincial labour body, the umbrella group of many of the affiliates in this province, by way of introduction. We are sisters and brothers in solidarity who always pursue social, economic and political justice, the goals on which the labour movement was founded.

We applaud the government's commitment to end sexual violence and harassment, and welcome the opportunity to comment on the Ontario government's plan. I'd like to stress today that the Ontario Federation of Labour's directors brought together members of our women's committee, our health and safety committee and our workers' compensation committee to consider the workplace component of this plan. We put our heads together and found where there were shortfalls and perhaps failures in legislation that could help with prevention, and we're going to speak to that.

0920

I would also like to say on a personal note, as a woman who worked in the mining industry for 18 years as a young woman, beginning in 1977, I could write a pretty sad book about some of the sexual harassment, abuse and actual very dangerous situations that had me fearing numerous times in the mines during the early years of my career. I'd like to just point out that I speak from experience on a lot of this.

The elimination of workplace violence and harassment will be an incredible, massive undertaking, as you know. There are many significant and unique problems facing our society, from murdered and missing indigenous

women and girls to the lack of supports and access to psychological professions for all people, even as close as northern Ontario, where, when you're dealing with harassment and violence and you need professional help, it isn't there for many of our members of society, especially in northern Ontario.

More resources for women's shelters and transition homes are needed, but let me be clear that the answer to the problem of sexual violence and harassment isn't to build more shelters and homes; it's actually to address the issue of prevention and to take the problem head-on for real solutions.

Aboriginal women and women of colour face double abuse from both racial and sexual harassment. These women, along with immigrant or disabled women, also suffer additional stresses from isolation, poverty and difficulties in communication. Language, religion, sexuality and traditional dress can also be factors in why certain people may be targeted for harassment. LGBTQ communities—gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer communities—face discrimination, harassment and threats of violence in the community and where they work.

Tackling bullying in schools is also an important initiative. Making an impact on the mindset of our next generation is key to having an impact and driving the shift in our society. According to research, we've seen that 55% of young men who were bullies in high school went on to have criminal records by the time they were 24 years old. We provide the abstract of the research in our appendix to the brief. The committee will know that we've just handed out a copy of our brief, which goes into a lot more detail on what I'm speaking about.

Workplace bullying and harassment is an incredible part of all of this. While the issues that the government is laying out in their plan are all important, there are others that may be in a better position to discuss those in detail. We intend to focus our energies on the role of the workplace with this action plan and the fact that all employees are entitled to a safe and healthy workplace, free from sexual violence and harassment. When the government says, "It's never okay," we couldn't agree more. Part of the action plan is to make the Occupational Health and Safety Act—a place where workers can be free of sexual harassment and violence, and we have some ideas regarding the changes to legislation and recommendations that could be made.

According to information provided by the Canada Safety Council, 72% of workplace bullies are people in a position of authority: bosses, supervisors. The victims tend to be the ones who lose their jobs, with 64% of workers quitting or being terminated. Another 13% are being transferred out of the job, and only 23% of cases are punished by the employer when the bully is a person in authority in a company. I think we saw a case at the CBC quite recently where there was zero tolerance once it was public and addressed, and we hope that that would be the norm throughout all companies, but sadly, it isn't until it becomes in the public eye.

We need additions to the duties of employers and supervisors under the Occupational Health and Safety Act to make it illegal for them to engage in sexual harassment or violence in the workplace. Our proposed language is provided in the appendix of our brief. We've actually written and drafted some legislation recommendations for you to consider.

Employers should have a clear duty to take steps to prevent harassment in the workplace. Two recent decisions at the Ontario Labour Relations Board which dealt with reprisals due to harassment complaints covered this point: "In the case of an employee who complains that he has been harassed, there is no provision in the" act currently, the Occupational Health and Safety Act, "that says an employer has an obligation to keep the workplace" free of harassment. It's actually stunning to think that in this day and age, in 2015, there's no provision that says they must keep it free from harassment. "The only obligation ... in the act is that an employer have a policy" and a program with dealing with these.

We've seen inspectors going into workplaces with horrific situations that they are meant to deal with, and they have to ask the employer, "Do you have a policy?" "Yes." "Do you have a program?" "Yes." It could be written on a napkin or on a scrap piece of paper posted somewhere on a bulletin board, and they comply with the act. That is not enough, and I think that's very clear with workers and especially with union reps.

We have proposed that the language not be limited to workers but include other persons in the workplace. We're thinking about situations where workers of other employers enter a workplace. We're seeing that a lot with service sectors and even, for example, office towers, where you have cleaning staff, and there are still people working in the building after hours. We've heard of situations where workers working for another employer have been victims of sexual violence and harassment. So we think the act should be expanded to deal with workers in a workplace and other people entering a workplace.

An employer can have the best harassment policy and procedure, but if it's the CEO of the organization that's the bully, the policy and procedure would mean little or nothing to the worker being bullied, because the worker would have to follow the complaint investigation, and it would be that CEO with the final say on what the repercussions would be. Usually those victims, as I said earlier, just slide away, being terminated in most cases.

Bad behaviour by employers and owners of companies is an issue we hear about all too often. One recent case by the OLRB dealt with the owner of a company who had humiliated and then fired a worker, and the OLRB found in their ruling that throughout the dismissal procedure, the process, the employer "acted in a manner that was unfair and in bad faith, being both untruthful, misleading and unduly insensitive."

We've referenced the cases in our brief, so you can go back and look at the entire cases.

There was another case represented by the Toronto legal clinic, which deals exclusively with workers who

do not have the benefit of union representation. There are many more examples of these legal clinics or the Office of the Worker Adviser that represent non-union workers. You can imagine, if unionized workplaces have these issues, what is happening out there with the unorganized workers without a union.

This particular case with the Toronto Workers' Health and Safety Legal Clinic dealt with a woman who was cutting hair, so independent, working in a small shop and sexually harassed and abused very often.

Section 57 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act must be amended also to include cease-and-desist orders that may be effective for abusive managers or supervisors who remain in the workplace. For example, the inspector then could write an order for an employer to cease and desist their action.

There's the question of what to do about predators that go from workplace to workplace, starting the cycle of abuse and leading a trail of broken and psychologically damaged people behind them. We hear that often, where companies will just shift the problem to a different location in their chain. I hate to think of—being of a Catholic upbringing myself, I can't help but think of the Catholic Church and the example of priests that were abusing young people, and they just, in their unwisdom, moved them from parish to parish instead of dealing with the problem. That's what we're often seeing in workplaces today.

Harassment and abuse often create a poisonous work environment for all workers who witness the action. There's a cone of silence that happens, and we can see when workers are made examples of.

0930

Defining sexual harassment and violence: The definition under the Occupational Health and Safety Act for workplace violence is restrictive and is limited to acts which cause or could cause physical harm—only physical harm. So where's the issue of psychological? Incidents of sexual abuse in the workplace should become part of the mandatory reporting requirement under section 52—mandatory. Under section 52 there are some things that the employer must report to the ministry; sexual violence and harassment is not one of them. We're saying that it should be reported to the Ministry of Labour as a flag so that it would trigger a visit and an investigation.

One example provided to us at our meeting was the inconsistent use of the term "sexual abuse" that involves long-term-care facilities. The employer in this case posted a notice for employees notifying them that sexual touching by a resident against another resident is considered sexual abuse and to watch for it, but if the resident does the same act of touching upon the staff, it's not considered sexual abuse. Think of that if you're the staff member. We heard this example where residents were putting their hands up the shirts and the tops and the uniforms of the long-term-care workers, but that wasn't sexual abuse in the eyes of the employer, grabbing breasts with hands under the work shirts. That was just an unfortunate incident that you had to handle. So the em-

ployers must take action to protect their workers in all cases. We hear that very often in the health care profession.

We've been advised by one of our affiliates that they had a situation where a personal support worker suffered psychological trauma when the man she was providing support for grabbed her and performed a sexual act on her. She was not physically harmed. But the employer's only response was to tell her to wash her clothing.

Then there are the workers who face bad behaviour from the public: retail workers who get yelled at for store return policies, medical secretaries who are bullied because of long wait times and wait lines for doctors and lab tests, social workers who are threatened by clients or their families. What has really been getting into the media lately is the trend of men who feel that they can sexually harass female TV news reporters as a new sport. These men are invading the workspace of these reporters. Think: This is these women's workspace. This is their job. They are performing their job. Sexually harassing them is not funny. It is not a joke. Many of the perpetrators are not juveniles. That's what stunning. As a mother of two sons, it's stunning to see the age group of these grown men, some with good jobs and university educations. They behave badly in front of cameras. What are those stations and those employers doing to protect those employees when they go out into the field?

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

Ms. Nancy Hutchison: Oh, my goodness. Okay.

The issue of temporary foreign workers—and you can see that I'm reading quickly. It's all in the brief. However, huge flags go up for temporary foreign workers who are at the mercy of employers that bring them into the country, that have the workspace for them, that usually provide housing, and that threaten to take away their passports or send them back to the country they came from if there's any report of sexual abuse or harassment.

Domestic workers: I plead to you all to consider that domestic workers be included in legislation. Can you believe that today the Occupational Health and Safety Act excludes what they call "servants," which are really domestic workers, from the act and the protection that that gives?

Working alone: We've provided some language, legislation changes, in the area of working alone. Women are most vulnerable. Young women are most vulnerable. Whether you're a Tim Hortons worker or a chambermaid in a hotel room or a gas station attendant, when you're working alone with money there are also situations where you could be vulnerable.

Codes of practice: I bring your attention to the Canadian Standards Association and I ask you to look that up, because it's very, very important, around the issue of a best practice that could be adopted.

MOL inspectors: I think it's very important to ensure that they have for the workplace training for themselves as OPSEU members, as workers, not only in the area of sexual harassment and abuse at the workplace—I can tell

you that I knew some mining inspectors up north and when Bill 168 came into place, and the Occupational Health and Safety Act, they gasped—

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

Ms. Nancy Hutchison: Okay, and I'm gasping.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We're going to go to some questions for you now.

Ms. Nancy Hutchison: Thank you, Madam Chair, and there's also a lot more to cover.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We're happy to have your submission and we will read it very thoroughly. Thank you.

Our first question for you is from our NDP caucus, from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you so much for being here today and for sharing this very comprehensive brief. I think that's going to be very helpful.

One of the first things you pointed out is the fact that currently the Occupational Health and Safety Act only requires employers to have a policy, and there is no kind of feedback or standard or anything about the components of the policy. I wondered if your brief includes some elements of what should be in effective policies within workplaces. Actually, would you even go further and say that there should be some kind of standard policy that would ensure some consistency across workplaces?

Ms. Nancy Hutchison: Thank you, Ms. Sattler. It's a very good question, and one we tackle often because we're often asked if there are a set of best practices or standards. We say the best policies, programs and procedures are developed when the joint health and safety committee are involved in that development at the workplace with employers. We didn't include a checklist per se, but I'd be happy to forward one on to your committee, to the Clerk, where we would consider best standards.

But I think that's very important to note, that the employers doing this alone—often there are a lot of components left out. When you involve the workers, it's much more helpful.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP Dong.

Mr. Han Dong: Thank you very much, Nancy, for your presentation. I want to thank you for your advocacy. It's very important work. I can definitely see the passion, and it goes beyond benefiting your members but everybody that's in the workplace. Thank you very much.

You mentioned much about the inspection, the fine-tuning of terminologies in the act—sorry you had to cut your presentation short on temporary foreign workers. I want to give you this chance to say a bit more about how to train them, how to educate them on their rights, so they can stand up and maybe come forward. What can we do to encourage them to come forward and start protecting themselves?

Ms. Nancy Hutchison: Thank you very much, sir, for that question and for giving me a little more of an opportunity. One of the key components, I think, that is critical is that there be no reprisals against workers. Right

now in the Occupational Health and Safety Act there is section 50 in the act, which really is not enforced by the Ministry of Labour. This is a very serious component that must be looked at. The ministry has actually told us that they do not enforce section 50.

Then, there are the exclusions I just spoke about, whether it be farm work or domestic work or temporary foreign workers. These are the most vulnerable, precarious workers, and they are excluded. I also mentioned in the brief the issue of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, which has not been amended in many years and it excludes the compensation being given to workers who have suffered from sexual violence and harassment.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final comment for you is from our PC caucus, MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much. I'll let you take two angles, whatever you want to answer. One is, I didn't know if you wanted to finish anything else off that you didn't get out. The second was, I actually had a forced labour issue in the Kawartha Lakes part of my riding, and that's under a human trafficking aspect. I didn't know if you know anything about that or if you just wanted to finish off—you don't have to know about that particular incident, but it is foreign workers and forced labour.

Ms. Nancy Hutchison: No, I think that's a very, very good point. I should point out that I've been appointed to the round table, by the government, on sexual violence and harassment, and thank you. A lot of you know that. I'm going to be bringing the workplace perspective, which deals with—and sex trade workers; we're hearing from those workers at the table as well.

0940

The temporary foreign worker piece is very, very important, and I think that's a component of workers that we really haven't heard from. I do want to stress that many of those workers may or may not be covered under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, so WSIB, workers' compensation. I'm going to stress that again—and thank you for the opportunity—because right now, the act does not address that even if it was in the course of employment that there is a sexual harassment/violence situation that causes a worker to go off work under a doctor's care, they are not covered.

Now, the Ontario Nurses' Association has challenged that. There was a Canadian charter challenge and the nurses won, so I'm hoping that the WSIB and the government are looking at amending the compensation act, the WSIA, to make sure that this prohibitive—illegal, really—practice stops. If there is gradual onset of the effects of sexual violence and harassment, then it should be covered under the workers' compensation act.

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

Ms. Nancy Hutchison: You see I'm rushing.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much for coming and addressing this committee today. We invite you to join our audience now if you wish to.

Ms. Nancy Hutchison: Yes, I would like that.

CHILD WITNESS CENTRE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next witness this morning, with the Child Witness Centre, Laura Muirhead. Committee members, we're running a little bit behind. I encourage you, again, to ask very concise questions if you can. Thank you.

Good to see you, Laura. Please make yourself comfortable. Pour yourself a glass of water if you'd like. You will have 15 minutes to address our committee—up to 15 minutes, if you require that. Then we will ask you some questions. So please start, for the record, by stating your name and your organization.

Ms. Laura Muirhead: My name is Laura Muirhead and I am the executive director of the Child Witness Centre. I want to thank you all for being here and for the very diligent work that you are doing on this very, very important subject.

At the Child Witness Centre, we support children, youth and their families who are victims or witnesses of crime through the criminal justice system in both Waterloo region and Guelph and Wellington county. We deal with kids and their families once charges are laid. We help them cope with their anxiety, fear and stress, minimizing the revictimization and potential traumatization through the court process. We help kids be heard, and they and their families tell us that with our support they feel enabled and empowered to tell their story.

Over the past two years, we've been working with our justice and mental health partners in Waterloo region to establish a child and youth advocacy centre, which I'm going to refer to often through this as a CYAC, because it's less of a mouthful.

I know that you've heard from Karyn Kennedy, some of you, who is the executive director at BOOST, about the child and youth advocacy centre, and last week the Ontario network presented as well. You will also be hearing later in the week from the Cornwall child advocacy centre. We each have a slightly different spin on it, but it's all about trying to bring awareness to the fact that kids who are sexually abused need support, and that if we can do that kind of work up front, it may help us in the long run with adults.

Child and youth advocacy centres are a best-practice model for investigating and supporting children and youth who have been victims or witnesses of sexual or physical abuse or maltreatment, and for supporting their families. So I want to thank you again for the opportunity to present to this committee, specifically regarding the support and prevention of sexual violence and harassment of children and about how we can improve the response to Ontarians under the age of 18 who have experienced sexual violence and harassment.

Our agency has been privileged to work with children and youth and their families involved in the justice system for over 30 years. We strongly believe that children and youth have very different needs and require different approaches than adults when they have been victimized and are involved in the criminal justice system.

Over the years, we've supported more than 6,000 children in Waterloo region. About 600 of them were in Guelph and Wellington county. Almost 100% of those kids were victims or witnesses of abuse and violence.

Our dream for our community, for our province, is that we all live in a community and a province where kids can be kids, can grow up safe and without the threat of abuse and violence. The first step, we believe, to realizing that dream is to establish a centre of excellence, a child and youth advocacy centre where investigations of child sexual and physical abuse are done by specialized professionals in a safe and child-friendly setting, and support is provided to help deal with the trauma of the abuse.

We've been working with our community partners to implement the CYAC over the past year and a half, and we hope to open in 2016. We know that this will exponentially improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the process but, more importantly, improve the experience for the child and youth in the family as well as all of the partners who participate in the process.

CYACs are a proven best-practice response to child abuse. They've been in the US for more than 25 years. There are more than 700 of them. Five years ago, our federal justice department said, "Yes, this is best practice. Yes, we can be better in Canada. Yes, we want to provide seed funding to get these kinds of groups going across the country."

Their focus is that child advocacy centres are a seamless, coordinated and collaborative approach to addressing the needs of child victims or children who have witnessed crime. CACs or CYACs minimize system-induced trauma by providing a child-friendly setting for child victims or witnesses and their families.

A CYAC is, first of all, a safe, confidential child- and youth-friendly place where investigations of suspected sexual and physical abuse and maltreatment will happen. With the support of an advocate, these kids and their families will be linked to support services at the time of investigation as they are needed. Those support services will be available to all kids regardless of whether charges are laid.

One of the big things that a CYAC does is that it puts the needs of the child first, because sometimes what may be best for the child may not necessarily be what's best for the mum or may not be what's best for the family in general. It's important for these young people to have a place where kids' voices are heard and where their needs are put first.

In 2013, we did a needs assessment and feasibility study funded by the federal government to look at establishing a CYAC in Waterloo region. A number of gaps were identified. Clearly the system was fragmented, and that's not because the partners that were involved in the system weren't all doing a good job. They were all doing a good job, but everybody works in their silos. They were the group that came together and said, "We can all do a better job."

It was also identified that child abuse, particularly sexual abuse, is greatly under-reported—that was the

feeling by the service providers—largely because people don't know how, and they're afraid of what might happen if they do say something.

There was a strong need to expand the current collaborations and protocols and develop a more coordinated kind of approach. Based on these findings, there was wholehearted support, and we had struck a very strong steering committee to develop a model for a child and youth advocacy centre in this region. That involved the Waterloo Regional Police, family and children's services, the crown attorney's office, the medical community and the counselling communities.

If I had video, I would show you a YouTube video that's about two minutes that would really capture the essence of what a child and youth advocacy centre can do. But instead, I'm going to ask you to turn to the next page. You'll see this hand-drawn diagram here in the package. This is an example of how things happen today. Hanna is age five. She tells her teacher that she's being hurt at home. The teacher takes her to the principal. They might see a school nurse. They might go to the hospital. They might see a social worker. Then they might go see the police. They might then go back to the hospital. They might see child protection, then they might see a crown attorney and then they might see a counsellor. All the while, this poor little girl, Hanna, is travelling to multiple places, talking to multiple people, and the next time she has to talk to somebody, they may be different people again.

0950

What a child and youth advocacy centre—if you turn to the next page—does is, when Hanna says something to her teacher, the next step will be, Hanna and her mom will come to the child and youth advocacy centre—so they'll come to one place. They'll get to talk to a nurse, they'll get to talk to a counsellor, they'll get to talk to the crown attorney, they'll get to talk to the police and family and children services, if required, and they will talk to an advocate as well who will help them navigate through the process. When they come back the next time, she will get to see those same people and she will work with those people all the way through the process.

What do you think the chances are that Hanna will come out of the process in a better way on the second sheet than she may have on the first sheet? The evidence suggests that very much it will help her and her family deal with the trauma that has been put upon them and give them a better chance of moving on.

I wanted to just talk about the five key elements that are considered best practices and that are part of our implementation—so it's co-locating a dedicated team of professionals with child-specific skills. That would be police officers who know and are trained on how to talk to kids, how to interview kids and how to ask kids questions so that kids know how to answer those questions. The police, family and children services, the advocate and the counsellors would all be working together as an interdisciplinary team all focused on meeting the needs of the child. Again, that kind of process and that kind of

structure allow the child the best opportunity to move forward.

Just to give you some numbers: In 2013, the police investigated 750 cases of child abuse; 300 of them were sexual abuse of children in our community and 450 were physical abuse. Typically, when a CYAC opens, they experience 20% to 30% growth on those numbers. So we anticipate, in a given year, having 900 to 1,000 investigations which could involve more than one child. That means almost three investigations every day of the year in this community alone. In addition, sexual assault is believed to be reported less than 10% of the time, and 60% of all victims of police-reported sexual assault are children under 18.

Waterloo Regional Police Service, in addition to the 750 investigations of child abuse that they did, also investigate, on average, 100 cases of historical child abuse. Those are people like us sitting around the table who are saying, "When I was a child, this happened to me," and those people are now coming forward and the police are involved in those investigations. Our hope is that with a child and youth advocacy centre, those people will be more comfortable coming forward when they're children and you don't have that long-term kind of impact.

The Badgley report suggested that one in three girls and one in six boys will experience an unwanted sexual act by the time they're 18. These numbers really scare me. When I extrapolate them into Waterloo region, that would suggest that 25,000 children would experience some sort of sexual assault by the time they're 18. Add to that physical abuse, which is the other part that we're focusing on at the child and youth advocacy centre, and then you extrapolate that across the province, it makes a really compelling case for why investing in child and youth advocacy centres as a best practice to supporting kids at this point is a good thing.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Laura, you have one minute remaining in your presentation.

Ms. Laura Muirhead: Okay. In your package, there's some information about long-term implications through the Public Health Agency of Canada.

I guess I'd like to talk about—it was already mentioned by the person who spoke before me—the sexual harassment of female broadcasters. The firing of that perpetrator, I think sends a really clear message regarding tolerance and a shift in the social norms. As you're talking about shifting social norms with women and violence, there needs to be a huge shift in terms of what's acceptable with children, and shining a light on the issue of child abuse in a community allows you to be able to do that.

Children are 20% of our population but 100% of our future, and we feel strongly that the province needs to send a clear message that sexual abuse of children is not okay either and strengthen your response by supporting the implementation of child and youth advocacy centres.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much for your presentation this morning. Our first question for you is from MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you, Laura, for coming today. It's an incredible centre. I think all of us in Waterloo region have had a tour of it.

When it comes to children, what are the outcomes after they have gone through this centre compared to what they would face—in your diagrams, page 1 and page 2? Do you have statistics regarding that? They're fairly compelling.

Ms. Laura Muirhead: One of the things that they talk about in terms of outcomes is that it's more efficient. Cost savings-wise, long-term in terms of health costs, it's a really difficult thing to measure. Actually, the federal government is grappling with that. How do you know what it would have cost you? What I can tell you is that a lot of the feedback is that the kids and their families feel better about the process. If they came across somebody else who had experienced similar abuse, they would be more likely to say, "You should tell someone," as opposed to today, they may have a bad experience going to the police, and they would be less likely to encourage anybody else to come forward.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP Harris.

Mr. Michael Harris: Thanks, Laura. We had a real pleasure speaking to you at the local office, but more importantly, my colleague Catherine and I travelled to Toronto and toured the Boost set-up in Toronto. It's clearly amazing.

So tell me: What do we need, provincially, in terms of resources to make this happen locally?

Ms. Laura Muirhead: We need funding—is that what you mean?

Mr. Michael Harris: Yes, absolutely.

Ms. Laura Muirhead: We need infrastructure kind of funding to support the running of the office, and we need funding to support the advocate program.

Mr. Michael Harris: I know the federal government has put money aside; that's just a bit of a start. But provincially, Toronto has funding given to them by the province. I'm not sure if you can speak to how much, and then, roughly, how much you would need here in the region.

Ms. Laura Muirhead: The province gave money to Boost, and there's some confusion as to whether it was specifically earmarked for the child and youth advocacy centre or not. We would be looking for probably a couple hundred thousand dollars a year sustainable.

That's the single biggest question we get from the community as we're about to launch this: What's your sustainability plan? We're hoping, both locally as well as from the network perspective, to have this movement across the province and to get that kind of infrastructure sustainable funding.

Mr. Michael Harris: And you submitted that request—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thanks very much, Laura. Just to build on what Michael mentioned, that tour of Boost was

really amazing, because it's co-location. It is a very streamlined way of developing resources and funding resources. But you have to fund collaboration; it just doesn't happen by itself. Can you just build on sort of the vision for Waterloo region and why it really should be a provincial model?

Ms. Laura Muirhead: Just back on the funding, all of the partners are bringing their own funding to the table in order to fund part of it. The incremental funding would be to support the gap right now, which would be for the advocate kind of role, which is the navigator in the child and youth advocacy centre. I don't think I'm answering your question, though, Catherine. Why should this be a provincial model?

Ms. Catherine Fife: That's right.

Ms. Laura Muirhead: Because of the outcomes that we need to have—that we owe the kids in this province—and to not set one community up on a better way than another community. I would say it's about equality and accessibility. I think every child in this province deserves that and should have the right to receive service like that when they've been a victim.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Laura Muirhead, thank you very much for coming and informing this committee of the important work that you're doing. I want to personally thank you for the time that you spent with me giving me a tour of your facility; it was very informative. Say hi to your daughter, too. Thank you.

Ms. Laura Muirhead: Will do.

SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE OF BRANT

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'd like to call on our next witness to come forward from the Sexual Assault Centre of Brant and Taylor the Turtle. Please come forward. Have a seat; make yourself comfortable. You're going to have 15 minutes to speak to our committee, and that will be followed by questions. Begin by stating your name and the name of your organization.

1000

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: Okay. My name is Carrie Sinkowski, and I am the manager of Taylor the Turtle at the Sexual Assault Centre of Brant. Thank you for allowing me to come here today and share my turtle. I'm not going to make you guys sit through a lesson or anything like that.

Interjection.

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: Well, it would actually be kind of interesting.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Can you show us the turtle? Show us the turtle.

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: This is Taylor. We created Taylor in 2009. My dad and my sister actually are the ones who designed it for us. We had no funds. What we were seeing was an increased need in the community for children's programming regarding sexual abuse prevention work.

The programs that were available we were finding were not reflective of or responsive to the needs that we

were identifying. What was available were Good Touch Bad Touch programs, which have their own merit but are narrow in scope. They focus too much on the positive and scary scenarios. The other programs that were available were the Stranger Danger programs; within our client population at the sexual assault centre, we have very few people for whom that was their experience.

We did some research and we found that increasing children's resilience, building their self-confidence, building their body awareness were better protective factors, because unfortunately there's no 100% way to protect a child from sexual abuse. What we need to focus on is decreasing the incidence of sexual abuse and increasing the likelihood that a child will share that experience with someone if it has happened to them.

With our program, we operated with no funding for a couple of years within my community education program. I've been with the centre since 2002 as the community educator and community developer. In 2009 was when my sister and my dad did some pro bono work for us and then in 2010 was when I secured a Trillium grant for the capital and operational costs.

We created facilitator kits because the idea was to outsource the delivery of sexual abuse prevention to the community to increase the community's capacity—so not about increasing our statistics or our capacity to sexual abuse prevention work; this was about something more. This was about engaging the community on issues of sexual violence. Right from the beginning, we tried to make it a community collaboration. Our original partners were the Brantford police; St. Leonard's Community Services; Woodview children's centre; Nova Vita women's services; Ganohkwasra, the shelter in Ohsweken; and victim services—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Carrie, I'm just going to give you some advice. I'm being told by the audio people that you're very close to the microphone and it's popping.

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: Is it popping? Okay.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes, so if you'd just lean back a little bit—there you go.

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: Is that good?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): That's good. Thank you.

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: All right, perfect. So right from the beginning, we wanted the project to be as collaborative as possible—oh, and the Grand Erie District School Board was our final partner. Together, we created the curriculum. We came up with six lessons, which are on the handout that I provided all of you. Then, when we created the facilitator kits, what we did was we created lesson cards. On the front of each card is an image with the lesson title, and then on the back of the card are all the questions and prompts and activities to support that lesson.

We tried to make the program as broad as possible so that parents can do it with their children and so teachers can do it in their classrooms. We have therapists in town who use it in their individual counselling sessions. Chil-

dren's aid uses it within their parenting groups. Within my own program—I go to an after-school program once a month. So it's nice and broad. You can make it a 20-minute presentation, or there's a kindergarten teacher I know in town who does one lesson a month. They explore that lesson through their English class, through their health class. They use it in many disciplines within their classroom.

The methodology we use is things that build their self-expression. We do art, we do role-playing, we play games, we do collaborative games, we do storytelling and we also do the guided discussion. Today, actually, I go to my after-school program, and we're going to be doing our wrap-up for the year. This year, we went to the fire hall and the police station as part of the program to talk about their right to a safe community and who can be safe in the community. We explore different topics. The program now—for myself, I see between 5,000 and 10,000 kids a year. Brantford police and Brant OPP, it's their primary school program, so they are seeing thousands of children a year. And now the public school board in our riding is also using the program for all grade 1 teachers, because our program actually matches the health curriculum quite well, very nicely. We focus a lot on consent—that's age-appropriate, obviously—self-expression, about body awareness and the mind-body connection. We find that children who are more present in their body are more aware of what's happening and they are going to listen to those warning signals, and if they are self-confident, they're going to listen to warning signals—because we know that sexual abuse doesn't often start out with someone immediately touching your bathing suit parts, which is what all the other traditional programs focus on. We know that it starts out with—that there's a process of grooming, that it might be hair touching or shoulder rubbing. That's confusing, because it might feel uncomfortable, and our “uh-oh” feeling in our stomach might be telling us something is not okay, but it's not a bathing suit part that has been identified within the existing sexual abuse prevention programs.

So we want to focus more on self-confidence and self-expression so that kids feel more connected to their bodies and that when something doesn't feel okay, no matter what it is, they know they have the right to talk to someone about that. So we do use human rights language. Every lesson says, “I have the right to talk to a safe person” when they don't feel safe.

We also talk about the fact that not everyone has the same safe people. So I don't say, “Go tell your mom,” or “Go tell your dad,” because for all I know, that is your perpetrator. So we explore who are safe people and everyone gets to name three. We talk about why three is an important number. It's because so many people that we've worked with in our centre have told us that they told someone and they didn't listen. So I really encourage kids, through my program, that if someone doesn't listen to you the first time, maybe they're having a bad day, maybe they are not understanding you, or maybe they just can't hear you right now, so let's talk about who else we can go see.

The program has been going really well. What has been an interesting sort of by-product of it has been that it has really shifted the topic of sexual violence in our community from being very marginalized to being very central. I do staff training with Brantford fire and with Brantford police on supporting survivors of sexual violence. So we have our traditional partners from the community who are still working with us, but now we have a whole bunch of non-traditional partners.

Taylor has also been a nice jumping-off point, even when I'm working with adult populations: that you start with this nice, cute little turtle and then move into the harder discussions about sexual violence and prevention work for themselves or for their kids.

Our clients have found our program less triggering than other programs, which is another reason why we created this program. We have a website. There are songs on there and there's a cartoon on there that local high school students made. I just wanted to come here today to share with you an example of prevention that does mirror the curriculum that was brought out by the province and that has been successful. We do have it in other communities. Blind River has it within their schools. Six Nations has it within theirs. We chose a turtle because we are in the territory of Six Nations and we wanted to be respectful of our territory. Also, turtles have a built-in mechanism for safety and for alone time. The kids get that. Then we also have two tortoises that we sometimes take to classrooms for the kids to talk about the lessons and apply the lessons to our actual tortoises.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much, Carrie, for your presentation this morning. We have some questions for you now, beginning with our PC caucus. MPP Harris.

Mr. Michael Harris: Yes, thank you. You spoke of the non-traditional partners, like fire. I don't know if you could list some others and why you feel now they're important to engage.

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: We've been working a lot with Community Living, and we never used to really work with them before.

Mr. Michael Harris: In what way? Community Living for—

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: I do my prevention work with them. Unfortunately, I'm now part—I have a new job, so we're working out something with Community Living where we can continue doing education programming with them, but I've been there for the last six years doing a modified version of Taylor.

We're stronger in the schools now. We've always had a partnership with the schools, so even a lot of our traditional partnerships have strengthened.

But I think what happens with the issue of sexual violence is that it gets marginalized and minimized and it becomes either a women's issue or a victims' issue. Taylor has helped make that a community issue instead. So Brantford fire and Brantford police—yes, Brantford police deal with sexual violence all the time but it doesn't mean that they are proactive in prevention work. I'm not

trying to discount the work that they do or anything like that, but they're our main partner on Taylor the Turtle now.

1010

Mr. Michael Harris: Were there any major hurdles for you when you first launched this? Getting into the schools, perhaps?

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: No. We had a little bit of one with the Catholic school system, but once they understood the program, then it was fine. Even though the public school board has taken it on as their own and implemented it as their grade 1 program, the Catholic school board has approved it and there are several Catholic schools within Brantford where that's their kindergarten program.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next questions for you are from our NDP caucus. MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for sharing that with us. It sounds like a terrific program. You mentioned that it has demonstrated some success. What are the indicators or measures that you're using to assess its effectiveness?

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: That's something we struggle with all the time because prevention work is extremely difficult to evaluate. What we've been sort of relying on currently is talking with teachers after, talking with whoever is organizing that group. I've been training; I have over 200 people trained in Taylor the Turtle so I check in with them to see how it's going and if they're feeling that it's still relative to their parent groups. A lot of it is anecdotal, unfortunately, but we do go by stats. We go by media hits. We go by the activity on our website and Facebook, that type of thing, to try and figure out how effective we are.

Our presence in the community has definitely dramatically increased because now we have a giant mascot costume. Now we're in places that we were never, ever in before because a sexual assault centre was too harsh to be there, whereas Taylor the Turtle and the "My body belongs to me" message is a much gentler presence. Does that answer your question?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you; yes.

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: It's something we struggle with all the time.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final question for you is from MPP Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you very much. I know we don't have too much time, so first I wanted to know: Has there been exploration or interest outside of the boundaries of where Taylor the Turtle is currently being offered?

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: Yes. Because we have the kits and we sell them at cost, we do offer to mail them. There are a few teachers in Peterborough, Niagara, Toronto and Oakville, so there are individual teachers. Because our school board has approved it, other school boards have been open to their teachers utilizing it within their own classrooms.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Okay. And if I go outside of Taylor, from your experience can you maybe tell me some of the services that children would need? Is it more a focus on prevention or support?

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: We use it as prevention because we only counsel 16 years and older because we're funded by the Ministry of the Attorney General. In town we have two different agencies that provide counselling to children who are survivors, and they use Taylor as a therapeutic tool. So it can be used both ways. I only use it preventively, but yes, it can be used therapeutically.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much for coming and making your presentation this morning. We invite you, if you wish, to join our audience now as we move to our next presenters.

Ms. Carrie Sinkowski: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Do we have Bernice Connell and Jennifer Keddy here? These are presenters who are coming to us from Bruce and Grey and we suspect that they're in transit now.

WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We're going to move ahead to our next presenters from Wilfrid Laurier University Students' Union. We know that they are here and preparing, so committee members, we are going to recess for five minutes.

Interjection.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I know we're putting you folks ahead. Are you prepared to come forward right now? Yes, you are; I see a nodding head. Sorry. Stand down, committee members. We continue.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Are we in the military?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We'll be talking about that later.

Wilfrid Laurier University Students' Union, please have a seat. Make yourselves comfortable. Pour yourselves some water, if you wish. You are going to have 15 minutes to speak to our committee and that will be followed by questions. It's very good to see you here this morning, Christopher; I know you personally and am looking forward to your presentation this morning. Please begin by each of you stating your names and the name of the organization which you represent.

Ms. Laura Bassett: Good morning. My name is Laura Bassett. I'm the vice-president of university affairs for the Laurier students' union.

Ms. Olivia Matthews: Hi. My name is Olivia Matthews. I'm the president and CEO of the Laurier students' union.

Mr. Christopher Hyde: My name is Christopher Hyde. I'm the director of policy, research and advocacy—I think that's a very long title—also from the Wilfrid Laurier University Students' Union, and I'm a full-time staff support for our student leaders.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Please begin.

Ms. Laura Bassett: Thank you. Today, we are not only speaking on behalf of the 17,000 undergraduate voices from both the Brantford and Waterloo campuses at Wilfrid Laurier University, but we also are speaking on behalf of any survivors or students who may be affected by sexual violence and harassment.

Through our support of these students, we believe that our on-the-ground and local perspective will add much value to these proceedings.

Sorry, I'm not too sure—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): The mikes are very sensitive this morning, so we ask that you lean back to avoid the popping.

Ms. Laura Bassett: Okay, perfect.

In the past, student unions have played a crucial role in creating campus culture and social expectations. We are at the forefront of programming, as we provide over 1,200 volunteer positions for 800 unique volunteers. We have led processes around staff training to combat sexual violence, gendered violence and sex-based harassment, and in bystander intervention and health and protective services. We provide this training through our online portal, titled MyLearningSpace.

Due to our involvement in these issues, we strongly encourage the province to extend eligibility to student unions for any financial resources intended to support sexual violence prevention and responses, as we are currently not among the list of supported agencies.

Going forward, we are looking towards a coordinated approach to university policies on sexual violence and harassment.

First, we believe that changes need to be started from the top down and that the province needs to take a leadership position in setting clearly articulated definitions of gendered violence, sexual violence and harassment for all campuses, which you are clearly doing here today.

We believe that the province should work with community partners and sexual assault support services to adequately address the massive "grey area" that exists off-campus.

The provincial government should create requirements for universities to adopt and publish grievance procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee complaints alleging any harassment. And they should create clear guidelines around how to file complaints and to whom these complaints should be going to.

Universities should be encouraged and supported to create a single policy covering all forms of sexual violence, gendered violence and sex-based harassment. This will provide clarity and a clear definition for all members of the campus community.

Furthermore, universities should be encouraged to introduce or amend additional policy changes to the student code of conduct and the student athlete code of conduct for instances of harassment, sexual violence and gendered violence. This should include a zero tolerance policy at all campus venues for any time of violence or

harassment, as well as providing specialized training to all staff who are working where alcohol is involved.

In conclusion, universities should continue to update and review these policies with other community agencies to ensure effective performance and adherence. Everyone has a responsibility to this issue. However, we are looking to the provincial government for leadership and commitment to new policy practices for our students and the broader community.

Ms. Olivia Matthews: Policy, procedure and clearly defined terms regarding sexual violence and harassment are the foundation; however, education and training are the tools to empower both students and staff to speak up and respond. When we educate students about sexual violence in university, we hold them to a standard even after they leave our institution.

It is the responsibility of the university and its affiliates to ensure students feel safe and feel valued. By adopting training surrounding sex-based harassment, we as an institution can ensure students are able to take a stance against gendered violence. This is not a specific department's dilemma, nor is it a specific university's, although we speak as Laurier. It is an entire institution's and an entire province's responsibility, and therefore training opportunities must be widespread.

While training staff is crucial in responding to a disclosure, it is just as important, if not more, to reach out to students. We study at university as students; it should not be a difficult task to learn a culture that has a zero tolerance policy for sexual harassment. Students learn curriculums consistently; they need to have the opportunity to engage in a curriculum of consent.

While education and training opportunities come into play, it is just as important to evaluate their effectiveness. Annual climate surveys that assess students' knowledge regarding sexual harassment, sexual violence, retaliation, if students know how to report such conduct, and even students' experiences with sexual violence, help create an enhanced system and process every year as we continue.

1020

They need to be educated on the consequences of their actions—whether that's criminal, academic or more—the inexcusability of any such conduct but, most importantly, they need to learn that their university has systems and policies in place to support and protect them if they were ever to witness or be a survivor of sexual assault, sex-based discrimination and gendered violence.

Students must be at the forefront of the discussion, as without the proper tools and funds to empower them as bystanders or survivors, campus culture will never shift. Gendered violence will continue to be swept under the rug and there will no longer be such a push for these policies like that sitting in this room today.

Soliciting student input throughout the process but especially in training them in how to report and educating them on what consent looks like is the only way to change culture.

Far beyond educating our students is earning their trust. With the conversations again being held in this

room today, we can tell that students are frustrated with the lack of process and support given to these topics. Every student, whether they are a survivor, perpetrator or bystander, has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

The key to disclosure is a compassionate response. While we need to be prioritizing prevention on campus through our education efforts, supporting the healing of those who have experienced sexual violence must also be a priority.

A compassionate response includes eliminating hostile environments for students, which could encompass changing residence rooms, switching their class schedule or even academic accommodation. The support extends further than simply being flexible. We need to make disclosure as easy as possible by providing accurate information on how to file a criminal report and how to find university and local services. The rights of the survivor, including whether or not they wish to proceed with an inquiry or report, must always be at the discretion of the survivor.

The university must not respond in a way that waits for the conclusion of a criminal investigation—it's too late for a student's semester or year at that point. The university should be administering an inquiry and protecting the complainant throughout the entire process.

Showing compassion to survivors by creating a safe space for them to learn and live is the response that universities should be taking across the province. I am pretty sick of not being able to speak up or shamed into silence.

Having a well-known process, garnering confidentiality and speaking out against sexual violence should be what all universities are doing already. We're incredibly lucky to be a part of an institution—which will be speaking later—which is already taking the steps to become such a university, but there is still much work to be done.

Mr. Christopher Hyde: I'd like to thank my colleagues and our student leaders for coming here and speaking with us today. I think they bring a powerful perspective.

Olivia, our president, has been a don all four years that she has been on campus, aside from her first year in residence, and has had an active presence living in residence and dealing with these issues that students face on a yearly basis. I want to thank them for coming forward and thank this committee.

What I'm going to speak next on is—we refer to this as our unpolished gem, and that is asking the committee to look at the Residential Tenancies Act and the intersection it's going to have with sexual violence and harassment. We call it our unfinished gem because we're not policy experts. We try to be, but we're not. We often come up against areas where other acts or other pieces of legislation interact with sexual violence and harassment, and we'd like to see some form of change.

I want to talk today about one such example, and I want to tell you why I'm talking about this example. We have the Student Rights Advisory Committee at the

Laurier students' union, and what we do is, we work to represent students on a number of issues dealing with academic, community crises, legal crises, but also issues around landlord-tenant.

Something that's coming up and is starting to emerge for us is the challenge that students have when they are victims of sexual violence or harassment within the university campus community, and I think there's something important to note here. When you come to university, you live away from home and you live in the university community, you are joining a network and a foundation that is brand new to you. You are creating links, you are meeting people, and you are joining a small community that is usually not your own and is far from your home.

When you are a victim of sexual violence and harassment, you can be torn out and ripped away from that new community that you've formed, and it can be especially traumatic to students who are living in that.

One thing that we've seen—and I'm going to bring a perspective from one of our students who came to us this year. She came to us early on in the year and she said, "I need some help with a landlord-tenant issue." We said, "What can we do? Is it a lease? Is it a key deposit?" She said, "I'm under constant threat of sexual harassment and violence in my own home and I cannot get out of my lease." I said, "What do you mean you can't get out of your lease? Are there no provisions in the Residential Tenancies Act or in your agreement or when you feel at risk?" She said, "I have filed complaints with the landlord and with the police. I do not know who else to talk to. I do not know what else to do." We tried to follow up and provide support to that student as best we could, keeping in mind that we are a student union. We tried to work with community partners and university partners. In the end, that student was forced—or made the choice to vacate those premises and find another place to live. There were issues of financial precarity alone—that was an excessive financial burden. This student was unable to break the lease, and this really is the point of intersection that I'm coming to speak of here today.

In our experience, when a student is under a threat of sexual violence or harassment, or they are a victim, in many cases they're forced to live in the small university communities in which we reside in close proximity, or adjacent, or even in the same building or, heaven forbid, even in the same apartment with the perpetrator. That, to us, was unacceptable and it was frightening. We weren't really sure at the time what we could do. We said we would continue to bring this forward, and that's why we bring this idea forward today.

The idea and what we've put forward in the brief that we submitted on behalf of the Laurier students' union is not complete and it doesn't have all the answers, but one of the things that we'd like to see is the Residential Tenancies Act looked at, or some amendment looked at, that would allow for victims of sexual violence and harassment to find a way to terminate their lease early. Some of the provisions that force them into a situation where they can't break that lease—again, through finan-

cial considerations, it may be difficult or it might just be impossible for them to move. So we would hope that there would be considerations.

We put forward the idea that they would be able to use documentation or information from the police. We recognize that that, in and of itself, is challenging. Going to your landlord with a document that says, "I'm a victim of sexual violence or harassment and I need to get out of my lease"—we understand that that's not an acceptable thing to ask. That's why we said this is unfinished and unpolished. We wonder if there could perhaps be a blanket document that police or others could provide for victims of gendered violence, sexual violence and domestic violence.

I know Bill 22 was brought up a number of years ago. It was an act to amend the Residential Tenancies act for victims of domestic violence. We wonder if something can be brought to the table that would allow victims of sexual violence and harassment, gendered violence and domestic violence to be able to terminate their lease early when there is this situation where there is a constant threat, or when they're forced to live in an environment adjacent or near to their attacker.

We do understand that there are going to be realities for landlords and all people involved, and police and extra burdens. However, in the cases and the people we've spoken to, when we've had students come to us begging for help in getting out of their leases and being able to move away from a building where an incident occurred or a building where they're under the constant threat of sexual harassment, we felt that the least we could do was bring this idea forward to the committee in whatever form.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Do you have any concluding remarks to make? Ready for your questions?

Ms. Laura Bassett: We'd just like to thank you for this opportunity to speak. It's something that we're very passionate about at Laurier, and I feel as though we are taking the charge in protecting our students in being here today.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our first questions for you are from our NDP caucus, from MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you very much, Olivia, Laura, and Chris, obviously, for being here. I think it's so important that student voices come to this committee. Your provincial associations have done that as well.

The stats that came out of the media reports in the early fall: Around one in four students experiences sexual assault or violence on campus. Was that surprising to you when you heard it?

Ms. Olivia Matthews: I would say no, and quite frankly, I would say it's higher.

Ms. Laura Bassett: I would say that it's not necessarily surprising, just because I don't think that we have a clearly defined definition of what constitutes sexual assault, so students don't necessarily believe they've been sexually assaulted until you give them a broad definition of what it encompasses.

Ms. Catherine Fife: So this is that culture that you're talking about, though. I think that's really important for us to delve into.

Thank you for also raising the issue of dedicated resources for reporting, because the clarity has to be there and it has to be a clear path as well. I just wanted to thank you. Thank you for the work that you're also doing on campus.

The issue of residency and safe places to live is a huge issue. Finding accommodation, actually, is also a big issue, so thank you once again.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our next question for you is from MPP Dong.

Mr. Han Dong: I just want to acknowledge what Christopher just said. It's very important. I think yesterday I brought up a point that the aftermath for the perpetrator and the victim doesn't equate to the notion of justice that we seek. So I hear you, and this is what this committee is looking at across the government, to see what could be done across the ministries.

1030

My question is, in your mind, what are the major contributors to sexual assaults on campus? And any comments on how the policy has been rolling out at the colleges and universities? Because that's part of the requirement of the action plan.

Ms. Olivia Matthews: By "contributors," do you mean just contributors to helping the process?

Mr. Han Dong: Why is it happening? Why are the numbers so high? Why are there so many victims?

Ms. Olivia Matthews: I believe it's because—on campus again going back to Laura, it's the clearly defined term. I can say it quite bluntly here: Sexual violence doesn't always mean rape, and I feel like students on campus believe that sexual harassment can only be rape. So when we're talking about gendered violence on campus, it's that we don't have a definition. We're coming into university not ever really having had a conversation about consent. Then all of a sudden we're trying to be adults and we don't understand what that looks like yet.

But I think the biggest issue there would be that on both sides, on the perpetrator's side and then on the survivor's side, we're not sure what sexual violence looks like and therefore we don't speak up when it happens.

Mr. Han Dong: Good.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final questions for you are from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much for appearing here today. You brought up good topics.

It's going to take a while to change a culture and the fact that, predominantly, men can treat women the way they do. So right now, how do we educate everyone going into university that this is zero tolerance, beyond a poster campaign? Do you have any recommendations for that?

Ms. Laura Bassett: I don't necessarily know if it's a culture that will just exist forever.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Not forever, but for right now. We're working on changing it.

Ms. Laura Bassett: I think it really stems from the top down. Like we all kind of said before, I think it comes from a definition of what sexual assault is, and policies that are clear and defined as to what zero tolerance looks like—so if there is an allegation of sexual assault in a residence, there is a zero-tolerance policy for that occurring, and there will be procedures set out to investigate those instances and not just pushing it aside.

Ms. Olivia Matthews: Also, we're okay, as a students' union, taking responsibility for helping students in their transition for university. So during orientation, having a speaker about sexual consent, and continuing that as an ongoing process throughout your years—it shouldn't just be when you're in first year. It should be always and hitting all years of the university.

I think the university has to take a lot of responsibility, but again, I agree with Laura that it will have to be a top-down approach from the government to say, "You have to have these certain steps taken," in order for us to even get there and help the peer-to-peer.

Mr. Christopher Hyde: And it's about having that conversation when someone comes to university, I think. When they come to the campus community, there is a great deal of discussion at length on the standards of, "You show up to class at this time," or "You show up to this to collect your money or to pay your money." We need to start having conversations around sexual violence, harassment and consent at the same time, when they come to the campus community, and say, "If you're going to be part of this campus community, we need to ensure that you understand and replicate these ideas."

I think Laura and Olivia have touched on it brilliantly. From our end, that involves tying things into orientation—so maybe not just a speaker. Maybe we have a couple of sessions where we talk to students: "What does consent look like? What does harassment look like?" I completely agree with Olivia that we have not properly defined harassment for perpetrators and victims. We need to be clear on what constitutes that and then to build it into our culture going forward. I mean, if we have establishments on campus, we enforce our zero tolerance and we stand behind that and try to change the culture slowly, and, as small players in the wider campus community, try to have that effect over time.

Ms. Olivia Matthews: For the change in culture specifically, it needs to be widespread across the university. For instance, you can't just have one support centre on campus that's for sexual assault. You need to be able to go anywhere on campus, anywhere that you feel the most comfortable, whether that's where you live in residence or whether that's the students' union. We need to be trained properly on how to respond to that type of disclosure and who to lead them to.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Excellent. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We thank you very much for coming in and informing our committee today of the work that you are doing. We invite you now, if you wish, to join our audience.

MR. WAYNE MORRIS

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I call on our next presenter to come forward, and that is Wayne Morris with the Wilfrid Laurier criminology department. Good morning, Wayne. Very nice to see you.

Mr. Wayne Morris: Good morning. Nice to be here.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Please make yourself comfortable. If you'd like a glass of water, by all means pour a cup for yourself. Wayne, you're going to have 15 minutes to speak to our committee and that will be followed by some questions for you. Please start by stating your name and the organization that you represent, and begin any time.

Mr. Wayne Morris: Good morning, everyone. My name is Wayne Morris. I'm an instructor at Wilfrid Laurier University.

I understand that you have already received and will be receiving some very compelling stories and experiences. What I think I can do, if anything, to assist your committee is to speak on more of an evidence-based, decision-making approach, giving you some information based upon my readings and my experience as a practitioner in criminal justice and now as an academic in, I guess, my third career.

Prior to joining Wilfrid Laurier University, I was employed in correctional services for 30 years in both Alberta and Ontario correctional services. I have been in charge of treatment programs, including programs for sex offenders. I've been the superintendent of a number of major facilities and the area manager of probation and parole for Wellington, Bruce and Grey counties, including a number of programs for sex offenders. I redesigned the classification and placement system for the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services to make placements of offenders within the Ontario system. I'm also a former administrator at Conestoga College, where I designed the community and criminal justice degree program.

One of the classes I teach at Laurier is on the psychology of crime. As I understand it, your mandate is to attempt to reduce sexual assaults and determine how best to care for victims. I think my best contribution to your objective is to speak to you today of what causes men to commit sexual assaults and what are the characteristics of victims. I will purposely not discuss sexual assaults on children, as the motivators and characteristics of those labelled as pedophiles are vastly different from those who assault older girls and women. However, you'll note that often, statistically, these two groups overlap. I will also make some suggestions regarding how to prevent sexual assaults, and I will share with you some insights and recommendations gathered from my students. After my presentation, I'm open to any questions. As I present, I will not make reference to my footnotes, but I have submitted my presentation.

What are the characteristics of men who commit sexual assaults? Sex offenders come from all levels of society. They differ in background, race, religion, cul-

ture, personality, attitudes, interpersonal skills etc. You just can't identify a sex offender by looking at them.

However, using statistics from the United States—and these are most likely the statistics that are most broken down, and they are similar in Canada—we can conclude that most sexual assaults are committed by men less than 25 years of age. They often have a criminal record which is very broad and is not restricted to assaults on women. Indeed, they often have a history of non-sexual aggression on both genders. What is particularly noteworthy is that they always share a similar attitude; that is, that men should be dominant and women should be submissive.

These men also have what is labelled as cognitive-perceptual distortions in communication; that is, they have misconceptions of verbal and non-verbal communication. They have erroneous perceptions of sexual behaviour and misinterpret women's behaviour as flirtatious and a come-on when there was no intention to give that message on behalf of the women. These men—and some women—buy into what is referred to as "rape culture," where rape is normalized and accepted.

Behaviour is learned. I emphasize this to my students over and over: Behaviour is learned. Often, these men have learned this behaviour by what they have seen at home or learned from others whose opinions they valued. Violent, abusive behaviour is learned to be normal and acceptable. That's not to say that all victims of sexual abuse as children or those who see violence towards women will become perpetrators of sexual violence. It is an accumulation of risks and predisposition factors that lead to this and all types of offending.

1040

There have been some links shown between men viewing violent pornography with sexual assaults. It is important to differentiate this type of porn that depicts the violence and the degradation of women with erotica depicting sexual contact between consenting adults.

There have been a number of different systems of classifying sexual offenders. A very detailed and thorough system is employed at the Massachusetts Treatment Center, which is located in Bridgewater, Massachusetts. This may be of interest to you if you wanted to do some further work in that area.

However, for the purposes of your project a more simplified system developed by Groth may be just as useful. While the term "rape" was replaced in Canada with the term "sexual assault" in 1983, as an American, Groth uses the term "rape." You'll notice in the literature that it often continues to be used in American literature and it varies from state to state.

Groth notes: "Rape is never the result simply of sexual arousal that has no other opportunity for gratification.... Rape is always a symptom of some psychological dysfunction." He notes that "Rape is always and foremost an aggressive act." He classifies different types of rape dependent upon the mixture and prevalence of anger, power and sadism. Often, these characteristics are learned through various experiences.

The victims: Who do these men sexually assault? Primarily it is youth. The American National Violence

Against Women Survey conducted in 1998 and discussed by Tjaden and Thoennes in 2000 noted that: 29% of forcible rapes occurred when the victim was less than 11 years old—29%; 32% of forcible rapes took place when the victims were between 11 and 17; 22% between 18 and 24—then it starts to drop off drastically: 7% between 25 and 29; and only 6% when they were older than 29.

The peak age for a victim of sexual assault is actually 15. That is kind of constant across the US and Canada. Usually the victim knew the person who committed the assault. Kilpatrick et al. examined the same study and noted that: 21.9% were husbands or ex-husbands; 19.5% were boyfriends or ex-boyfriends; 9.8% were relatives; 14.6% were friends or neighbours; and only 24.4% were strangers. To a certain extent a lot of our theories about stranger danger, while very evident and scary—we may want to be spending our resources and our attention on people where the victims were known and had a relationship with the victimizer.

In a 1993 study of 125 US college women, Frintner and Rubinson noted that 83% of the women who were sexually assaulted said the attacker was someone they knew and, interestingly, it happened in their first year of post-secondary education when they may have been a little bit more naive.

It should also be noted that alcohol often plays a role in cases where force is used, as well as when the victim is incapacitated. Also, for some unexplained reason, victims seem to be especially vulnerable to future attacks.

Of particular interest is that some victims seem to fail to perceive risks. Some victims either think they are at a lower risk than their peers of being sexually assaulted or do not recognize that a particular situation poses a threat. Therefore they are often more vulnerable in their first years at post-secondary institutions.

Imagine the situation: If you start with a young male who has learned that men should be dominant and women submissive, especially if they were raised around a rape culture and they may have viewed violent, degrading pornography, and you pair them up with a woman or a girl who may be particularly insensitive to those risks, you have a dangerous situation. If you add alcohol, the risk becomes amplified. Again, post-secondary education: people away from home, experimenting with alcohol and perhaps not being as wise in the ways of the world as they think they are.

So what do we do to reduce sexual assault? While treatment programs for victims are important and I do not want to diminish those—even treatment programs to address the criminogenic thinking of offenders have merit, and there are some out there—most importantly, we need to change male attitudes towards women. And we can change attitudes and influence culture. When I was a teenager, drinking and driving was quite acceptable. Driving without your seat belt wasn't considered a big deal. But now, most young people frown on that practice. So attitudes can change.

We can reduce rape culture and influence male attitudes toward women, and the best place to start is

through education. Remember that most men who commit sexual assaults are less than 25 years of age and most female victims are young.

I used the opportunity, as part of my psychology of crime class, to get input from that age group. Having 135 young people in their late teens and early 20s, I asked my psychology of crime students for their suggestions. I want to point out that this was after we had gone over basic psychology of what causes crime, what attitudes, and basic learning theory. The vast majority of these young university students stressed the importance of educating youth and the public at large. They spoke of changing attitudes and stopping the spread of rape culture. Many emphasized that elementary students—some who come from very violent homes—need to learn that violence is not normal and that both genders deserve respect. They noted that only when women are seen as equals to men can a change in attitude and culture take place.

So we need to change male attitudes, but as some of the female students noted, we need to change female attitudes as well. Women cannot condone rape culture. If you've seen some of the incidents, especially at a certain east coast university where the women were chanting along with the men certain comments in their frosh activities, we know that some women can buy into this. And women need to become more self-aware. Both young men and young women need to appreciate what constitutes a healthy relationship.

I would like to quote one of my students. In a very quick assignment at the end of my class on this topic, I asked everyone to make a submission, and this is her quick comment, but I thought it was insightful. She said, "Speaking from personal experience, young girls need to be educated on the warning signs and specifically about concepts of love and trust and healthy relationships. Learning what a healthy relationship is early on will lay a foundation for how women and girls look for potential boyfriends/girlfriends; learning what acceptable behaviour is and what verges on the lines of controlling, manipulating, extreme jealousy and unwanted behaviours, and cues as to when to leave a dangerous situation. Girls need to learn that you can't change a man through 'love,' and that if your relationship is not healthy, move on. Most sex assaults occur by an acquaintance. Let's make sure girls know how to spot a good friend and one who is not."

So the bottom line to reduce sexual assaults is we need to change male attitudes so they are not assaultive, and because we can't be completely successful, we must also educate females so they will not become victims.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Wayne, you have one minute remaining in your presentation.

Mr. Wayne Morris: The best method to do so is through education. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You were almost near the end. I should have held my breath.

Mr. Wayne Morris: You didn't have my copy.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We would like to see your copy, if you don't mind handing it in to us.

Mr. Wayne Morris: Yes. Mr. Short has copies.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our first question for you is from MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you, Wayne. You and I worked together a long time at the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council, so we really understand the whole concept behind root causes of crime and root causes of sexual assault. I'd like you to just continue along that as to how we address the root cause of male attitudes so that they're not assaultive.

1050

Mr. Wayne Morris: Again, it's learned behaviour. When you have a culture that says that it's okay to be macho and to be physically aggressive towards a woman, it's the attitudinal behaviour that you have to address. It's learned behaviour. Through the school system, we have to expose those people. If you look at all violence and a lot of the psychology of violence, it's learned. It's because the children come from homes where they have seen abuse, where they find that if they're physically assaultive to other youth, it gets them what they want. They have to learn that it's not appropriate and that you can be a man and you can be macho and you can be attractive to women by other methods than being physically assaultive.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next question for you is from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much for appearing here—excellent presentation. We heard a lot yesterday especially about pornography, and that young boys start looking at 11. I don't know if you can speak to pornography specifically. If you as a child are at home, you see dad being disrespectful to mom, violence, and build on maybe pornography—whatever you see on social media or video games or wherever you get that input—they come to school, and we're trying to educate how to respect others, what healthy relationships are. I don't know if I'm asking a very deep question, but that child is going to be very mixed up—

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Confused.

Ms. Laurie Scott: —and confused. What happens? What should we be looking at? We're not solving all the problems today, I know, but what should we be looking at for that situation that may occur?

Mr. Wayne Morris: I think we have to be very thoughtful in our approaches, for instance, to our education system. I do think that the new sex education system is a step in the right direction.

I'm not an expert on the topic, and I don't want to go into that in detail. If you're not careful, if you say, "All of this is wrong," and you become too controlling, you'll get a backlash. What we have to show to children is that consenting sexual activity is appropriate.

If you're talking about pornography, we have to differentiate between degrading behaviour and, frankly, some of the bondage and violence—I'm not going to go into some of the more newsworthy activities of certain radio announcers recently. If that behaviour is consenting, who cares? But where it becomes a problem is when the women are abused.

If you want to be coldly scientific about this, what happens is, there's a link between the sexual stimulation of seeing that and the sexual gratification that those men get by basically masturbation. There is a click, physically and psychologically, when they associate that pleasurable experience with viewing pornography and having been started on that road by the normalization of that through violence at home and through their peer group. That becomes reinforced, and it becomes quite acceptable in gratification—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. I'm sorry; I'm just going to move you along. Our next question for you is from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for your presentation. Yesterday, in Windsor, we heard an excellent presentation—yours was excellent, too—from a professor at the University of Windsor who sort of categorized programs into preventing men from assaulting, helping women to resist or recognize the risks, and then empowering bystanders.

I wondered if your research has come up with any kinds of conclusions about the effectiveness of those three programs. She, at the University of Windsor, was focusing on empowering bystanders to respond effectively when they see these kinds of situations.

Ms. Wayne Morris: I'm not familiar with that particular research, but I can tell you that, generally speaking, on a lot of behaviours, the empowering of bystanders is a very important step. As Kathryn McGarry is familiar, with the crime prevention council, we've been very involved with a program on improving behaviour on social media. One of the things that we've found is, it's that bystander behaviour that is most likely to intervene successfully. You've got a group who are victims and a group who are causing that problem. The victims, you can strengthen. It's hard to address directly abusive behaviour. But with those people who are observers, they can speak up and say, "That's not acceptable." I know that the social media program has been very successful in having their peers intervene and say, "That's not cool."

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Wayne Morris, I want to thank you, with the committee, this morning for hearing from you, your information that you have provided for us. It's good to see you, and we invite you, if you wish, to join our audience to take in the rest of the presentations.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I just want—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes, MPP Scott?

Ms. Laurie Scott: I just want to make one comment, because I know we talked a little bit about it. On CBC last night, on Media Watch, they profiled what Shauna Hunt had done, the reporter that took on the aggressor. Anyway, I just put that out there. I know there's a CBC reporter in the room. But it was excellent. I actually watched it twice last night. It was very good. So anyway, I just put that out there for information for you.

Mr. Wayne Morris: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Laurie, I'll add to that, I was surprised that not only did they do one seg-

ment, they went to a commercial break, they came back and they still had the panel and they continued. There was so much to say about the issue, wasn't there?

Ms. Laurie Scott: With their own reporters discussing their experiences—it was incredible. Then, the panel was doing their feedback of what they've seen over the years. It really is something to have a look at.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: CBC?

Ms. Laurie Scott: CBC, and I believe it was Media Watch. It was last night, part of The National news.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And those of us who have worked in the media—I could certainly have added a few stories.

WOMEN'S HOUSE SERVING BRUCE AND GREY

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call now on our next presenters with the Women's House Serving Bruce and Grey.

Good morning, ladies, and thank you very much for coming here from Owen Sound this morning. Please begin by stating your names. You will have 15 minutes to address our committee. That will be followed by questions. Start any time.

Ms. Jennifer Keddy: My name is Jennifer Keddy.

Ms. Bernice Connell: I'm Bernice Connell.

Ms. Jennifer Keddy: We represent the sexual assault services program of Women's House Serving Bruce and Grey, operating from Kincardine and Owen Sound. Between us, we have spent 50 years supporting sexual abuse/assault survivors and working to end violence against women and children. We applaud the Ontario-wide action plan, It's Never Okay, and appreciate the opportunity to speak to the select committee today.

Statistics on the rates of sexual assault are clear. Given that at least one in three women will experience some form of sexual assault, it is fair to say that virtually all of us knows someone who has been assaulted, whether or not they have disclosed this to you. What we present today is informed by many courageous women who have survived sexual assault and harassment and have shared their stories and journeys.

There is a reason why individuals who have experienced sexual violence are called survivors. Imagine a child surviving ongoing sexual abuse by a family member or multiple members. Imagine not being believed when you finally told someone and instead being blamed for what happened to you and feeling responsible for your family falling apart. Women carry the shame of being abused into adulthood and often cope for years in isolation. However women may cope with what's happened to them, we recognize the strength and resilience it takes to survive.

1100

Many who do reach out for help are met with a lack of understanding of sexual assault, minimization of the impact of the abuse and often by outright disbelief. The systems women navigate when they come forward,

although intended as support, usually have additional roles such as investigation, medical response, evidence collection, addiction treatment and mental health assessments that can eclipse women's needs. Women can feel revictimized when helpers aren't aware of the long-term effects of trauma or when the parameters or limitations of any given service take priority.

I note that young people face many challenges today in our highly sexualized popular culture—overarching pressure of social needs that send confusing and desensitizing messages of women's lives being worth nothing more than sex.

Extensive ongoing training with a gender analysis of violence and led by women's sexual assault advocates is required for all service sectors providing support to survivors. A better understanding of trauma is needed, as well as awareness of how trauma intersects with addictions, mental health, poverty, racism and oppression. Most times, the traumas of sexual assault are the very seeds of these social patterns and problems.

Very few women report to police the sexual violence or harassment they experience—as few as 10%. Of the 10% who do report, the majority of cases will not proceed to court and obviously even fewer will result in conviction. Most women are not willing to put themselves through a process that still feels like victim blaming and that often holds her more accountable than the perpetrator.

Too much of the province's resources are directed at the criminal justice system when so few survivors access the courts. Can we just stop asking why women do not report and, instead, focus on what is most helpful?

Survivors are resilient but healing must take place on their own time schedule and by their own direction. By this, we mean that women are the experts in their own lives and with information, support and advocacy are able to make the best decisions for themselves.

Sexual assault and rape crisis centres provide support to women who have been recently assaulted and to those who are coping with historic abuse whether or not they have reported to police. Women must be believed and helped to understand the social context in which violence occurs. They must receive advocacy when needed and cannot be limited in the number of counselling sessions available to them.

We support stable and adequate funding for sexual assault and rape crisis centres. We enthusiastically support It's Never Okay and its directives regarding public education and the integration of information about sexual consent and healthy relationships into the school curriculum. This focus will be the best way to prevent sexual violence.

We ask the committee and the Ontario government to commit to support the action plan and ensure its implementation is guided by women's advocates.

Thank you again for this opportunity to continue this most important work of ending violence against women.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Will you be presenting?

Ms. Bernice Connell: I guess I would just like to say, in response to the previous speaker, the important message that we can get to young men—and as encouraging as it is that those discussions are happening and recognizing that it's a confusing time for young people, I think the messages of "Ask" and "Don't rape" are very simple.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our first questions for you are from our PC caucus, from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much for coming all this way from Bruce-Grey. We really appreciate your dedication—cumulatively 50 years helping women. I can't express my gratefulness enough to you.

We've heard through the committee—you've said this morning also that we have to do a better job of helping survivors. We have heard of the difficulties of the justice system, the revictimization when women have to tell their stories.

Are there any examples that you have in your area where you've hopefully seen improvements as time has gone on that you could recommend—say, best practices or even a story that did not work out well, that would highlight what is wrong?

Ms. Bernice Connell: I know that too much of our time is spent helping women navigate those systems—way too much time. We've been working for three or four years with the mental health sector and the addictions sector specifically with the No Wrong Door initiative. That has helped. It has helped improve it if the front-line workers are connected with each other. They're assisting women by making the connections for them with these other services, and if management up the line is supportive. I just think that our biggest problem is that women aren't believed and they're busy trying to cope with the limitations and criteria of other services. Of course, we see a lot of women who have certainly been revictimized, especially by the psychiatric system and the legal system.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next question for you is from our NDP caucus, from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for coming to speak to the committee. I was really struck by your comment about the need to stop asking why women don't report and instead ask what they need to heal. There is a lot of focus on the justice system and getting more women to report and putting that into that very expensive and hurtful system for women. I wondered if you wanted to comment more about what women need to heal. We've heard previously at this committee that not always laying charges is going to be helpful to a woman's eventual healing and that there are alternative kinds of approaches that are more respectful of what a woman needs to feel supported. Can you talk about your own experiences?

Ms. Bernice Connell: I can speak about our sector, the violence-against-women sector. Our expertise comes from women who have survived abuse and violence. We learn from them. Women are defining what works for them, and that's helping us create some expertise. I think

that rape crisis and sexual assault centres are leading-edge in terms of the response to women. It helps if you have an analysis of gender and violence, if you believe women, if you support them in what they identify as important for themselves, and again, help with labels they may have received or coping mechanisms that they're working through around alcoholism or any kind of addiction.

Do you want to add anything to that?

Ms. Jennifer Keddy: Yes. I'm thinking, too, because of that expertise that we have in that area: bringing us to the table for the high-risk teams that are out there. We're not at those tables. We've been excluded from those tables. Bringing us to those tables to hear from us, training in the justice system—having us do that training because we have that expertise directly from the women—and bringing on board survivors to be part of those initiatives, I think, would go a long way in that healing process and what they're looking for.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final questions for you are from MPP Malhi.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you. Thank you so much for your presentation. I wanted to ask you a little bit more about what your opinions are on the distinction between sexual violence and domestic violence. We hear a lot about how the two shouldn't be different. What are your thoughts on that?

Ms. Bernice Connell: Thanks for the question. It's a great question because we, in the sexual violence sector, feel like the poor cousins, usually, at any table where we're talking about violence in our communities. It's much easier to talk about domestic assault and domestic violence because people understand the need for safety and shelter. It's not very easy to talk about sexual violence; it makes people really uncomfortable. Frankly, some of the horror that women go through is just too hard to hear, I think. We get that it's all violence against women and we are certainly allies with our sisters who work in the domestic violence sector, but we need bigger visibility.

1110

That is what's exciting about this initiative. It's really exciting what the Ontario government has done in terms of the bystander public messages—I think they are really, really great—that draw the line where it's encouraging people to just put themselves in a situation and open up a discussion about what they might do. So it's a really tricky one, but thanks. That's a great question.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Bernice and Jennifer, I want to thank you very much for your journey all the way here from Owen Sound this morning, and for sharing your information with us. We invite you, if you wish, to join our audience.

GUELPH-WELLINGTON
WOMEN IN CRISIS

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I now call on our next presenter, from the Guelph-Wellington Women in

Crisis centre. Please make yourself comfortable. We're getting you a glass in case you want to pour yourself some water.

You're going to have 15 minutes to speak to our committee, and that will be followed by some questions. Please begin by stating your name and your organization. Begin any time.

Ms. Jessica St. Peter: Jessica St. Peter from Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis.

My name is Jessica and I'm presenting on behalf of Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis, an umbrella organization that deals with violence against women and children. As the public educator for Women in Crisis for the last five years, I'm here to speak to my experiences working in the violence-against-women sector from a prevention perspective, and my experiences as a physically able, white, cis woman living in Ontario.

There are various reasons that people enter this sector, that people choose to work every day with women who are survivors of violence. My entrance into this field was directed by my own lived experience, the women mentors in my life, and the challenges of being a young woman in our province. Why does someone dedicate their life to prevention work? We do it for the survivors, the women who have shared their stories today, the other women around our province who you've heard from before, and those who continue to suffer in silence.

Three generations of women within my family have been impacted by the effects of domestic violence and sexual violence, none of which were reported to the police, for a complex array of reasons. The struggles that these women have faced, and have continued to face, are impacting their lives, their children, and future generations. I wanted to be a part of providing a safer space for individuals to be heard, believed and supported in their lives, but most importantly, to be a part of ending gender-based violence. It was because of the openness, honesty and information that was shared within my own family and the privileges that I was born into that I have been equipped to continue the work that we do at Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis.

The ability to sit here and speak to you is a privilege, and I am aware that it is the voices that you are not hearing today that we need to be aware of. We need to be equipped to explore the intersections of oppression that marginalize women and girls who may not feel this is a safe forum to share their stories, or may not have a safe ear to share their story with.

As a graduate of a gender equality and social justice program, it is upsetting to hear of the decreased funding for women's studies and gender studies across our province, because it was at this institution that my eyes were opened. It was where I gained the experiences and information that equipped me with the language and knowledge to work towards the prevention of violence against women and girls. From the moment I entered my first gender class, systemic issues and sexual assault were forever connected for me. Similarly, the stories you hear today, and that our audience members will hear—when

you listen, actually listen, to the stories of survivors, you open a door and step into a world that you cannot turn back from. Because of this, I continue advocating for survivors of sexual violence and aim to work myself out of a job before retirement.

As you sit here and listen to the experiences of survivors and the organizations and advocates that have dedicated their time and limited resources to providing the support in working towards a response, I am reminding you that we all have a responsibility, and you have political leadership in our province. I'm glad you're here to listen. We all have an important role to play. We need to work alongside survivors and their allies and advocates to consider how to fix and create systems that support them. Forums like this are so crucial to the work as we take our steps towards change together.

Today, I'm here to speak to some recommendations concerning systems, and I will also give recommendations about aiming to support survivors better. We need to move beyond the question of what will encourage more women to report, because that question is not reflective of the information and guidance we are in need of. Instead, I think we need to ask what will better support survivors of sexual violence. What do survivors need most and what will help us to prevent sexual violence from happening?

For over 37 years, Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis has been listening, supporting, advocating and working towards the end of gender-based violence. We are a feminist community-based organization providing services to women and their children around issues of women abuse and sexual violence. We believe our services must be inclusive and equitable for all individuals while being responsive to issues of race, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, socio-economic status and our abilities.

Our programs include Marianne's Place, a shelter that provided homes to over 150 women and 90 children in the last fiscal year; a transitional and housing support program that supported over 850 women from our community; a family court support program that supported over 200 women last year; our sexual assault centre that supported over 150 women; a 24-hour crisis line that took over 3,000 calls; and a public education program that presented over 250 sessions within Guelph and Wellington county.

There are no fees to any of the services that Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis offers. As stated earlier today, survivors should not experience additional financial burdens as a result of their victimization. They are not to blame.

Over a one-year period, the Ministry of the Attorney General found that Ontario's 30 sexual assault centre agencies responded to 37,000 crisis-line calls. These calls are from our community members, the individuals who may or may not ever reach out to the criminal justice system. The individuals whom you hear from today are just a sample of those calls, just a portion of the stories that are often unheard and would leave us in awe.

We believe that sexual violence cannot be separated from the broader context, one in which the survivor, the offender and the violence itself exist in a larger system of societal norms and inequalities. Consider, for example: In my own life, the women I refer to knew their perpetrators. The women we support are often shamed and revictimized when they attempt to reach out. The women we work with are scrutinized, not believed and continually violated. Quite often, folks are not aware of the laws or what would happen when you report to the police. It is unfortunate that, too often, the lived experiences of our folks leave them feeling that the laws, the law enforcers and the law creators do not care about or believe them.

The over 1,500 women who have accessed our services, when available, can have access to a women's advocate or worker who can help prepare them for these, can help tell them what to expect when they call the police, explain why the police officer may or may not ask certain questions, advocate for more action on her case and most importantly, empower them to advocate for their own rights throughout the process.

As an agency and member of the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres, we support the recommendations of our sister centres whom you've heard from today. Education and public discussion on sexual violence supports prevention. We believe that education is the best way to prevent sexual violence. Public education promotes a focus on prevention of sexual assault as opposed to catching and imprisoning offenders. Imprisoning offenders does not end gender-based violence; it's just a piece of the puzzle.

Yes, I'm sure we're all here because we wish to see less sexual victimization more than anything else, and prevention strategies can take on various forms. We work towards supporting women and children to understand their rights; for women and men to understand the spectrum of sexual violence and expand the concept of sexual assault to explore that continuum; and supporting women and men to be exposed to and have opportunities to challenge sexual assault myths and learn the facts that debunk them.

1120

We are dedicated to educating bystanders to better understand how to recognize sexual violence, intervene and support someone who is or might be targeted by sexual violence. This prevention strategy has been a focus of the campaign mentioned previously, Draw the Line, an amazing public education campaign that has been designed to equip our community members with the skills and resources to be a part of that change, to have the skills to act when their gut tells them something is wrong.

Public educators across our province draw connections between systemic issues such as societal attitudes that justify, tolerate, normalize and minimize sexual violence against women and girls. They make connections about the attitudes and factors that contribute to rape culture, and they connect it with the reality of women's day-to-day lived experiences. The educators from across our

province would not even fill this room, yet these are the people whom we rely on to do the work for our entire province. Educators like myself need the support of our government and need to be validated. The amazing programs that have been presented today such as MAASV and Taylor the Turtle have been created by these organizations. They've been moved forward, and they're the kind of initiatives that need to be supported.

The move to integrate information on sexual consent and healthy relationships and online sexual activity into the school curriculum is much needed and greatly supported. We applaud this move by Ontario's government. It's about time that we talk about consent, but we can't talk about consent without addressing sexual violence and the gender-based violence that's resulting from gender inequality in our province. As an educator in our community, I am glad to see that "consent" is no longer a foreign word, but I look forward to seeing an increase in awareness of what exactly consent means and looks like in our everyday lives. Supporting our young people to better understand their bodies and their rights, and patterns of healthy versus unhealthy relationships, is part of that solution, part of the change in ending sexual violence.

However, it's important that we equip the educators who will disseminate this information with the information themselves. We can't just introduce topics into the curriculum and expect the message and information to be transferred adequately when the educators themselves have grown up in our society, a society that normalizes and perpetuates gender-based violence. It is for these reasons and the reasons shared by both Sara and Judah before me that the work of sexual assault centres across Ontario needs to be supported—because these people have been doing the work. Where else do you work with a degree in gender equality and social justice?

It's not always the case, as Judah stated, that getting into schools to support learning comes from the top down. More often than not, it's at the ground level, where teachers and individuals, for their own reasons, advocate for sexual assault centres to come into their classrooms. The top-down support of the expertise of sexual assault centres in our community is often reactionary. It's a call we get when a situation arises and is not resourced for the prevention work that is needed. We need to use education for prevention and allocate resources accordingly.

As an agency, we support the aboriginal-led strategies to address sexual and gender-based violence against aboriginal women. We've heard the recent stories. We know the facts. We know that aboriginal women are five times more likely to die as a result of the violence. We have a collective responsibility to recognize this and work towards the change. The continually increasing number of missing and murdered aboriginal women in Canada is something that needs more attention. As an agency, we engage our community in various public education events and community activities that aim to open the eyes and minds of people to learn more about and question what is being done to explore these injustices.

Our annual Sisters in Spirit vigil is an example of the types of public forums we host to encourage our community members to be a part of the change and to engage in crucial unlearning of oppressions, stereotypes and inequality.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. St. Peter, you have one minute remaining.

Ms. Jessica St. Peter: The stories shared by the brave women whom I've spoken to across the country will support that sexual assault centres in our province have been doing the work for decades, which is why it is imperative that funding allocated to Ontario's sexual assault centres and other services that survivors need be adequate and sustainable.

Focusing on increasing sexual assault reporting won't necessarily increase support to victims or end gender-based violence. Our current system is rife with problems that do not make reporting necessarily useful or a supportive method for dealing with sexual violence. In reality, a majority of sexual assault cases are simply not reported at all.

Similar to the voices that go unheard, some sexual assault survivors, like our at-risk youth, our sex trade workers and our women engaged in substance use, are often revictimized over and over and scrutinized for their behaviours, their roles and their reaction, should they testify in court.

Women can and ought to feel like they have the right to report, but they also need information, support and alternatives to reporting, should they choose not to—prevention, education and training, challenging sexual violence myths, and supporting professionals, bystanders and the public at large to sensitively respond to sexual violence.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first question for you is from our NDP caucus, from MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thanks for your presentation. You bring a lot of experience to this committee. I wanted to ask you, because you talk about this culture and the fact that people don't fully understand what sexual assault is, or sexual violence even—they can't define it—do you think that we're losing ground as a society? I have a daughter; she's 14 years old. She's exposed to things that I never, ever wanted her to see through the media, through social media, online. Can you comment on that?

Ms. Jessica St. Peter: We're losing ground if we don't keep the education on par with the experiences. There's no point in educating people for a world that we lived in 14 years ago, when that's changing so rapidly.

Ms. Catherine Fife: So your message around using education for prevention is very powerful, but it has to be current and it has to be relevant.

Ms. Jessica St. Peter: And it has to be—

Ms. Catherine Fife: Accessible.

Ms. Jessica St. Peter: —coming from the right source. That's my fear.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our next question for you is from MPP Dong.

Mr. Han Dong: Thanks for your presentation. I thank you for your support to the curriculum change. I, too, recognize that it's very important to educate the general public in terms of prevention, and I recognize that your group provides quite a bit of service in the area.

I want to ask you if you can tell us what specific initiatives you think may improve the service delivery in your area; for example, if there is any service or organization that could be integrated into the shelter program that you have to provide a better service or experience to the client.

Ms. Jessica St. Peter: I think having the resources to expand what's already being done in terms of court accompaniments, support around hospital accompaniments. That comes down to time and people being able to do those things. They already exist within our shelter—but just making sure that we have the resources to continue to provide those programs.

Mr. Han Dong: So expand the funding in the program?

Ms. Jessica St. Peter: Yes.

Mr. Han Dong: Okay.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final questions for you are from MPP Harris.

Mr. Michael Harris: Thank you, Jessica, for coming in and presenting to the committee this morning. You talked about allocating resources wisely. At the beginning of your remarks, you talked about some of the changes in the actual education and perhaps some roll-backs. I don't know if you want to expand on that and talk about exactly where you feel dollars should be.

Ms. Jessica St. Peter: It's about not reinventing the wheel, so not creating initiatives that disregard the work that is already being done, and looking at that top-down in terms of bringing people in to support educators who might not have that analysis and gender lens to do the work that needs to be done in order to disseminate this curriculum—so looking at how we increase partnerships with sexual assault centres and academic institutions to advance the programming.

Mr. Michael Harris: Have you been part of the system currently?

Ms. Jessica St. Peter: Yes, but it's usually, like I was saying, at an individual level, where a teacher, from their own experience, advocates for us to come in. It's not until it's responsive or a youth or student has been violated that all of a sudden boards and higher-ups want a presence within their school.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. We are very grateful for your presentation this morning. We invite you now to join the audience, if you wish to.

BRANT RESPONSE AGAINST VIOLENCE EVERYWHERE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenter from Brant Response Against Violence Everywhere. Please come forward and make yourselves

comfortable. If you'd like to pour yourselves a glass of water, please do so. You are going to have 15 minutes to address our committee and then they will put some questions before you. Please begin by stating your names and your organization's name.

1130

Ms. Sandi Montour: *Remarks in Mohawk.* My name is Sandi Montour. I'm from Six Nations of the Grand River. My name is Ganhodoghus, which means I'm an opener. I am Mohawk Turtle Clan.

Ms. Joanna Brant: Good morning. My name is Joanna Brant, and I work at the Sexual Assault Centre of Brant. I want to acknowledge first that we're on native territory today and also to say that I feel as though I'm stepping on to sacred ground. I'm very moved by the presence of my sisters in the struggle—Jess, Bernice, Sara and Carrie—this morning, and also by the fact that our provincial government has prioritized bringing us together and having open hearts and minds in this process moving forward.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Well, we're very honoured by your presence today.

Ms. Joanna Brant: Thank you. Today, we are representing Brant Response Against Violence Everywhere, which is a long-standing DV committee in our community. We have 13 partner agencies, including a sexual assault care and treatment centre. We're being supported by Mary Dempsey from that organization today.

The objectives connect to advocacy for improvements in existing systems, prevention and intervention initiatives, coordination and improvement of the flow of information between agencies to ensure a sound knowledge base for the application of DV protocols, the promotion of education and training amongst agencies, and increased accountability in the delivery of each member agency's respective service.

We formed a subcommittee, the sexual violence action group, and we are charged with the responsibility of responding to any and all matters related to sexual violence in Brantford, Brant county.

We wholeheartedly support the conclusions and recommendations provided in the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres' brief to the select committee, and we are very pleased to hear so many of the themes that we identify with so strongly echoed by our colleagues today. We provide this additional brief to highlight the specific needs of our community, including Brantford, Brant county, Six Nations of the Grand River Territory.

Our main conclusion is that increased support is needed for sexual violence work that includes prevention, healing and change. This is in contrast to an approach that emphasizes punishment through the criminal justice system.

I'm not going to lead through the detailed version of the report because it's quite lengthy, and we wanted to give you as many resources as we can to take away with you. We're also mindful of the fact that we're the last speakers before lunch, so blood sugar might be bottoming out a little bit.

But I did just want to highlight one area, which is the author's position in regard to the submission connected to healing and change. We believe that there is no change without healing and no healing without change where sexual violence is concerned. Healing at the individual level and change at the community level must occur in tandem. Psychiatric, psychological, social work, mental health and justice system interventions which seek to facilitate healing for individual women who have survived sexual violence will fail if the woman must return to an unchanged community where sexual violence continues to be perpetrated. Correspondingly, change cannot take place without healing for women who have been impacted by sexual violence; that is to say, every woman.

For indigenous communities, sexual violence and other forms of violence such as family violence are linked to the trauma experienced through colonization and, more specifically, the experiences of residential schools. Thus, it is vital to recognize that to address the issue of sexual violence against aboriginal women, we must also be prepared to undertake healing and change with respect to interrelated issues such as racism, grief, addictions, poverty and so forth.

We refuse to surrender female survivors of rape and other forms of gendered violence and trauma to the exact environment that allowed those atrocities to occur in the first place, and we believe our provincial government should refuse to do that too.

Ms. Sandi Montour: Our most urgent recommendation is to increase support for sexual violence healing work with aboriginal women. This includes developing a better understanding of the impact of sexual violence in indigenous communities. To do so, we recommend providing provincial funding to support the First Nations Women's Caucus. The First Nations Women's Caucus has been sanctioned by the Chiefs of Ontario to organize a gathering of survivors of sexual violence to share their stories and to promote healing and understanding.

If you want to hear the aboriginal voice, you need to give money and support to aboriginal organizations to foster that voice because when you have white privilege—it is very intimidating for our women to stand up here and talk to individuals who have white privilege. The First Nations Women's Caucus has already done an initiative for the murdered and missing aboriginal women in Ontario, and I know that they would do an excellent job to promote that voice.

We would also support providing long-term, stable provincial government funding to establish violence-against-women agencies on the Six Nations of the Grand River Territory, specifically for sexual violence support work. Currently, on-reserve sexual violence support work in our area receives no funding, despite being the highest at-risk population and despite being the largest First Nation in all of Canada. That's something that I fight very strongly for as a director of our shelter, and I will continue to fight for that.

Also, include at least one representative on Ontario's Roundtable on Violence Against Women who has direct

experience and knowledge of issues facing survivors and sexual violence support providers on First Nation territories. If possible, we would strongly encourage the inclusion of two representatives, one from the northern reserves in northern Ontario and one from a reserve in southern Ontario. I'm aware that you currently have a representative from the OFIFC on the round table; however, they represent the urban aboriginals, and we each have our own experience. Certainly the southern reserves as well as the northern reserves have two different experiences as well.

We are also recommending organizing an initiative led by aboriginal women to integrate a more thorough explanation of the relationship between sexual violence against aboriginal women and the impact of residential schools and colonization into Ontario's It's Never Okay: An Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment.

Also, provide additional resources to help operationalize provincial legislation that is beneficial to aboriginal women on First Nations territories, such as Bill 168. Bill 168 is something that I know is sanctioned throughout most of the province; however, because First Nations territories are federally funded, there are options. Most organizations on-reserve do not have to sanction Bill 168, so it's actually, again, a privilege to have Bill 168 in your organization. Please don't make that assumption that every territory has a Bill 168 policy, because most in the Six Nations of the Grand River do not have that policy.

While implementation of such legislation is not required on-reserve, organizations and businesses might be keen to do so if they knew more about the best practices contained in such legislation and had the resources to put these legislative changes into effect.

Ms. Joanna Brant: We also support funding for prevention, healing and change work at the community level. To do so, we recommend the following:

Provide new funding and resources that will strengthen already existing services in Brantford, Brant county and Six Nations of the Grand River. We note that this reinforces the recommendations outlined in (1)(b) to provide funding to established agencies on Six Nations of the Grand River Territory.

Also, fund inter-agency collaboration work that emphasizes eliminating sexual violence and harassment, including opportunities for community organizations to work with institutions—such as harassment. We are a MAG-funded agency at the sexual assault centre, but we notice that a lot of our collaborative work is in fact invisible and there is no way to report on those meetings and the meaning that we make in the community because of that work.

1140

Work directly with established violence-against-women agencies to develop accessible campaign materials to address key issues such as consent, victim blaming, online safety and negative stereotypes of aboriginal women etc. Ideally, these materials would be available province-wide, free of charge, and be adaptable to the whole community, with specific reference to our indigenous sisters in that regard.

That concludes the formal portion of our presentation, as we were hoping that panel members would ask us questions that related to specific recommendations so we could direct our comments towards the areas of most interest to you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'm sure our members are going to have lots of good questions for you. We begin with MPP McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Thank you. Meegwetch. Powerful presentation, helpful recommendations, and that's what we're looking for.

I'm not far from you, in Burlington, actually.

A question for you: I was interested to learn more about Bill 168 and it not being applicable. Is that because of the federal funding constructs? Could you explain that to me?

Ms. Sandi Montour: It's because the reserves are on federal territory. We're sovereign territory, so any legislation that comes down from the province, it's more optional. There are certain things that are optional. That is one bill—and, again, most reserves are run by chief and council, as you're probably aware. Well, chief and council are mainly male, as well.

Again, Six Nations is one of the most progressive reserves in all of Canada, and if we don't have it, I guarantee you, they don't have it. That's something that Ganohkwásrá, the organization that I'm from—we have that, but we have it more as a best practice. We try to model that to other organizations in our community. However, most of them have not even heard of Bill 168.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Okay. Quickly, as we move forward, since the action plan includes possible legislative remedies around the Occupational Health and Safety Act—amendments to Bill 168—how can we best proceed in that regard, ensuring that we work in partnership with you?

Ms. Sandi Montour: Well, what we talked about here is doing best practices. Again, I don't think it would be right to come down and say, "Thou must," because, especially for aboriginal people, we will push back. It's all in here about advocating for doing best practices, promoting best practices.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Sharing them.

Ms. Sandi Montour: Sharing them, yes.

Ms. Joanna Brant: I think we also need to understand that there's a differential impact on the aboriginal community in regard to some of these issues. If you're designing something that's supposed to be for the whole province and it doesn't take the experience of on-reserve communities into account, I think it behooves us to figure out how to add companion resources, companion documents, companion supports, so that those core resources that are promising practices can be accessed.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP Harris.

Mr. Michael Harris: Thank you both for coming and making your presentations this morning.

I'm not sure if you were here earlier when we heard from a local organization, the Sexual Assault Support

Centre of Waterloo Region. They've got a program, Male Allies Against Sexual Violence. I'm just wondering if there's any work that you are doing in your community specifically with males and young males or boys similar to what this program offers here in the region.

Ms. Sandi Montour: Ganohkwásrâ does a lot of work with—it's our philosophy. Again, we have that holistic philosophy. It's in our traditional teachings that each of us is exposed, just by breathing, to that duality of both positive and negative energy, and it's up to us which way we choose, which path we choose.

With that in mind, we work with the whole family: the men, the women and the children, not just the women. So our policy is that violence is not okay, regardless of gender, age, position.

Yes, we have a very good men's program that does very good work. We do trauma work. We do co-ed work. We have men also in our shelters. We're very unique to the world in Canada and the United States. We're doing some really incredible things there. There was once a day when the feminists were slapping our hands because of that, and today a lot of people are coming to us, asking us how we do what we do.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. And our final—

Ms. Joanna Brant: If I may answer that question as well, just in two ways, if possible: one is to talk about the work that we are doing in our local community as it relates to concepts of masculinity and the deleterious effect that that has on our young boys and men in our No More campaign and the services that are available—but I feel this sort of empathy moment with Kathleen Wynne and the questions that she's been asked about why It's Never Okay has a gendered analysis and why the scenarios in the public service announcement focused predominantly upon the experiences of women. I'm partly looking forward to being in a forum of this kind when we don't have to address that question. I think it's exciting to see male allies taking up the reins and beginning to build on their own thinking and their work. That's definitely a project that we would want to get behind, but I also welcome the day when we can just engage in our work in an unapologetic way.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our final question for you is from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you so much for the very specific recommendations. This is actually a bit of a gap in terms of the presentations that have been made to this committee. This is incredibly helpful, so thank you.

You mentioned at the outset—and we've heard this throughout the process of the committee—the need to provide alternatives to reporting for women who are survivors of sexual violence. I would imagine that for First Nations women, given the experiences of colonialism and residential schools, the alternatives to reporting may look different. I'd be interested in hearing your perspective about helpful approaches within the community to help First Nations women heal and to provide alternatives to reporting.

Ms. Sandi Montour: I think a lot of the people—not all; I can't speak for all, of course—who we've worked with just want healing. They don't want the punishment; they want healing. Because of that there are various communities that do justice circles. There are various initiatives such as that throughout Canada.

Again, a large portion of the individuals who are molesting are family members—because in fact, a lot of us are family and we know each other. Again, I'm sure you have heard the dynamics of what happens in a community and how the perpetrator lives across the road or lives next door. Because we're on-reserve, we don't want to just leave. Leaving is not an option for us because we're tied to that land. That land watched us be born and we're tied to the land. Yes, giving women options to justice and what that might look like, I think, is a good thing. From what I know, most women want healing rather than seeing somebody—like I said, I can't speak for everybody, but that's pretty much what we hear a lot: They just want their family member to heal.

Ms. Joanna Brant: I didn't prepare exact stats, although I might have anticipated that question. I think an important component is also who justice gets visited upon. I think there's a differential impact in the aboriginal community in terms of criminalization and incarceration of men. We want to be very clear, when we're moving forward with justice recommendations, that if the model remains unchanged, that inequity will be enhanced and perpetuated rather than eliminated.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ladies, thank you very much for coming and speaking to us today and providing your information. Much gratitude to you. Thank you again.

Committee members, thank you for your work this morning. We are adjourned until 1 p.m.

The committee recessed from 1150 to 1302.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Good afternoon, everyone. The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment will now come to order. We continue today with our afternoon session in Kitchener-Waterloo. I'd like to welcome all of the presenters who are here this afternoon and any guests.

Let me very quickly share with you the mandate of this committee. We're here to listen to the experiences of survivors, front-line workers, advocates and experts on the issue of sexual violence and harassment. You will inform us on how to shift social norms and barriers that are preventing people from coming forward to report abuses. However, I do want to stress that this committee does not have the power or the authority to investigate individual cases. That is better left to the legal authorities.

I welcome you.

WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I see that we have our first presenters here from Wilfrid Laurier University. Could you please start by saying your names and any titles that go with the names?

Mr. David McMurray: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. We're very pleased to be here. I'm David McMurray, and I'm the vice-president of student affairs at Wilfrid Laurier.

Ms. Lynn Kane: My name is Lynn Kane. I work in Laurier's Diversity and Equity Office as the acting manager.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Begin anytime.

Mr. David McMurray: Okay. Thanks very much. I've had the pleasure of presenting twice to the committee, first of all representing Wilfrid Laurier University, and then in the second session as chair of the Council of Ontario Universities Reference Group on Sexual Violence.

I just wanted to start with an introduction, because Lynn will be doing the bulk of our presentation for Laurier today. While I've been designated as the institutional lead on matters associated with gendered violence at Laurier, we certainly are taking a team approach. We have approximately 200 staff, faculty and student volunteers involved in our efforts, which we'll explain today.

We launched the Diversity and Equity Office at Laurier for this purpose in 2006, so we've been working on education and programming, policy research and assessment for some time. While we'll focus somewhat on history, we really want to expand on recent research and programming commitments at Laurier. Our approach, as I say, is not solely on sexual violence and harassment but on gendered violence overall.

Lynn, take it away.

Ms. Lynn Kane: Thank you. Like many good undergraduate papers do, I'm going to start with a definition. I think that's really important to our Laurier approach, and I think it's something that sets us apart. We're using the term "gendered violence" instead of sexual assault or sexual violence because we see this as a cultural problem. We're looking at all of the factors related to that. That includes, for us, homophobia, intersections with racism, harassment, and stalking. We use this term to be a large umbrella so that it's very inclusive of all of the different aspects, and this was a recommendation to us from The Change Project, to use the term "gendered violence." That has informed our approach to defining our terms for the Gendered Violence Task Force.

After speaking about the definition, I'm going to go a little bit into the history of the culture at Laurier and I think something very common to university culture in general. This article is from *The Cord* in 1989. They outline panty raids that were happening in our residence buildings. Groups of men were breaking into women's rooms at night, stealing their underpants and displaying them in the dining hall. In *The Cord*, the conversation isn't condemning it or applauding it; it's really a back-and-forth dialogue. It's students engaging in the conversation about whether or not this is about spirit-building or whether or not this is about misogyny, and they are divided on the issue.

In 1990, after these things were happening, the president of the university at the time brought together a committee of six people on this issue and they heard 28

recommendations related to some very similar things that you're going to hear today: orientation programming, dons training, and a position dedicated to human rights and employment equity in order to address this. I bring this up because this is really fresh and on universities' minds right now, but it is not a new issue. Students, especially, have been engaging in these dialogues and having these conversations for a very long time.

Some of the more recent calls to action at our institution: One of them of note is an open letter that was written last December by two students in the Women and Gender Studies program. In that class of 50 students, five disclosed experiences of sexual assault to all of their classmates and recounted that the responses that they received from their peers were not adequate. Impassioned students wrote a letter—it was published in *The Cord* and it was signed by their classmates—about inadequate responses. After that time, we convened the Gendered Violence Task Force, which I'll speak more about later.

Some ongoing grassroots work and student activism include Not My Laurier. That's a campaign that was started by a Laurier athletics student and partnered with the Laurier athletics department and the Diversity and Equity Office to say that gendered violence doesn't represent her Laurier. She has engaged a ton of volunteers and made this an ongoing program. Monthly, there are different initiatives tied to different themes related to sexual assault/gendered violence, such as consent, healthy relationships or masculinity.

We have the Women's Safety Action Group in Brantford and we have ASCC, also out of Brantford. This is a group of former journalism students who call themselves the Advocates for a Student Culture of Consent. It's a really clever acronym, I think. Then, of course, there are the calls to action, such as the media coverage, the *Toronto Star* article, and the Premier's action plan, *It's Never Okay*.

We're really lucky at Laurier to have a little bit of a head start with this in that we just wrapped up a multi-year research project in partnership with the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region and with SIRG, which stands for the Social Innovation Research Group, out of our faculty of social work. It was funded by Status of Women Canada.

The Change Project gave us very Laurier-specific research. Much of the findings in this report are in line with what you find through research on a much broader scale: 18% of our students had experienced gender discrimination—self-reports of it—and 13% had experienced sexual assault. When you flipped it and you asked students, "How many students have disclosed to you gender discrimination and sexual assault?", it was about double. So about 25% of our students had had a disclosure from a peer that they had been sexually assaulted.

1310

Consistent with what we see elsewhere, women were 1.58 times more likely to experience gendered violence. Students with disabilities were over three times more likely to experience gendered violence.

Out of this report, they were able to make recommendations to the institution. There were four headings of recommendations and 11 distinct actions under prevention, student-centred responses, committed and accountable leadership, and improved collaboration between the university and the community. We're really pleased that this report has really guided us. We've begun a lot of the recommendations that they've put out; for example, bystander intervention training and engaging men in conversations about masculinity.

One of the things that we find really helpful about the report—I know you heard from some of our students this morning—was how much student input was in it; there was a lot qualitative data, a lot of student voices and a lot of credit, where it was due, to students for all of the grassroots work that they've been doing in this area for many, many years.

Mr. David McMurray: The level of engagement is widespread, starting with a representation across Ontario with all Ontario universities, and I'll be speaking to that a little bit later today. I'm currently serving as chair of that group. The Gendered Violence Task Force at Laurier that Lynn mentioned rose out of the response and the input primarily from students, but it has become a campus-wide community effort of students, staff and faculty.

In order to develop action-oriented and time-sensitive work, we developed terms of reference and an action plan based on policy, education, awareness, prevention, support and services, research and assessment, and communicating all of our activities and actions campus-wide. The basis of those terms was drawn from research that our students are involved with that Lynn is going to explain, as well as the Women's Directorate guide and Premier's action plan.

Something unique to Laurier: We've just appointed a gendered violence faculty colleague to provide theoretical, technical and professional expertise associated with the literature so that regardless of the representation, the ideas that come forward will be well-grounded in the field with that kind of specific leadership.

Ms. Lynn Kane: I'm going to talk more about the task force action plan and terms of reference. When we got started last year, after the response to the open letter, there were about 10 of us. As David said, we're nearing on 200 people involved. We put out a call again in September. I think I was prepared to hear back from about 30 or 40 people, in terms of booking room space and coordinating the first meeting, and then I was bombarded and overwhelmed, and really impressed with the natural diversity that came to that group in terms of representation from staff, faculty and students—male students, female students, students on our Brantford campus and students in Waterloo. That was very impressive.

Our mission is to work toward the elimination of gendered violence at Laurier, but it's also to work toward better support and robust support for survivors. Inclusive dialogue, meaningful and ongoing training, accessible policies and protocols, community engagement, support services and campus collaborations are all part of our mission.

We feel really strongly about our guiding values and principles—I only have rough headings up on the slide. These principles came out of the first general meeting of all of those members. We had members write down on a cue card what they wanted this task force to achieve. A lot of those statements were very much value- and vision-driven rather than action-driven. They outlined that safety is not just physical, so our task force mandate is not just to deal with feelings of physical safety—things like lighting—but emotional safety and well-being. They talked about shared responsibility and the idea that this is not only an issue for a particular department, such as the Diversity and Equity Office, or for special constables or wellness, but this is really something that everyone on campus can play a role in.

In the idea of shared responsibility, though, we do emphasize in our terms of reference that this doesn't impact everyone equally, and so special attention needs to be given to the voices of people who are impacted more greatly.

Intentionality, integration and sustainability is another one of the principles. That principle sees and recognizes this as a cultural problem, a problem of rape culture and misogyny, and is working to embed training efforts not just at those key touch-point times which are really important, such as orientation week, but into all of our services and existing programs. When faculty are being on-boarded, for example, or in the classroom, what are the books that we're looking at? What's the curriculum?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Lynn, you have one minute remaining in your presentation.

Ms. Lynn Kane: Thank you.

Mr. David McMurray: Let's go to "Next steps."

Ms. Lynn Kane: Yes. Some of the actions that the task force is looking at—one that we're really excited about is the development of a policy. I'll probably use my last minute to talk about this because it's a distinct policy. This policy was drafted for us by that committee I mentioned, ASCC. These students were in a class. The class ended, and they continued to stay together and they made us a policy. They said that by September or October of next year it will be ready to present to the board of governors and the senate. We have taken them very seriously. They are now part of the policy and protocol working group and they have submitted a draft to us that we're now looking at revising, parsing out and making more accessible and clear. They are still involved in that committee. We're really proud that this is completely student-run. I think that we're really lucky that that's the case.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Committee members, we're going to share the last two and a half minutes if we can, perhaps, if you want to make a very concise comment. We begin with our PC caucus, with MPP Harris.

Mr. Michael Harris: Yes, carry on. If you've got something you want to get out before you're done, please take the time.

Ms. Lynn Kane: You can ask questions more specifically about the policy if you're interested. Our long-term

steps focus on education and training and not one-offs. Ongoing programming is really important to us. I think I covered most of how we're going to proceed with actions through the values.

The one thing I will mention about the policy is that it is going to be inclusive of staff, faculty and students. Its focus will be on gendered violence, much like the definition I set out before, so it is looking at not just sexual assault or harassment. It's going to be broader than that.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): A comment from our NDP caucus.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you for the presentation, to you both. I like the fact that you've defined it, because the theme throughout the morning is that people don't have a full understanding of what sexual harassment is, either as the offender or those who are being offended or imposed upon.

What's happening at Laurier is absolutely unique. In the context of the work of this committee, can you tell us specifically what you need for us to recommend going forward so that you can continue the work and possibly duplicate it in other campuses across the province?

Mr. David McMurray: I think one of the most important things is the balance that we need to achieve between compliance and reporting, and the compassion required of survivors. It's a bit of a conundrum that I'm finding that exists, not only on our campus but provincially, that there's no sure, pure reporting mechanism that we're aware of that really represents the kind of campus climate that we know exists that comes from our students and also is provided in the data from research on vehicles such as the national college health survey. That would be helpful to reach out to universities to achieve an understanding of how important it is to balance compliance and compassion when reporting and supporting survivors.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. We're going to get a final comment in from MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: The working group for the policy run by the students: Is this in response to, or will it cover off, the proposed requirements for universities to have sexual assault policies?

Mr. David McMurray: Absolutely.

Ms. Lynn Kane: Yes.

1320

Mr. David McMurray: And we want to ground that in a firm foundation that has come from our students.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much for coming forward and sharing your information with this committee today. We invite you, if you wish, to join our audience.

COUNCIL OF ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES,
REFERENCE GROUP ON SEXUAL
VIOLENCE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will now call on our next presenter, David McMurray, with the—

Mr. David McMurray: That's me.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Oh, sorry. Just stay right there, David.

Mr. David McMurray: I'm just going to stay right here.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Just change hats.

Mr. David McMurray: You can stay.

Ms. Lynn Kane: I'll just sit and watch.

Mr. David McMurray: Thank you for having the patience to listen to me twice.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I thought it might be a different David McMurray. Who knew?

Mr. David McMurray: No, my evil twin brother—it's me.

Not only assuming the responsibility, which I cherish, at Laurier, I was also elected to chair the Council of Ontario Universities' new reference group on sexual violence that was established by the presidents of all Ontario universities. I have a prepared speech that I'd like to present, and then, obviously, take any questions that may arise.

Thank you for the opportunity to be here today and share the important work that is happening across universities in Ontario.

The reference group that I chair was established to provide evidence-based advice to Ontario's 21 universities as the entire sector looks to build on the work to create campuses that are free of sexual violence and to support survivors. Universities applaud the Premier for the bold approach she's taking to sexual violence in the action plan, and we very much appreciate and support the work done by all parties on the issue, especially those who have come together through the select committee. The universities in Ontario all recognize how widespread sexual violence is throughout society, and we want to do all that we can to address the issues on our campuses.

Last fall, after a series of media reports on sexual violence on campus in which some female survivors said that they felt that there was not a clear path to get help, Ontario universities came together to discuss what more we could do to make our resources easier to access, clear and concise, and to create safer campuses.

To help survivors navigate the resources available to them, every university in the province committed to developing a sexual assault policy and protocol website. They also agreed to put out a clear statement from the president that sexual violence would not be tolerated, and laid out steps that survivors could take to get help. These websites are now up and in place at all universities.

The COU also conducted an inventory of what was already in place on campuses and found that all universities had policies and procedures, as well as prevention, support and education programs, and at this point all universities have committed, regardless of the policy framework that they have, to distinctive sexual violence policies.

In February, more than 200 faculty, staff and students came together from every university in Ontario at a conference called Taking Action, hosted by the Ontario

Committee on Student Affairs, which is my professional group, associated primarily with vice-presidents and vice-provosts. We heard from speakers, shared ideas, and took part in round-table discussions on prevention and awareness strategies, support services and policy development.

What I learned from the conference was that while universities might not all take the same approach, we have a vast number of people devoting their time and energy to finding progressive, compassionate ways to deal with this very serious problem. From the moment students arrive on campus, often right out of high school, and also throughout their time with us, there are education campaigns that aim to challenge and change perceptions.

The University of Guelph, for example, has mandatory training for students about the meaning of “consent” during orientations. More and more universities, including Laurier, have bystander intervention training. We currently have close to 100 staff, faculty and students trained as “train the trainer” in the bystander intervention program. Others use social media or seek out student pubs to raise awareness about sexual violence and educate students about prevention.

When we talked at our conference about supports, we heard that some universities have a 24-hour crisis line, in some cases operated by students, many in partnership with their community resources. Many have “report” buttons on their website. Many have safe-walk programs and foot patrols, and some have safety applications for smart phones.

While universities in Ontario offer many of the same supports, there are instances where they provide different offerings based on the specific needs of each campus and community. This differs depending on location and size, sometimes. While specific programs may differ on our campuses, it’s important to know that when it comes to tackling sexual violence, Ontario universities have a number of important elements in common. These are some of those elements:

All universities engage in various forms of awareness-building about sexual violence: participating in campaigns, organizing workshops, hosting speakers, delivering training, and promoting events at orientation and throughout the year. It’s important to educate students when they first arrive; a lot of decisions are made. But it’s also important not to overload students and to really focus on the transition and transformation that occurs in an educational environment from the time that they start first year to when they graduate.

We all have mechanisms for launching formal and informal complaints. We all have mechanisms for confidential disclosure.

Universities all support survivors in ways which relate directly to their own environment, whether it be in the classroom or in residence, for example.

We all offer on-campus counselling, and we partner with our community colleagues to provide additional support off-campus. That support is available 24/7.

Our universities make it easy to find this help by promoting services clearly on their websites. Despite this fact, many students tell us that they don’t know; they’re not aware. So we have to work harder at communicating these resources for students and working with them in compassionate ways.

Many universities are looking at how to enhance the existing training for a variety of people to handle disclosures and work with survivors of sexual violence. Some are taking the approach that there should be a one-stop, one-place, sexual violence response centre. Many of us are concerned about whether that should be one place or a variety of touch-points that appeal to the student depending on their particular wants, needs and hopes for student success.

Universities are using a broad lens and taking a hard look at events and programming specifically focused on sexual violence. It’s not just about the violence piece but also programming on, “What is a healthy relationship? What about the impact of alcohol and drugs and mental health and organized sports?”—more to determine how sexual assault prevention or support initiatives can be incorporated.

Universities are now preparing to meet the requirements of the Premier’s action plan. All universities are creating, as I mentioned, a stand-alone policy. They are doing this in consultation with students as well as faculty and staff, since these policies will apply entirely to our campus communities. Universities are working together to find a common system for public reporting of incidents of sexual violence. We want to be transparent and we want to give students and the public a fair comparison from university to university, all while respecting survivors’ rights to anonymity and confidentiality. This is the point I made earlier about the balance of compliance and compassion.

The past year put a spotlight on sexual assault and saw a shift in consciousness that was bigger than any one person, institution or sector. It led to fundamental shifts in the way we think and talk about the issue, not only at post-secondary institutions but across entire communities.

Ontario’s universities have taken important lessons from the recent work on this issue. Perhaps most importantly, we will continue to listen to and engage with students and community organizers to work towards communities that are free—where there’s no tolerance for sexual violence.

Thank you very much. I’d be pleased to try to answer any questions.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first questions for you are from our NDP caucus.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you for your participation in the earlier presentation and this one also. I want to talk a little bit more about the common reporting system. The earlier presentation started out with a clear definition of what gendered violence is. I imagine, for this common reporting system to have any value, you’re going to have

to have the same definition across institutions so that you're reporting apples to apples. Where are you at in terms of that discussion across institutions about a common definition for what's going to be reported?

Mr. David McMurray: The reference group is focusing on that specifically. As chair, I actually brought our gendered-violence definition, which emerged from the Change Project at Laurier, and tabled the question, "Is our role going to be gendered violence-focused or sexual violence-focused?" And the decision from the reference group was that it would be focused, at least at this point in time, across the sector, on sexual violence.

1330

There are various means of reporting in place now that range from formal reporting to informal reporting. The ones that are made public are usually at the former, the formal statistics, which we all know are low.

What we'd like to do, and what we're discussing, is how we can come together with a system that involves multiple touch-points on campus that I mentioned earlier. So we have deans of students offices, we have residence life offices, we have the wellness centres, we have the Diversity and Equity Office, we have conflict and resolution offices, we have peers. We have multiple touch-points that the students interact with, so it's a complex issue of how that kind of informal data can be communicated in a way that speaks to a safe campus, as opposed to "Here are the statistics"—full stop. We'd rather talk about, "Here's the evidence associated with a safe campus and what's most important to our students and what they're encountering." We're working towards that. There's a special committee that's been developed by the ministry of five universities, five colleges and five student representatives, who are going to be meeting June 2 to more explicitly try to come up with some type of approach that all will hopefully reach consensus on.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from MPP McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Great presentation. One of the things, just anecdotally, that I thought was terrific about this and had been an open question for me was the sharing of best practices amongst university campuses. While, intellectually, that might seem like a sound practice, I wasn't exactly sure if that was happening, because we're hearing across the province of different approaches, and you don't always get the sense that there's a sharing. I understand that that's happening, certainly, from your presentation, and I think that's important.

The other piece that I'm wondering about is, are you measuring the impact of these interventions and are there in place some—because I think that will help the broader understanding and to shape policy provincially, but also because it gets at a greater understanding of what's working.

Then I have just a quick recommendation for you at the end.

Mr. David McMurray: Thank you very much. Yes, we are measuring results very, very explicitly. Our work-

ing groups include policy, education, support and services, communication, and the fifth is research and assessment. We want to evaluate absolutely everything that we're doing and provide evidence that will support decision-making and will give us feedback on whether our efforts are working.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: If I do have 30 seconds, Madam Chair, just quickly: I'll share with you her information at the end, but we heard from a professor at the University of Windsor yesterday who's doing really groundbreaking work in this area. They've designed a specific prevention program at Windsor, and she's done some very distinct research into that program with a broader lens. I'll share with you her information at the end. I think you'd find it helpful.

Mr. David McMurray: Thank you very much.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: My pleasure.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. It's good to know someone else is keeping time, too.

Our final question for you is from MPP Harris.

Mr. Michael Harris: Thank you, David, for coming in today.

We heard this morning about the Dalhousie situation, and I'm almost certain I've read of Laurier pioneering or being out front of this. I'm just wondering if you can speak to Laurier's changes, if any, since that incident. If you want to comment briefly?

Mr. David McMurray: It'd be a long story to tell. We would probably have taken a different approach. Laurier's approach in its student code of conduct is restorative-based and not really open to various interpretations. It's very clear. It's focused on the student; it's focused on the community. It's approved by the senate and our board of governors, and we've been working with it, from a student leadership perspective, for many, many years.

I think it's really important to say that the Diversity and Equity Office started as the Office for Student Diversity in 2006. It was intended to reach out and listen to students to find out what some of the most critical problems were, and after listening to listen again and come back with a focus on programming, prevention and education. I think we've taken it seriously for a long time and not simply been reactive to some of the more recent media front-page news.

Mr. Michael Harris: Thanks.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very kindly for both of your presentations today.

Mr. David McMurray: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And we invite you, if you wish now, to join our audience.

MS. MARY LOUISE HEYENS

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will now call on our next presenter to come forward, Mary Heyens.

Good afternoon, Mary. Have a seat. Make yourself comfortable. If you like, pour yourself a glass of water.

Now, Mary, I hear that you might be a little bit nervous, and that's okay. Sometimes we're nervous too.

Just to make you feel a little bit more reassured, I'm going to ask our committee members to go around the horn here and just say their first name and where they're from. I'm Daiene and I'm in Kitchener.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Laurie, and I'm from the Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock area.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Hello.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Michael Harris is next to me. He's Kitchener–Waterloo.

Mr. Michael Harris: Kitchener–Conestoga.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Kitchener–Conestoga. Sorry.

Mr. Michael Harris: Next is Kitchener–Waterloo.

Ms. Catherine Fife: I'm Catherine Fife. I'm the MPP for Kitchener–Waterloo.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Okay.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Hi. I'm Peggy Sattler, and I'm from London.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Hi.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Hi. I'm Eleanor, and I'm the MPP for Burlington.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Okay.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: And I'm Kathryn. I'm the MPP for Cambridge—so close by.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Hello.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I'm Marie-France, and I'm from Ottawa–Orléans.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Hello.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Hello.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: I'm Harinder. I'm from Brampton–Springdale.

Mr. Han Dong: I'm Han Dong from Trinity–Spadina, Toronto. Good afternoon, Mary.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Good afternoon.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): So, Mary, you're in good hands here. We're a very friendly and supportive group.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Okay.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'll let you know that you will have 15 minutes for your presentation, and then our committee members will ask you some questions, if you're okay with that. So begin any time. Start by stating your name and if you're with a group or an organization or if you're here on your own.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Okay. My name is Mary Louise Heyens. I reside in Guelph. I live in Guelph.

Can you hear me okay? I'm not too close—too far away?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Just grab the microphone and point it more toward you. There you go.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: How's that? Okay?

This is a public presentation. Thank you for the opportunity to present this oral presentation. Please refer to the attached documents that are accompanying my presentation. They will provide the select committee with a snapshot chronology of my story. As well, I submitted a written submission May 15. Please review all my documents. Thank you.

I ask the select committee for help to decipher the contents of Premier Kathleen Wynne's action plan, what

compensation packages I can apply for and what support programs I am eligible for. I don't know if you can help me locate legal assistance, but I also wish to participate in your action plan polls and surveys. I read that on page 13 of the action plan.

Am I speaking properly?

Interjection.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. William Short): It's fine.

Interjection.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Okay. I thank my family and friends for their support.

I'm here to report three male-dominant workplaces in southern Ontario that discriminate against women.

The first one is the employer, city of Guelph, and union CUPE Local 241.

I speak out publicly so that other women and men will be empowered. What happened to me was wrong. I never gave up trying to get my job back and an apology from the city of Guelph and CUPE 241.

The sexual violence in my workplace caused me to develop PTSD, undermined my dignity, blocked my career path, prevented me from reaching my full potential and destroyed my ability to earn a living.

The act of making public a private trauma to this select committee is powerful and holds accountable the employer, city of Guelph, and CUPE 241. Telling my story helps me feel whole and is part of my personal recovery. I have nothing to be ashamed of and nothing to hide.

I'm a survivor of workplace sexual violence and bullying and will not remain anonymous. I am not protecting anyone who made my life a living hell and a waking nightmare. It is difficult to speak out and identify myself as a victim of sexual violence which was perpetrated by co-workers, supervisors and human resource managers when I was employed by the city of Guelph and CUPE 241. It is difficult to speak out and say the words: I attempted suicide because of that workplace misogyny and bullying.

Sexual harassment is never the victim's fault. I believe it is important to put names and faces to the issues of sexual violence and bullying for reasons of healing and for political reasons.

I have lost all my retirement finances. I included a file labelled "Financial hardship" for you to review. I'm currently on ODSP and Canada Pension Plan disability.

I was hired by the city of Guelph on November 29, 2004. I'm a single parent, a professional truck driver and a skilled tradeswoman with 10 years' experience. I was a direct hire with the city and passed my probation period. Within the first four months of employment, my co-worker George sent me a lewd email saying that he liked my nipples. It just completely caught me off-guard.

1340

I worked 18 months full-time driving a waste packer operator truck with a clean driving record, and I was proud to serve the residents of Guelph. My dream job quickly turned into a waking nightmare. I was bullied

and sexually harassed for three years by a number of co-workers. I was assaulted at work by Patrick Kelly, a co-worker who pestered me for sex repeatedly, and I was raped on July 3, 2007, by male co-worker Ron Wisniewski. During the rape, he boasted in my face, “My mother-in-law sits on Guelph city council and I have political pull.” He also raped another co-worker named Joy Arnold. She said to me, “I guess I should have pressed charges, but my mum and aunt work for the city, so I can’t say anything.”

Please read the two-page letter written by my social worker, Valerie Damsma, of the Guelph General Hospital sexual assault unit, dated March 26, 2014, which relates to that incident.

I met a man named Joe Centorrino who was working for four years at the city and was bullied and lost his job when he spoke up. A similar incident happened to him that happened to me. One of his co-workers, Dawn Hamilton, pestered him for sex when he was a new hire. This seemed to be a recurring theme at the city of Guelph.

Betsey Elderkin, one of my co-workers, told me about her workplace harassment. The city fired her eventually.

Please refer to the file named “Guelph Police Service correspondence,” which will fill you in on all these details.

When I spoke up to report the misogyny at my workplace, the union, CUPE 241, and my employer laughed in my face and fired me. I had to hire a lawyer in 2006 just in order to communicate with this employer and union, and I had to file my own grievances because President Brad Kelloway, Vice-President Don Goodman and area rep Mark Charboneau failed to carry out their legal union duty.

The union told me to file grievances and then they blacklisted me. I had to contact and email Paul Moist and staff at their head office in Ottawa, the CUPE national headquarters, and they just blew me off and said, “We believe the local union will take care of you.”

I included letters from my lawyer, Izaak de Rijcke. He was an excellent lawyer and he helped me out as best he could. He referred me to a lawyer named Peter McSherry in Guelph, who just didn’t help me out very much.

When I reported the workplace rape, I was interviewed by two city of Guelph male police officers. There was no female officer present.

Overall, the union just stonewalled me and never represented me or supported my grievances. It was extremely difficult to find a lawyer because I didn’t have a lot of money because I had lost my job, so I was broke. I refused to sign off with the city of Guelph; I had no lawyer and did not understand what I was signing. I never gave up trying to be reinstated to my job and made sure I spoke up so that other men and women wouldn’t suffer the same way I did, especially new hires at the city of Guelph.

I attempted suicide twice, in 2007 and 2008, after the city fired me.

I received erroneous information. For example, a lawyer at the Guelph legal clinic told me not to bother

filing with the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board because, in her words, “Don’t bother. They’d just turn you down and you won’t get it,” but then I started to meet other women who had applied and were awarded compensation.

Women in Crisis: I attended there for counselling, but I was really disappointed because I came back to them at least eight times and said, “I can’t find a lawyer. Help me,” and they just turned me away and said, “Well, it doesn’t relate to domestic violence. It’s a conflict of interest.” I found this really puzzling.

I searched in every city in southern Ontario many times for a lawyer, but once again, I didn’t have money.

I emailed every political party I could think of, including Laurel Broten, the minister responsible for women’s issues. I kept meeting women who were at the city—Kathleen, who drove a garbage truck like me. She took the WIST—women in skilled trades—program, the same as me. She experienced a lot of bad discrimination from Gord Hunt, who is a city of Guelph human resource labour specialist. Select committee, please pay close attention to the information I have submitted to you regarding Mr. Gord Hunt. This man, in my opinion, hates women and just blocks your career path. He gave out negative references about me over the telephone, which is illegal for a human resource manager to do—that’s what I’ve been told.

In 2009, the city introduced automated cart collection systems. I was excluded from this job because of workplace sexual violence and bullying. I was in line to try to be part of that work crew. I kept meeting more women when I was employed at the city. A female loader operator told me in 2006 that the men said to her, “Women can’t do this job.” Also, another employee, Barb Hock, told me that men intimidated her at the operations department.

A couple of quick examples: Roy DeAngelis—Mario is his nickname—on March 22, 2007, boasted to me, “There used to be no women on the garbage trucks. We were bad.” He laughs out loud, “We were hard on the women in the past.” He said this out loud in front of all my co-workers, so there were lots of witnesses around.

Murray McLeod, in 2007: “We are mistreated by management and that’s why we are so hard to get along with and we cause new employees so much trouble.”

I also included a list of co-workers who harassed me.

Overall, the point I’m making here is that there is a flaw in this workplace design because the lead hand’s co-workers are all within the same bargaining unit.

I carefully read the Jian Ghomeshi CBC report that came out in April 2015. It’s a really important document. It outlines how the workplace was flawed, and there were serious problems with people being believed when they spoke up to report their workplace harassment.

I recall my lead hand, Joe Borin, making jokes about how Mohawk, Algonquin and Dakota streets in Guelph were referred to as “the reservation” because it had low-income housing in that area. There was a lot of discrimination towards different people at my workplace.

The second employer is Guelph Tool and Die, where I worked before I was hired at the city. I worked there for four years full-time. In the year 2000, in November, one of my supervisors, Rick Dean, health and safety coordinator, made a comment to me: “Mary, do you know that if you did not have those two things on your chest, you could do this job and you’d be a man?” I reported it to the company owner, Mr. Ireland. I received a letter of apology but then after that the bullying just increased tenfold.

I went to the WIST—women in skilled trades—pre-apprenticeship program. Just before I left Guelph Tool and Die to go to that program, Mr. Edwards, another manager, said to me, “I hear you’re going to Conestoga College to take the apprenticeship program.” I said to him, “Yes, when I finish I’ll come back and go to the tool room as an apprentice and hopefully I can get signed up as an apprentice.” Bill Edwards said to me, “Mary, if you come back to work in the tool room, I will make sure that you don’t work in the tool room, so don’t bother. I’ll make sure you don’t get a chance.”

I passed my WIST course. I worked in Toronto automotive factories. I wanted to let the select committee know that I’ve never met any women working as machinist apprentices in tool room factories in southern Ontario—zero; I never met any, and I found that really upsetting.

The third employer is Miller waste systems out of Toronto. When I lost my job at the city of Guelph in 2007, I tried for a year and a half to secure employment with Miller waste. They’re a garbage removal company. This company services Milton and areas close to Guelph, where I resided. I was actually overqualified for the job. I had good references, but the company wouldn’t hire me and just stonewalled me.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Mary, I just want to step in and let you know you have one minute left.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Thank you. When the Human Rights Tribunal asked this company how many women worked as truck drivers for Miller waste, they wouldn’t answer. They said, “We’ll get back to you,” and they never did. This is a big company and I should have had that job. They promised to contact me for job openings, and when I contacted them, they never replied.

1350

The final point I want to make is that the Guelph Community Health Centre—I was volunteering there after I lost my job at the city of Guelph. I was on Ontario Works, living on less than \$500 a month. They knew I had some mental issues and I was trying to work with my health care workers to communicate with them. I took a bag of milk out of their volunteer fridge without authorization, so they banned me from the building. I found it upsetting that this community health centre wouldn’t sit down and talk to me.

I hope that makes sense.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Mary, thank you very much for sharing your experiences with us. I do want to reiterate to you, though, what our Clerks’ office

has shared with you in writing, and that is that by naming names, you may be exposing yourself to litigation. You know and understand that. Correct?

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Not really. I don’t have a lawyer. I never did have a lawyer. I kept falling through the cracks in the systems, and when the systems were there, they chose not to help me.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): The challenge for us, though, is that by naming names—those individuals are not here in this setting and giving us their point of view. But the experiences that you are sharing, generally, are important for us to hear.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We’ll take some questions now. We begin with our Liberal caucus, with MPP Malhi.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you, Mary, for coming and sharing your experiences. I can understand how difficult it probably is for you to be here and share all the experiences that you’ve been through.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Thank you.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: I just want to know: What could have made it easier for you? What kind of supports could the government have put in place that would have possibly made your experience easier after the first time you felt this way and you felt that you were vulnerable at that point? What could we have done to make it easier, or who would you have wanted to turn to?

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Thank you for the question. In 2013, the University of Guelph was taking a survey. I participated in that survey. It was called the “first response protocol” survey. In 2007, in Guelph, there was no protocol in place. In other words, to answer your question, what I needed was Women in Crisis, Guelph Police Service and Trellis Mental Health to sit down at the table with me and say, “Okay, Mary. This is your situation and this is how we’re going to help you get through it.” I was constantly trying to keep my head above water and just do the right thing and get my job back, take good care of myself and just go through these processes. I was all by myself. I couldn’t find a lawyer. To answer your question, if I had had a lawyer to help me, I would have got this resolved years ago.

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

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Sorry; can I follow up for one second? So what you’re saying is that if there was somebody to help you set up a plan as to how you were going to move forward, that would have been something that would have—

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Yes.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Okay.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: And to have the police acknowledge that this man who raped me, Ron Wisniewski—he was DUI and was taken off his job at the city of Guelph, but they held his spot until he got his ignition interlock off. So I was a placeholder for this guy who broke the law.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next question for you is from our PC caucus, from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Mary, I just want to thank you for coming forward and telling your story. I'm sorry if you, as you have said, have fallen through the cracks, not having anyone to assist you. You've given us lots of documents, and I think that we'll just leave it at that. I know we're running out of time, but I just wanted to thank you for coming forward.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our final question for you is from MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you, Mary. I know that it takes a lot of courage to come here. You've been here for most of the day, listening to a lot of the stories.

I think what we'll take out of your presentation is that there have to be some checks and balances along the way to make sure that victims are not revictimized and that the rights of people are ensured as they move through the process.

You're absolutely right: You should have had legal counsel with you from the very start, and this is a common theme that we find, that people don't have access to legal counsel and/or can't afford legal counsel, and often-times that legal counsel is not expert enough to navigate through this system, which is already so complex.

Thank you very much for providing the materials. We certainly wish you the best of luck going forward.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: I don't understand what you mean by checks and balances.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Checks and balances: You cited two different workplaces where the people who were supposed to be enforcing the policy were actually judge and juror at the same time. That should be in violation of the workplace health and safety act. There has to be some legislation which actually ensures that. If an employer has a policy, there has to be a third party to actually make sure that that policy is being upheld, because the employer is not going to say, "I am purposely sexually harassing you." There's a conflict of interest in workplaces and, you cited, also, in a union. That's part of the transcript going forward. Thank you.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Which workplaces are you referring to? The city of Guelph?

Ms. Catherine Fife: Yes, in your presentation.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Mary, may I just jump in? You, at the beginning, asked for some guidance and some direction; you were asking for help.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Yes.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You say you're from Guelph. Do you know who your MPP is? Is it Liz Sandals?

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Yes.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Have you tried contacting her constituency office?

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: I went to her in 2009 and I said I can't find a lawyer. She said, "I can't help. I don't get involved in legal matters." I was really, really upset.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Have you tried contacting legal aid in your community?

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Yes, they assigned me a lawyer. They approved the legal aid certificate 24 hours before I went to the Human Rights Tribunal in 2009. The lawyer, Augusta Tribe, barely looked at the documents, and then she cut a deal with the lawyer in the next room. I wanted to go to a hearing. I had all the papers filed by myself. She didn't help me.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I know that this is going to be a lengthier conversation and I don't want to hold up the other people who are here to give presentations. If you are patient and want to wait, perhaps we can chat after we're done today. What would you think of that?

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Thank you. I would appreciate that.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much for coming in and chatting with us.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Okay. Is Catherine Fife saying she's going to take out—what was she trying to say? She's going to take something out?

Ms. Catherine Fife: I'll talk with her.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): She will talk with you; she's right back there.

Mary, thank you very much for coming in and talking to our committee and sharing with us today.

Ms. Mary Louise Heyens: Thank you.

SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE LONDON, OPENING THE CIRCLE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will now call on our next presenters, the Sexual Assault Centre London, Opening the Circle.

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: Thank you. I'm here alone.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Good afternoon. You're going to have 15 minutes to address our committee, and after that it will be followed by some questions by our committee members.

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: Great.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Once you are all connected there, please start by stating your name and the name of your organization, and begin any time.

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: Thank you very much for the opportunity of being here today. My name is Margaret MacPherson. I think about myself more as a freelance public servant than I do a consultant, but I work on a lot of different projects. I'm here to talk specifically about a project with the Sexual Assault Centre London called Opening the Circle.

For me, this journey really began with my tenure in the Ontario public service. I worked as a low-level civil servant in a regional office in the victim services secretariat, and then in children and youth services. I loved the public service and feel that we're so lucky to have the infrastructure and the people.

One of the most challenging things that I left the OPS with was, from a sort of regional vantage point, I saw

projects and initiatives that were amazing in terms of groundbreaking and grassroots that took place all over the province, but there was no way to drive it up through government so that people could see what was happening on the ground. That's kind of my personal project out in the community: figuring out ways to drive the really brilliant things that are going on up, because we have a wealth of resources in this province and people working on such amazing things with very little money. They do amazing things. That's sort of the context.

I'm here to show you one particular project that's relevant to this committee, I think. It's called Opening the Circle. It's funded by the Department of Justice. It's a two-year project. We're just coming to the end of the first leg of it, really. I wanted to show you the website because I think it speaks to the issues very well.

1400

The other thing I should say is that I am also a woman who experienced sexual violence as a young girl and never told anyone about it. It's only through working with the people that I've come in contact with at Opening the Circle that I realized it's really important to tear down the walls between those of us who would stand outside and say, "Not me," to recognizing that it's so present in our population and so many of us have been touched by it. I was a 14-year-old worker who had two managers sexually assault me in my very first job. I never told anyone, because I blamed myself somehow or I thought it was just what it was like to be a girl.

I think part of the whole package is tearing down the walls. If you want people to come forward, we have to figure out ways to create the environments where they're not anomalies, where they're not specimens, people who are different. We were doing focus groups in London with survivor groups, both men and women. Over and over again, what we heard was people who had been victimized, and revictimized, by the system, both in the service sector and also the criminal justice sector, by lawyers, by well-meaning people who treated them as different from themselves, as lesser than, somehow, for being victims. So this is the stigma, really, that we're challenging. What they wanted—over and over again what we heard—was to be treated like a whole person and not to be treated like a diagnosis, because so many of these folks have been through the system for mental health issues and addictions issues and in trouble with the law. They're struggling all over the place.

We created this project where we invited people—anyone—to come. Survivor language, victim language, is also difficult, so we talked about anyone who has been impacted by sexual violence, whether directly or indirectly. So over the last two years, we had a specific mandate to create tools. So three tools—we were developing something around peer support, because we feel peer support is primary to people getting help in and out of the system; something we called the lifespan tool, which I'll show you; and a service coordination and learning network, because what we wanted to do was figure out how to help the service system be more re-

sponsive—not just the service system, but also the community: How can we be more responsive when we're working with people who are seeking help?

This is the website. The most amazing thing about it is that when we first launched it, we took stock photography images of people, and the people on this project who came to it created this; this is their work. If you want to see energy for change, go into the communities and talk to the people who have been most impacted, because I can tell you that they have lots of energy and lots of ideas. They just want an opportunity to create something. What they'll also tell you is that having an opportunity to create something is a very healing process. There's a whole community that has been created from this work. We have over 70 people who have just come together. They come and go, as they can, because the work can be quite difficult. So sometimes people will come in for a little while and then they need to be out for a while. But other people pick it up and they work on it.

This is where we are right now. These are actual people who have been involved in the website. They wanted their faces on the website. When we're finished, you'll be able to click on them and they will have things to say to other people who are looking for help and support and community about what helped them. You're just seeing a sample of it. We just did this because we had stock photography up, and they said, "No, we want our faces on it." You can see as you scroll across it that there are pictures of people sitting in London talking together about how they're going to create tools for the people who are still out there, who have never found a voice or never found a place to come.

The project itself has three areas of focus; when you go down, you can see. This is the peer support. They have developed guidelines for peer support that I don't think exist anywhere else—I've been looking. It's about how to excel in peer support from the perspective of having experienced sexual violence. We went to the Mental Health Commission of Canada's peer support conference last year and were told that they had purposely left out sexual violence as something they wanted to deal with because it's too difficult. So we have developed guidelines through two years of consultations that will support people in providing a framework for what the rules are around peer support and how you do peer support in a way that never does harm but that actually supports yourself as a peer support, and also the person—what you can expect. It sets out some parameters. It will be available on the website; it's not there yet.

This is the lifespan tool. I'm going to give you a look at it. It's the idea about taking a look at where you are today and where you want to go. Most of the people who have participated in this project have never been involved with the service system. They have never sought services because they had some bad experiences, and so they are sort of the outliers. This is the group who say, "Not for me. I don't want to be treated like a victim." The lifespan tool is based on the determinants of health and also the

medicine wheel, because we wanted to help people consider a whole life.

When you come into the site, you launch the lifespan tool, and the first thing is a question: “Are you in crisis?” It will send you to where to get help if you’re in trouble. If you’re not in trouble, you go through a series of questions that will ask you about different parts of your life. Again, we looked at the determinants of health. I’m going to move through it pretty quickly, but I’ll show you a few scores.

Here’s one question: “Sexual violence or abuse defines my life.” “Yes, I feel this way quite a lot.” You go to the next question and you slide on the scale: “I feel disconnected and alone.” “Yes, I feel this way today.” “I am working on healing my past.” “Yes, I am.” “I’m able to get enjoyment out of activities.” “Yes, okay, sometimes.” I’m just going to cycle through the questions. “I have people who support me.” “I feel anxious most of the time.” “I have a safe place to live.” “My head is always busy, and my thoughts are obsessive.” “I have an addiction that worries me.” Yes, let’s say that’s a big one. “I feel supported by a community (faith, spiritual, religious, arts, sports)—whatever; “I just feel like I belong to a community.” “I feel hopeless, depressed or desperate about my life.” “I have an income that supports me.” “I feel that my life is meaningful.” “I’m physically healthy.” “I’m angry and afraid that I will hurt someone.” Let’s say you feel this way a little bit. “I can change my negative self-talk.” “Yes, I think I can do that.” “I feel like I have nothing to give.” “Yes, I feel a little bit like that.” “I feel loved.” “Yes, a little bit.” “I have enough food.”

You’re just sort of assessing, and then you come to the end. What it does is, it counts up your scores, basically, and privileges what you feel good about and what you are concerned about. If you’re really concerned about something, what are your options? What are the things that you could do to change your life? We’ve got three areas. There are strategies that come from the life experiences of the people who’ve been coming to the project, there are supports that are informal supports, and then there are services.

We’ve got one example posted for someone who says, “My thoughts are obsessive.” The strategies are stories from people who say, “Here’s what I do when I can’t get my head to stop.” On a few of them, there’s an audio portion where people can listen to the story.

This is one example: “Many nights I would wake up and my brain would be running flat out and in circles. I was exhausted. On those nights, I turn on the television with a timer and the volume way down low. Listening helps me stop the monkey chatter in my brain and pretty soon I am asleep.”

Those are strategies that are linked to every one of the statements that come from the people who have been involved, supports or ideas, things that have helped people along the way—joining a group, doing journaling. There have been some really interesting things, like Songza, a free Internet radio station that has many

different playlists. Turn on whichever station melds with your mood. There’s a phone app available. It’s just little things to help people get over whatever place they’re in.

1410

Then, of course, there’s the different services. This is the part that isn’t really built yet, because we’ll engage with the service sector to begin a discussion about what would actually be helpful for people, what’s the kind of information.

So the lifespan tool—people can archive their experiences so that they can see if they’ve had changes over time. They can take their lifespan tool to a service provider if they want to talk about what’s important to them rather than just whatever the issue is. It’s a tool to help them think about the whole of their lives and make decisions.

We’ve had service providers who’ve been involved with the project from the beginning, and what they say is that this could be a radical shift. You want to talk about changing social norms. This is a power shifter in terms of putting the power back in the hands of the people to decide what is important to them.

The next step of the project is, we want to pilot with service organizations in the area because some people need help in completing the lifespan tool. So we will figure out how to support service organizations in using the tool to work through it with people, but ultimately those folks will still get to decide what it is that matters to them. We see this as a way to also open the door and integrate services, get a conversation going among very different kinds of service providers about how to support people who’ve been impacted by sexual violence, in a way that will be informed by the people most impacted and that will also create a network of learning in this area for all of us to learn from each other.

We’ll have our first forum with the service providers in June. And—you know, I’m 58, and every now and then the thoughts go right out of my head. I don’t understand why this happens to me. Whatever.

Ms. Eleanor McMahan: I hear you.

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: Anyway, we’re excited about this. We do think this is a game-changer in a lot of ways. We’ve constructed it in such a way that we can share this with other communities, because there’s a lot of very universal information here about sexual abuse and violence, child sexual abuse, sexual violence statistics, myths and stereotypes, so that people can find information. This was one of the things we heard: “Where can I go and find information that will help me sort of place myself and think about what’s next for me?” We will have a whole section on, “I’ve just discovered that I was sexually abused as a child. What should I do? Who might I talk to?”—so again, stories and strategies from people who’ve been there, who understand.

The social enterprise piece of this is that we think that we can share this with other communities, and all they would have to add to their site is their own service experiences. We’ve constructed the lifespan tool in such a way that it can be shared in other places. We would work

with them. We'll develop the templates and whatnot so that they would just add that service line. So we see this as a way to sustain the project.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You have one minute remaining in your presentation.

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: I'm finished.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): All right. You're right on time, then.

Our first question for you is from our PC caucus, from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much. That's incredible. How difficult is it for the service providers to, say, adapt a program like this for you? Do you hear stories? Are there roadblocks? Are they kind of given money in envelopes that they can freely do this if they want to? Is there going to be a problem, do you think?

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: In terms of putting it into service organizations, there will be challenges, for sure, but what the service providers—we've got a lot of great leadership, and people who say that what we're doing isn't working, that we need to do things differently. So a willingness to try things, a willingness to experiment, which is another really important piece for funders to know—the Department of Justice has been amazing in letting us work on an emergent project that can shift and change as we're going. That's allowed us, I think, to create this environment where the possibility of landing this in very different kinds of environments, like employment services, as well as the women's shelter and the family counselling agency—very different kinds of people who share a common bond of working with people who've been impacted, who may or may not know it. So I think the will is there—

Ms. Laurie Scott: So when you say "justice department"—sorry—what do you mean?

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: It's a federal grant.

Ms. Laurie Scott: A federal grant to develop it?

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: It was a federal grant that got us going.

Ms. Laurie Scott: To get you going, and then it's the provincial overlay. Okay, thank you. That's probably all I have. I'm being cut off.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our next question for you is from our NDP caucus, from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much, Margaret. I'm very proud of my community and the work that is under way and game-changing initiatives like this. I want to acknowledge the work that you have done in the community.

You mentioned that the site was designed for people who aren't necessarily connected to the system in any way. How are you going to reach those people to let them know that the site exists? So that's one question.

The other question is also around the content: Is the content dynamic, so that as people go in and use the lifespan tool and have strategies that have worked for them that they want to share, is there an opportunity for them to upload ideas like that?

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: So those are really good ideas that, absolutely, are kind of next steps, next iterations. We're creating the base program, and then that's exactly where we're going. It will be dynamic in terms of it needs to be—because it's a community approach that we want as well. This isn't a project that starts and stops. We're figuring out ways to keep it moving and learning and developing—evolving as well. So yes, that's very much a part of what makes this, I think.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: And how are you going to reach people who aren't connected to the system?

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: Well, we have a communication group, right? We have people of all ages who have various degrees of expertise with social media, and people who have been impacted by sexual violence are connected in ways out there that we don't necessarily see. They are the ones who will drive this.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final questions for you are from MPP Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you very much for being here today. I guess I have similar questions. What are the next steps for Opening the Circle? How many people have participated in this project?

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: We have about 70 people who have contributed to the formation of what we have right now. So we're still in the beta phase. We haven't launched it, but we will do a community launch next month. And then the next steps are twofold. The communication piece—we're also collecting data. We'll be analyzing how people are using the system, what's useful, what's not useful, and then piloting with the service organizations to begin the process of the integration among sectors within the community. So that'll be the next big piece.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: So basically right now you're piloting it, and then you're going to partner with—I don't know—agencies or community centres that will ultimately use that program.

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: It will be a resource for them, as well, because their front-line workers often report that they don't know what to do with people who disclose to them. They come in for another reason, and they're not sure what to do either. So your question about—there's a real benefit to service organizations being able to support people in a meaningful way.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. We very much appreciate your presentation to this committee today. Thanks again.

Ms. Margaret MacPherson: I appreciate the opportunity. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We invite you, if you wish, to join our audience.

We will now call on our next presenter, Sexual Assault and Violence Intervention Services of Halton to come forward. Do we have Kathryn Baker-Reed in the room? No?

Ms. Sara Casselman: She's not here yet.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Okay. Let's skip ahead and see if we have representatives from the YWCA of Toronto. Okay.

Next down, we have Waterloo Region Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centre—I guess we're way ahead of schedule now.

Committee members, I will ask you just to take a five-minute break, and we'll reconvene in just a few minutes. We'll see how we're doing with our next presenters. Thank you.

The committee recessed from 1419 to 1421.

YWCA TORONTO

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Committee members, we're going to move ahead with our next arrival, Maureen Adams with the YWCA of Toronto. Maureen, I would ask you to come forward and have a seat. Make yourself comfortable. Pour yourself a glass of water, if you'd like.

Ms. Maureen Adams: Thank you so much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You're going to have 15 minutes to address our committee and that will be followed by questions. For the record, when you begin just say your name and your organization. Begin anytime.

Ms. Maureen Adams: Thank you so much. Maureen Adams, YWCA of Toronto. I wanted to thank the committee for rescheduling me. I was actually scheduled to appear before you in Toronto last week—why would YWCA Toronto be in Kitchener-Waterloo?—but there was a death in my family.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Oh, I'm sorry.

Ms. Maureen Adams: That's okay. I'm very happy to be here today.

I'm the director of advocacy and communications at the YWCA Toronto. We're actually the largest women's organization in the country. We provide direct services and tackle systemic issues that create barriers to women's equality. We help women escape and recover from violence, move out of poverty and gain economic security, and access housing that is safe and affordable. We also work with girls between the ages of nine and 13 and we build their leadership and critical thinking skills. We serve about 11,000 women and girls in 30 programs in 12 communities across the city of Toronto.

In the 15 minutes I have with you today, I thought I would focus on three issues:

- the importance of public awareness and prevention programs to change attitudes and behaviours against sexual violence and harassment;

- the critical need for trauma counselling to help women and girls who have been sexually assaulted recover from that assault; and

- the importance of independent legal representation for sexual assault survivors to ensure that their rights are protected and also that the men who assault them are held accountable.

As you know, when we're talking about sexual assault we always try to be guided by the voices of survivors, so I wanted to start with reading a small passage from a remarkable book, *One Hour in Paris: A True Story of Rape and Recovery*, by Canadian author Karyn Freedman:

“There are images in my head that do not belong there. No matter how hard I try to get rid of them they will not go away. It is as if they are permanently seared into my brain and written over my body. Over the years I have tried to talk them out, and when that didn't work, I talked louder. I have tried to write them out, paint them out, fight them out, and by sheer determination, will them out. Occasionally, in darker moments, I have tried to drink them out. These efforts were not futile (except for the drinking). Each one helped in lessening the hold the images have over me, but none was entirely successful. They are mine for life ... and that just might be the most important thing we can learn about psychological trauma.

“It has been over 20 years since I was raped ... and I now understand that trauma is not something from which one ever fully recovers. It is a chronic condition, and that means that rape is forever my shadow. It tracks me everywhere. It follows me up the street to my local coffee shop in the middle of the day, and when I come home from a late night out with friends, it is just over my shoulder. It is with me at work, in the classroom and at play, and in the dressing room before one of my recreational hockey games. Most especially it stalks me in the bedroom.

“Twenty years later and I still have to work to put myself to sleep at night. And like most survivors of sexual violence I am anything but carefree with my body. I am never fully uninhibited when lying naked with another person, and I have to set up strict boundaries—no touching my head, no dark rooms, no spontaneous moves—in order to protect myself from the images that will otherwise wash over me.”

This passage powerfully describes the long-term impact of violence and trauma on sex-assault survivors. The tragedy is that 460,000 women and girls are sexually assaulted in Canada every year, and each one of them has their own unique story about the impact that sexual violence has had on their lives.

This is not the type of world we envision for our daughters, our sisters, our mothers, our friends and neighbours. This is why the select committee's work and the province's It's Never Okay strategy are so critical to ending sexual violence and harassment. It's also why women are speaking up in online campaigns like #BeenRapedNeverReported, and why two 13-year-old girls organized a petition on sexual consent that was signed by over 40,000 people.

It is why there is a renewed commitment—including by men—to stopping violence against women. The last few years have been difficult for women and girls but not unusual: Rehtaeh Parsons, Rinelle Harper, female students at Saint Mary's University, Dalhousie and UBC—and of course the allegations against Jian

Ghomeshi. The public is behind change and is behind solutions. Now is the time for bold action.

Beginning in January of this year, YWCA Toronto has been holding consultations with front-line staff and participants, asking them about the systemic issues that the association should focus on. So far, we've met with 150 participants and we're halfway there. Not surprisingly, violence against women has been identified as a top priority in each and every consultation. This is what the women and girls have told us:

We need to educate boys and men to stop assaulting and harassing women and girls as we go about our normal lives, in our homes, when we are at school or on campus, when we are online, at work, or in the community at large. We have the right to go about our lives without the fear of violence and to live in a world where we are safe at any time of the day or night.

Sexual violence is one of the most traumatizing forms of violence that can happen to us. It's an unacceptable violation of our bodies, our integrity, and our place in the world. Counsellors need to know the impact that trauma has on us and recognize the unique process that we each need to go through to recover from assault.

If we are involved in any legal procedure related to violence against us, we must be fully informed about our legal rights and options and be provided with legal help when we need it.

In other words, there needs to be a continuum of strategies, from changing awareness and behaviour to crisis and trauma counselling, from training and education to legislative change and reform. But most importantly, we must have the courage to develop new ways of tackling sex assault, because what we are doing now is simply not working.

I want to talk about the three issues. First is the public awareness and prevention programs.

There is strong support for the new Who Will You Help? public awareness campaign, particularly its focus on bystander awareness. It is a very accessible campaign, touching on very real and recognizable scenarios to most of us, and it's changing the dialogue about sexual assault and harassment and what people need to do to stop it. The only advice we would give on this is to ensure that in cases where people do intervene and attitudes do begin to shift, there are appropriate community, health, education and legal resources at the back end to support the public awareness campaign.

The revisions to the sex education curriculum also have strong support, especially related to sexual health, consent and online safety. Even though there is opposition to these changes, they are critically important in developing healthy, informed young people. We urge the committee to recommend that the government remain steadfast in implementing the new sex ed curriculum in the fall of 2015.

1430

Participants in our YWCA Toronto girls' centre have also identified the need to address pornography. They are telling us that its prevalence is changing the way young

men define their expectations about sexual behaviour and relationships. From the girls' perspective, this behaviour is not only unhealthy but unsafe, with elements of violence that are becoming normalized.

Girls also told us about the need for prevention and public awareness programs that are youth-led and media-savvy, including social media, of course, and that engage girls on issues such as violence and sexual exploitation, healthy relationships, critical thinking and social change. Girls want gender-specific programs where they have the space to talk about violence against women in an open and safe and non-threatening environment.

We urge the committee to recommend that permanent funding be put in place for girls' prevention, awareness and leadership programs, particularly in recognition of the disproportionate impact that violence has on women and girls.

Trauma counselling: Women respond to and recover from trauma differently and there is no one intervention that works well for all survivors. Some women prefer individual counselling; others prefer group or peer-led supports. Some are helped through art therapies such as dance, visual arts, music or journaling, others through spiritual work, body work or fighting for social change. Some require specialized intervention, such as sexually exploited women or girls who may be sex-trafficked, indigenous women, newcomers, or women and girls with addiction or mental health issues.

The length of time it takes women to recover can also vary. This depends very much on the nature of the actual sexual violence, whether there have been multiple assaults, the relationship with the offender, whether there are family and community supports, the response from first responders, whether a woman goes to trial or not, and the overall well-being of the woman and her community prior to the assault.

Healing is complex and the responses and services need to respond effectively to this complexity. Participants in our YWCA Toronto violence-against-women programs have told us that they cannot access the trauma counselling that they need because they cannot afford counselling fees. There are long waiting lists. Some counsellors are inadequately trained. Many programs are short-term in nature or not available at all, such as specialized addiction detox beds for women. Most importantly, the types of alternative supports I just mentioned that survivors find most helpful are generally not funded at all.

We urge the committee to recommend that trauma counselling be defined broadly to encompass the different interventions and specialized supports that women need to recover from sexual violence and that mechanisms be put in place to ensure that trauma counselling is timely, accessible and affordable, particularly for low-income women.

Legal representation: As we all know, and you've probably heard, sexual violence is one of the most under-reported of all violent crimes. For every 1,000 assaults, only 33 are reported. Twelve result in charges, six are

prosecuted, and only three lead to a conviction. Clearly, the system is broken and failing women, who represent well over 90% of those who are sexually assaulted.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Adams, you have one minute remaining, or you can continue and we'll forgo the questions—your choice.

Ms. Maureen Adams: I thought I timed this. I'll go a little further, but not much.

You probably know why women aren't reporting sex assaults. You've probably heard that, so I'll pass on that. But I do want to say that in terms of legal representation, the Supreme Court has given clear directions: the rape shield law, provisions about medical and other records, not introducing rape myths in court, and clarity on the meaning of consent. The issue here is that many women don't know about this, do not know it confers rights upon them, and they have no access to free legal, independent representation, advice about how the court works, what evidence is and is not admissible, what their rights are, how they can be cross-examined and what the role of the judge and crown is. Nor do they know that sometimes—it's very rare, but sometimes—they can make legal submissions to protect their rights during the course of a trial.

Some who have financial means can retain counsel at their own expense, but this is not the reality for most women who have been sexually assaulted, and as we know, the judge and crown cannot be their advocates.

The law is complex, the court system is complex and most of us, let alone those experiencing trauma, cannot expect to be knowledgeable about or able to interpret complex legal issues and decisions on our own.

Participants have told us they are afraid to navigate the criminal justice system on their own and feel disadvantaged and intimidated when they do. Some fear for their lives because they have experienced violence or may have been harassed. For these reasons, we strongly support the provincial action plan to develop a new prosecution model, a pilot project with legal representation and, particularly, working with the law society to ensure that defence counsel upholds Canada's rape shield laws.

This is an area that will require openness, courage and determination as it is an attempt to balance and protect the rights of sexual assault complainants while maintaining the rights of the accused. These suggested reforms are necessary, for if nothing significant changes, things will stay the same: low reporting, low conviction rates and no consequences for the men who continue to sexually assault women.

We urge the committee—this is my last recommendation—to recommend that in all cases where sexual assault survivors are attempting to exercise their legal rights, whether it be in the criminal or civil courts, a claim before the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board or a complaints process arising out of an incident on campus, they be fully informed about their legal rights and options, and be provided with free, independent legal representation throughout the process.

This concludes my presentation. I'd be happy to answer questions.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. We will do that. We've got about 30 seconds per caucus—so very concise—beginning with MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: If there was one priority area that we should focus on first while we're moving forward to address all these, would it be prevention, supports for survivors or improving the criminal justice system?

Ms. Maureen Adams: Which one would I go for first?

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: To address first.

Ms. Maureen Adams: To tell you the truth, I can't really pick.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Okay. All important?

Ms. Maureen Adams: Because they all go hand in hand.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: They all go hand in hand. Okay, thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): From our PC caucus, MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much for accommodating and wanting to come to present to us. I think if you could just submit especially the legal specifics that you didn't get to, and give that written submission to our Clerk so that we can see for our report-writing, that would be excellent. Thank you very much again.

Ms. Maureen Adams: You're very welcome.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I was going to make the same point, too. If you wouldn't mind either emailing us your speaking notes today or giving us a hard copy, we'd appreciate that.

Ms. Maureen Adams: I actually brought a hard copy for all of you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We will get that from you.

Ms. Maureen Adams: Okay. I didn't know if you wanted to be carrying them all over.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We'll do that in just a moment. We're just going to take a final comment from our NDP caucus, from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much. Earlier today, we heard a powerful presentation from a woman about her own experience in the justice system. You echoed a lot of what she had shared with us.

Now, you identified the law society as sort of the main place where there should be accountability for ensuring that the rape shield law and other legal protections for women are upheld. Is there some onus on judges as well? You didn't mention—

Ms. Maureen Adams: Yes. In the back of my report, I've put a number of background documents that I've used that helped me prepare for this today. I would say that there is lots of debate here and around the world about what role a judge can play in court. There was a case recently, in the last year, where a judge did attempt to intervene when there was a defence counsel who was pushing too hard on the rape shield law. That was appealed to the Court of Appeal, I believe, in Alberta, and it was overturned on the basis that the judge did not act impartially and that it was not the judge's role.

So one of the issues in all the reviews that are going on about this issue about legal representation is ensuring that women's charter and privacy rights are protected, but the judge can't protect them and the crown can't protect them because they are impartial arbiters in the decision. That's one of the problems.

In Europe, it's a different court system. A judge has something called an inquisitorial role and actually can ask questions for everyone in the room, but in our system in Canada, Britain, New Zealand and Australia, it's more of an adversarial system, so the crown and the judges have to be seen to be independent and not advocates for the women—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Maureen Adams, we are very thankful for your coming to Kitchener-Waterloo today from Toronto.

1440

Ms. Maureen Adams: You're welcome.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): There are four area MPPs in the Kitchener-Waterloo/Cambridge area who are sitting on this committee, so you got to experience the drive that we do all the time.

Ms. Maureen Adams: I came on a different lovely rural route, and it was fabulous. Thank you so much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): That's the way to do it. Thank you.

WATERLOO REGION
SEXUAL ASSAULT/DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
TREATMENT CENTRE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would like to call on our next presenters—committee members, we're skipping ahead as we are still waiting for our Halton presenters. I would call on Casey Cruikshank and Katie Gosse.

Ladies, come forward and take a seat; make yourselves comfortable. Pour yourselves some water if you would like that. You're going to have 15 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed by questions. Please begin by stating your names and the organization that you represent. Begin any time.

Ms. Casey Cruikshank: I'm Casey Cruikshank, and I'm the director for the Waterloo Region Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centre, which is a hospital-based program.

Ms. Katie Gosse: My name is Katie Gosse, and I'm a social worker with the treatment centre, under Casey.

Ms. Casey Cruikshank: I'm going to begin today. I know that Katie had hoped to bring someone with her, and she will explain why she isn't here.

My presentation today represents those experiences and recommendations from people who have accessed our team at the Waterloo Region Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centre as well as our social worker and nursing team members and myself. As I mentioned, Katie Gosse is with me, and she had hoped to bring JB with her.

I want to first explain the context from which I speak. The Waterloo Region Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centre is a program of St. Mary's hospital since 1992 and provides an immediate response to those living in the region who have experienced a recent sexual or domestic assault. Annually, we see a little over 400 people, and the majority are female. Two thirds access us through the hospital, and another one third contact us for counselling only.

The program is quite tight. It's myself, 12 social workers who represent 1.8 full-time equivalents and 12 nurses who represent 1.3 full-time equivalent nurses. They work on an on-call basis so that we can be responding to people immediately when they come to the hospital because of an assault. Our program is the only hospital-based program in the province that has nurses and social workers on call, and we found that that has been a benefit to people who come in to use our service. As a matter of fact, 30% of those who come in to see us do continue to see that same social worker for follow-up. In a sense, when the person comes into the hospital and is examined for forensic evidence or photographs, the social worker is able to be with that person and ground her while the nurse is collecting forensic evidence. Again, we are the only centre in the province that has the nurse and social worker on call, and we would really recommend that that be something that the committee could consider.

We see people for six sessions. Katie is going to talk a little bit about that. That works for some people, but it doesn't work for a number of other people who are traumatized and needing a lot more than six hours with a counsellor, a social worker. We would hope that there might be some room to look at something more like six to 20 hours for victims, minimum, for counselling.

In our region, we have a specially trained group of partners. Their focus is domestic violence. Most of those are housed under one roof, referred to as the Family Violence Project. The partners include the detectives, family and children's services, assistant crown attorney, victim services, and legal aid as well as our own follow-up social worker and nursing. All partners have specialized training related to domestic violence. The proximity of the service, I believe, really benefits victims. It means that the partners have an expanded understanding of the roles of each service and can make better and quicker referrals to each other on behalf of clients and with the client's permission. There are regular joint in-service consultations, resulting, I think, in increased awareness, sensitivity, learning and advocacy among the partners. I believe the result is greater dignity, equality and respect to those who do access us.

This partnership exists where the assault has occurred to a person and where there has been an intimate relationship and there has been physical violence. A partnership among services where the accused is an acquaintance, a stranger or a person in a position of trust, such as a parent or a teacher, does not exist, and the benefits noted earlier in terms of that proximity with the partnership just don't

exist, I don't believe, to the same extent. I would recommend that services be provided from a partnership basis for those who experience assaults by acquaintances, strangers etc., similar to those noted in the Family Violence Project.

As a team, we also want to recognize and thank the provincial government's Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment, especially for the recent scenarios that are being aired on TV addressing bystander behaviour to sexual violence and harassment, because what we have found is that there has been lots of discussion about those scenarios, and we think this is leading to some change in behaviours that we hope will help to end misogyny. Our hope is that there are going to be more of those.

Our members have been disturbed by the stories we have heard from victims of sexual violence, including video games and music glorifying sexual violence and, in particular, date rape; victim blaming; a lack of safety for women to speak out; a lack of societal support; and verbal sexual comments thrown at women by men. More recently, it was well publicized by the sports broadcaster who was verbally harassed by a group of men.

Our team members and those who access our service are encouraging that there be:

- an increase in education and outreach that targets healthy relationships;
- an increase in airing of scenarios similar to what we just spoke about that challenge sexual violence;
- increased budgets for counselling;
- an understanding in court that light sentences for offenders send a negative message to victims and perpetuate the sense of victim blaming;
- more accountability in universities and colleges; and
- marketing of hospital-based centres to encourage victims to come forward and get immediate help.

We are concerned that the criminal justice and court response to sexual violence by an offender known to a victim appears to be treated as not so serious. We suspect that if the crime is not treated seriously, the offender will not change his behaviour and he's at risk for repeat offending.

We are most grateful to Ms. Wynne's government for the commitment to end misogyny in Ontario, to make it a safer province and for inviting us to provide input and recommendations from those who have been intimately impacted by experiences of sexual violence and harassment. Thank you.

Ms. Katie Gosse: I would like to go along with Casey and just let you know the appreciation of those commercials and how I've had many discussions with my clients about them, and even just the general public. I really think they have a very clear and powerful message. I'd just like to say that as well.

My hope for today was that my client who is a 16-year-old sexual assault victim would be able to attend, as she was hoping to write a letter to the committee in terms of recommendations for services and explain her experi-

ence of the services that she received. Unfortunately, she is not able to attend today because she is having some physical health problems that have required her to be in the hospital for the past two days. I spoke with her and tried to encourage her to share with me in letter format, as she was very tired and weak, what I could share with you. Unfortunately, I didn't receive anything directly from her, but I will do my best to speak on her behalf and—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Katie, I just want to step in and say that if and when you do receive a letter from her, you can certainly submit it to the Clerk's office.

Ms. Katie Gosse: Absolutely. That's great. That's great to know.

Like I said, my client is a 16-year-old sexual assault victim. I met her in the emergency department. I was the social worker on call, and I was able to be with her while she had the sexual assault examination kit completed. Just as Casey did say, the benefit of me being in that room with her was that it was as if it was an extra session. We have six sessions that we are allotted to meet with each client. My presence in that hospital room with her is a huge engagement strategy because I am there with her experiencing what she's going through—not directly—and encouraging her through it, so that the next time that we meet she doesn't have to explain her story yet again to another person, to a new person, that retelling of the story. I was there; I get it—"Okay. Where are we going from here?" Just that familiarity with the social worker, I think, provides a huge level of comfort and ability to engage and have a more beneficial time when we meet together.

1450

I really believe that our centre does an excellent job of addressing the emotional and cognitive trauma that is associated with sexual assault. One thing that I have noticed in a lot of my clients, who actually tend to be young females around the age of 16 to about 21, is that a huge complaint is the physical impact that the trauma has on them. I believe that when you go through an experience such as a sexual assault, it impacts every part of your being. Our services, as social workers, can address the emotional and cognitive issues that arise, but when clients are complaining that they can't sleep at night, that they have constant tension in their body, that they're experiencing physical pain—for example, having to go to the hospital with my current client—I directly correlate that to their experience of sexual assault.

With the allotted time of six sessions, we have very limited ability to address those concerns, which is a huge part of their healing because that is a constant feeling that they have, that there is not a lot of relief or remedies that they feel they can address because it's just always there. I believe that if we were given more time than just the six sessions, which essentially limits us to crisis counselling, we could really connect more and provide more direct interventions that help relieve some of the physical pain that the victims are experiencing.

As well, along with these six sessions, is that clients may feel—that is explained to them from the beginning: “These are our services and this is how we can help you.” Sexual assault is such a huge topic that I think we know and they know cannot be covered in six hours. From my education and the research that I’ve done, most evidence-based interventions and therapies recommend a minimum of eight to 12 sessions in order to fully engage with a client, develop goals, practise interventions and really solidify those goals, so that they know that when they are no longer receiving our services, when they’re out in the community on their own, those are going to be something that they can rely on themselves—so just creating that independence and that self-empowerment to address their own trauma.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Katie, you have one minute remaining in your presentation.

Ms. Katie Gosse: Well, that’s very timely, because I think that’s it.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You’re well ahead of schedule. Thank you. Our first questions for you are from our PC caucus, from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much for coming here. I wasn’t aware that the Waterloo region hospital was the only hospital that—

Ms. Casey Cruikshank: It’s the only one that has the nurse and social worker on call together.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay. I think it’s a marvellous model that needs to be implemented across the province. You gave us a good backup; we’ve been hearing about the need for more sessions, so you both addressed that incredibly well.

I just have to look to my note to see what else I was going to ask you here. Do you find that, in the case of the 16-year-old—I don’t know how she arrived at the hospital, if she came by ambulance, but I just wondered about the hospital setting. Is that comfortable for people to have the first contact, especially if we’re talking about young girls, right? Would they think first—does it appear cold? It’s hard to go to the police, first off. So I don’t know if you want to expand on that setting, how successful you are, if things should be done differently.

Ms. Katie Gosse: We have two locations, so we service Cambridge Memorial Hospital as well as St. Mary’s General Hospital, and at St. Mary’s General Hospital we have—well, we have our own safe space at each hospital, but St. Mary’s is more up to date and renovated. Through donations we had some comfortable furniture and it was painted and there are some pictures of flowers. It’s a lot more calm and quiet, and comforting to the victim. It’s a huge benefit for us. We take them from a crowded, noisy emergency department to a more intimate space that’s locked, it’s key-card access, so no one can just walk in. A doctor’s not just going to walk in, or a male, or someone of the other gender that may frighten them. That’s a huge benefit. Cambridge isn’t quite as nice, unfortunately.

Ms. Casey Cruikshank: Maybe I can just add something to that too. One of the things that the team members

will ask is if it’s okay for the director to give them a call to see how things went. My question to people who do access the emergency services is, “Was it what you expected?” And the response I get over and over again is, “I didn’t know what to expect.”

Coming to the hospital, they were worried about pregnancy, they were worried about HIV, they were worried about disease. That’s what drove them to the hospital: their safety.

Then, as Katie had mentioned, we come into the hospital within 45 minutes—it’s usually sooner—and then we take them away from the emergency department to a nice, safe place that’s just for them. It was put together with input from victims who had used our service to say, “This is what you need.”

We do our best, but I think your question around coming to the hospital and what it’s like for a 16-year-old is a good one. I think the fear of disease and pregnancy and other things is probably what drives them.

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

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much. Again, well done.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our next questions for you are from our NDP caucus. MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you. Casey, you were talking about the Family Violence Project and I think that’s really in keeping with the same theme, that they are victim-centred services, right? Do you want to expand on some of the victim services that are co-located and the importance of—I think you called it the proximity—of those services?

Ms. Casey Cruikshank: Yes, sure. It came together in about 2006. We actually were homeless, our centre. We ended up there in terms of renting space. Then the police started a domestic violence team, and in conversation with them they decided to come to a place called Carizon. It used to be called the Catholic Family Counselling Centre—

Ms. Catherine Fife: And Mosaic.

Ms. Casey Cruikshank: And Mosaic, yes. I hope it doesn’t change the name again. But the bottom line, I think, is that a number of us have been down to San Diego, where they have a model—it’s called the Family Justice Center. It’s very justice-focused. So we tried to replicate it but not make it justice-focused, make it victim-focused. With the police and myself and the Catholic Family Counselling Centre, we started working on other people, like the shelter, like family and children’s services, like the crown attorney, like legal aid and the Victim/Witness Assistance Program to come. Basically, they’re renting space. We’re all renters and we’re all supported by our various ministries.

But the fact that we’re all on one floor, and we can walk down the hall and say, “There’s a woman down here who would like to talk to the police. She knows that you might have to lay charges but she needs to talk to you.” Or to say to somebody, “I think you’re going to need some help in protecting your children. Family and children’s services is just around the corner, let’s go get them.”

We all know each other, and we know each other's roles and it just feels like a better service.

Ms. Catherine Fife: It is.

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

Ms. Casey Cruikshank: Thanks.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And our final questions for you are from our Liberal caucus, from MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Thank you very much. As a former emerg nurse at Cambridge Memorial Hospital, I can't tell you how grateful I was as a triage nurse to be able to call your centre and direct everybody out of my very busy and non-private emerg to another area, which leads me to looking at your best practices and the integration of services that we have here in Waterloo region. Can you see it being beneficial to roll that out across the province?

1500

Ms. Casey Cruikshank: Are you referring to the Family Violence Project, or are you referring to our model—

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Your model, because you've got, as I said, almost wraparound services in your own centre right at the moment of truth, including your nurses who do the rape kits etc.

Ms. Casey Cruikshank: I'd love to see it, because there are 35 hospital base centres. How we became different is because I didn't realize as a new manager that you really should get permission around your budget. My background is social work, and I went to the women who I had worked with—

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: That's what we do, social workers.

Interjections.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Ask forgiveness.

Ms. Casey Cruikshank: I invited a number of women who I had worked with in the past to come and meet with me, some in groups and some one-to-one. I said, "We've got this money coming down the pike to develop this program. What do you think we should do?" We talked about the services that were already in the province; there were about 25 centres at that time. They all had one nurse coming in at 3 o'clock in the morning—and expecting to support the victim, her family, be involved with Family and Children's Services and the police. I thought, "How can you do that to one person at 3 o'clock in the morning?"

The women said that, in their experience, they had gone through the emergency department, and how frightening it was when people didn't know how to support them. They wanted somebody at their head basically to ground them; so the nurse could collect forensic evidence—excuse me—between their legs, swabs and all sorts of very intrusive things. It feels like a second assault.

They said, "If you're going to get a social worker, if you've got one FTE for a social worker, why don't you make her on call, too?" I said, "Okay, well, that's what we'll do." So that's what we did. I think it is a good

model. I think that it allows the nurse to collect forensic evidence, give the medication, know that she's going to go to court on that, and yet help to ground the victim and get through it.

Ms. Katie Gosse: If I could add as well, I was able to attend the Ontario conference of all of our centres and was able to network and communicate with some of the other service providers in different regions. When they found out that we had a social worker attending—"Wow, that's amazing." Some of the stories of their own fears of attending in the middle of the night by themselves in a small room—with a population that we work with that is very vulnerable, unpredictable, can claim a lot of things. For workers' safety—physical safety, emotional safety, all those safety concerns for workers—I feel way more focused on meeting the needs of the client than worrying about what I'm missing or something else.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Forensic evidence.

Ms. Katie Gosse: Yes, exactly.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Katie Gosse, thank you very much. Casey Cruikshank, I've had the honour of telling your story now for over two decades in a different capacity. Thank you both very much for the important work that you're doing in this community.

Ms. Katie Gosse: Thank you.

Ms. Casey Cruikshank: Thank you so much for the invitation.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I invite you now, if you wish, to join our audience.

COMMUNITY JUSTICE INITIATIVES

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenter to come forward. We're a little bit ahead of schedule. I'm going to call on Chris Cowie with the Community Justice Initiatives to come forward.

Good afternoon, Chris. Good to see you.

Mr. Chris Cowie: Well, that was quite the timing, wasn't it?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Just take a seat wherever you like. Pour yourself some water if you wish to do so. Chris, you're going to have 15 minutes to address our committee. That will be followed by questions for you. Please begin by stating your name for the record and the name of your organization.

Mr. Chris Cowie: I'm Chris Cowie, and I'm the executive director of Community Justice Initiatives, which has been alive and well for quite some time in this community—really began the very first restorative justice program. I wanted to talk a little bit about that.

Restorative justice is not often the first thought when it comes to issues of sexual abuse, when it comes to resolving issues of sexual harm. With some of the things that we've been learning over the last number of years, we really feel that it needs to play a bigger role in this.

I'm often asked to speak about restorative justice and really just talk about what it is. That's a difficult thing to do in a very short period of time, but I do feel the need to talk a little bit about our program where we address

sexual harm by first off just talking a little bit about restorative justice.

Essentially, restorative justice happens when we're able to set aside our natural desire for revenge and retribution where harm has been done, where crime has taken place or where conflict has happened and when we have perpetrators who are willing to accept responsibility for what they've done, who are not trying to minimize the impact of their crime and certainly not trying to deny that they've committed a crime. We can bring those people together and we have the ingredients for a restorative process. A restorative process really seeks to restore what has been lost through various types of conflict and crime.

Our flagship program is really our victim-offender reconciliation program, where we receive in the area of about 100 referrals a year that come directly from adult court. We deal a lot with assaults, break-and-enter and theft, assault with a deadly weapon and, to a certain extent, sexual assaults as well. What we do is we do extensive work with the victims and the offenders ahead of time and prepare them for being able to come in and meet. Then, we facilitate meetings between them so they can arrive at their own solutions in a way that is really consistent with their own values and the things that are important to them.

When we talk about things like that in the context of sexual harm, sexual crime, a lot of people end up getting a little bit afraid. Yet, we've developed a program where we work with people in that context, and we've had tremendous success with doing extensive case development work and then bringing people together to resolve some of these issues.

Our process is called facilitated dialogue. It really recognizes that where sexual harm occurs—first of all, as you've probably been hearing for months and months and months, most of this takes place within family contexts. It takes place between people who know each other. We have sexual crime that happens in other kinds of contexts as well, but our program is particularly identifying these types of harms that have taken place.

What we do is, we do extensive work ahead of time with the people who are actually involved to prepare them to be able to meet and to resolve things. I'll give you a couple of examples. We received a phone call several months ago from someone who said, "I was routinely abused by my father beginning at age 12. This went on until I was age 17. But I had a brother who was two years older than me. Up until the time I was 12, we were a pretty normal kind of family and I got along well with my brother. He knew what was going on, and we had no real discussion about it. We never really talked about it."

By the time that he turned 17, he left and moved out of the house. She finally left when she was 18 years old. She said, "I've not talked with my brother since, and that was 20 years ago." Not only did the harm impact her, but it also impacted that relationship. She had done years and years of work to try to address some of the issues that she

was going through and the struggles—counselling and things like that—but she really felt that she needed to have a conversation with her brother, and she really didn't know how. She heard about our program and she said, "Would you be able to help me?" We said yes.

We hooked up with the brother. We spent a lot of time with him, talking through a lot of the things and determining what it was that he did know and what it was that he needed to bring forward in a conversation. In that particular case, we ended up bringing them together after doing that work, and they met only one time with our assistance. Within a couple of hours, they were talking and it was really a life-giving thing for both of them. They went on to maintain that relationship, and they still do.

We had another person who called us—this began just about a year and a half ago. This was a person who was in a committed same-sex relationship and had been for 10 years, and said, "My previous relationship lasted for exactly 10 years and then it came apart. It came apart because of issues that have never been dealt with because of my being sexually abused when I was young. When we could not deal with those things in our relationship, the relationship crumbled. The relationship I'm in now is a very serious one; I really love this person very much. It's going down exactly the same path, but I have no idea how to have a conversation about those particular things. I don't know what to do with that. Can you help us?"

So, again, we did extensive work with them individually and then eventually facilitated about seven or eight conversations, and that's work that is still ongoing.

1510

We received a case not that long ago which was a really serious one where a 17-year-old girl at a wedding, a family gathering with lots of family, was approached in a very inappropriate way by an uncle, which then gave way to a sexual assault. It took place where there were witnesses but nobody who was willing to talk about it, and they were not family members.

This young girl buried that and just did not talk about it for almost a year. Then she finally disclosed to her mother. It was her mother's brother who was the actual uncle who had committed this offence. Her mother, who worked in—this was quite far away that this actually took place—the field of restorative justice as well understood that there were more restorative responses to being able to deal with this kind of thing. Her daughter was most afraid that she would actually have to go through the system, charge her uncle, and then have to go through all the court things and whatever. This is what had inhibited her from bringing this forward, along with feeling just horrible about what had happened.

So her mother actually did a search to see who was doing work like this. We were the only organization that was doing that work, and so they reached out to us and they asked if we could have some involvement in their situation. We said yes.

A few of the family members were actually afraid of doing that, so they chose to go through a different

process initially, where they brought a number of family members together. This actually took place in a church context. It was being facilitated by a pastor who ended up giving us a call pretty quickly, because he felt he was just really in over his head and didn't really know how to manage things. But what they did was they brought a number of people from the family together, the immediate family. So it was the uncle—it was the mother and father of the victim, the actual uncle and his wife, and the grandparents as well. The one rule that they brought in was to say that the young girl who was going to disclose what had happened did not want to be asked any questions. She felt very uncomfortable; she just wanted to tell her story.

As soon as she told the story, the questions began to fly. There wasn't an adequate process in place to be able to hold that back, and particularly the uncle's wife began asking things like, "When could that have happened?" and "What happened with this?" and questions that began to indicate that people in the family actually didn't believe her story, which is about the worst thing that can happen. I think you've probably heard that over and over again as well. It becomes a re-traumatizing thing when that happens.

At that point, we got the phone call from this pastor, who said, "Listen, I don't really know how to deal with this situation." So we began to meet with these people individually. As it turned out, this young woman who was the victim really did not feel like getting back in the room with anybody again, at least a group of people. She was quite scared because of this whole thing. However, the parents were now extremely protective of their daughter and felt outraged at the grandparents who had indicated that they did not believe this story. This was something that was splitting the family and was keeping them apart.

So what we chose to do was to meet with them individually first and then bring those groups together. We brought the parents of the victim together with the grandparents, and as we began facilitating some of the discussion there, it became very apparent that the grandparents actually in their hearts did believe the story, but that it was too difficult to be able to admit. At one point, the grandma actually said, "If we believe her story, then I have to believe that my son committed a sexual offence, and I wasn't willing to accept that."

The reason this story is important is that it illustrates so much of what happens around these things that also needs to be dealt with. The context in which these things happen is extremely important to any kind of meaningful healing that is going to be long-term.

After that had happened, the grandfather felt very, very strongly that now they needed to meet with the uncle and his wife, who was now pregnant as well. So we did extensive case development, again working with them individually to prepare them for what they needed to talk about.

I'll just take a little aside here for a moment. One of the things that I believe very strongly about restorative

justice: The word "mediator" is often used for the people who are helping people out. I don't think it's a really good term. A mediator is usually thought of as a person who comes in, listens to one story, listens to another, and then begins to suggest maybe certain compromises that need to be made or what a person can do to help someone else. Our way of doing things is not that. It's to have as much discussion as possible so that the people are actually telling their own story. It's never about a facilitator bringing forward some kind of response or some kind of a suggestion as to what would be a helpful thing. In this case, it's very much about drilling into someone's thoughts and feelings and responses to what they've heard, so that they're able to articulate exactly what kind of impact there has been.

When we finally brought the grandparents together with the person who was the perpetrator and his wife, it was a long and tedious and very difficult discussion. It started off with this perpetrator being rather defensive and really minimizing a lot of what he had done and ended up with him really coming forward and talking about it in much more detail, so that it was much more obvious that he was telling the truth and the family could actually deal with that.

There is a meeting planned now with the victim. This is now about a year and a half that we've been doing this case. Now, finally, the victim is at a place where she feels that a meeting with that person—because other people have agreed and believe her story and she doesn't feel that same level of risk. She really does believe that they're going to be able to enter into some kind of relationship again and be able to restore much of what has been lost even in the wake of such a horrible thing that has happened to her.

Many times when we are dealing with issues of sexual harm, we do the exact opposite thing. We really believe that we need to keep people completely and totally apart, and there is a time and place for that. Oftentimes it's an immediate one. It needs to be like that, but over time people begin to indicate an interest in being able to come together. Even only a few years ago, when we would get referrals from other agencies where they would say, "I don't agree with this. I don't like this process, but the person really does want to meet with the person who did this. You're the only people we know who can do that." After we have done so many of these types of cases now and the clients end up going back to those agencies—and what they're hearing is that there's a tremendous amount of healing that actually can take place. There's closure like there's never been before in these cases.

The most typical thing that I hear from people who end up participating in the process, particularly when it's a victim who comes forward and a victim who initiates the process, then we reach out and we begin to put the pieces together and eventually bring people together for a meeting or for a series of meetings—they often say, "The outcome was nothing like I expected. It didn't happen like I expected, and yet as the weeks went by following, I recognize that there was a different kind of closure here that I had not experienced before."

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Chris, you have one minute remaining in your presentation.

Mr. Chris Cowie: This program that we operate receives no government funding. It is entirely funded by private people who care a lot about what it is that we do. One of the things that's difficult and one of the particular trends in funding is always that people want to have exactly the numbers. "Who exactly are you going to impact? How long are you going to impact them for, and what's going to be the outcome by such and such a date?" Some of the facilitated dialogue cases we do, start to finish, in about three months and other ones have been ongoing for the past three and a half years. So we're thankful to those who are so behind the work that we do in that regard, that they're willing to donate the funds to be able to do something which is a more protracted process and really invest in the healing of people who have experienced this kind of harm.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first questions for you are from our NDP caucus. MPP Fife.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Chris, thank you very much. For those on the committee, the reputation of CJI is very strong in the community because the trickle-out effect in the community around the good work that you've done—I think the quote that's in your flyer, "It was when I was treated like a human being that I decided I better start acting like one," is a very powerful statement.

For the committee, though, we're looking at systemic issues as well. So you're advocating today for resources in the community to actually pick up the pieces, post, because that's also a prevention factor. Is that—

Mr. Chris Cowie: It's a huge prevention factor.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Yes.

Mr. Chris Cowie: Absolutely, yes.

Ms. Catherine Fife: And there has to be a safe place to heal as well, right? That's been a consistent theme going forward.

Mr. Chris Cowie: Right. It's fairly well known that there's a cycle—a cycle of violence, a cycle of abuse. People who experience that, if it's not dealt with, if there is unresolved trauma—the chances of them either committing something themselves or closing their eyes to other things or participating in other things like that are very great, not to mention the personal harm that is ongoing. But this allows a full kind of healing in that way.

1520

Ms. Catherine Fife: So you want to interrupt the cycle.

Mr. Chris Cowie: Absolutely, we do.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Our next questions for you are from MPP McGarry.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: Great to see you again, Chris. Are you chairing the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council right now?

Mr. Chris Cowie: Yes, I am.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: The right person in place, I might add. How inspiring. We, in Waterloo region, are

very proud of the work that CJI does, and I echo my colleagues around the table on that.

How do we clone you? I actually mean that. So often we hear of victims who don't want to go the justice route, who don't want to charge family members and friends because it's too difficult for one reason or another. How do we get this kind of programming to other communities that might want to start one? Can you address that?

Mr. Chris Cowie: I would say that over the last couple of years, when I speak around the work that we do, that is the question that I am asked most often.

Mrs. Kathryn McGarry: No kidding.

Mr. Chris Cowie: I don't have a single answer for it. I know that in this community with CJI—and it's already been mentioned that they have a tremendous reputation, but it started off with a relationship between CJI and crown attorneys who were willing to take risks and not just use minor crimes which, really, a restorative process has a minimal impact on, but take some serious cases and do something with those cases. That takes a lot of time and trust built up. In other communities there needs to be that same kind of advocacy. There needs to be that same kind of work that happens like that, to the point where we could do programs like our facilitated-dialogue program.

At the moment, though, the good news is that we were just given five years of federal funding to replicate our Stride program, which is a program we operate out of the prison for women. Basically, the purpose of that funding is to say, "Go to other communities in this country that have federal prisons for women and replicate your program with partners that are there because it's been that effective." Our victim-offender reconciliation program and our facilitated-dialogue program could each do that. There's room for this type of program in every community, but it takes that kind of training and it takes that kind of affinity within other organizations to pick it up and to go with it and to grow it.

Facilitated dialogue was something where we would get one or two referrals that would come to us, simply because we didn't advertise it a great deal, but most of our referrals now come from people who have been involved in the program. They know a dozen other hurting families that need that kind of help, and they're quick to give them our name. Those people are calling us now; a lot of them are calling us now.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our final questions for you are from MPP Harris.

Mr. Michael Harris: Yes. Thanks, Chris. I appreciate you being here today. We've met before and heard some of the stories, in addition to those that you spoke to today, of how this program is working.

You talked about the outcomes and that the young woman going into it, at the end, wouldn't have thought that those outcomes would have actually been the way that they were. I don't know if you want to get into specifically what she perhaps would have thought of and then what outcomes she found at the end because of, specifically, this program.

Mr. Chris Cowie: Especially when there's a great deal of time that has taken place in between, a victim has a notion of what they think the truth really is of what was going on in the heart and the mind that drove the actions of the people who have done the things to them. Oftentimes, what comes out when they're talking very honestly is that there are very different motivators behind the scenes that someone didn't really expect.

At first they need to weigh out: Is this person making an excuse of this, or is this some sort of a legitimate contributor to something that may have happened? When they tell me that they have also been aching because of this over the last number of years, is that true or are they trying to sort of pull a little sympathy out of me to make this go away a little bit easier? Those are the types of things that someone needs to be able to sort through. They're not expecting to hear those things. A lot of the time they're simply expecting someone to say, "This is what I did and this is why I did it." Acknowledging still is probably the biggest thing that they need to hear.

I met a woman a little while ago who made a rather sizeable donation to our organization, and I had never seen her name before. I wondered where that came from and so I gave her a call; I do that with anyone who gives to us.

She said, "I wouldn't mind meeting with you and telling you why I did that." She was a client of this program seven years ago. That was her story. Her story was

one between her, her brother and an uncle, and it was kind of a messy story.

In the end, she said, "By the time that we all got together, I wasn't hearing the things that I thought I was going to hear, the things that I was expecting to hear or the things that I even necessarily wanted to hear. However, over time I began to realize that the things that were being said were actually the truth. I was able to tell the truth of my story, they were able to tell theirs, and mine was acknowledged. So what I was exactly hoping for didn't come to the surface, and yet I realized that"—and this woman had been through years and years of counseling. She realized that going through that actually brought a different type of closure to the whole thing for her, and she felt very satisfied with that.

Mr. Michael Harris: Great, thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much, Chris Cowie. I will say to you what I said to Casey Cruikshank, who spoke before you, and that is that I've had the honour of helping you to tell your story in this community for a couple of decades. Your work is very much appreciated. Thank you.

Mr. Chris Cowie: Good. Thank you very much.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would like to tell our committee members that our next presenter has asked to speak to us in private. I would respectfully ask people in our audience right now if you wouldn't mind clearing the room, and we're going to need about 20 minutes.

The committee continued in closed session at 1526.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

Chair / Présidente

Ms. Daiene Vernile (Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre L)

Vice-Chair / Vice-Présidente

Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock PC)

Mr. Han Dong (Trinity–Spadina L)
Mr. Randy Hillier (Lanark–Frontenac–Lennox and Addington PC)
Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde (Ottawa–Orléans L)
Ms. Harinder Malhi (Brampton–Springdale L)
Mrs. Kathryn McGarry (Cambridge L)
Ms. Eleanor McMahon (Burlington L)
Mr. Taras Natyshak (Essex ND)
Ms. Peggy Sattler (London West ND)
Ms. Laurie Scott (Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock PC)
Ms. Daiene Vernile (Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre L)

Substitutions / Membres remplaçants

Ms. Catherine Fife (Kitchener–Waterloo ND)
Mr. Michael Harris (Kitchener–Conestoga PC)

Clerk / Greffier

Mr. William Short

Staff / Personnel

Ms. Erin Fowler, research officer,
Research Services

CONTENTS

Wednesday 20 May 2015

Strategy on sexual violence and harassment	SV-377
Unifor.....	SV-377
Ms. Lisa Kelly	
Mr. Bill Gibson	
Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region	SV-380
Ms. Sara Casselman	
Ms. Dianne Piluk.....	SV-383
Mr. Judah Oudshoorn.....	SV-386
Ontario Federation of Labour.....	SV-389
Ms. Nancy Hutchison	
Child Witness Centre	SV-393
Ms. Laura Muirhead	
Sexual Assault Centre of Brant.....	SV-395
Ms. Carrie Sinkowski	
Wilfrid Laurier University Students' Union	SV-398
Ms. Laura Bassett	
Ms. Olivia Matthews	
Mr. Christopher Hyde	
Mr. Wayne Morris.....	SV-402
Women's House Serving Bruce and Grey	SV-405
Ms. Jennifer Keddy	
Ms. Bernice Connell	
Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis.....	SV-406
Ms. Jessica St. Peter	
Brant Response Against Violence Everywhere.....	SV-409
Ms. Sandi Montour	
Ms. Joanna Brant	
Wilfrid Laurier University	SV-412
Mr. David McMurray	
Ms. Lynn Kane	
Council of Ontario Universities, Reference Group on Sexual Violence.....	SV-415
Mr. David McMurray	
Ms. Mary Louise Heyens	SV-417
Sexual Assault Centre London, Opening the Circle.....	SV-421
Ms. Margaret MacPherson	
YWCA Toronto.....	SV-425
Ms. Maureen Adams	
Waterloo Region Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centre	SV-428
Ms. Casey Cruikshank	
Ms. Katie Gosse	
Community Justice Initiatives.....	SV-431
Mr. Chris Cowie	