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Friday 22 May 2015

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des débats
(Hansard)**

Vendredi 22 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

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ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

**SELECT COMMITTEE
ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE
AND HARASSMENT**

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

Friday 22 May 2015

Vendredi 22 mai 2015

The committee met at 0759 in the Ottawa Marriott Hotel, Ottawa.

**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'd like to welcome all of our presenters this morning, and the guests who are here with us today. Let me quickly share with you the mandate of this committee. We are 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 and reporting 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 would like to stress to our committee members who are here—and I will do this again to the other committee members when they arrive—that we have gone back to our 20-minute scheduling today. Our presenters will have up to 15 minutes to address our committee, and then our three caucuses will be sharing the remaining time, so a total of 20 minutes. I encourage all committee members to make your questions as concise as possible.

MANUP

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Let me welcome our very first presenters, from ManUp. Please begin by stating your names for the record.

Mr. Travis Wing: My name is Travis Wing. I'm the teacher coordinator.

Mr. Belal Qayum: My name is Belal. I'm one of the members of ManUp.

Mr. Euan Scoffield: My name is Euan Scoffield. I'm also one of the members.

Mr. Elias Papoulias: My name is Elias Papoulias. I'm also one of the members.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And begin any time.

Mr. Travis Wing: Okay. Hello. Thank you very much for having us. It's a super-important day for us, something we've been building up for for a while now.

Please accept our apologies in advance that we're not public speakers; that's not how we go about our business here at ManUp. Most of the time we have our conversations in really small groups, intimately amongst a much less intimidating crowd.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Just consider this a very intimate group, okay?

Mr. Travis Wing: I feel pretty intimate. Yes, this is nice. The guys will be a little bit nervous, but just be patient with us. We are a student-led group. These guys have done all the legwork, and we wouldn't have it any other way.

I was hoping to roll a quick little video of our work on CTV, but there's no audio, so I'll probably save us that time. But if I can maybe click some of the screen shots—we had some big assemblies and we had a lot of public attention because we've done a lot of work with Glen Canning, who—I suppose we don't have to tell that story about his tragedy and being affected by violence against women, so we'll leave it at that and I'll let the guys start going about our history. I believe Belal is going to get going on that.

Mr. Belal Qayum: Yes. This started all the way back last year in May 2014, when a group of boys were chosen and we went down to listen to a conference at city hall. When we got to city hall, we heard a lot of guests speak. One of the guests was Glen Canning. When he told his story and what happened to his daughter, it really affected us, and inspired and motivated us to do something about it, to act and not just to leave without doing anything. That kind of sparked the idea of ManUp.

Fast-forward a couple of months to the start of this school year, and that's when we had our October launch assembly. That's when we put up posters around the school and really just presented ManUp. We invited all the males to talk to. We presented ManUp and we explained what ManUp was and why it was needed, not just in the school but also in the community. We also created and showed a PSA video in the school in our winter break assembly. Really, it just reminded students to be careful during parties in the break and to act if they saw anything.

We were invited to the OCTEVAW conference and also the OCDSB leadership conference. That's where we presented ManUp and we talked about ManUp to other various members of the OCDSB school district.

We recently had our ManUp Inspire Conference. That's where we expanded ManUp to schools who wanted to join us. There were a lot of guest speakers there who presented, such as Glen Canning. We showed them what ManUp was, and we presented them a toolkit to help them in the year and to meet ManUp's criteria.

All that kind of leads us to where we are today. Thank you.

Mr. Travis Wing: Thanks, Belal. I'll share with you guys a bit of what we've done in terms of a model for sustainability. We designed it to be guaranteed successful. I guess it happened when we first saw Mr. Canning at that conference that Belal was talking about at city hall. We were invited, and Mr. Canning came over to us directly. He was speaking to a big group, most of whom were either victims of sexual violence or they had roles—a lot of people you're probably going to meet with today, as a matter of fact, but none of them were males and none of them were young males. As soon as Glen was done talking, he walked over to us. He directly approached and spoke to the guys who were in the group. He was tearing up, so I was tearing up. Everybody was tearing up. He was just saying, "For the first time since my daughter has been gone, I feel a sense of hope." He said, "Every father"—and he started tearing up further. He said, "I don't get to call myself that anymore because I don't have a daughter, I don't have any kids anymore." That's what got me. I was in. He said, "Every father needs a hero for their daughter, and you guys can be heroes."

At that time, they looked at us and they said, "We're doing something, right? We have to listen to what he said." Myself and my colleague Aaron Leach decided we need to build something. We need to build an arena for these kids to send their message and to be student leaders.

What we've done is we've created that moment of inspiration that happened as a coincidence. A major part of what we do is create the moment of inspiration. We built our sustainable organized focus group around it. We took the kids on a retreat at the beginning of the year. We left the school. We chatted about ideas, what they wanted to do, what they wanted to implement, what specific acts of violence and harassment they wanted to target.

Then we moved forward from there to have our launch assembly. The guys pitched their ideas to the school. They brought every male student from our school into the gym. We brought Mr. Canning back. He spoke to every guy in the school. Then we sent our message saying that this isn't going to happen here. We're going to draw a line from what we're going to tolerate in our school and what we're not going to tolerate.

I'll let Euan talk about what happened after that moment.

Mr. Euan Scoffield: Hi. So, I'll just be quickly highlighting the various campaigns and initiatives that ManUp has done to help spread awareness of what we do, and try to get people on board with what we do as well.

To start off, our poster campaign that Belal mentioned earlier: We started this initiative right after our big as-

sembly in October. This was really to get the gears going. We wanted to get the message out; we wanted to get our faces into our school. We created these lovely posters thanks to Mr. Wing. We posted various sizes, various models of these posters around our school. As you can see, each poster has an individual quote that each of us had selected that we each believe has some significant meaning to something about ending violence against women.

This initiative was almost crucial and essential to our plan to get our message across as well as put our faces into our school and get people to think about who we are. It was an essential component to begin our campaign.

Next was our social media presence. Twitter is obviously a big part of our generation; almost everyone is using it. We felt we needed to get on board as soon as possible. We started up a Twitter page where we do post tweets on various occasions. Right after our assembly we make sure to announce what our upcoming plans are. Before big events, such as Christmas break or Easter break, we want to send a message out saying, "Be safe on these holidays" etc. I think that it's gotten a lot of great feedback. We have up to 370 followers after just over a year of having created ManUp, which I think is great, and it's growing at a rapid rate.

Next what we did was we created our public service video. This was completely student-made. Mr. Wing, this time, was not affiliated with this. Not only was the ManUp crew involved but we also took students other than ManUp, including girls, who were interested in helping spread the message as well.

We'd like to show this video, but due to time purposes and as well as the audio issue, it might not work. But it's basically a PSA video just describing significant events. In this event, it's a typical high school party. One girl seems to be passed out and it's leading to what the viewer might think—a guy might take advantage of this passed-out girl. Then the tension is rising and the viewers might think, "Oh no, what's he going to do next?" He does the right thing. He ends up taking her cellphone and calling her parents to say, "Hey, could you come pick her up? Something's wrong." It kind of leaves the audience with a relieved feeling that something actually went right for once.

Honestly, I think that's something that we have to think about because, is that something to be relieved about? That should be something that's expected. Why should we expect something wrong from a guy like that? If anything, we should expect him to do that. It shouldn't be a relief, or it shouldn't be something that we're proud to say, "Oh yeah, he did that." It should be something where we say, "He should have done that."

Mr. Travis Wing: I'll interject before I introduce Elias. The coolest thing—as the leaders, myself and Mr. Leach were looking at our overall project and we're starting to try and decide, "How do we know this is working?"

0810

Euan touched on it there: This was made almost entirely by kids who were not in the ManUp group. I'll

get Euan to tell a story about a Facebook issue as well. We have our group of 12 guys, but when we started seeing the other kids in the school, who are not directly affiliated with what we do, sending our message and doing our work, that's when we know that we're starting to get a critical mass of people in our small community who are stepping out of their comfort zone and their box to make sure that these acts of violence and sexual violence are not taking place in our community.

Do you want to touch on that Facebook thing?

Mr. Euan Scoffield: Yes, sure. So a lot of questions that various people ask are, "Well, are you guys actually making an impact in your school? You can say all of this, but we need to see results." We completely agree with that. We do. There's actually evidence that we do actually make an impact.

Sometime before Christmas break last year, there was an event on another social media site, Instagram. There was a student in our school in a younger grade, who did post a photo of another girl in our school with a very derogatory caption. Obviously, it was disrespectful. It was unjust. Immediately, all the ManUp guys saw this and we said, "Okay, we have to do something."

Now, before we were even able to comment on this photo, immediately we saw various other students from other grades commenting on this photo, telling them, "Hey, what are you doing? This is wrong. Why would you post something like this?" They were riddling him with all of these comments that eventually he was forced to take it down, because no one was approving of what he was doing. The ManUp crew saw that right away. We didn't have to do anything before someone interjected and made that guy think about what he did.

We think that's amazing, because that's essentially what we're trying to do. We're trying to get people involved. For us, that was a big step forward in what we are trying to do.

Mr. Travis Wing: Thanks, Euan. Elias, do you want to talk a little bit about the bring-a-buddy-to-lunch program that we do?

Mr. Elias Papoulias: All right. So essentially what the bring a buddy to lunch is, is we don't take it from just our group anymore, the group of loving guys behind me and sitting here. We also bring in others from our school. We believe that we bring in people who are good figures, they believe in what we are doing and it's people that others can follow easily. This was including people from, say, younger grades—grade 8—and strong female leaders etc.

Together, we talk about predetermined topics that we believe need to be covered and shared about. We also share success stories—like you just heard about the Instagram one—about how people have manned up. As a group, we train our buddies as well about how they can man up when they're put in certain situations or when they see something is not right.

These lunches aren't just talking either. We actually start doing things. An example of this is during one of our bringing a buddy to lunch, we created that PSA, the idea and everything behind it.

Mr. Travis Wing: We also make it a point to engage the female leaders in our community and in our city to help fuel our initiative. We know that this is not something we can do alone as guys. We think it's important that the males in our group are the ones sending this message from the front end, but at every juncture, we have been working with women all along the way.

We were inspired initially by Mr. Leach's wife, who works in victim support, in a nursing role, I guess, from a medical standpoint. Then we connected with OCTEVAW, who is the Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women. Those ladies were helping provide the much-needed content for our bring a buddy to lunches. We bring them in to help us with training. Julie Lalonde, who is somebody you're going to hear from twice today, comes in and works with us regularly. She does sessions on consent with our group and then expands in other groups.

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

Mr. Travis Wing: Okay. Thank you.

We've really benefited from having that partnership.

I guess, with a minute left here, the pretext of the day, or the concept here, is to make a recommendation on our experiences. From a leadership standpoint in this group, I think the main takeaway here, if I'm looking from a provincial level—oh, I should go on to the moving-forward thing.

We've managed to engage 21 schools at this point, committed to running our program in various schools. We hosted a conference. We brought Glen back in and we re-created that moment of inspiration, because first and foremost, the kids—you've heard from these three outstanding guys here. I think the kids are the key to this whole thing. If we can get these young people involved and inspired, then they're potentially the most powerful tool that we have in this province to create change. If we can provide them a structure for them to do their work, then we can see some real serious difference and some real serious change.

I would love to see a broad commitment to these conferences, where we're going and giving our model to various schools across the province. We've been to Port Elgin, Ontario. We've been to Owen Sound. We've been to Georgetown, Ontario. We have schools in Kingston that are committed to going.

This is based on 12 kids' work and two teachers' free time, which is extremely limited. We're doing our best within our context, but we've built something that works and that other people want to buy into—and I think we're just getting started. As part of our Inspire conference, we inspired our next group of 12 kids, who are sitting back at the school right now, ready to do this whole thing again next year.

For this program, being cyclical is a major part of it, so that it doesn't stop and doesn't go away, because this change isn't happening overnight. This change is going to happen over the course of maybe a decade. So we're committed to doing that.

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

Ms. Laurie Scott: Incredible. I loved the whole thing. If we can help you spread the word to all the other school boards, and to motivate the young men in those schools, I'm all for it.

Do you have anything else to add? You did a great job in presenting what your program is about, so if you want my time to add anything else, you go ahead.

Mr. Travis Wing: No. I guess if we want to talk about barriers—like, we're tired. There are two of us, and that's a real barrier. We're trying to do this, and I love the idea of going to your riding and talking to schools in your board, but there are some serious limitations on teachers and our time and our resources.

We are going to do our best, and keep doing our best, and thankfully, we have some really supportive administrators and superintendents.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Would they write to the other school boards?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'm sorry—

Ms. Laurie Scott: Oh, we're out of time.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You know what? You can answer, but we're going to have about 30 seconds for each caucus after that.

Mr. Travis Wing: Okay. Sorry.

Ms. Laurie Scott: We can talk later, but any other plan that we can help you with, to write to directors—whatever you suggest. Thanks.

Mr. Travis Wing: Perfect. Thank you.

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

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you so much. It has inspired me, the program that you've talked about.

I'm curious to know: Do you get any pushback from other students at the school?

Mr. Travis Wing: Like I mentioned before, one thing that a lot of people ask was—and one thing we were somewhat worried about—was there going to be any pushback? That Instagram case I previously mentioned, I think, is proof that in fact what we're doing is being accepted and being spread by other students in our school.

So far, we haven't heard any negative feedback from any of our students. It's only positive, and I think that's great. Hopefully, that's what it's going to continue being, moving forward.

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

Mr. John Fraser: Thank you for your presentation. I actually heard about you two days ago, before I came here, at a community developers' meeting. I'm from Ottawa South. I think you're going into Ridgemont. Do you go into Ridgemont?

Mr. Travis Wing: Yes, 100%, we're in there.

Mr. John Fraser: That's great. I just want to congratulate you on how you've organically grown this.

I'd be interested in knowing—you don't have to answer the question right now—what your ideas are to

help continue to grow that. It's great that you've done it organically, and there are probably ways that all sorts of people can lend you more support to assist your getting it out there.

Mr. Travis Wing: A quick, short answer is we're just doing our best. When people help us do our best, that's awesome, so let's keep talking. That's great.

Interjection.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'm being told by our Clerk that our next presenter is not here, nor the one after that.

Our next presenter, going down the list, is the Carleton University Graduate Students' Association. I'm told that you are here. Can I see a show of hands? Are you prepared to come forward now and give your presentation?

Ms. Alannah James: Is it okay if we do our scheduled time?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Yes, you absolutely can.

Since we are waiting for our next presenters, we can continue the conversation. I apologize for being so abrupt and cutting people off.

If we have any of our committee members who want to ask further questions, we can continue this conversation. MPP Dong.

Mr. Han Dong: Hi. I'm Han Dong from Trinity–Spadina riding in Toronto. I'm going to give you my card later on. I just want to connect—

Laughter.

Mr. Han Dong: Yes, my colleague is laughing.

I just want to make sure we connect. I think this is something that my local school board, the TDSB, can really benefit from—

Mr. Travis Wing: I've got a guy in TDSB who is already on this. That's good. We should talk, for sure.

0820

Mr. Han Dong: Especially with these young gentlemen called the ManUp crews, I think you guys are making it really cool to be convincing role models in school and really spreading the word. You just gave testimony that other kids are responding to this very well.

I know that you have barriers like—

Interruption.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. William Short): That's your BlackBerry.

Mr. Han Dong: I don't have a BlackBerry.

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

Mr. Han Dong: Okay. Anyway, I'm just wondering—you're doing this all volunteer? What about the t-shirts and the flyers? Do you have sponsors? What's your funding model right now?

Mr. Travis Wing: Our funding model is limited to a donation from Crime Prevention Ottawa. They give us \$5,000 to work with. It's also sort of on the heels of Glen Canning's generosity that we've been able to do a lot of this. There is some additional help from the superintendent to get supply teacher time, supply teacher coverage. There is another organization—other people

are funding us to take our show on the road, like when we went to Port Elgin and Georgetown. The other schools are paying our way there, which is really helpful. But as far as my time and my partner's time are concerned, it's mostly chasing down quarters and nickels to make sure that it's all paid for. It's really tricky.

Mr. Han Dong: My second question is just to understand this initiative from the young gentlemen better. What's your incentive in being part of this? Why did you sign up?

Mr. Euan Scoffield: I think that, like you mentioned, to be a leader in our school. We want to change what the social norm is for students such as ourselves, and even younger generations. I think that what the social norm is right now is that it's not cool to do that, and we want to be that change. We want to say, "Well, it is cool," and I think we are making that difference, slowly but surely. I think that's one thing that all guys like myself and the other 11 guys in this group want to do: We want to leave our legacy in this school as the guys who really tried to make a change. Hopefully that will leave the younger generations with a feeling that, "Well, we have to continue this."

Mr. Han Dong: Thank you. I applaud that.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): MPP McMahon?

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: You've inspired me before 8:30. Well done. Excellent. I'm looking at you and I have faith and inspiration in the next generation. You guys are amazing.

I have a nephew who's in grade 11. I love him—he's my nephew—but he's a little too cool for school sometimes, if you know what I'm saying. We have these conversations, and I know he feels like you do, so I can't wait to get home and tell him about what you're doing, because I think part of it—I think you've touched the nail on the head, so I'd love if you could expand on this a little bit. In terms of sowing the seeds of changing the culture at your school and beyond, I don't think it's cool in a lot of places, and what you guys have done is you've blown that right out of the water. You've made it cool, as Han was saying, to do this, to be leaders and to be inspirational to guys in grade 9 who are behind you and looking up to you. I think that's really cool.

Mr. Euan Scoffield: Yes, and that's exactly our point. Of course we want to be that change. We want to be that cool role model.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Yes.

Mr. Euan Scoffield: Honestly, though, it's not the easiest job in a high school environment, where everyone is going to be judging you. Everyone is looking at what you're doing—all your actions, all your choices—and it's a big deal.

I think that we're lucky enough that we have great people on our side. We have people who are willing to watch our backs. We have great teachers, we have great supervisors who are all willing to help us. I think that's a huge, critical part of what we're doing.

Now, one thing that we like to mention a lot in all our meetings and all our discussions is that the general theme

is the bystander effect. I'm sure that you all understand what that is. That's a big deal that we face in high school, because we don't want to get judged by others. We don't want to be critiqued by other people, because for us there's a lot of self-esteem issues, there's a lot of other stuff growing up, especially at our age.

What we're trying to get across to these students who perhaps don't feel comfortable manning up or standing up to the people who are doing wrong is that we have your back—not only us 12 guys, but it should be everyone who is going to be dedicated and involved in this program. I think that if people realize that we have their back, that there's someone who's going to be helping them, someone who's going to be there to catch them when they fall—we're not going to judge them. If anything, we're going to help them move forward. I think that will give people the confidence to say something, step up and get involved.

Mr. Travis Wing: Another aspect of that, just talking about cool-ifying standing up, I guess—that photo there is of Mika Zibanejad. He's a player on the Ottawa Senators. He's gotten this to the Senators team: 15 of those guys wear these shirts and want to be part of our efforts. The Carleton University basketball team was at our conference and they want to be part of our efforts. When we put them on stage and we put them in the spotlight via social media or whatever, that's how we define "cool." That's how the young men are defining "cool." If these guys are willing to put our logo and our mark on coolness, then that's a major win. So we don't take those connections lightly at all.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): MPP McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I'm sorry, Laurie; I'll be fast. Say someone gave you a pot of money right now and they came forward and said, "Here's \$10,000," or \$15,000, and say, just for fun, that that's provincial funding. Someone says, "Here's some money to help." It seems to me that one thing you might do with that—I'd be interested in hearing what you might do, because that's the point. But it seems to me taking this program, replicating it—I wish that we could clone you all, but since that's not possible, is there a way to help you replicate it and take it to other schools? Because it's tough for you to leave Ottawa all the time and travel around the province. Let's build some capacity in other communities. How can we help you do that?

Mr. Travis Wing: I think the answer to that is built into our original design, and that had to do with the cyclical design of expanding. The idea here is, if we can, we have our ManUp Inspire Conference that we just had—the first one was tremendously successful. We were talking to 400 kids, and we had an intimate discussion with each of them. Then we took their teachers aside and we trained the teachers on how to run this program. We gave them a toolkit. We got in touch with social media, and they are ready to rock, starting in September. They're going to do the exact same steps that we are.

If I was looking at a big-picture system for our program, it would be to have a series of these conferences, in

the bigger cities at first. It's almost a network marketing approach without a financial structure, but it does really well. Some of the really keen schools in the city want their own independent business model. They're going to run their own Inspire conference and they're going to bring 10 schools, and I'm like, "Oh, that's awesome." If we can get 10 schools to bring 10 schools, and then the next year they all bring 10 schools, within five years we have every school in the province. If it's done—somebody mentioned the word "organic." That sounds like a pretty organic growth model.

Funding these conferences in the various cities and bringing in our partners, like Glen, and then bring some of our guys back—I think that would make this move really quickly and real powerfully.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): MPP Scott has another question.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Sure. As you've reached out to school boards—I assume you have—are you getting pushback at all? Are you getting interest?

Mr. Travis Wing: Yes. Well, there have been some people who are reluctant. They think that this is a risky business to be in because we're focusing on the males and they think it's perhaps chauvinistic, or misogynistic, even. Those people we try and engage in further conversation rather than ignore them because they just don't understand what we're doing.

The other major pushback we've had and that we need help with is breaching the French school boards. We had several schools lined up, and they said, "Are any of your presentations going to be in French?" We said, "Excusez. Non." That's a tough one.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: But we're going to work on that.

Mr. Travis Wing: Yes, we're working on it already. That started this morning.

Ms. Laurie Scott: When the directors of education or the Ontario principals meet, can you go to presentations? Have you thought that far down? It's just spreading the word, right? Not every school is going to engage. I have a couple of schools where I would want to make it mandatory myself. Have you got to that stage yet, or how do you think we could help you?

Mr. Travis Wing: We did speak at the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board leadership conference. We spoke to every principal and superintendent and we even had Jennifer Adams, the director of education, in that conversation. So that was step one. Again, it's a little bit slow, because we are trying to build this organically, but I don't think there's any other way than having those small conversations with those people. She had said that she wanted to take this as far as she can take it. So we're still waiting to hear. If we ever have an audience like that—we would love to have an audience of more superintendents and more directors of education, absolutely, 100%.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay. We've got your card, and I certainly will try for it back in my area of Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock.

Mr. Travis Wing: That's where my cottage is. Awesome.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Sorry?

Mr. Travis Wing: I've got a place to stay.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Everybody has a cottage there. Excellent; okay. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): If you're not in any hurry, we'll continue to fill time here. MPP Malhi?

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you. Your presentation was absolutely amazing. I was on a school board prior to being elected as an MPP, so I had the opportunity to see a number of leadership programs, but nothing like this. I was with the Peel District School Board, and I was going to say that I'd be happy to go back to the school board and try to talk to our director out there—we're the second-biggest board in Ontario—to see what could be done and how they could take on your initiatives.

Do you have a module or anything that you send forward? Did you say that it was like a kit? What does the kit entail?

Mr. Travis Wing: Yes, we have a tool kit that we're super-protective of—not because we don't want other people doing our thing; we specifically do want other people doing our thing. We're protective of it because, if it's not presented in the same means as we would like to have it presented, then it's going to be silenced. The RCMP national youth program wanted to take our manual and put it in every school across the country or whatever and just plop it on a desk. I said, "If you want to kill our program, that's the way to do it."

Our toolkit has a step-by-step method to create that forum for the kids to be their own leaders. It talks about the major principles. It talks about creating an inspirational moment for the kids, and it talks about working with that inspiration. It's growing, too. Again, this is being done at midnight. This is a typical day for me: waking up at 5 to make ManUp work, to get these kids organized, go and teach a school day, then go home at night and, "Let's recap today and try to sort out what happened." That, again, is something that's happening slowly. We're working on it.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you. As a teacher, you do an incredible job—

Mr. Travis Wing: That's my old school board, Peel district. That's awesome. I need to get there. I still have connections there.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: So do I, so we'll definitely connect and try to get you guys into the board to see what—Director Pontes or a few of the principals I can think of off the top of my head would definitely be interested. They've posted male leadership programs in the past; they haven't been as successful. But something like this, with a module to follow, will definitely encourage them. Thank you.

Mr. Travis Wing: Great; thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): MPP Malhi, you're in the Brampton area?

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Brampton is in the Peel board. We cover Caledon, Brampton and Mississauga.

Mr. Travis Wing: Awesome.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Any more questions from any other committee members?

You're free to go.

Mr. Travis Wing: Thanks, everyone.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Members, we're going to stand in recess until our next presenter arrives.

The committee recessed from 0832 to 0836.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Committee members, we have our next presenter. I'm going to ask that you all have your seats so we can resume.

CANADIAN FEDERATION OF STUDENTS

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'd like to call on our presenter from the Canadian Federation of Students to come forward.

Please have a seat. Make yourself comfortable; pour yourself a glass of water if you like. You're going to have up to 15 minutes to speak to our committee, and then that will be followed by some questions for you. Please begin by stating your name for the record and the organization that you represent.

Ms. Bilan Arte: Certainly. Thank you. My name is Bilan Arte and I'm here on behalf of the Canadian Federation of Students.

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

Ms. Bilan Arte: Good morning, everyone. I wanted to start off by saying thank you for having me here and inviting me to speak on this very important topic.

As mentioned, my name is Bilan Arte. I'm the national deputy chairperson for the Canadian Federation of Students. For those of you who don't know, our federation represents over 600,000 members across Canada. I'm honoured to be able to speak today on a very difficult but very important subject matter.

This will certainly not be news, I think, to most of the folks who are in this room, but the issue of sexual and gendered violence on university and college campuses is nothing new. In fact, as students and organizers and activists across this country know all too well, the rape culture that we see manifesting itself on campuses, we see as a symptom of a wider societal issue of misogyny and sexism, and one that certainly needs to be addressed.

I'm here today to provide some perspectives from students on how we can effectively address this problem. I'm going to provide, through my presentation, an overview of what's happening on campuses across the country, as we are a nationally based organization. Then I'm going to talk a little bit more specifically about some of the work that folks have been doing right here in Ontario and how it relates to the provincial action plan that your government has developed. Finally, I'm going to offer some final remarks and recommendations on how we can move forward on working together to ensure that we can eradicate the presence of rape culture on our campuses.

First off, as mentioned, the Canadian Federation of Students is the organization that has been working on,

amongst a million other campaigns, the issue of sexual and gendered violence on campus. In fact, one of our longest-running campaigns is the "No Means No" campaign. It's been running since before I was born. It has been running for about 30 years now.

Interjections.

Ms. Bilan Arte: Yes. It's a true testament, I think, to the important work that students have been doing across this country to continue to challenge social norms around sexism, around misogyny, and how they manifest themselves through sexual and gendered violence on our campuses.

The "No Means No" campaign has centred around a variety of different actions that students have taken on, on campuses, including the creation of physically accessible spaces like women's centres, talking about gender-inclusive spaces on campus and talking about the importance of queer-positive spaces on campus. It has meant students taking action on campus and in our communities by organizing Take Back the Night marches, by organizing rallies to demonstrate in support of students' rights to choose when it comes to matters that affect their own bodies, and it has meant students taking on hosting and pushing very critical discussions on our campuses about what it means to be diverse and to have a diverse student body and a diverse campus community, and what it means to not just accept but celebrate all identities and think about how we can be as inclusive as possible of all of the experiences that folks have, once they enter our institutions and become involved members of our campus community.

As part of the reason why we're here today, the issue of sexual violence on campus has certainly gained quite a bit of momentum in the media as of late. I think that folks around the table are quite familiar with the real media break that happened about a year and a half ago around the rape chants that were uncovered at Saint Mary's University in Nova Scotia and at the University of British Columbia.

Again, I may be preaching a little bit to the choir here, but I think that, as many of us will admit, these aren't new issues. Although we recognize and certainly appreciate the momentum that is happening right now, where folks are more interested and there's more of a public discourse on the issue of rape culture on campus, we recognize that this isn't an issue that is isolated to specific campuses or to specific communities. It's an issue that students are facing on campuses across this country, and it's something that needs to be addressed, as mentioned previously, as it is a symptom of a wider societal issue that we have with sexual violence in our society today.

As I mentioned, we're very grateful for the momentum. Actually, one of the things that has been quite important and central to the work that we've been doing as a federation is ensuring that students are at the centre of the message when we're talking about how we address the issue of sexual and gendered violence on campus.

Our federation hosted a national student forum on consent. It was actually called Consent Culture, and it

was held right here in Ottawa, a couple of blocks away, at the Delta hotel. It was held in March. It was an incredible opportunity to bring together over 100 dedicated student activists who had been working on this issue on their campuses and to talk, over the course of two days, about what it means to build a consent culture on our campuses; about what it means to not only challenge rape culture but to build a meaningful dialogue, a meaningful alternative; about what consent means, what consent education can look like and should look like, and how that can, hopefully, affect and combat the issue of rape culture on our campuses, so that we're not just moving away from one specific subculture but we're moving towards something that is much more celebratory of all of our identities and all of our experiences, and that can actually enhance the quality of the education that we are receiving.

We talked at length about the fact that when we talk about the rising cost of post-secondary education, we talk about the costs that are associated with tuition fees and high student debt, but we oftentimes don't see very much public discussion about the importance of those spaces also being physically accessible and being spaces that students from all different backgrounds and all different identities feel included—and, more so, safe—within. If students don't feel safe on campus, then the idea of an accessible education becomes further and further a myth. So it's very important for us not only that our institutions remain accessible in the financial sense of that term, but that they remain physically accessible to all students as well.

One of the most important things that came out of our student forum was a national student vision on ending sexual violence on campus, which really emphasized a holistic approach around education, policy and support. The exciting thing is that since then, we've been able to work on a national level, on a national framework.

Many of you folks might be familiar with a motion that was recently put forth in the House right here in Ottawa, and that is Bill 444. It was presented by a member of Parliament, Niki Ashton, and it presents a national strategy on ending violence against women in Canada.

It includes, as well, a national inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women—of course, recognizing within that strategy—and we do this, as well, within our campaigns—that the violence we see, in particular sexual and gendered violence, has insidiously had a larger impact and a larger experience particularly within those communities that find themselves more socially and economically marginalized in our communities already. We're talking about indigenous students, when we're talking about campus-specific examples, and the queer and trans students on campuses, in addition to racialized students. That has been incredible work that we've been able to see, and the momentum at a national level.

Also, just to talk a little bit about another province, in Nova Scotia we've seen legislation recently proposed around ensuring some accountability from institutions

towards actually reporting issues of sexual assault and sexual violence on campus, and actually legislating that they take measures toward ending that. We are thankful for the momentum that we're seeing across this country toward actually working on the issue of sexual violence.

I'm going to bring this back to Ontario, as I'm sure that that is likely the area that's of most interest to this committee. One thing that I'm very glad to see as a national student representative is the fact that this government has made a priority of working with students. Hopefully that is something that governments across this country use as an example and take a lead on when they're talking about—we've certainly seen this momentum. We know that other governments across this country are talking about what's happening right here in this province, the national strategy that has come up and, more importantly, the work that's been done to include students in that process, so before I go any further on that subject, I just wanted to say thank you for doing that.

I think that we're really excited to continue to work with you, both through our representative bodies as the Canadian Federation of Students, but I think as students as a whole we find that it's very important that policy development and the work that is done to better improve the experience that we're having on our campuses regularly and meaningfully—I'll emphasize the word "meaningfully," because that's not often the kind of involvement that we see—that that work continues to happen.

In Ontario, students have been working with their institutions, have lobbied for a very long time and are excited with the newly presented action plan to see the development of stand-alone and rigorous policies to address the issue of sexual violence on campus in a preventive manner, not just reacting to incidents as they happen and as they are reported by the media, but actually taking a stance towards developing structures and strategies on campus to prevent those issues from happening and to build a consent culture on campus.

Students in this province have identified three further recommendations to the work that has already been done. They've recommended the creation of a sexual assault support division within the government of Ontario. Essentially, this provides a framework for the government, and for governments to come, to continue to prioritize this issue. As I've said before, I've been quite grateful for the momentum that we've seen on this issue in the last couple of years in public discourse, in the media and within government, but it's very important that this is an issue that continues to be addressed, that the strategies and policies that are being proposed today continue to be evaluated, that we continue to have conversations like these to ensure that we're actually moving in the best direction and to ensure that we're moving towards a space where we can create more physically accessible and safer campuses.

We know that the issue of sexual violence is not something that we're going to be able to solve tomorrow, but being able to have dedicated space within govern-

ment to develop these policies and to also think about the question of funding goes into our second recommendation: actually having funds available for post-secondary institutions, for colleges and universities in this province to apply for, that would be governed by the support division, that could enhance existing programs or help create and develop new education programs on campuses, around consent, for example, and around sexual assault prevention, to provide training and support services for survivors on campus, and to actually support student-led initiatives or peer-to-peer initiatives that often at times don't have access to the funding and the resources that they need in order to be successful on campus.

Being able to administer those funds is one of the things that the sexual assault support division within this government could do. We recommend, at least for now, a \$6-million investment in that work, so that we can ensure that every institution in this province has the means necessary to be able to really live up to some of the goals that we've set in terms of actually combatting—and effectively combatting—sexual and gendered violence on campus.

Our third recommendation is to institute mandatory consent education, ensuring that the education that is received around consent is developed in conjunction with the campus community—that includes student groups, and that also includes faculty groups, staff groups and other groups on campus that are stakeholders—and ensuring that we actually have education, in the first couple of weeks of school especially.

We know—and research shows this; it's not just anecdotal—that a majority of sexual assault and sexual violence incidents happen within the first couple of weeks of school starting, so it is so important, right when a student is learning about the ABCs of their post-secondary institution and what they need to know in order to be a successful student on that campus, that they know they have access to resources and support should anything happen to them or to anyone they know, and that they also know what consent means and what we're actually talking about—not just relying on our community to be able to provide that education, but that we actually provide dedicated space and dedicated strategy towards ensuring that education and training happens on campuses.

0850

Those are some of the recommendations that students have put forth. Something I wanted to emphasize as well when speaking to this committee is that I think that—and I've mentioned this, I think, quite a few times now—the issue of sexual and gendered violence and the way that we see rape culture manifesting itself on our campuses is certainly a symptom of a wider societal issue. But we have a very unique opportunity, I think, on post-secondary campuses because they're public spaces that are governed and that are supported and that are talked about through committees like these and through our government. These are spaces where we actually have the opportunity to provide a very meaningful impact.

Myself and many of my peers go towards a university or a college education, go to our post-secondary institutions, in an attempt not only to learn the skills and education that we need in order to be active and successful workers—

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

Ms. Bilan Arte: Okay—but we also go there in order to learn more about what we need to do in order to be successful and active members of our communities and of our societies.

Just in closing I'll say this: I think the work that's happening in this government and in this province today is fantastic. I think that students are very happy to have had the opportunity to work with you folks thus far. We're looking forward to continuing to have those opportunities hopefully in the future.

I want to thank you for having me, and I would welcome any questions that you folks have. Thank you very much.

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

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you so much for your very animated and enthusiastic presentation. The voice of students is critical in any kind of successful implementation of these strategies.

One of the things that this committee heard a lot about is that the Occupational Health and Safety Act requires workplaces to have a policy, but it doesn't have any kind of oversight over what is in the policy. How do we hold post-secondary institutions accountable for actually having meaningful policies that will address some of the issues that you've raised: preventing and changing rape culture on campus?

Ms. Bilan Arte: Am I able to respond directly?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Absolutely.

Ms. Bilan Arte: Okay. Thank you for the question.

I think that is in fact part and parcel of why we recommend the first item that I talked about, so the creation of a sexual assault support division within the government of Ontario: to not only compile and provide all relevant information around sexual assault prevention on campus—and that can include working with institutions to develop curriculum around consent education—but it would also provide an accountability measure. It will provide a space within government for there to be discussions around how we enforce a strategy like the one that's been discussed within Ontario and how we hold institutions and individual administrations accountable.

As you've mentioned, we know that not all administrations are going to be as willing to go through the work that some of us have outlined here today, but I think that actually having stand-alone space within the workings of this government to provide for those discussions to happen—and to provide for discussions around what enforcement looks like—is going to be able to provide us with the mechanisms and an outside body, outside of just

our administrations, to be able to appeal to if we find that our administrations are in fact not acting in the best interests of students when it comes to sexual assault prevention.

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

Mr. John Fraser: Thank you very much for your presentation this morning.

Ms. Bilan Arte: Thank you.

Mr. John Fraser: And I agree: a very animated, excellent presentation.

I wanted to ask you two questions. First of all, you were talking about working with the colleges and universities in terms of building stand-alone policies. I just want to know what the uptake is like on that in terms of how quickly you're moving forward with—I know you said very positive things about what's happening in Ontario, but what's your sense on the ground as to how administrations are taking this?

Ms. Bilan Arte: We've seen quite a bit of momentum. I'm glad that you've raised that issue because we've actually seen this sort of disturbing trend where institutions are trying to get a policy out there as soon as possible because they're trying to get ahead of a story. Unfortunately, a lot of our administrations and a lot of our institutions are governed by a practice where they're very concerned about their self-image. In a sense it's good; it's very important that we have institutions that are working on the issue of sexual violence, and yes, it does, I think, make an institution look better to a family that's considering it if they know that institution takes the issue of sexual violence seriously, but sometimes they're not as inclusive of the wider campus community as they could be in the development of these policies. Particularly, we've seen institutions not really include students in the policy development process as much as they should have been, and that's why I emphasize the idea of meaningful consultation and meaningful involvement.

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

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much for being here. Which university—are you at one of the universities? Did I miss that?

Ms. Bilan Arte: I'm actually from the University of Manitoba, but I work here in Ottawa now, as we're a nationally based organization.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay. Very good. Do you see anything different that happens in the universities in Manitoba, as opposed to—

Ms. Bilan Arte: No.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Not really? Okay. So we're all kind of on the same page.

We've heard from different students at universities. Some have better set-ups. It was kind of shocking, when we started this, that there weren't the areas, the dedicated staff. There wasn't a coordinated approach on campus when sexual assault occurs. It seems to vary from province to province.

You're promoting a framework to be done across all the universities, and the dollar value you put on it is

something that you roughly figured it might cost to do. I think you said a \$6-million investment.

Ms. Bilan Arte: Yes.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Is that for all the universities, a province-wide plan? Are you talking with the other universities? I'm just trying to get a grasp of—

Ms. Bilan Arte: Definitely. The \$6-million investment is specifically for the province of Ontario. What we're hoping is that that will provide a fund for different initiatives on campus that either need more resources or need resources to get off the ground.

We recognize that not all institutions have the funds or resources necessary to be able to support this work on campus. As public institutions, we find that they should have access to public resources. If, for whatever reason, an institution does not have sufficient resources on its own to be able to carry forth consent education, or training on consent issues or sexual assault prevention, if they have access to a fund that they can apply for that is governed by the sexual assault support division, that would give them access to funds and resources to be able to carry out that type of programming on campus.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Bilan, thank you very much for your presentation this morning to this committee. I invite you now, if you wish, to join our audience and to hear our next presenter.

PROSTITUTES OF OTTAWA/GATINEAU WORK, EDUCATE, RESIST

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would like to invite forward Frédérique Chabot. Please come forward. Make yourself comfortable. You're going to have up to 15 minutes to speak to our committee, and then we're going to ask you some questions. Please state for the record the name of your organization and repeat your name.

Ms. Frédérique Chabot: My name is Frédérique Chabot. I'm a member of POWER. POWER stands for Prostitutes of Ottawa/Gatineau Work, Educate, Resist. We're an advocacy group located here in Ottawa.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I want to tell our committee members, too, that the 8:20 presenter was not able to be here for family reasons, but you may be speaking on behalf of that person.

Ms. Frédérique Chabot: I will do my best.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Begin any time.

Ms. Frédérique Chabot: Just a quick introduction about who we are and the kind of work that we do here in our city: POWER was founded in 2008 in response to a new policing tactic that had been introduced in our city and how it was framed at the time was to "clean the streets" of Ottawa, language that has been tied to increases in violence. If you see research from Simon Fraser University on the language of the discourse of disposal, that kind of language around street sweeps and cleaning streets is really problematic and is very clearly linked to increases in situational and predatory violence

in a city when that starts to happen. So in response to something that was emerging in our city at that time, sex workers here locally decided to start to organize and see what they could do to better their relationships with institutions in the city and address some problematic relationships with some of these institutions, including the Ottawa Police Service.

At the time, to determine what kind of group POWER would be, there was some small community-based research that was organized here in the city. It was done in conjunction with a professor at the University of Ottawa. She recruited sex workers themselves, and their allies, family members and community members, to be research coordinators and interviewers. She trained them to do that research here in the city and to develop, as well, the questions that were going to be posed to sex workers working in the region here. Then these people were scattered around the city to snowball the research.

0900

What was supposed to be a very small needs assessment to decide what kind of group POWER would be at that point—would it distribute soup and warm socks; would it be an advocacy group or a service organization etc.—ended up being a much bigger project, because of the richness of the data that we managed to gather, because of the fact that community members were interviewing their peers.

A year after this research was started, we published a report called *Challenges: Ottawa Area Sex Workers Speak Out*. It's available on our website, if members of the committee are interested in reading it, at powerottawa.ca. It maps out challenges encountered by sex workers here in the city of Ottawa when it comes to the workplace, clients, access to services, violence, criminalization and police.

What was very interesting was that one of the main findings—it was surprising; out of all of the topics that were touched on by the interviewers, 100% of the street-based workers who were interviewed and a good number of the indoor workers identified police as one of their main challenges in working in Ottawa. What came from that was that we filed a request for an inquiry by the Ontario Human Rights Commission to look into the policing of sex work in the city of Ottawa. That was in 2010, and they did come to our city to interview a lot of stakeholders in this particular situation.

All of this was to map out the kind of work that we ended up doing. We decided to stay unfunded; it's a volunteer-based organization that is directed by and for sex workers and their very close allies. We are an advocacy group working around the criminalization of sex work and trying to address emerging and pressing issues for sex workers here in Ottawa.

Obviously one of the main challenges that we are trying to tackle is the criminalization of sex work and how it impacts people's access to resources, including police protection. This is why we're here today to talk about this, because there are thousands of pages of research, there is a lot of experiential knowledge that was

shared, and there is the Bedford ruling, which does speak to the fact that the current way that we police sex work—in Ontario, but in Canada widely—has an impact on violence experienced by certain members of our community. To build on the excellent presentation that was right before mine, which highlighted how some communities are affected in different ways when we're talking about sexual or gendered violence, I'm here today to speak to the violence experienced by sex workers in Ontario.

Our Premier has brought attention to the fact that she was very concerned about the new prostitution laws. We're here to speak to that and to confirm that we are also concerned as a community and are hoping to continue to build relationships with elected officials and people working who do have a very real impact on policies and how we can facilitate access to protection for certain communities that are at risk of increased violence.

Very briefly, there are four main provisions that criminalize sex work. I'm not really going to touch on them in much detail because it's a conversation that has been ongoing nationally. There are a lot of ways to inform ourselves, and I don't want to assume that members have not followed a lot of the story in the past couple of years.

I still want to briefly talk about how section 213, the communications provision, has been reintroduced by the new prostitution laws—a little bit tweaked, but barely, really, with a similar intended impact on women and on people in the sex industry. It is worth mentioning that in Canada, 95% of prostitution charges are communication charges—at least, historically that was the case—so we are policing a very small subset of sex workers: the ones who work on the street. In Ottawa, it would be about 5% of the industry; Canada-wide, it's estimated that it's about 5% to 20%. A very small number of people in the industry are overly policed. It's mostly linked to poverty and presence on the street.

In Ottawa, that's definitely a trend that's true. Communication charges are the most common ones. If I may, I would describe an interaction with police when it comes to communication charges, at least until the new laws came on, because right now we're assessing what the enforcement of the new laws is looking like.

Here in Ottawa, a lot of women would be caught during street sweeps by police officers who would pose as clients and then bring a woman into their car and start negotiating sexual services, because that's the part that's illegal.

Communicating in public for the exchange of sexual services is difficult to prove, so sometimes it was reported, and it is reflected in the *Challenges* report, that police officers would use techniques that really speak to the fact that in our culture we consider sex workers to be unrapeable. So they would use techniques like, if a sex worker was worried about a police officer being a police officer, she would ask, "Are you a member of the police?" Then police officers would touch the women or ask them to touch them to prove that they were not

police—leading to charges that way. It was a tactic that was discussed pretty openly by police as something that was not problematic in their eyes. That's captured in a few community-based research here in Ottawa.

So it speaks to how we view certain people when it comes to sexual violence and dichotomize victims in terms of good victims and bad victims, and sex workers are definitely falling squarely into one of the camps.

Provision 286.2 is the new provision that criminalizes material benefits. I'm not going to touch on it because Bedford clearly ruled it unconstitutional. It's back in our Criminal Code now, but there is a lot of ink that has been spent on that one.

Advertising being criminalized is a new thing. It was introduced in the new set of laws by the federal government. One concern for sex worker communities is that spaces where sex workers gather to advertise are now made illegal. These are spaces where, when you are isolated in your profession, you can gather with people who can share information with you, including information about bad dates, bad clients, violent clients etc., so people can take measures to protect themselves as they continue working. That's now made more difficult for sex workers.

Provision 286.1: That's the most controversial one, the criminalization of the purchase of sexual services. That's completely new. That basically criminalizes all interactions between clients and sex workers in Canada, effectively making sex work illegal for the first time. We do have data on the impact of such measures that comes from Canada, so we don't even necessarily need to look outside of our boundaries to understand what that looks like, because in some cities the criminalization of clients has started a long time ago, a few years at least in some cities. Vancouver, for example, is one.

There was an article that was published in the medical journal *BMJ Open* on the impact of criminalizing clients on sex workers. What was remarked was that it recreates the same conditions that put people at increased risk of violence, so a greater displacement for street-based sex workers; greater scrutiny by police, which means that clients are nervous, people have to jump into cars; there's no time to assess a client, to discuss what you consent to and what you don't consent to; there's no time to negotiate safer sex supplies. Often, people in Vancouver remarked that they're now taken out of their familiar neighbourhoods to be brought to isolated areas because clients are nervous about police detection.

0910

So it has been linked, in Montreal as well, with increased instances of situational violence and predatory violence because people are very aware that sex workers, to avoid being profiled as sex workers so they don't have their clients identified, refuse to go to the police for protection. People are very aware of that. Individually, all these laws are problematic, in our opinion. But it's together, as well, that they work in a way to create really dangerous working conditions for many Ontarians who are put at a very high risk of situational or predatory violence.

We are here, again, to continue to raise red flags around this legislation and around the enforcement of these problematic laws in Ontario. That's already, we know, a discussion that is happening with our elected officials. We're very grateful for that, and we hope to continue that conversation and we hope to be sitting at the table with people who can have a real impact on developing that conversation, in Ontario and also at the national level, to ensure that we are the kind of society that does address very real contributing factors in terms of facing violence for certain communities in our province.

Another thing I'd like to touch on because it's definitely timely is the conflation of sex work with human trafficking, consensual sex work being discussed as if it was interchangeable with instances of exploitation, of human trafficking. We do believe that it does not serve sex workers or victims of human trafficking to discuss these two issues as the same thing, and we do believe that in some instances it's used with very specific political aims.

What it looks like in real life in a city in Ontario when we do talk of human trafficking and conflate it with sex work or do not consider how it could impact sex workers in our city—we do have some examples here in Ottawa—

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

Ms. Frédérique Chabot: Thank you. So we've had two operations that were conducted here in our city that ended up in a more difficult relationship with our police service here. The first one was called Northern Spotlight. It was a nation-wide operation that was conducted last January, I believe, or last February. In Ottawa it looked like raids in the homes and the workplaces of escorts. Police posed as clients and showed up at their appointments, and when the sex worker would open the door, possibly in her work attire, four big police officers in all their gear would enter her apartment to possibly—at least we have a few recorded instances where police searched the premises to try to assess if there was any exploitation but ended up spooking sex workers. There was quite a push-back from sex workers here about how it continued to deteriorate the trust between sex workers and the police service: the fact that they posed as clients and the fact that they visited their homes like that with no prior assessment of possible exploitation.

The second one happened a couple of weeks ago. I'm going to talk as fast as I can. The human trafficking unit here in Ottawa investigated 20 massage parlours, and they did mention in the media that it was responding to public complaints. That resulted in 11 women being deported. As we have seen a report coming out of Toronto and Vancouver, 100% of Chinese workers working in massage parlours do not call the police when they're victims of assault, sexual assault, robbery, because they fear possible deportation, retaliation and charges. So we have seen here the problematic conflation and how it actually impacts people's access to police protection.

That certainly is a contributing factor to sexual violence and gendered violence experienced by sex workers in Canada.

That is certainly compounded when people are in situations of intersection, of marginalization, such as racialized workers, indigenous workers, migrant workers and poor workers working on the street. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Committee members, I do want to encourage you again, and just to add, to our new committee members who have just joined us, to be very concise with your questions today. MPP Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Merci d'être ici.

Ms. Frédérique Chabot: Merci.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you. And I'm going to go straight to the question because I want to make sure: What are some of the best practices in prevention of violence against and support for women in the sex trade?

Ms. Frédérique Chabot: There are a few places in Canada, but also in New Zealand, for example, where sex work has been decriminalized, where the police have been working very closely with advocacy groups representing sex workers to develop ways to respond to such instances.

I would invite you to look at the case of a woman in New Zealand who just won a settlement of \$30,000 after suing her employer in a massage parlour for sexual harassment. That was done with the support of the police in her city. This was the first time that it was achieved, that there was a real way to address violence experienced in the workplace by sex workers—a protection that should be afforded to all citizens.

In terms of what is happening right now, as sex work is criminalized, here in Ottawa we have developed relationships with very specific police officers who have gone beyond their duties to ensure that people can access police protection and can navigate the system, even though they may have, at the time, pending charges, red zones, probations etc., that would have precluded an easy access to protection—so, every step of the way, being by their side, and in certain instances, visiting clients who had threatened sex workers etc.

Happily, it works very well to rely on these relationships. Sadly, when these officers move out of their positions, we lose an entire system of protection for sex workers, which has happened a couple of times here in Ottawa, and I know that it has certainly happened in Toronto.

Merci.

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

Ms. Laurie Scott: I wanted to give you the opportunity: Is there anything else you wanted to add? We only have such short moments that if there's anything you missed in your presentation, go ahead and hit the point for us, because it's your time.

Ms. Frédérique Chabot: Thank you very much. That's very nice. What I would have added was to rap home how the criminalization of sex work, regardless of where we stand, does feed the stigma and the discrimination that sex workers face, not only from public institutions, and how it makes it more difficult to access police protection and it also increases tensions with community members. It does feed into stereotypes that feed violence from the community.

It is a very long-term work to address the problematic aspects of how we police sex work, and how we treat sex work in this society as a criminal matter, as opposed to a social one or as a work issue or as a human rights issue. That does feed into the violence experienced by sex workers in our province.

I do believe that the national conversation that was sparked in the last year, the conversation that was sparked in Ontario following Premier Wynne's concern about the new laws—I do believe that these are positive steps to start discussing, in the open, who sex workers are in Ontario and how we can facilitate access to protections that Canadians have access to.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And the final comment, from our NDP caucus.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I was very interested in your comment about the dichotomy between the good victim and the bad victim. Can you talk about what recourse a sex worker has if they are the victim of sexual violence, currently, as a "bad" victim?

Ms. Frédérique Chabot: Well, sex workers are bad victims, and we've built that assumption in many different ways. The fact that we do consider them, in many ways, to be unrapeable is definitely problematic in their accessing protection or the criminal justice system for redress.

The fact that police officers and a lot of community members do consider what happens when a sex worker is working as she's asking for it—"Isn't that your job?"—instead of considering that people are consenting to very specific sexual services that are negotiated in advance, and anything that falls outside of that is just like any other issues of absent consent, is definitely a huge barrier.

At this point, be it real or not, it is perceived by sex workers that police are not necessarily a help in those situations, because of experiences or because of assumptions about the police and about the fact that they wouldn't get help.

In the research that just came out from Toronto and Vancouver, with Chinese massage parlours, one of the questions was, "How do you deal with those assaults?" And the response was, "Move on."

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. We do appreciate your coming and speaking to this committee this morning.

Ms. Frédérique Chabot: Thank you for having me.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We invite you to join the audience now, if you wish to.

CARLETON UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenters, from the Carleton University Graduate Students' Association. Please come forward. Make yourselves comfortable. Pour yourselves some water if you like. You will have up to 15 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed by questions. Please begin by stating your names for the record.

0920

Mr. Theo Hug: Hi. I'm Theo Hug.

Ms. Alannah James: Alannah James.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And begin any-time.

Mr. Theo Hug: Hi, everyone. My name is Theo Hug and I'm currently doing a master's in political economy. I'm the vice-president external to the graduate students' association.

Ms. Alannah James: Hi, everyone. My name is Alannah James. I'm a second-year master's student in political science at Carleton. I am the vice-president academic for the graduate students' association at Carleton University.

Thank you for inviting us here today. Our presentation is only about 11 minutes, so we're leaving a lot of room for questions.

We are excited to speak to this report, because not only does it contain necessary and progressive recommendations, but promoting consent culture and combating rape culture are important parts of campaigns the GSA runs. All of our members are affected by rape culture; as such, we applaud the diverse solutions offered by the action plan.

First, we will detail a bit about the GSA and how this committee fits in with our work. Next, we will take the opportunity to build upon the recommendations of the report by detailing examples specific to Carleton that are also emblematic of the broader power structures contained in the report. Finally, we will provide constructive recommendations from students' point of view. We wish to close by emphasizing how excited we are to be here, and we look forward to working with the province on this.

The GSA works to provide services and advocacy for 3,600 graduate students at Carleton. Our members are students, workers and educators of diverse identities, ages and abilities. The GSA is a member of the Canadian Federation of Students, and as such we support Bilan's earlier suggestions. It is important that our experiences as graduate students in particular contribute to the creation of this legislation. We make the decision to return to post-secondary institutions, despite financial and emotional costs and potential risks to personal safety, because we understand the value and importance of having a comprehensive education.

As a result, the GSA actively fights to keep education accessible through the creation of safer spaces, and this extends to sexualized violence prevention and education.

As a woman, the threat of sexualized violence does not disappear the moment I step on campus. In fact, these threats are more concentrated. Campus is a microcosm for a very problematic broader culture that normalizes gendered, racialized, and sexualized violence against women and other marginalized gender identities.

This culture forces me to moderate my behaviour in certain ways. This includes holding my keys as a weapon, walking with a purpose, not lingering on campus after dark, not wearing revealing clothing, and the list goes on. I can tell you about the multiple occasions I've been street-harassed—and this is just last week. For women, summer is open season on harassment. This has got to stop.

Mr. Theo Hug: Following a highly publicized sexual assault at Carleton in September 2007, students banded together to create a coalition for a sexual assault support centre. They endeavoured to establish a student-run, survivor-centered support center. They asked the administration for space and resources to enable this vital centre to exist. For nearly five years, Carleton's senior administration actively resisted the idea of having a student-run support centre. They refused to provide space for students and distanced themselves from the issue of sexual assault on campus.

Five years later, in 2012, Carleton's administration announced that it would be opening a sexual assault support centre run by the administration. Though we are happy that they created this service and certainly believe that there can never be too many services and resources for people who experience sexual assault, it is important to note that this did not meet the demands of the coalition, as they were specifically asking for a student-run support centre.

This is important because not all students feel comfortable going to a centre run by the administration, particularly when that same administration initially challenged the need for that centre at all. Additionally, we feel that it is important for students to have the choice of services that they are more comfortable with and work best for them. Finally, the service centre established by the administration is located far across campus from where the rest of the service centres are and as a result is not as visible or as well known as the other service centres. That being said, I do know that they do a lot of valuable work and it is certainly a welcome contribution to Carleton's campus. However, it should not have come at the cost of the student-run sexual assault support centre students have long been demanding.

Ms. Alannah James: For this reason, in line with the recommendation put forth by the Canadian Federation of Students, we recommend the government of Ontario establish a \$6-million post-secondary sexual assault support fund. This fund would help to develop and enhance support resources on campus. If this fund could be made available on an application basis, so that post-secondary institutions, students' unions or clubs and societies could apply for it, then initiatives such as the student-run sexual assault support centre could be created in conjunction

with those support resources established by our administrations.

Enabling independent, student-led projects is particularly important because we are the ones experiencing sexualized violence at the highest rates. We have been organizing around these issues for decades and we understand the context in which these experiences take place, putting us in an ideal position to cater to students' needs. Furthermore, we can more easily create support systems that accommodate specific populations that experience sexualized violence at disproportionate rates, including racialized, indigenous, queer, trans and differently abled peoples, alongside all of the intersectional identities that exist among these groups. We are best positioned to establish these resources because we, as students from diverse student bodies, are members of these groups.

One way that the GSA has contributed to this effort is by creating a campaign that recognizes the plurality of ways that trans and gender-nonconforming students experience violence on campus. We created a poster series and we brought with us samples of the five posters we created to show you. This poster series highlights different microaggressions that people experience. These microaggressions are not distinct from rape culture, but are in fact manifestations of it. When trans students get points or stares or are even verbally and physically harassed, this normalizes violence against these populations, making them more vulnerable to sexualized violence.

This poster series reflects the ongoing realities faced by our members. Educating students in a holistic way about consent culture helps maintain safer spaces, thereby ensuring that education remains accessible to students of all identities. As we will detail, this particular point strikes very close to home.

Mr. Theo Hug: As graduate students who value our education immensely, we would like to reinforce the recommendation of mandatory consent training for students at all points in their degree. This past September some Carleton frosh week orientation leaders were photographed in Ottawa wearing t-shirts that read "Fuck Safe Space" on the front and "Or Me" on the back. Not only does this demonstrate a fundamental lack of understanding of rape culture and the need for spaces free from violence and harassment, but this incident and responses to it are also one key example of why comprehensive education is so desperately needed on an ongoing basis for all students.

Frosh is organized by Carleton. In the aftermath, they immediately worked to distance themselves from the incident by abdicating responsibility, as did the students involved and the Carleton community at large. Regardless of the intent, the statement on these shirts serves to attack and demean the ongoing efforts by students, faculty and staff at Carleton to create safe spaces free from violence, oppression and discrimination. Most disturbingly, this incident came only days after a Carleton student was arrested and charged with three counts of sexual assault on campus.

To frame this as an isolated and off-campus incident is to fail to recognize the systemic problems these shirts perpetuate. This is not the first time students have mocked safe space policies. The solution cannot be simply to penalize those students and remove these shirts from campus, but rather to actively combat a campus culture that allows people to think these shirts and other actions that create unsafe spaces are appropriate.

The GSA has been working hard to promote and strengthen inclusive safe spaces on campus. We are present throughout orientation weeks, reaching out to both graduate and undergraduate students with equity campaigns such as Challenge Homophobia and Transphobia, Challenge Racism and challenging other forms of oppression. The GSA also funds two sexual assault outreach coordinators who actively work on the No Means No campaign, addressing gender-based violence and rape culture while also promoting healthy sexuality.

In the aftermath of this incident, the GSA hosted a town hall to address student concerns about the incident. We created committees and events in order to highlight how ineffective the university's response has been. There's a gap in current university policy that does not address a specific campus environment that enables the conditions for sexualized violence, including a party culture fuelled by alcohol, barriers to accessing services and a lack of awareness of what constitutes safe space and consent.

Ms. Alannah James: I'm very happy that the plan mandates that each post-secondary institution adopt a stand-alone policy. I think this will go a long way to make students feel more safe and supported on their campuses. I'm also incredibly happy to see the mandate for student involvement and the requirement that policies be updated every four years. I think these are very necessary aspects of the policy creation process.

However, even the strongest policy is only as good as its implementation. Students rely on university and college administrations to keep them safe, but these same people often refuse, or even cover up incidents of sexualized violence on their campuses in order to protect the reputation of the institution. These same administrations fail to support those who experience this violence. There needs to be a way to hold universities accountable to the policies they create.

0930

For this reason, our third recommendation would be to establish a post-secondary sexual assault accountability division. This division would provide a number of incredibly necessary pieces of infrastructure, such as tracking sexual assault policies at post-secondary institutions across the province. It would ensure that all universities and colleges collect data about incidents of sexualized violence in a standardized way so that data can be analyzed and the effectiveness of the Premier's plan can be tracked.

Finally, this division would directly oversee and enforce university accountability measures, including receiving and pursuing student complaints when students

feel their universities have not complied with their own policies. If this strategy is to be effective, it needs to support the people who experience sexualized violence in as many ways as possible.

In the Carleton context, this division would prevent the issues that students encountered starting in 2007 around a sexual assault support centre that we mentioned before by enforcing university accountability and transparency.

Currently, Carleton does not have a standalone sexual assault policy. Recently, a number of groups on campus have been meeting to discuss our approaches to challenging rape culture and sexualized violence on campus. We are eagerly waiting for the policy creation process to begin, and we welcome the help of the province in pushing Carleton to develop this policy.

Mr. Theo Hug: Thank you again for having us speak today. As we have detailed, the action plan and its proposed legislation are desperately needed on our campus. As students affected by and actively working to combat sexualized violence, we are natural partners in the fight to establish safer spaces across all locations and for everyone.

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

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you very much for being here today. I'd like to touch on something that you didn't include in your presentation. One of the big subjects that we're looking at here is the under- or unreporting of sexual violence. As you're from Carleton, I want to know if there are any unique or specific items on campus that either amplify the unreporting or mitigate that unreporting, or things that are specific to campus life that would be beneficial for this committee to understand and to incorporate in our going forward. If you could just expand a little bit on that from a university perspective: unreporting.

Ms. Alannah James: Sure. As Theo mentioned, and Bilan earlier, a lot of these incidents happen in the first few weeks of school. This is not a coincidence. This is when there are many events and parties happening, in residence particularly, but also the broader campus. What we see is a blurring of the lines between consensual sexual interactions and sexual assault and rape. This party culture fuels these incidences by promoting a culture of, "Oh, he was just joking around. This is a friend who lives down the hallway. He couldn't possibly perpetuate problematic realities like this." For students, the lines become blurred, and this is where consent education is absolutely critical because it demarcates these behaviours as acceptable or unacceptable.

Mr. Theo Hug: I would just add to that that the way that the administration—at Carleton, anyways—has sort of distanced itself from these issues really puts up a barrier to students coming forward and reporting, because the administration is essentially saying they don't really care or they care more about their reputation. Obviously, that's important for them because they need funding and whatever. It's not like it doesn't make sense

to us, but it still puts up a barrier for students coming forward, because they don't necessarily feel like they're going to be believed or they're going to be supported in the ways that they want to be.

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

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you for coming today and thank you for your efforts to create safe places on campus for gender-nonconforming, LGBT and other sexual minority groups.

We tend to think of this issue as being primarily an issue for undergraduates in their first few weeks of school. You started out your presentation by talking about graduate students and the need for your voice to be included. Can you expand upon that a little more, about the differences from an undergraduate perspective versus a graduate student perspective?

Ms. Alannah James: Absolutely. Graduate students pursue independent research more than undergraduate students. As such, we are on campus for longer hours, sometimes overnight. Students in the sciences are tracking laboratory processes that go for hours and hours. As such, they're more vulnerable in campus spaces where patrols aren't as regular, there's not as many people around, and they're in isolated spaces. That would be the primary difference for graduate students in their research. But, also in a social sense, they are more isolated, because there aren't the frosh week activities dedicated to them, they're not in groups in residence—although there is a graduate residence. They're more socially isolated, and, as such, it can be harder to reach out, which is where the GSA steps in. We form committees and we actively encourage gender non-conforming students on campus to interact with our committees. But we can't reach everyone.

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

Mr. John Fraser: Thank you very much for being here this morning and thank you very much for your support of safe places.

I do want to ask you a question: What do you think is the major contributor to sexual violence on campus? We had an interesting presentation earlier this morning at the secondary level and their approach to that; I don't know if you were here earlier when they were here. What do you think the major contributors are—you've said a few things—and how would you change those?

Mr. Theo Hug: I think campus is just like a little concentrated rest of the society. Rape culture is everywhere, right? So I don't know if there's one key thing that contributes to sexualized violence on campus more so than anywhere else.

Mr. John Fraser: You just had mentioned alcohol and parties. So I'm wondering, when you're tackling a big problem, sometimes it's, "Okay, well, let's take on this." That's the reason for my question, but I appreciate that it's a big, complex problem.

Mr. Theo Hug: Yes.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'm going to bring in Minister Naqvi, who has joined us, for a quick comment.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Thank you, Chair.

Thank you for your presentation and for raising some very important points.

The one point that struck me is the conversation around creating safe spaces, which is a very important discussion, and what we need to do to have safe spaces on campus. My colleague MPP McMahon and I were talking, because it seems like, when we were in university—the issues have not changed. There's one thing that I felt when I was on campus, and I feel the same way now, that the entire campus should be a safe space; don't you agree? We don't need to have specific rooms which are safe spaces. What we need to get to is—we want our whole society to be a safe space, but when we walk on a campus, this is an institution of higher learning and development; the whole place should be a safe space where everybody's respected regardless of who they are. Would you agree to that, and any thoughts on how we get there?

Ms. Alannah James: I have an answer for Mr. Fraser. I've been thinking it through and I can address both questions at once.

Post-secondary institutions are touted as a place of higher learning, and I think that often obscures the reality. Although these are independent people pursuing their educations, this almost silences discussions and discourses that we should be having about consent and safer spaces and gender non-conforming folks on campus and many associated topics. So I think that students in their first few weeks are encouraged to be independent students and people on campus, and this obscures the fact they're part of a broader community. It's very exciting to be accepted to university, and it's almost like society then lets go of the responsibility of educating students because we have many amazing high school programs—that we've heard from today—but those end when you graduate high school, and the responsibility is not taken up by anyone else. This falls to the university, which is why we're holding the university accountable.

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

KOALA PLACE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We go to our next presenters. I ask the presenters with Koala Place to come forward.

Good morning. Please make yourselves comfortable. You're going to have up to 15 minutes to give your presentation and that will be followed by some questions from our committee. Please start by stating your names.

0940

Ms. Franca DiDiomete: Franca DiDiomete.

Ms. Elyse Lauzon-Alguire: Elyse Lauzon-Alguire.

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

Ms. Elyse Lauzon-Alguire: I just have a PowerPoint that I'm going to—

Ms. Franca DiDiomete: Perhaps, while she's doing that, I can just do my presentation, and then we'll get through it quickly.

I'm here representing the agencies working on developing a child and youth advocacy centre in Ottawa, and we thought we'd do a joint presentation. You're going to hear about CYACs from my colleague from the Koala centre, and I know that you heard from the Ontario network of child and youth advocacy centres earlier on. So I'm going to keep my comments more general rather than specific to CYACs.

In 2008, StatsCan reported that the rate of sexual assault against children and youth reported to police in 2006 was five times higher than it was for adults. We know that trauma may have enduring effects on both the neurobiological and psychological development of children. Severe and repeated trauma during youth may have enduring effects, altering stress responsivity and altering adult behaviour patterns. Individuals experience a greatly increased risk of mood anxiety and personality disorders through adult life.

Professor Bessel van der Kolk, who has done a lot of research on trauma and a lot of work on trauma, conducted a five-year study of 528 trauma patients from American hospitals. This study identified a range of symptoms that correlated well with prolonged, severe childhood sexual abuse: "... the inability to regulate emotions like rage and terror, along with intense suicidal feelings, somatic disorder, negative self-perception, poor relationships, chronic feelings of isolation, despair and hopelessness; and dissociation and amnesia.

"The implications are that real-world childhood ... trauma may be responsible for many psychopathologies usually considered to have endogenous origins, including various kinds of phobic, depressive, anxiety and eating disorders, not to mention borderline personality, antisocial personality and multiple personality disorder."

The long-term impact of child sexual abuse is far-reaching. Many studies indicate that without the right support, the effects of childhood abuse can last a lifetime.

I see the impact of child sexual abuse every day at our agency; it's not just statistics to me. Adults, both men and women, come specifically for our sexual abuse programs, or they seek counselling for other issues, which can then be tracked back to childhood sexual abuse. We also see many victims of sexual abuse in our partner assault response program. So they then become abusive to other people.

My point: We, as a society, cannot afford to do nothing in response to childhood sexual abuse. The cost is too high. If we don't provide children with the right support, many of these children will be at greater risk throughout their lives, not just as children.

If the human cost is not a sufficient reason to act, then perhaps we need to consider the economic cost. A 2003 study done by Health Canada put the cost of child sexual abuse at \$3.6 billion. If we intervene early, we can reduce both the human and economic costs. Thank you.

Ms. Elyse Lauzon-Alguire: Good morning. My name is Elyse. I'm the executive director of Koala Place child

and youth advocacy centre. We are based out of Cornwall, Ontario. I'm aware that you have heard from various of our colleagues this past couple of weeks.

I'd like to begin by providing you with just a brief overview of what Koala Place is. Basically, we provide a safe, neutral, confidential environment for children, youth and families who are victims of physical abuse, sexual abuse and maltreatment. They come to our centre for the forensic interview: They meet with police services, child protection services and victim services. Basically, it is a hub for children and youth who are victims. Our centre is 24/7. We deal with three police services, two child protection services and many other community agencies.

We became operational in January 2014, and we are the fourth centre to open in Ontario. We belong to the Ontario CYAC network, which is comprised of many centres across Ontario, some that are open, some that are in development.

Just to share a few statistics with you—there are several more statistics in the handout that I provided you—60% of all reported sexual assaults are against children. One in three girls and one in six boys experience an unwanted sexual act. Four out of five incidents of sexual abuse will occur before the age of 18, and 95% of child sexual abuse victims know their perpetrator.

Since opening Koala Place, we've had 162 investigations come through our centre. I can say, based on our statistics, that indeed it is mostly family members who are the perpetrators.

You may have heard of the recent Jeffrey Baldwin inquest. Jeffrey was a healthy baby when he was placed in the care of his grandparents, and he died—he was starved to death—in 2002, which led to an inquest. One of the recommendations submitted—which I've copied below—is that “The Ministry of Children and Youth Services and Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, in consultation with the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies and provincial police authorities, shall expand the child and youth advocacy centre model across Ontario and provide the funding necessary to sustain this province-wide expansion.”

Again, this is simply a scenario that reinforces that we need to provide a better response to child abuse victims.

Why is a child and youth advocacy centre needed? As we know, early assistance is crucial to the long-term impact for children. Child and youth advocacy centres are a seamless, coordinated and collaborative approach to addressing the needs of child and youth victims and witnesses of abuse and crime. CYACs seek to minimize trauma, including system-induced trauma, by providing a child-friendly, one-stop hub for child abuse victims and witnesses. A collaborative, multidisciplinary intervention, such as the one implemented by Koala Place, is part of the solution in responding to crimes against children. CYACs are now recognized as a leading practice to ensure better access to the justice system for children and youth. There are over 700 CYACs in the United States, and that's where the model stemmed from for the

Canadian. A lot of evidence-based research comes out of the United States.

A CYAC coordinates and assists in integrating the services of a highly skilled multidisciplinary team of professionals to respond to cases involving child and youth victims of abuse. Fundamental members of a multidisciplinary team include police, child protection, the crown attorney, medical, mental health, victim support and advocacy services, and many more.

In our centre, we have amazing partnerships with our police services victim/witness program. It has been astonishing. I don't believe I mentioned this, but our centre is an outcome of the Cornwall public inquiry that we had in 2005. This was one of the recommendations submitted to the commissioner. It has been in the works for many years. We are certainly pleased to be open, and certainly, there is a need for our centre.

I won't spend too much time on this, but some of the benefits delivered by a CYAC:

—Better outcomes for children: Again, this is early intervention and reduced trauma for the children.

—Improved client experience: It provides a single point of access, so the child does not have to go to the police station and then to child protection services and then to the crown's office. It provides a one-stop.

—Enhanced partnerships in the community: It brings all the key players involved in a child abuse investigation.

—Optimization of government and community resources: It streamlines and reduces duplication of service.

—Public confidence and public safety: It helps the child not to fall through the cracks. We deal a lot with victim services, and they provide that constant support throughout the investigation.

—Collecting and using evidence, so increased conviction rates: Our hope is that we obtain a better disclosure from the child.

The CYAC supports the It's Never Okay action plan, and I'll touch on this. How do we fit into this action plan? CYACs provide a hub for children and youth and families who are victims and witnesses of abuse. This reflects one of the action plan commitments to introduce an innovative fund to test new service delivery approaches based on best practices; for example, community hub models.

0950

CYACs improve the experience of children, youth and families navigating the criminal justice system. Again, this reflects the commitment to increase supports and develop an enhanced prosecution model to improve the experience of survivors navigating the criminal justice system.

We provide training and ongoing professional development for MDT members. This supports the commitment to develop up-to-date training for front-line workers in the health, community services, education and justice sectors to better support survivors of sexual abuse and harassment.

We provide public education that is prevention-focused, which supports a commitment to launch a multimedia public education and awareness campaign to engage Ontarians in a discussion about how to prevent sexual violence and harassment.

We feel strongly that the province of Ontario needs to strengthen its response to child abuse victims by including the implementation and sustainability of CYACs in Ontario. We are recommending making us part of the solution in the action plan.

Just to touch personally on the recommendations brought forward from my board of directors: We are interested in complementary objectives, such as prevention and research activities. My board of directors is recommending the wide adoption of the Respected violence and abuse program, which is delivered by the Canadian Red Cross. They have a variety of programs regarding sexual violence and harassment.

Another recommendation is improved teacher training to build teacher awareness of maltreatment, how to recognize it and how to respond.

Train professionals who work with children and youth in order to equip them with effective steps and strategies to prevent child sexual abuse, and train the general community regarding abuse, reporting and bystander intervention. Teach people to overcome their resistance to helping out.

Implement effective child protection and child sexual abuse prevention policies, ensuring background checks are indeed conducted in all businesses and organizations.

Provide sexual abuse prevention and response training for staff volunteers who work with children and youth.

In order to successfully achieve the recommendations listed, funding for a prevention educator or coordinator would be of fundamental importance. I've just added a quote here from Nelson Mandela: "We owe our children—the most vulnerable citizens in any society—a life free from violence and fear. In order to ensure this, we must be tireless in our efforts ... to obtain peace, justice and prosperity ... for communities and members of the same family. We must address the roots of violence."

Every child and youth deserves to be raised in a family, community and province where he or she is safe from abuse. The truth is that abuse happens. Whether they're our own children, our neighbour's, the children we work with or a stranger, we all have the responsibility for their well-being. We owe it to them to do whatever we can to keep their childhood a safe place to be. Child and youth advocacy centres are doing something about this, but we need your support.

Thank you for your time and for listening to our recommendations.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Committee members, I want to encourage you to put your hands up if you're going to be the one speaking.

MPP Sattler asks our first question.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for coming to this committee. We've certainly heard a lot since we've been doing this, seeking input about the incidence

of adult survivors of sexual abuse or sexual violence having experienced it as children.

We also heard about the impact on the broader family context when it is a family member who is the perpetrator of the violence and the need for different kinds of support to help the family heal because of the divisions and tensions that this can create within a family coming to terms with this reality. Can you talk a little bit about the kinds of supports? Does the CYAC provide the broader family counselling, as well as support to the individual child victim?

Ms. Elyse Lauzon-Alguire: Yes.

Ms. Franca DiDiomete: Sure. One of the things to remember is that CYACs are not standardized across the province or even across the country. They all look different in response to the needs in their community because there may be already existing services. The idea of a CYAC is to bring all of those services together in one place, to work together to provide a more seamless experience with families.

Most CYACs in Ontario do not have a counselling component. Counselling isn't funded, unfortunately, by the province of Ontario in a generic way. It has to be very specific. Of the ones that I've visited, they've been able to cobble together pieces of counselling, including family counselling, from other existing services but there is no specific stream of funding for counselling, which I think is unfortunate because it doesn't allow CYACs to do the kind of work that they could do in terms of prevention.

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

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Thank you, Elyse and Franca. Franca, I was hoping I could get some of your thoughts on the services for male victims of sexual violence. The reason I ask is I know that in eastern Ontario you and your agency provide those services. Just from your experience, your agency has been doing this now for two years—

Ms. Franca DiDiomete: Four.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Four years; time is flying—four years for male victims of sexual violence. A two-prong question: One is, as you're providing those services, have you found some challenges being unique to male victims and what are those unique features, in terms of things that we need to consider as we're discussing, of course, sexual violence and harassment as it relates to males?

Ms. Franca DiDiomete: Certainly we've noticed some differences between the male survivors and female survivors. One of the notable differences is that men tend to come into service and exit. They may come for two sessions, leave, and then come back six months, a year later when they're in a better place. Most services aren't equipped to handle that. If we're doing groups, they're 12 weeks. We're the lead for eastern Ontario so we also work with all of our partners. Many of our partners are doing a lot more individual than group work now, recognizing that in-and-out process that men live differently than women. Women tend to stick with it a little bit more.

The other difference, I think, would be that we see a lot of rage. You see anger with women but you don't see the level of rage that we see with the men. Many of them have been incarcerated and many come through the Partner Assault Response Program. They're charged with assault. One of the questions we ask is, "Have you ever been sexually assaulted or abused as a child?" Then we refer them to the program.

I'd say those are the two notable differences.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. A final comment from MPP Hillier.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you very much for being here and making your presentation.

One of the things that we've heard often is the need for integration and coordination, and we see that what you're doing is that integration and coordination. I've heard that for many areas, from many people, that the ability to integrate and coordinate services for adults has been hindered and hampered because of funding from different sources, different ministries. You alluded a little bit to this, that therapy was not funded. We were in Kingston yesterday, and they've been trying since 2008 to get an integrated approach for sexual assault and violence.

I'm just wondering if you could share with the committee your thoughts and views on how you overcame these different funding challenges and what is still out there that we need to improve upon or how to overcome the different ministries wanting to keep different things on their own turf.

Ms. Elyse Lauzon-Alguire: Well, that's difficult. CYACs again are geared towards children and youth. We are funded by the Department of Justice Canada through the Victims Fund, and they provided basic start-up operational costs. This is an area that we unfortunately are headed for, to some degree, a crisis to keep our centre open. That's why we're seeking the support from the provincial government as well to support—

Mr. Randy Hillier: So most of your funding is from justice?

Ms. Elyse Lauzon-Alguire: That's correct. Again, it was only for start-up costs. We're still waiting to hear—our funding ended on March 31 of this year.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. We appreciate your appearing before this committee this morning, and we invite you to join our audience now, if you wish to.

1000

SISTERS ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenters. Committee members, Isabel Rodrigue is not here, so we're moving ahead with Sisters Achieving Excellence. If you could please come forward, have a seat and make yourself comfortable. You will have up to 15 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed by questions for you.

Please begin by stating your name for the record, and start any time.

Ms. Bailey Reid: Okay, thank you. Hopefully, I'm just going to get my presentation up here.

My name is Bailey Reid, and I am the founder and chief executive officer of Sisters Achieving Excellence. I can tell you a little bit about me, to start. I started Sisters Achieving Excellence when I was 25 years old, when I noticed, as a young woman, there were a lot of things I was being told that I needed by the media. I needed to have long hair, and I needed 200 pairs of skinny jeans and a hot boyfriend and to know my perfect shade of red lipstick.

At that point, we had 600 missing or murdered indigenous women in Canada. Now we know the number is more like double that. But I noticed that indigenous women were vastly overrepresented in the criminal justice system, but really underrepresented as government leaders. Some 90% or more of women who are incarcerated in Canada have experienced abuse or exploitation at some point in their lives.

So I thought maybe we don't need red lipstick and skinny jeans. Maybe what we need are programs that move us forward as a community, programs that move us forward as women, programs that educate us and empower us. That was my goal with Sisters Achieving Excellence.

Since then, we've worked with 250 women in Ottawa. We were recognized as a best practice by the Grand Valley Institution and by Vanier Centre for Women in Milton, and have served women in their institutions for the last year. As of next week, we'll be serving women in North Bay Jail as well. That's what we do with Sisters Achieving Excellence.

I really wanted to highlight today who we serve, because when we talk about sexual violence, they tend to be left out of the conversation. Certainly, I mentioned indigenous women and the rates of incarceration, and I think it's also really important to highlight the heightened rates of abuse that they experience as well.

I think we talk a lot about rape as a tactic of war in countries all over the world. We fail to see rape as a tactic of war against indigenous women in Canada. We know that rape is used to dehumanize and to colonize people, and when we look at what's happening to women in Canada, particularly women who are disappearing, that's happening. I think that women who are struggling through mental health concerns, when they have experienced addictions and they're working through that, are really left out of the conversation around sexual violence.

It's because we are biased. We're all humans; we're not robots. We've had experiences; we've internalized media messages our whole lives. We've had our experiences that shape us and, for the most part, make us really empathetic, kind, understanding human beings. But bias happens, and that's okay. It's not about blame; it's about recognizing internal biases.

When we look at policing in particular, women who are marginalized and criminalized have all sorts of experience with the police. A very small portion of it is about reporting sexual violence experiences. When police

are working with marginalized women, we've been trying to tell them, "You have to get past the fact that they may have a criminal record themselves." They may have called the police hundreds of times for these experiences. If you're a sex worker, the chances of you being sexually assaulted are much greater. It may happen to you more than once. It's about asking our justice system to recognize this and to still honour them as survivors of sexual violence.

Our biases have created what I like to call the "perfect victim" paradigm. We see this in reporting of sexual violence in the media, and we see it in the way that we respond to sexual violence. Our biases have kind of created a framework that we work from, whether a woman is a "true" survivor of sexual violence. In this paradigm, we think, "Okay. Well, is she white? Yes or no? Was she sober? Yes or no? What was she wearing? Has she had sex with him before? Does she sell sex?"—these paradigms. The perpetrator's bright future: That one is one of my favourite things that we see in the media when we're reporting sexual violence.

We must recognize that all sexual violence is worthy of the justice system, is worthy of support. When we think about the perfect victim paradigm, this framework can be really dangerous when we're not aware of it and when we're not keeping our own biases in check.

Perpetrators are also aware of the sexual violence paradigm, obviously, and it's particularly dangerous because they know how to exploit it. A good example is, there's a case before the courts in Canada right now with a media personality. Allegedly, he had taken feminist studies so he knew about what the barriers of sexual violence reporting were for women and, you know, he exploited them. The stories are saying that he had started the assault consensually and then it moved to non-consensual. He would know that this would blur the lines for women and confuse them as to whether or not—he knew that he was in a position of power in Canadian media and that coming forward about his violence would really take a lot of courage and a lot of bravery. And we're talking about women there who aren't marginalized.

So if you're a sex worker—you have to recognize that perpetrators know that they're using drugs. The police have experience with them before. They're not necessarily going to be believed as easily as a woman from Rockcliffe who is assaulted in the bushes. It's not going to be the same.

When we're aware of the perfect victim paradigm and aware of our biases, it helps us to serve women and it helps us to recognize all women as survivors of sexual violence.

I think it's really important to note too that with women who are marginalized and young, they are at such higher risk of exploitation because they have to survive, right? You have to eat. You have to have somewhere to live.

The girls that I serve think that they've got a great new boyfriend, and unfortunately, it's about trafficking. So

traffickers are making \$280,000 per year on just one victim. Most of the girls I know—he's got a girl in the west end, a girl in the east end and a girl in the south end. That's just selling women, not drugs. It's a very profitable industry to traffic young women.

There is a cultural environment that excuses violence against women. So when we look at—I mean, this is a fashion advertisement and it's so rapey, for lack of a better term.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: It's horrible.

Ms. Bailey Reid: It is. It's horrible. This is what's happening. We live in a country where you can buy a costume called "Pocahottie" and dress up as a sexy indigenous woman. This is really problematic, and the excusing of violence against, particularly, indigenous women is just one way we dehumanize them and colonize them, and they face structural inequality in Canada. But we have to recognize that we do have a culture that excuses and condones violence against women. And this is just a fashion advertisement. There are hundreds of examples.

Dr. Christine Stark did a really interesting study that was finding that a lot of indigenous women were being trafficked from Thunder Bay into Minnesota. When she interviewed these women and asked them about their experiences, one of the women said, "There are no pimps anymore, just boyfriends." In Ottawa and across the country, I think this is another really important thing to notice: Yes, there are pimps who use violence and drugs to control and manipulate their victims, but for the most part it's about saying, "Oh, you're so wonderful. You're my girl. I know that you're having fun at this party. My friend John thinks you're really hot. Can you just spend a little bit of time with him in the room? He's going to give me 50 bucks. We just have to do this till we can save up enough for our first and last month's rent together." That's how it starts.

We do literacy support. That's what Sisters Achieving Excellence does, and when her phone is blowing up because the guy keeps texting her because he doesn't know where she is, she thinks this is sweet and kind. She's like, "Oh, isn't he so wonderful? He doesn't know where I am right now, so he's sending me 60 text messages"—whoa. Let's take a step back and think about what a healthy relationship really looks like.

1010

This is how it starts: What ends up happening is that the police start seeing the women that I serve as uncooperative victims, because she's much more afraid of her pimp/boyfriend than she is of the legal system. She loves him. We know that abusers aren't violent and horrible all the time. She does think that he loves her. She doesn't want him to get in trouble; she just wants the violence to stop. She knows the game, right? It's all about playing the game. You don't snitch and you don't rat. These are really important things. When we're looking at addressing sexual violence with marginalized women, we have to stop thinking of them as uncooperative victims. We have to understand the context in which they live and in which they have to survive.

Again, you guys will probably hear this all day, but we know that there's just so much shame around reporting sexual violence, and there's so much shame around coming forward as a sexual violence survivor, especially if you are a woman who has been marginalized or criminalized in any other way. I think that that's one of the most important things: that when we're thinking about how we want to start addressing sexual violence in Ontario, we have to really address the culture of blaming and shaming victims of sexual violence.

All right. Questions?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Questions. Here we go. We're going to start with our Liberal caucus: MPP Malhi.

Ms. Harinder Malhi: Thank you so much for your presentation. I think it's great that, at 25, you were so motivated to start a program to support women.

You wanted to talk more about support programs and education around empowering women. What do you think we as a government can do to empower women?

Ms. Bailey Reid: I think what we've found has worked really well with our project in jails, the Transcendence Project, is encouraging women. They have so many labels on them already. They see themselves as, "I am a failed mother, because my kids got taken by CAS. I'm just a drug addict. I'm just a sex worker." Our Transcendence Project is about transcending those boundaries and letting them know that they can overcome them. So as a province, really encourage those programs, programs that help women to move beyond those boundaries and give concrete skills.

The thing with literacy is, a lot of the women I work with don't really want to do sex work. Unfortunately, their choices are limited because they don't have the literacy skills to fill out a job application. I think we have a really dangerous perception that drug dealing and sex work are easy money, and it's not. It's not easy to have sex with somebody you don't want to have sex with. When we do give them the skills to do something else, often that is what they'll choose to do, even if it means making less money.

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

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much. Amazing work. Last Thursday, I just did a motion in the Legislature about human trafficking and the coordinated approach that we need to take. You could have given my speech. You just did it amazingly on that slide deck. Hopefully we can maybe get your presentation?

Ms. Bailey Reid: Yes, for sure.

Ms. Laurie Scott: If you can send it in to Will, then we can get it.

So you started this up. How are you telling people about it, especially on the human trafficking part? They're so young; sometimes they're starting to be recruited from public schools, let alone high schools. How do they know how to get to you?

Ms. Bailey Reid: We run three programs in Ottawa that are in transitional houses. One of our programs is at

Tewegan Transition House. We have a program at the Vesta women's recovery centre, which does addictions treatments, and then a supportive housing home through the John Howard Society.

Right now, you'd have to be a resident of one of those homes to access our programs. It would be great if we had the funding to expand to a community program where women could just do it drop-in style, but our volunteers do amazing work. I'm the only staff. It's all volunteer. It's so sustainable, and I'm grateful for them every day.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Well, you are a remarkable individual. Thank you very much.

Ms. Bailey Reid: Thank you.

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

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you so much for coming to make the presentation. One of the phrases that you used we haven't heard before, and that's about this concept of the perpetrator's bright future. I'm reminded: There was a recent case in London, in my community, where that was exactly how the media reported it. He was a hockey player, an A student, and so there was this feeling of being sympathetic to the perpetrator because of his bright future. How do we address this? What kinds of recommendations would you put forward to address that?

Ms. Bailey Reid: I think the first thing we have to do is address the fact that our default position is to disbelieve a victim and disbelieve that this is happening to women. I think we hear that so often. We make up excuses all the time: "Maybe she just wanted to have sex with him because he was a hockey player and the next day she regretted it," or "He broke up with her, so now she's a vindictive girlfriend." These are myths that we have to start addressing in the media, and we have to start addressing them in our own cultures, society and community. I think that's a huge thing.

From a legislative standpoint, I think that when we think about the perpetrators of sexual violence, we have to make sure that we are really enforcing the fact that they did something wrong. Women don't do anything wrong by coming forward. They don't do anything wrong. They don't ever ask for it. Nothing they ever do could possibly ask for the sexual violence that happens to them, so we have got to put the onus on the perpetrator and confront his behaviour.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. It was a wonderful presentation.

Ms. Bailey Reid: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We invite you to join our audience now, should you wish to.

M^{ME} ISABEL RODRIGUE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenter. Committee members, we're going to leap back to the previous presenter, Isabel Rodrigue. I would ask you to come forward.

M^{mme} Isabel Rodrigue: Thank you, everybody.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): Bonjour.

M^{me} Isabel Rodrigue: Bonjour.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): Vous avez 15 minutes.

M^{me} Isabel Rodrigue: Ça ne sera pas si long.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): Bien.

M^{me} Isabel Rodrigue: Et je suis en retard parce que j'arrive de Hawkesbury, et c'est loin.

M^{me} Eleanor McMahon: Oui, c'est loin.

M^{me} Isabel Rodrigue: C'est loin, et il y a de la construction.

Je suis ici ce matin pour vous parler d'une catégorie de femmes de notre société qui est, selon moi, laissée-pour-compte. Premièrement, je vais vous dire que mon nom est Isabel Rodrigue. Je suis une enseignante dans une école secondaire de l'est ontarien. Je travaille avec des jeunes de la septième à la 12^e année.

Ça fait quatre ans que je suis à Hawkesbury. Avant ça, j'étais à Ottawa. L'est ontarien est une population tout à fait différente de celle d'Ottawa. Je vais expliquer pourquoi je vous dis ça. Il arrive souvent, dans ces petites villes-là et dans ces petits villages-là, des couples qui se défont; les parents ont des nouveaux conjoints et ça se met à mal aller avec l'adolescente.

La problématique que je veux surtout soulever c'est qu'une enfant qui a 16 ou 17 ans et qui va faire une demande à l'aide à l'enfance, si c'est sa première demande, elle ne sera pas considérée; l'aide à l'enfance la considère comme une adulte. Le problème est que cette enfant-là, qui ne peut plus vivre chez elle pour telle ou telle raison, a 16 ou 17 ans et ne peut pas aller demander de l'aide sociale sans avoir un fiduciaire et ne peut pas prendre un appartement et signer un bail si elle n'a pas de fiduciaire.

La raison pour laquelle je voulais présenter devant ce comité-là, qui est contre l'abus sexuel, c'est parce que je trouve que ces petites filles-là, à ce moment-là, deviennent des proies. Si elles ont 16 ou 17 ans, elles peuvent être la proie d'un homme ou d'un jeune homme de 22 ou 23 ans qui va dire : « Viens rester avec moi. Je vais l'encaisser, ton chèque d'Ontario au travail. » Parce qu'Ontario au travail accepte d'aider financièrement ces jeunes filles-là, mais fait le chèque au nom d'un fiduciaire.

Pourquoi je le sais? Parce que depuis que je suis à Hawkesbury, j'ai eu Catherine qui a vécu chez moi, parce que je suis une prof célibataire. J'ai une grande maison. J'ai une chambre dans le sous-sol. J'ai une première petite fille qui a vécu chez moi; elle est partie. J'ai maintenant Jardlyne, qui vit chez moi depuis décembre.

Donc je me dis que si ce n'est pas une prof qui le fait, si ce n'est pas une adulte qui le fait—??Jardeline, avant de vivre chez moi, a été dans la Maison Interlude, qui est la maison pour les femmes battues, une maison de crise qui est à Hawkesbury. Elle a vécu là pendant un mois avant que je la prenne chez moi. Donc, si ce n'est pas de ça, elles font quoi, ces enfants-là? Ce qui me meut, moi, au niveau des lois, c'est que ces enfants-là sont laissées-pour-compte.

1020

J'ai une idée de faire une maison éventuellement. Je voudrais faire une maison qui est un endroit où ces enfants peuvent soit vivre là jusqu'à ce qu'elles aient fini leur 12^e année, soit jusqu'à ce qu'elles aient 18 ans, soit jusqu'à ce qu'elles ne veulent plus rester là. Donc, on ne veut pas retenir les enfants de force, mais c'est d'offrir un environnement où la petite fille peut vivre, elle peut—au niveau de la subvention, ça, c'est une autre histoire. C'est encore quelque chose que je ne sais pas.

J'essaie de trouver—je me dis, « Bon, si Ontario au travail subventionne ces enfants-là, peut-être qu'un organisme comme Ontario au travail peut aider »—peut-être que ce n'est pas eux autres qui peuvent aider. Peut-être que la location familiale qui est donnée à une enfant habituellement peut rentrer dans une subvention comme ça. Ça, je ne le sais pas.

J'ai calculé les niveaux statistiques à Hawkesbury : les petites filles de 16 ou 17 ans, c'est 1 % de la population. Je ne suis pas en train de dire qu'il y a 1 % de la population qui a de la misère, parce qu'il y a des petites filles de 16 ou 17 ans qui ont de bons parents, et puis que ça va bien. Mais, moi, depuis quatre ans, j'ai accueilli Catherine, j'ai accueilli Jardlyne, mais j'aurais pu prendre Vicky et j'aurais pu prendre Stéphanie et j'aurais pu prendre Marilyn.

Je travaille dans une école secondaire de 400 élèves. À Hawkesbury, il y a aussi une école qui est beaucoup plus grosse qui a environ 1 000 élèves. Puis ça, c'est juste Hawkesbury. Je ne peux pas croire que, dans d'autres endroits en Ontario, ça n'arrive pas de la même façon. Je trouve ça déplorable. C'est ça. Je ne comprends pas comment on peut laisser faire ça, mais ces petites filles ont besoin d'aide.

Ma présentation était simplement ça. Je n'ai pas de « slide show ». C'est tout ce que je voulais vous dire.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): Merci beaucoup. May I speak to you in English, because je pense que mon français n'est—

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: And I could be able to answer in English, but I was not able to present in English. I'm sorry.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Okay. Well, we'll make ourselves understood to each other.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: Yes, yes.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): La première demande est de MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much. You hit on an excellent point, and I believe—I'm just trying to search our legislation. Basically, if the 16-year-old, say, hadn't been in CAS before—

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: CAS being l'aide à l'enfance?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Children's aid.

Ms. Laurie Scott: —the children's aid society; thank you, Marie-France, for helping me—they then can't enter it between 16 years and 18 years old.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: They're considered as adults.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Right. So we have been trying to bring forward pieces of legislation to change that very

thing, because that is absolutely wrong and you are absolutely right.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: Okay.

Ms. Laurie Scott: We will keep in touch with you. I was trying to email quickly to verify: I believe it was just a private member's bill in that respect, but we definitely, I know, on the PC side, agree that it has to be extended to 18. You're right, and we'll try and make that change in legislation. Thank you.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: Because even, you know, the Ontario au travail, which is—

Mr. Taras Natyshak: Ontario Works.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Ontario Works, yes.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: Because they give a cheque to the kid and then they say, "We'll call you every month to see if you're doing fine," but they don't.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I agree.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: They don't. The little girl is okay because she's living with me and I'm a teacher—

Ms. Laurie Scott: Because you rescued her.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: —but if he was a predator, if he was a guy who is just keeping the girl for the cheque, they wouldn't call her and say, "Are you okay? Are you all right? Are you eating?"

Ms. Laurie Scott: It's totally wrong, and thank you for interjecting as best you can to save as many as you can from any possible perpetrators.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: But, you know, there's only so much I can do.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Yes, exactly, so thank you. We are working on changing that. Thank you.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: Thank you very much.

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

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much, and apologies for speaking English.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: It's okay.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I did listen to the translation of your presentation. One of the things you said at the very beginning was about the differences between the youth you have dealt with in Hawkesbury and also in Ottawa. I wondered if you could expand a little bit more on that. What makes the challenges different in a small community like Hawkesbury versus Ottawa?

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: In my opinion—when I was in Ottawa, I was working in the école secondaire publique Deslauriers; that is in the southwest. There's a majority of immigrants there—a lot of people from Djibouti, Somalia and Lebanon—and they just don't talk about those things. They're not going to say, "I have a problem at home." It's taboo. In Hawkesbury, kids can be really in your face with their problems. They open up and say, "You know, Madame, my mom just kicked me out of the house this morning." It's just like right in your face, and you have to deal with it. I think that the kids I was working with when I was in Ottawa, they wouldn't talk about those things because you cannot say, "I'm being beat up"—you just don't say it.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Cultural differences.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: I think that's the big difference. Again, there are schools in Ottawa that are more—I don't know how to say that in English—qui sont originaires du Canada. Leurs parents sont originaires du Canada. Donc, ce que j'ai expérimenté, c'est une école à 75 % immigrante, quand j'étais à Ottawa.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Marie-France, could you translate for us?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Newcomers, so 75% of her—

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Yes, I got that.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. And our final questions for you are from MPP Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I think John's going to—on va partager.

Mr. John Fraser: Je vous remercie d'être ici aujourd'hui et pour votre présentation. The rest of—mon français n'est pas bon.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: That's okay.

Mr. John Fraser: I want to thank you first for what you're doing, which is, you see a problem—and we've seen that a few times in almost every presentation this morning, where people see a need and they move in to meet that need at their own personal expense and their own effort. But if there was one thing that we could do as a government to fix the things that you have described this morning, what would that be?

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: I was not expecting that question.

Mr. John Fraser: Sorry.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: No. What I really want—because someone said, "Go to that committee and say what you have to say," but to be honest with you, I don't even know what this committee does and I don't know what is going to happen with that. But what I want is to be able to have a house that will—accueillir?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Welcome.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: —that will welcome those girls who are in need. There is the same problem with boys—don't get me wrong, it's not only the girls—but the committee is about sexual harassment and sexual abuse, and my fear is that those girls can be—prey?

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Yes, yes.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: So what I really want is—changing the law would be good, but again—

Mr. John Fraser: You've answered the question very well. So don't—

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: I did?

Mr. John Fraser: Yes, you have, very well.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: I'm a teacher. I talk a lot. That's the thing—

Mr. John Fraser: We're politicians. We talk a lot, too.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Voilà.

Mr. John Fraser: Thank you.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Je voulais juste te remercier beaucoup d'être ici au nom du comité.

M^{me} Isabel Rodrigue: Merci.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Je pense que tu as apporté, comme MPP Scott mentionnait, un point très

important par rapport à la vulnérabilité de nos jeunes à cet âge-là et l'impact qu'ils ont, peut-être pas seulement à Hawkesbury, je vais être honnête, peut-être à travers notre belle province, à savoir les expériences de vie à la maison et puis comment ça peut se transiger dans la situation qu'ils vont vivre après.

M^{me} Isabel Rodrigue: Oui, parce que je ne suis pas allée tant dans les statistiques—

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Non, c'est bien.

M^{me} Isabel Rodrigue: —mais si on regarde aussi dans l'est ontarien, les filles-mères, parce qu'elles ont 16 ans, n'ont pas de place où aller puis elles tombent enceintes, et ça—

M^{me} Eleanor McMahon: C'est affreux.

M^{me} Isabel Rodrigue: Bien, ça « scrape » un peu la vie d'une femme.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Merci d'avoir présenté. On apprécie beaucoup.

M^{me} Isabel Rodrigue: Merci à vous.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Merci beaucoup. And I would like to give you some information; you asked about the purpose of this committee.

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: Yes.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We have been asked by the Ontario Legislature to hear as many stories and experiences as possible for people who are dealing with sexual violence and harassment. So whether it's survivors or advocates or anyone with a stake in this, we want to hear your recommendations on how to shift social norms and look at the barriers that are preventing people from coming forward and reporting. We're going to take all that information and those recommendations back to the Ontario Legislature and hopefully create some kind of a social shift in our culture.

I hope that answers your question.

1030

Ms. Isabel Rodrigue: Yes.

La Présidente (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Merci beaucoup d'être ici aujourd'hui.

M^{me} Isabel Rodrigue: Merci, madame.

Interjection.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Oh, and we have one more comment.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I just want to say that Jim McDonnell, the member from Glengarry–Prescott–Russell, introduced that piece of legislation. I'll get your email and send it to you, and hopefully that addresses some of what you've brought forward today.

M^{me} Isabel Rodrigue: Merci beaucoup.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. We invite you to join the audience now, if you wish to, for our next presenter.

ACTION ONTARIENNE CONTRE LA VIOLENCE FAITE AUX FEMMES

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would like to call up Maira Martin. Please come forward. Make yourself

comfortable. Am I saying your name correctly? Je dis votre nom—

M^{me} Maira Martin: C'est Maira.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Maira?

M^{me} Maira Martin: C'est parfait.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): Vous avez 15 minutes pour parler to the committee. Après, nous demandons les questions. Commencez.

M^{me} Maira Martin: Merci. Je vais m'exprimer en français, donc j'espère que ça ira pour la traduction.

Premièrement, au nom d'Action ontarienne, j'aimerais vous remercier de nous avoir donné l'opportunité de venir ici pour parler et pour faire des recommandations sur comment lutter efficacement contre les violences à caractère sexuel.

Je vais très rapidement présenter Action ontarienne. Action ontarienne contre la violence faite aux femmes, nous sommes un regroupement francophone provincial d'organismes qui luttent contre la violence faite aux femmes dans la province. Nos membres sont des maisons d'hébergement, ce sont des centres d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel, donc les CALACS, et des centres qui offrent des programmes de lutte contre la violence faite aux femmes.

En fait, on a un triple mandat. On travaille à la fois en violence conjugale, en violence à caractère sexuel, et on travaille aussi contre d'autres formes de violence comme, par exemple, la prostitution.

On a plusieurs objectifs. La première chose, c'est de favoriser la concertation entre les organismes francophones de lutte contre la violence faite aux femmes. On aide aussi les intervenantes dans les centres en leur proposant, par exemple, de la formation. On produit des ressources en français pour l'ensemble de la province. Puis, en dernier, on développe et on coordonne des campagnes de sensibilisation et d'information sur la violence faite aux femmes.

Par exemple, une des campagnes, qu'on a codéveloppée avec un organisme anglophone, s'appelle Traçons-les-limites. Cette campagne vise à sensibiliser les personnes de l'entourage aux violences à caractère sexuel.

En fait, on travaille depuis maintenant presque 30 ans dans le domaine. C'est pour ça qu'on est venu aujourd'hui vous parler, parce qu'on pense avoir au moins une légère expertise dans le domaine. Je voudrais aussi préciser que comme nous sommes un organisme francophone, je vais principalement parler des besoins de la population et de la communauté franco-ontarienne dans ma présentation.

Avant d'aller un peu plus en profondeur dans ma présentation, je pense qu'il faudrait d'abord revenir un peu dans le contexte et parler du contexte social dans lequel les agressions à caractère sexuel arrivent. Je pense que vous l'avez déjà entendu de nombreuses fois, mais je pense que c'est quand même important aussi de le rappeler : il existe encore de très nombreux mythes autour des agressions à caractère sexuel. Malheureusement, tant qu'on ne va pas défaire ces mythes, on n'arrivera pas à trouver de solutions et à changer les choses.

Il faut quand même savoir que pour beaucoup de personnes encore aujourd'hui, une agression sexuelle est

un viol uniquement. Ils ont l'image, le fantasme, du viol d'une jeune femme qui va se faire violer dans la rue, tard le soir, par un inconnu. C'est à peu près la seule image. Quand on parle d'agression sexuelle, c'est pratiquement la première chose qui vient à la tête des gens.

Pour aussi encore beaucoup de personnes, trop de personnes, les femmes sont en partie responsables. Ils pensent que les femmes sont en partie responsables des agressions parce qu'elles portaient une jupe trop courte ou parce que, par exemple, elles avaient bu.

Donc tous ces mythes-là, en fait, faussent complètement la perception et ils ont pour effet qu'une femme qui a été agressée sexuellement ne va pas oser en parler parce qu'elle va avoir peur. Elle va avoir peur d'être blâmée, d'être jugée, ou qu'on lui dise que c'est de sa faute. En même temps on voit que les agresseurs, qui sont les seuls responsables de l'agression, eux vont être totalement déresponsabilisés, voire même, dans certains cas, complètement excusés de l'agression. Pour ça, il suffit juste de regarder quotidiennement et pratiquement dans les médias, soit dans les médias traditionnels ou les médias sociaux, et vous verrez. Décortiquer les articles de journaux, c'est très révélateur pour voir comment on parle d'une agression sexuelle. À chaque fois, on essaie de pointer le doigt sur ce que la femme avait fait de mal.

Pour nous, pour lutter efficacement contre la violence à caractère sexuel, il y a trois choses à faire. La première chose serait la sensibilisation du public. La deuxième chose, c'est le soutien aux survivantes. La troisième chose, c'est de tenir les agresseurs responsables de leurs actes.

Pour la sensibilisation, on pense qu'il faudrait la commencer dès le plus jeune âge parce qu'on sait que plus les personnes sont sensibilisées jeunes à une cause, plus la sensibilisation est efficace. Donc, dans le cas des agressions à caractère sexuel, plus on éduquera jeune, moins il y aura d'agressions sexuelles. Pour ça, on soutient le gouvernement de l'Ontario dans la mise en oeuvre du nouveau plan d'éducation physique et santé, parce que pour nous il est vraiment primordial, et je dis bien primordial, d'enseigner aux jeunes ce que c'est que le consentement. Les jeunes ont besoin d'apprendre très tôt qu'ils ont le droit de refuser un acte de nature sexuelle, et ils doivent aussi apprendre très tôt qu'il faut entendre le refus de l'autre. Quand je dis très tôt, évidemment, c'est selon l'âge approprié et avec des mots appropriés à chaque âge.

Il faut que les jeunes apprennent très tôt ce que c'est que l'intimité, le consentement et la sexualité. Tout ça permettrait d'éviter des cas d'inceste, ça permettrait d'éviter des cas d'abus sexuels sur les jeunes, mais ça permettrait aussi aux jeunes de grandir avec une notion saine et une idée saine de ce que c'est que la sexualité et de ce que c'est qu'une agression sexuelle.

La sensibilisation devrait aussi toucher, évidemment, les adultes. On sait que plus on va faire de sensibilisation, plus les femmes vont parler des agressions qu'elles ont subies. Elles vont se sentir plus à l'aise, plus en sécurité et plus en confiance pour en parler. On sait aussi que

généralement, la première fois qu'elles osent en parler, c'est à une personne de leur entourage. Le problème, c'est que si les personnes de l'entourage ne sont pas bien sensibilisées, elles pourraient avoir une mauvaise réponse et bloquer complètement les femmes après. Si une femme qui vient dévoiler ce qu'elle a subi se sent blâmée et revictimisée, elle se taira tout le temps et elle n'ira pas chercher de l'aide. Donc, ça ne sera absolument pas efficace.

Il faut absolument que le public sache quoi dire et surtout quoi ne pas dire. Il faudrait aussi que le public connaisse tous les organismes communautaires qui sont capables d'aider, dans la communauté, les survivantes pour ensuite pouvoir les référer.

Pour nous, les campagnes les plus efficaces sont celles qui s'adressent aux personnes de l'entourage et qui leur proposent vraiment des solutions. On ne propose pas aux personnes de l'entourage de devenir des super-héros, mais simplement des choses très simples sur quoi faire lorsqu'elles sont témoins d'une agression sexuelle, ou comment soutenir efficacement une personne qui a été agressée.

C'est ce qu'on essaie de faire avec la campagne Traçons-les-limites. Cette campagne vise à défaire les mythes sur les agressions à caractère sexuel. Elle vise aussi à informer le public sur la réalité des agressions et à proposer des pistes, c'est ça, des moyens d'intervention et des pistes de solution pour essayer de prévenir les agressions sexuelles.

La sensibilisation devrait être faite par des personnes qui sont expertes du domaine. Pour nous, ce sont les intervenantes dans les CALACS qui sont les plus à même de sensibiliser les jeunes et la communauté à la réalité des agressions sexuelles, parce que c'est leur spécialité et elles sont formées pour ça. Elles ont aussi les outils et les programmes pour faire ça dans la communauté et dans les écoles secondaires.

Par contre, une recommandation qu'on fait au gouvernement et qu'on vous fait à vous, c'est de plus financer les activités de sensibilisation des CALACS. On voit que dans la majorité des CALACS francophones, il y a très peu de financement et il n'y a généralement pas de poste spécifique à la sensibilisation, alors qu'il y a beaucoup de travail à faire et qu'il y a beaucoup de demande. Malheureusement, elles ne peuvent pas faire autant qu'elles pourraient faire si elles avaient plus de financement. On a l'impression que dans le plan d'action, la prévention des agressions sexuelles est une priorité, donc il faudrait aussi que le gouvernement finance plus ces activités-là.

Les CALACS ont un double mandat, donc à la fois faire de la sensibilisation et puis aussi proposer du soutien aux survivantes, évidemment.

1040

Le soutien aux survivantes, ça se fait avec plusieurs services : du counselling individuel, des groupes de soutien ou des accompagnements. Par exemple, elles accompagnent les femmes dans les hôpitaux ou à porter plainte, par exemple.

Le rôle des CALACS est vraiment très important à ce niveau pour le soutien des survivantes parce qu'ils ont une approche féministe. Je vais vous expliquer un peu ce que c'est que l'approche féministe. C'est une approche, en fait, qui met la femme au centre de l'intervention. Ça va lui permettre de reprendre le contrôle de sa vie et ça va lui permettre de prendre des décisions qui sont vraiment libres et éclairées. L'intervenante va accompagner la femme aussi longtemps que la femme le décidera. Ça peut être une rencontre. Ça peut être des rencontres pendant une année, deux ans, trois ans, tant que la femme en aura besoin. Les intervenantes vont aussi donner toutes les informations utiles et pertinentes pour la femme. Elles vont lui offrir toutes les options possibles, mais au final, c'est la femme qui fera ses propres choix. L'intervenante la laissera complètement maîtresse de la situation.

Les CALACS aussi ont l'avantage d'avoir des services confidentiels et gratuits, ce qui permet aux femmes d'y avoir facilement accès. Puis, les intervenantes dans les CALACS sont aussi sensibilisées aux spécificités que rencontrent certaines femmes, notamment les femmes qui sont en situation de handicap ou des femmes immigrantes. Puis, surtout, et je vais insister là-dessus, c'est que les CALACS francophones travaillent avec le principe du par et pour les femmes d'expression française en Ontario. Je vous laisse imaginer que ce n'est pas facile de parler du fait qu'on a subi une agression sexuelle. Le faire dans une langue qui n'est pas la sienne, c'est vraiment une barrière supplémentaire. On sait que les femmes qui vont dans les CALACS apprécient vraiment de pouvoir le faire en français.

Là, je dois vous dire que nous sommes très inquiètes dans le réseau francophone en Ontario de voir que dans le plan d'action qui a été proposé en mars dernier par le gouvernement, il n'y a aucune mention de l'importance des services en français et des besoins des femmes francophones, alors que dans le plan de 2011, il y avait une section qui était réservée à ça. Donc, nous sommes inquiètes, je vous le dis, et nous espérons que les services en français et les besoins des femmes francophones sont toujours une priorité du gouvernement et de l'Assemblée législative en Ontario. On espère que toutes les mesures que vous prendrez seront pour les femmes de la majorité, les femmes immigrantes, mais aussi pour les femmes francophones en fonction de leurs besoins.

J'aimerais quand même préciser aussi que les CALACS—on a besoin que le gouvernement reconnaisse l'expertise des CALACS francophones et le rôle important qu'ils jouent auprès des femmes francophones dans les communautés. On aimerait demander au gouvernement de ne plus investir dans les services dits bilingues parce qu'on sait que, dans les faits, ils ne sont pas très efficaces pour les femmes francophones. Souvent des personnes dites bilingues sont engagées mais ne sont pas capables d'avoir des conversations en français. Donc, ce n'est pas aider les femmes de faire ça.

Au contraire, le gouvernement devrait favoriser la création de CALACS francophones là où il y a encore des besoins. Il y en a plusieurs dans la province dans les

différentes régions, mais on en a besoin de plus. Le gouvernement devrait aussi penser à financer plus les CALACS existants, à la fois en matière de sensibilisation mais aussi dans leurs services en règle générale, pour qu'ils puissent offrir plus de services à plus de femmes dans toute la communauté. Il faudrait aussi penser à pouvoir augmenter les conditions salariales dans les CALACS pour les intervenantes.

Comme je l'ai mentionné, en plus de la sensibilisation et du soutien aux survivantes, on devrait aussi s'assurer que les agresseurs soient tenus responsables des agressions. Pour ça, il faudrait que la société et notamment les médias arrêtent de faire porter la responsabilité des agressions sur les femmes et la fassent vraiment porter sur les agresseurs. Il faut aussi qu'il y ait une réponse adéquate par le système judiciaire. Actuellement, très peu de femmes portent plainte et encore moins d'agresseurs sont reconnus coupables, et ça, ce n'est vraiment pas normal.

Le fait d'améliorer la formation des policiers et des procureurs pourrait permettre d'améliorer la situation. Ça pourrait permettre peut-être à plus de femmes de porter plainte. Ça pourrait éviter que les femmes soient revictimisées pendant tout le processus et ça pourrait peut-être amener au final que plus d'agresseurs soient condamnés et soient poursuivis.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): Vous avez une minute.

M^{me} Maira Martin: OK. Donc c'est pour ça que nous soutenons le plan d'action sur la formation.

Pour conclure, on aimerait mentionner que pour une lutte efficace contre la violence à caractère sexuel, il faudrait une concertation. Il faut une réponse concertée et cohérente. Il faut que le gouvernement provincial travaille avec les organismes communautaires et aussi avec les survivantes. Action ontarienne est là pour vous aider à mettre en place toutes ces mesures et à être consultée.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): Merci. Est-ce que je peux parler en anglais?

M^{me} Maira Martin: Oui.

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

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you so much for your presentation. You made some interesting points that we haven't actually heard before.

I'm not sure if you were here earlier. We had a presentation from a teacher who had worked with French-speaking students in Ottawa and talked about some of the cultural barriers that those French-speaking students from other countries experienced in talking about their lives. You must work with a lot of French-speaking women who come to Canada from other countries. Can you tell us a little bit about some of the challenges and supports that you need to work effectively with those francophone newcomers or French-speaking newcomers to Ontario?

M^{me} Maira Martin: Est-ce que c'est correct si je parle en français?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Yes.

M^{me} Maira Martin: Merci. C'est vrai qu'il y a une grande communauté immigrante francophone qui arrive. La difficulté pour les femmes qui arrivent, c'est déjà tout le tabou qu'il y a autour des agressions sexuelles. Ça, c'est vrai déjà, évidemment, au Canada, mais ça peut être aussi le cas dans de nombreuses communautés et cultures qui arrivent au Canada.

Donc, la première chose pour ça serait, encore une fois, la sensibilisation : parler et expliquer aux femmes et filles immigrantes les lois au Canada, notamment en ce qui concerne le viol conjugal, parce que beaucoup—encore une fois, même au Canada, mais aussi dans d'autres cultures—pensent encore que les relations sexuelles dans le mariage sont encore un devoir conjugal; donc expliquer, par exemple, qu'au Canada tout ça est illégal, et faire encore beaucoup de sensibilisation, et puis, aussi, avoir des programmes plus spécifiques qui sont offerts aux femmes immigrantes par les CALACS, mais aussi soutenir des organismes qui travaillent directement avec les personnes immigrantes.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): Merci. Et maintenant, MPP Lalonde.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Madame Martin, merci beaucoup de votre présentation; elle est bien appréciée. Moi, j'aimerais vraiment que peut-être vous me parliez un petit peu des défis que rencontrent les femmes franco-ontariennes par rapport aux services de santé, de justice, etc., à travers la province par rapport à ce que vous nous dites.

M^{me} Maira Martin: La plus grande difficulté que rencontrent les femmes—là, je vais parler des femmes qui sont dans des régions désignées par la loi. Même dans les régions désignées par la loi, les femmes ont d'assez grandes difficultés à avoir accès à des services en français pendant toutes leurs démarches.

Dans l'est ontarien, on est relativement chanceux parce que c'est quand même très francophone, mais par exemple, si on parle de Toronto ou de la région de London, de Sudbury ou du nord de l'Ontario, là, elles peuvent avoir beaucoup de difficulté, par exemple, quand elles vont à l'hôpital, à avoir des médecins, des infirmières ou des infirmiers qui parlent français. Quand elles vont à la cour, ça peut être difficile—là, je vais parler aussi pour les femmes qui sont victimes de violence conjugale—à avoir accès à des avocats qui parlent en français et d'avoir accès à toute la procédure en français. C'est que, généralement, elles vont parfois arriver avec des gens qui vont se dire bilingues, mais au final, quand elles vont commencer à parler en français, elles vont se rendre compte que les personnes en face ne vont pas être vraiment capables de répondre. C'est vraiment la plus grande difficulté : qu'elles aient accès à un réseau complet de services en français. C'est le plus gros enjeu pour les femmes francophones.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Très rapidement : on a combien de CALACS à travers la province en ce moment?

M^{me} Maira Martin: Il y a neuf CALACS francophones, et il y a d'autres programmes qui offrent des services en agression à caractère sexuel.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Merci beaucoup.

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

And I do want to welcome MPP Yakabuski, who has now joined the PC caucus.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you for being here today. You've highlighted a problem that I didn't realize was such a problem, especially in obtaining bilingual lawyers—well, bilingual as in who actually speak the fluent French that you need.

1050

Can you help us with some kind of solution? You can reiterate maybe what you said before, but just develop that a little bit more of how we can assist. In French, I didn't think it would be such a problem. Other languages for newer communities coming to the province—but you've kind of surprised me when you said that the services just aren't as available, especially on the legal side. Can you expand a little bit on that?

M^{me} Maira Martin: Merci de me dire ça parce que ça me prouve que j'ai bien fait de venir ici aujourd'hui.

Les services en français, honnêtement—je viens d'un organisme francophone; je suis francophone. Donc, je pense que plus pourrait être fait pour les femmes francophones en règle générale. Au niveau légal—et ça c'est notre plus grande difficulté : comment trouver, par exemple, des avocates francophones qui sont sensibilisées à la violence faite aux femmes? On essaie de mobiliser les femmes avocates. On préférerait avoir des femmes mais évidemment des hommes aussi qui sont alliés. C'est vraiment très difficile de trouver ça.

Dans le plan c'est spécifié, par exemple, que vous voulez essayer de proposer aux femmes des conseils juridiques indépendants quand leur cause sera entendue devant la cour. Ça, je peux déjà vous dire qu'en français, ce sera extrêmement difficile parce qu'on n'arrive même pas à avoir la même chose devant les Cours de la famille où la représentation est obligatoire. Les femmes victimes de violence conjugale qui vont en cour de droit de la famille ont d'énormes difficultés à trouver des avocats francophones. Aller trouver des avocats en criminel alors qu'elles ne sont pas obligées d'être représentées sera un énorme défi.

Donc, je peux vous inviter vraiment—n'hésitez pas à venir nous consulter. Les CALACS ou Action ontarienne, on pourra vraiment vous aider ici à trouver des solutions concrètes. Mais la plus grande difficulté c'est, quand vous prendrez des mesures, que c'est toujours gardé en tête ce que doit être fait pour les femmes francophones. Voyez si ce sera possible de le faire pour les femmes francophones, parce qu'encore une fois, avec la Loi sur les services en français et dans 25 régions désignées, vous devez le faire.

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

Ms. Laurie Scott: Merci.

M^{me} Maira Martin: Merci.

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

Committee members, I'm told that our next presenter, Jennifer Valiquette, is not going to be with us today, but she is going to be handing in a written submission.

WOMEN'S SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE OF RENFREW COUNTY

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would now like to bring forward a representative with the Women's Sexual Assault Centre of Renfrew County. Please come forward.

Good morning.

Ms. Bev Ritza: Good morning.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Make yourself comfortable. You're going to have up to 15 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed by questions for you. So please begin by stating your name for the record.

Ms. Bev Ritza: My name is Bev Ritza. I'm here from the Women's Sexual Assault Centre of Renfrew County.

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

Ms. Bev Ritza: Okay. The Women's Sexual Assault Centre, also known as WSAC, was established in 1993, some 22 years ago. We're here talking about sexual harassment and sexual assault.

I must say that I've been relatively lucky in that regard. However, sexual harassment in the workplace has been a part of my story. My first experience began at the age of 16 in my first job. The boss came forward with inappropriate comments, inappropriate touches, and eventually showed up at my home on a weekend when he knew my parents were away. Given the dynamics of close kinship ties in Renfrew county, it's not surprising that my boss was also a distant relative. Word of mouth and family ties get you jobs in the Valley. I, like so many others, never talked about that, never mentioned it to anyone. I didn't see it as sexual harassment at the time at all. It was just the way things were.

In my adult years, I've been listening to and working with women who have experienced violence since 1988 within the shelter system, and since 2006 at the rape crisis centre with women who have experienced sexual violence.

WSAC supports survivors throughout a landmass that is larger than Prince Edward Island at just under 7,500 square kilometres, with a population of just over 106,000 people, and we do that all with an annual budget of \$252,000 per year. I believe everyone has sort of a map of the area to give you an idea of where we are. We recently learned that Toronto's not really sure where we are. We had a woman coming up to visit various agencies who was quite certain she could come up, have lunch and probably be back for afternoon tea in Toronto after visiting several locations.

We have had two changes in funding in 22 years and actually lost 5% in 1995. Our most recent sunshine list in Renfrew county tells us that our three local judges individually earn more than our entire program. We're funded by the same ministry. This, when a multitude of reports indicate that 92% of survivors of sexual violence do not engage with the judicial system.

Renfrew county is very large and is mostly rural. Renfrew county comprises other unique facets, including one of the largest military bases in Canada, Garrison Petawawa, one post-secondary campus, an aboriginal community, a small francophone community and a growing aging population.

WSAC has a staff of three women who, collectively, have 67 years of supporting survivors, and, at any time, between 25 and 30 active volunteers. Consistently, our women volunteers provide the equivalent of 4.5 full-time workers each year—unpaid volunteer time.

This past year, we received 2,699 contacts with survivors and their families, including crisis calls, face-to-face intervention and support, court accompaniment, police accompaniment and drop-ins. Staff, with the support of volunteers, are active in a variety of county-wide committees and numerous public education events.

What we have come to know over 22 years is that sexual assault and harassment is a constant daily part of women and children's lived experience and that reality takes a great toll on women's lives.

Misconceptions about sexual violence contribute to both individual and community responses to this gender-based crime. Misconceptions, including victim-blaming, denial of prevalence and lack of knowledge, can impact survivors of sexual assault directly; for example, by functioning to "cause people to minimize or question the experiences of victims/survivors," "blame the victim/survivor and contribute to the barriers they experience," and "excuse perpetrators' actions." That's from the Learning Network.

Rural women experiencing sexual violence face a complex array of concerns that urban women do not:

—In rural settings violence and abuse are often easily hidden and ignored. Geographical remoteness makes it easier to hide abuse.

—Sexual violence carries particular stigma in rural areas.

—Rural women are seen as violating community norms by their peers and family if they seek help.

—Traditional norms are more prevalent in rural areas and so are patriarchal attitudes that devalue and objectify women.

—Although poverty affects everyone in rural or urban settings, the rural poor experience of poverty manifests itself differently, mostly around access to transportation and less opportunities for employment and wage levels that support sustainability.

—In Renfrew county, there is "an abundance of weapons ... as well as numerous situations where the judiciary allows the return of the weapons to the offender for hunting season." That's a quote from VWAP East region.

—Renfrew county has no LGBT-identified organization that offers support, and WSAC has taken that leadership role for 22 years.

At present, WSAC has a two-year grant from Status of Women Canada to ask survivors of sexual violence what is working in Renfrew county, what needs attention, and how to better inform the sexual assault protocol for

Renfrew county. This is what we have learned so far from survivors of sexual violence at the halfway mark of the Status project:

In 2014-15, 162 survivors of sexual violence came forward either in person, through an online survey or in focus groups. When asked, “Why aren’t people accessing services?” responses included:

“I didn’t know what I needed at the time of being raped.”

“I wasn’t ready to tell my story to anyone.”

“I didn’t know what services were available.”

“I was worried about confidentiality and privacy.”

1100

In Renfrew county, it’s really a small town. Everyone knows everyone or is related to them. Family history tells me that our local member’s father is responsible for introducing my parents. Everybody is connected there.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Multi-tasking.

Ms. Bev Ritza: Your father did it, not you.

So everybody is related. Everybody knows everybody. By virtue of your last name, everybody is trying to connect everybody.

They also told us that they couldn’t get to services because there’s no bus and they have no money.

“I was a child at the time of being raped, and my father wouldn’t let me tell because it was my uncle.”

“I didn’t know that I had experienced sexual harassment.”

“I did not want to be blamed that my actions ‘caused’ the rape.”

“There’s such a big military community here that when I say I experience PTSD, people say it’s impossible, that I never served in the military.”

“Renfrew county subscribes to archaic gender roles—‘Boys will be boys’—and that shapes most people’s understanding of sexual violence.”

“Rural communities are so judgemental, and my reputation would be destroyed if I talked about my experience of rape, especially because my abuser lives in the Valley too—and he is a ‘good’ man.”

“I didn’t report but my boyfriend did it for me—he took my choice away.”

Those are some of the things that the women have told us.

Trends and themes and concerns the project has identified:

- notable confidentiality concerns;
- less choice of services;
- less awareness of available support;
- high transportation costs; and
- high travel times.

Some of the gaps are a lack of information, or a lot of misinformation, concerning victims’ rights and reporting processes.

Programs and services that were identified as supportive to survivors in Renfrew county include:

- outreach and information about the realities of sexual violence;
- community awareness and public education on sexual violence;

—training and education on responding to sexual violence disclosures for professionals, allies and lay people; and, last but not least

—validation of the impacts of sexual violence on the survivor.

When asked, “What is one thing that could make Renfrew county a more supportive place for survivors?” these were the answers:

- support groups and ways for survivors to connect;
- more public education and awareness of sexual violence issues, especially in schools;
- more awareness of existing services;
- more counsellors, since we currently have two free therapists in the entire Valley, and for most the cost of anybody in private practice is prohibitive; and
- compassion training for police.

Year 2 of the Status project will see us developing strategies to address the identified goals.

One of the great strengths of Renfrew county is that while we have very few support services for survivors of sexual violence, we have close ties with our community partners, who have also been doing this work for a long time, including the Victim/Witness Assistance Program staff, victims’ services staff and the hospital-based Assault Response Team. All these women have been supporting survivors in Renfrew county for a very long time. We are committed and dedicated experts who are friends with each other. These connections mean that survivors often receive a quick response because we can make a quick phone call.

On another note, something that is rarely addressed in discussions about sexual violence is the toll that the work of supporting survivors, advocating for change and doing social justice activism takes on the front-line workers. That is especially true in rural areas, where you have three staff who have consistently committed to supporting survivors of sexual violence and who are readily recognizable in the bank, at the grocery store, the post office and restaurants, where disclosures and resource information are sought by survivors, family, friends, the car repair guy etc. on a regular basis. We liken ourselves to doctors, pastors and priests, who are always on duty, always on, because we’re never anonymous.

We often experience disbelief that sexual violence exists in Renfrew county—it always happens away somewhere in a big city someplace. And because we work for a non-profit rape crisis centre with inadequate funding, there’s no pension or retirement fund, so we will be the elderly poor in the not-so-distant future.

The recommendations are simple:

—Adequately fund rape crisis centres and hospital-based assault programs.

—Provide funding for a wide array of public education.

—Encourage and educate and hold bystanders accountable to intervene when they see something happening.

—Hold perpetrators accountable, because the minute we stop talking about sexual violence and about holding perpetrators accountable, the minute we stop making

visible the truth of the matter, then the invisible cloak of denial is put back on and survivors are left alone in the dark.

You have the power at this table to facilitate real change. There are magic wands coming your way—fundraised magic wands. Hopefully, you can grant some wishes and that can make all the difference. Thank you for your time.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Let's see all the magic wands. If only it were that easy.

Ms. Bev Ritza: If only.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And if we had time, it would be interesting to hear that story of how your parents came together—a different time.

Our first question for you is going to come from our Liberal caucus, from MPP McMahon.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Hi. Welcome. A pleasure to have you here. I think I mentioned to you earlier, I had the pleasure of living in Eganville for a number of years. My late husband was an OPP officer in Killaloe. The most distressing part of his job was victims of sexual assault and partner violence. So I have no doubt that he worked with you in the past, and some of your colleagues as well.

The two things that resonated with me, that feel like daunting challenges for you—and I'm going to ask you how we can help—are around the distances in Renfrew county. Even living in Eganville, the drive to Renfrew, the drive to Pembroke and the disparity in services that exist, which I think is so important—and also the communication and education awareness programs and changing the societal norms and giving you the tools you need to change the conversations in the communities where you live in your way, in ways that make sense, taking into account the sensitive challenges you face.

Anyway, how can we help?

Ms. Bev Ritza: I'm not sure what the answer is to the transportation issue. A lovely network of buses would be wonderful but highly unlikely—just even funding so that if somebody wanted to see us, we could arrange to get them there or we could travel to them. Our travel budget is limited at best, as is our public education budget. I think it's a couple of hundred dollars per year, which doesn't cover photocopying, let alone getting to some place in Palmer Rapids one day, Deep River the next and then off to Arnprior.

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: Not to mention Quadeville and—

Ms. Bev Ritza: Quadeville, yes. There are lots of places to go and little time; three staff, so whenever somebody's out, it impacts the office and what's going on.

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

Mr. John Yakabuski: Thank you very much, Bev, for joining us today. It's my first time on the committee.

Ms. Bev Ritza: Mine too.

Mr. John Yakabuski: I'm not a sitting member of the committee, but I'm glad that I was able to make it today.

I'm sorry about your assault experience as a young person, but you're not the only one that I—

Ms. Bev Ritza: In no way is that a unique experience.

Mr. John Yakabuski: No. I've heard that from more than a few people in my lifetime. I think that what you talked about, how easily it is hidden in rural communities, is a real fact of life. People don't talk when it's stuff they don't want to talk about. I think your experience is something that is not unique probably in rural communities across the province, but it's certainly one that this committee needs to hear about.

How long have you been at the rape crisis centre?

Ms. Bev Ritza: Since 2006.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Since 2006, so nine years. You said the budget is \$250,000 a year. Last year, you had almost 2,700 contacts. That's less than \$100 per contact to provide all the services of that centre. Now those contacts, the 2,699 contacts: Would some of them have been re-contacts of the same people?

Ms. Bev Ritza: Some of them would have been, yes.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Right. In your nine years, because there has certainly been a tremendous amount of focus—obviously not enough, but we talk about this all the time. Maybe talk is not enough; I understand that, but it is not something that is, in the big picture, ignored anymore. We recognize what a challenge and what a crisis it is. Have we seen, from your perspective, any improvement in those nine years or are we treading water, or in fact are we falling behind?

Ms. Bev Ritza: Until recently, I would have said we were falling behind, that sexual violence was very much going back under the carpet, behind closed doors and not being spoken about. I think recent public events—the CBC—

Mr. John Yakabuski: Jian Ghomeshi.

Ms. Bev Ritza: —Jian Ghomeshi, Bill Cosby, the military reports—have given women a little more incentive maybe to talk, a little more belief that maybe they will be believed.

Mr. John Yakabuski: What about the establishment of this committee as of itself? Will this be helpful?

Ms. Bev Ritza: This is helpful. This makes us hopeful. I guess it depends on where this goes.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Right.

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

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you so much for your presentation. One of the things that really struck me was your comment about the lack of privacy and confidentiality, which is a real barrier for women, even when they know about the services. So public awareness, breaking stigma, those are long-term strategies to make women feel more comfortable to report and to challenge some of these community norms. In the short term, do you have some specific strategies to try to address these concerns about confidentiality and privacy as barriers to women accessing services?

Ms. Bev Ritza: It's something we repeat continually. We explain the service, how we work and things like that. People are afraid that when they pick up the phone,

they might know me from my daughter's school and that I might look at them differently, or that my co-worker would know them from the military base. We are mainly staffed by volunteers, so you would have 25 to 30 women from all corners of the county who may get a call from their next-door neighbour. So there are concerns of that nature.

All of our advertising includes talking about confidentiality. We reassure every contact we make that this is absolutely confidential, and we absolutely act under that. It's an education piece. It's fear-based.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Committee members, our next presenter is not here, so if you are available for this—and I apologize, MPP Yakabuski, for being abrupt with you, but we can continue the conversation because our next presenter is not here yet.

So MPP Scott, you had a comment you wanted to make?

Ms. Laurie Scott: Well, I was just going to ask — because I thought you were rushing off—if everybody would hold their wands and get a picture taken.

Ms. Bev Ritza: Okay. That would be wonderful.

Ms. Laurie Scott: And you can do real questions—

Mr. John Fraser: Han and I will have to hold ours together.

Ms. Laurie Scott: There you are. But we can ask some other questions. I'm sure Mr. Yakabuski has more questions.

Interjections.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'm going to make a suggestion, and that is for caucus members on this side to come and stand—

Ms. Bev Ritza: This is the value of the wands. It takes a horrible subject and makes it a little bit fun, which is not the easiest thing in the world to do.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Yes, exactly.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Members, we're going to have a recess to take this picture. We are officially recessed for a few moments.

The committee recessed from 1114 to 1128.

SEXUAL ASSAULT SUPPORT CENTRE OF OTTAWA

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Committee members, we're ready to continue now with our hearings this morning. I see that we have our next presenters: the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Ottawa. Good morning. Welcome. Please begin by stating your names for the record.

Ms. Zahrah Hajali: I'm Zahrah Hajali.

Ms. Brie Davies: Hi. My name is Brie Davies.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Begin any time.

Ms. Zahrah Hajali: In just introducing myself and what I do at SASC, I am the program coordinator for the Young Women at Risk Program.

Ms. Brie Davies: My name is Brie Davies. I'm the direct service coordinator at the Sexual Assault Support Centre.

Ms. Zahrah Hajali: We would just like to acknowledge that we are in no way going to be able to speak the realities and the truth of all survivors of sexual violence, and would like to recognize our place of privilege in being here and presenting to you today.

Ms. Brie Davies: The Sexual Assault Support Centre is a grassroots, anti-oppressive, feminist, collective support centre. We are survivor-trained, survivor-directed and survivor-run. We have over 32 years of experience supporting women survivors in Ottawa. We have a long-standing, positive history in the community, and we have many partnerships with other community organizations.

We're survivor-directed because we work to respond to the needs of women in the community. We're survivor-run because most of our support workers are also survivors of sexual violence. We're survivor-trained because we are trained by people who are survivors of sexual violence, and we take all our direction from survivors themselves.

We offer our support within a non-clinical, peer-support-based model. We do not require that the women who come for our services have any formal identification or formal health cards or fill out paperwork to come to seek our services. Our motto, or our saying, is that we are the women that call the lines, so we are the women that provide the support.

Ms. Zahrah Hajali: I'd like to just further highlight an aspect of it, the feminist peer support, that we think is crucial in supporting survivors of sexual violence.

The anti-oppressive framework and feminist lens allows us to do this work in a much more cost-effective and empowering way for survivors, because it truly tailors the support to women based on their experiences. We firmly believe that women are the experts of their own lives and their own healing and should be respected for the choices that they make, that peer support models acknowledge the struggles of surviving sexual violence, that there are many common reactions to surviving sexual violence, and there are many ways to cope with those reactions, and all of those coping methods are valid and legit and should be seen as a normal way of coping. There is, therefore, no right or wrong way to cope.

Peer support models also are pro-choice. They recognize that women are in different places in their healing, and, therefore, should be respected for the pace that it takes them to go through their healing process.

Ms. Brie Davies: Part of our support is that we are reaching out to the most marginalized members of society in the Ottawa community. We talk about marginalized women and women-identified folks. Who we're talking about are people such as sex trade workers, criminalized young women, women who have been involved with CAS, precariously housed young women, women who may be living on the street, women who don't have status in Canada, newcomers, refugees, transwomen, ritual and cult abuse survivors—and this list is not exhaustive. We can't speak for the realities of all marginalized women, but we recognize that these women are not often being serviced well by mainstream organizations,

and these are the groups that we outreach to in the community and serve within our centre.

SASC sees that sexual violence is about power, control and domination; it's not about sex. These things—power, control, domination and oppression—are things that our collective seeks to reject and overcome. That includes the larger context of all types of violence and oppression, and we recognize that you can't separate out sexual violence from oppression, because women and folks—they don't experience sexual violence separate from oppression.

Women also experience oppression based on their race, class, sexual identity, sexual preference and ability, and those things are experienced together. So we need a commitment to end sexual violence that also includes a commitment to end all other types of oppression. Our anti-oppression work is integral to the work that we do within our organization and our outreach work.

So, I like I said, SASC recognizes the intersectionality of oppression, and that it amplifies the impact of sexual violence. For example, a woman who survives ritual or cult abuse could be experiencing economic marginalization because of her inability to find work due to disability. She could then be a psychiatric survivor due to the impact of the psychiatric system and stigma. She may also be a woman of colour who is experiencing daily racism, and this would impact on her ability to heal from the sexual violence.

These intersecting oppressions are often not recognized by mainstream organizations, which could just blame somebody or somebody may be told that they're not healing fast enough, but it's not taking into account that it's not just the sexual violence, but all these layered impacts. This is what our organization seeks to take into account.

Ms. Zahrah Hajali: Which brings us to experiences of systematic oppression. We cannot exclude that from the practice of perpetuating sexual violence, which creates barriers and systematically perpetuates violence on survivors through the court system, children's aid societies, hospital, police, medical field, group homes, professionals, which re-traumatize, re-victimize and disempower survivors of sexual violence. For example, a woman survivor who has experienced criminalization could also be a survivor of being in the foster care system and experiencing sexual violence in group home settings, who then might choose to parent at a young age and experience the stigma and red-flagging through the child welfare system and have to work to break the barriers associated with that. So her struggle as a survivor doesn't start with her healing from sexual violence; it starts with her being able to advocate for herself so that she's not stigmatized, she's not red-flagged, and she has the right to parent and the right to live a life that is dictated by her and led by her choices.

I think the microphone went off. Did it go off?

Interjection.

Ms. Zahrah Hajali: It's good? Okay, sorry.

The way we support women in a peer support model is based on empowerment and allowing women the oppor-

tunity to grow and develop within themselves, have the right to advocate for themselves—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Can you bring the microphone closer or lean in a bit? Thank you.

Ms. Zahrah Hajali: Yes. I think it went off.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): When you see the red light on, that means it's on. You just need to either talk a little louder or lean a little closer.

Ms. Zahrah Hajali: Perfect. Thank you.

Our models of advocacy and empowerment are crucial in breaking these barriers for women. In a peer support model, women work to validate each other's experiences and not feel alone in the systematic oppression they experience, which is also a testament of the political use of rape and the systematic use of rape to undermine women. We see rape used as a tool of war and rape used as a tool of colonization, which has great impacts on aboriginal women and also goes further than just what we see in other countries. When we're talking about the military and the attitudes that the military carry around sexual violence, we have to recognize that that impacts other countries and other women around the world who might or might not be part of the Ontario scope and receive services from us. So it's a lot bigger and needs to be done in a way that acknowledges that.

Ms. Brie Davies: That's sort of our broader view on things. In terms of our programs, we've developed our programs based on feedback from the community and responding to the needs of the community, especially the needs of marginalized women. In terms of our general core programs, we have a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week support line, which is available to the community. We have individual support services, individual peer support. We have support groups within our centre. We have advocacy and accompaniment for women where we can accompany them to the police or to the hospital or to different places they might need to go. Then we also have specialized services within our centre for more marginalized groups.

One of those is support services for survivors of ritual and cult abuse, which is a group of women that don't have very many services—or any services—in the Ottawa area. Those women are very marginalized and have often also been abused within the psychiatric system because their stories haven't been believed. Their abuse has often been perpetrated by people in positions of power, and because some of the stories of their trauma often sound unbelievable or very strange, many times they have not been believed, so we have a peer support group for survivors of ritual abuse in our centre.

Zahrah will tell you about some of our other programs.

Ms. Zahrah Hajali: We have our Young Women at Risk program, which is an outreach-based program specifically designed for young women between the ages of 14 and 24 who are criminalized and marginalized. The program strives to reach out to young women who are going to be the hardest to reach and the hardest to serve because of the level of stigma and oppression that they experience. Typically a lot of the work we do involves working with women who are involved in the criminal

justice system, on whatever level, who are involved in the foster care system or who have children in the foster care system, young women who are at highest risk for sexual exploitation. That's a pretty big thing.

I don't know if you listen to the news, but there was a big thing this morning about two 14-year-old young women who were sexually exploited. That's the typical YWAR service user. They experience sexual exploitation in exchange for very basic needs such as food, shelter and protection. Our outreach program reaches to those women by offering continuity, confidentiality and consistency—all things that are not afforded to young women typically, particularly marginalized young women, who we know are at the highest risk of experiencing sexual violence and sexual exploitation.

1140

We also have our Women and War program that supports survivors of war, rape and torture, who are refugee and immigrant. This program, just like all our programs, was a direct result of the need in the community. We know that women survivors of sexual violence have specialized needs, and survivors of war, rape and torture are no different. About 20 years ago, we consulted the community and figured out there were no services that acknowledged the trauma associated with war, rape and torture.

Beyond that, there are many different barriers that women experience as they come into Canada, dealing with the immigration system and the changes that come with that, that are not taking women's situations into effect, that are not tailored towards women survivors of rape and torture. Therefore, a peer support model has allowed women to grow and develop by building self-advocacy and resource- and network-building by being within an environment where their stories are valid and their stories are important.

I can't tell you enough about the level of empowerment and the amount of work that has been done in this program. What we've provided for you today is a book, which you all have a copy of, called the Unspoken Stories. It's quite an incredible thing to share with all of you, because, like we said, we can't speak for all survivors, but we hope to give voice to those who don't typically have voice.

These are just some of the examples of the programs we have at SASC and a demonstration of our peer support work as well as our ability to respond to the communities' needs when issues arise and when we know communities are not being served properly. However, there's much more work to be done.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Our first questions for you—

Ms. Brie Davies: We have a bit more. Do we still have more time or are we done?

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

Ms. Brie Davies: Okay. I'll do the conclusions, then.

Basically, in conclusion, for peer support, professionalization is not the answer. Peer support is very cost-effective and outreach is very key. We recognize that

women survivors—we need to support women where they are and women are the experts on their own healing. The women survivors of sexual violence are not a homogenous group and the one-size-fits-all model doesn't work.

What we hear most from women is that they need to be believed and understood and not judged. They must be empowered and allowed to cope in any way they choose and have access to spaces that allow them to heal. Being a feminist peer support model allows us to bring voice to women who would otherwise never have their voices heard. The barriers that exist for marginalized survivors of sexual violence—in order to truly end sexual violence we must always work to end all forms of violence against all women, including fighting oppression, systemic or otherwise.

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

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you very much for being here. In your presentation, you use words about empowering the victim. We've heard a lot in this committee from a great many people. Their discussions and presentations have helped us understand many of the subtleties and the nuances that end up being barriers to reporting sex assault or sexual violence, but also how these subtleties and nuances of our legal system end up revictimizing people.

During the discussions yesterday with retired Colonel Drapeau, he was talking about this as well. One of the comments was about having an advocate or a lawyer for the victim, because at the present time the crown does not serve the victim; of course, the defence does not serve the victim. To be empowered, you also have to have knowledge of the system.

I'm just wondering if you could share with us if you're aware of any experiences where a victim has had an independent advocate or lawyer with them through the process and how that may have helped or not. And if not, your own thoughts and views on having victims of sexual violence and assault—what your thoughts would be if there was an independent advocate lawyer for victims right from the get-go, right from at the start—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): MPP Hillier, please ask your question. Thank you.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Yes. If you have any experience with that or if—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You've just used up all your time with your question.

Just a quick answer. Thank you.

Ms. Zahrah Hajali: Yes. So we have examples of where, when women have had access to independent counsel, it's been really helpful in making them feel empowered and being able to take control over the legal process, which can be pretty oppressive. However, it's usually done in collaboration with community agencies and lawyers that are willing to donate their time.

Yes, something that is more concretely available to women to empower them to be able to exercise those rights is crucial. It's crucial in doing this work, particularly for marginalized communities, because they will

experience the criminal justice system at a much more oppressive rate than anyone else.

I can get into detail, but I don't think you have much time. I will encourage you to ask maybe this question to one Sunny Marriner, who might be here later on today.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Okay.

Ms. Zahrah Hajali: She is the founder of the Young Women at Risk program and has done a lot of work and would be a great person to also ask for an example.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you.

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

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much. You ended your presentation by saying that professionalism is not always the answer, that peer support programs can be very effective. One of the things that this committee has heard is that reporting is not always the answer, that there have to be alternatives to reporting to help women heal. I'd be interested in your experiences and thoughts about alternatives to reporting based on the women you have served.

Ms. Brie Davies: Well, I think our perspective on reporting is that it always has to be the survivor's choice to report, and there's more about it in the written piece in terms of the double bind that people are often placed in, because there can also be so much pressure to report but the consequences of reporting are not always positive for the survivor.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Rarely positive.

Ms. Brie Davies: It can be very rarely positive. Alternatives to reporting can be getting support. I sort of feel like the whole system needs to be reworked from a survivor-directed perspective. My thought on that would be for the police and for the legal system, the hospital system, for all of the systems, for the government, to be getting advice from survivors and having the whole system be reworked from a survivor-directed perspective. Because the survivors are the experts in what it's like to survive sexual violence, so the survivor should be directing the system a little bit. There should be advisory boards for the police. There should be advisory boards for the criminal justice system, advisory boards for—everybody who interacts with survivors should be getting some advice from survivors because they're the ones who have the experience, and so maybe the systems could become a little more friendly for reporting.

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

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you very much for being here. I have to say that part of our mandate is actually reaching out to some of the clients, the survivors you're meeting. So thank you for being that voice and helping as best as you can within some of the limits.

I wanted to ask you, what other way would you suggest to improve the system—I think you've touched a little bit on that—to better target those you're reaching out to, the marginalized survivors?

Ms. Zahrah Hajali: Through stabilization of funding and through acknowledging the work that has been done over the 40-plus years through the sexual assault move-

ment within Ontario, I think we can make a real commitment to making these changes. We know the impact as experts in this field and we know how to work with women survivors, especially those who are marginalized, to bring voice to their concern and make a real impact and change for them.

I think that would be a starting place: to recognize the expertise that you do have within the province. You have 42 sexual assault support centres, most of them with more than 30 years' worth of history, all of them starting from a grassroots, feminist, peer support model. They've changed over the years; they have not been allowed to exist in that way. There's diversity, and that's fine. We recognize diversity, but we need to go back to the experts, and we need to be consulted continuously throughout this process, not just today but in the future. Whatever recommendations come out of here should definitely be brought back to the coalition, on a coalition level, so that we could support this process, because we know how to engage women.

It is very hard to reinvent the wheel. Grassroots always works when you're trying to make change up. Going down is a very difficult thing. Making change from the top is a very difficult thing to do.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We thank you very much for your insights and your recommendations today.

Committee members, if you haven't already done so, we encourage you to check out before 12 noon. It's a firm time, apparently. We will meet you down the hallway at the Albion room; it's past the elevators.

We stand adjourned until 1 p.m.

The committee recessed from 1150 to 1256.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Good afternoon, everyone. Our afternoon session of the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment meeting in Ottawa continues.

I would like to let the members in our audience know that we are now going to go in camera; we're going to be having a private session. This will run about 20 minutes, so I would respectfully ask if we could clear the room to accommodate some people who would like to speak to us privately. We'll be opening the doors up again in 20 minutes.

The committee continued in closed session from 1258 to 1321.

CENTRE NOVAS,
CALACS FRANCOPHONE
DE PRESCOTT-RUSSELL

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our public hearings now resume. I would like to call forward Anne Juras. Please have a seat. Make yourself comfortable. We understand that you're going to be speaking for about five minutes, and then—I'm sorry to inform our audience again—we're going to have to have you clear out again because we have another private presentation. For the

record, please state your name and your organization, and begin any time.

M^{me} Anne Jutras: OK. Ma présentation va être en français. Je m'appelle Anne Jutras. Je suis directrice du Centre Novas, un CALACS, Centre d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel, de Prescott-Russell.

Mesdames et messieurs—je vois qu'il y a des messieurs aussi du comité spécial—merci pour l'occasion de parole. J'aimerais aujourd'hui vous parler de la réalité locale de Prescott-Russell, qui vient avec des défis spécifiques à ses particularités. Nous ne sommes pas une grande métropole et l'accès en général est difficile.

Notre territoire est un territoire très étendu de 2 000 kilomètres carrés. On est entouré des frontières du Québec, la rivière du comté de Stormont, Dundas et Glengarry et d'Ottawa à l'autre extrémité. C'est une communauté rurale. Donc, il y a beaucoup de fermes, et les terrains sont très éloignés les uns des autres. La distance est très grande. Il peut arriver, entre deux grands centres, d'avoir au-delà de 100 kilomètres à parcourir pour se rendre de son village à un service.

Notre communauté a une minorité francophone très présente. Par contre, il faut se souvenir que c'est la raison pour laquelle il faut continuer d'avoir des services en français mais aussi des services en français de qualité, que ce soit dans notre région, où c'est un petit peu plus français, ça va, mais le reste de l'Ontario, certains de nos collègues dans d'autres provinces n'ont pas cette opportunité-là. Donc, c'est important de continuer d'avoir des services en français et de continuer de développer des services en français pour que toutes les femmes puissent avoir accès.

Dans le fait que nous sommes une région très étendue, il y a beaucoup d'isolement entre les familles et entre les communautés. Ça, c'est un des facteurs qui font que le tabou, le grand silence autour de l'agression à caractère sexuel, reste tabou. On ne peut pas dire ces choses-là, puis on ne peut pas parler de ces choses-là. C'est encore quelque chose—tous les mythes qui entourent ça—qui est très tabou.

Je voulais juste refaire un petit peu une définition de l'agression à caractère sexuel pour vous donner un peu le contexte dans lequel on travaille. Donc, l'agression à caractère sexuel c'est vraiment du contrôle. Ça n'a rien à voir avec la sexualité. C'est un acte de domination, d'humiliation, d'abus de pouvoir et de violence. Ce sont des rapports de force inégaux entre les hommes et les femmes.

Dans ce contexte-là, il faut comprendre que ça peut prendre plusieurs formes. Dans notre communauté, il y a deux groupes de femmes qui viennent nous voir au centre. Je dois vous dire que c'est une petite portion des femmes, probablement, qui ont été agressées, parce qu'il y a beaucoup de femmes qui n'en parlent pas. Mais des femmes qui viennent nous voir, il y a deux groupes importants : un groupe où c'est des femmes de plus de 55 ans et beaucoup d'entre elles ont vécu l'inceste; et il y a

aussi une autre proportion de femmes plus jeunes, de 16 à 24 ou 30 ans, qui ont vécu des agressions plus récentes, du harcèlement. Maintenant, ce qu'on voit de plus en plus à travers tous les groupes d'âge, c'est le harcèlement sexuel criminel et la cyberviolence, donc tout ce qui passe par l'Internet, le Facebook, le Twitter, etc.

Donc, ça peut prendre ces formes-là. Ça peut aussi être de l'abus rituel, du viol par Internet, le viol en prison, le viol en temps de guerre et de conflit, et c'est aussi toutes les agressions qui peuvent être faites contre les minorités de race, les lesbiennes, les femmes à mobilité réduite, etc., la pornographie et le viol sous l'effet des drogues.

Ce qu'il faut comprendre c'est que le secret et la manipulation sont les armes de choix des agresseurs. C'est ce qui fait que les femmes vivent dans la peur et c'est ce qui fait qu'elles ne parlent pas.

Les impacts des agressions à caractère sexuel sont majeurs et prennent place dans la vie quotidienne des femmes. Les agressions attaquent la dignité et le pouvoir de la femme au plus profond d'elle. Ça laisse des séquelles qui influencent le fonctionnement au quotidien des femmes, que ce soit de la confusion au niveau des sentiments, la baisse de l'estime de soi, la difficulté de s'affirmer—certaines sont même victimes de stress post-traumatique—l'anxiété, l'angoisse, la colère contre soi-même, parce qu'il y a encore beaucoup de blâme, ou contre les autres, ou la difficulté à faire confiance.

J'aimerais que vous portiez attention particulière à ce que je dis en ce moment parce que je vais vous ramener à ça tantôt.

Souvent, elles ont le sentiment d'être seules parce qu'elles ont été isolées et le sont encore parce qu'elles ne peuvent pas parler de leur situation. Il y a beaucoup de questionnement aussi au niveau de leurs relations amoureuses et de leur orientation sexuelle. Beaucoup, beaucoup d'entre elles sont victimes de flash-backs, de cauchemars, de troubles de sommeil, de difficultés de concentration, et j'en passe. Tout ça affecte, comme de raison, la santé mentale et la santé physique des femmes.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'd just like you to know that there are nine minutes remaining in your time, meaning the entire time for you and the person speaking with you.

M^{me} Anne Jutras: Okay. I'll cut it short.

Au niveau des besoins des femmes, il y a des études qui ont été faites en 2013 et 2015 dans notre région particulièrement. Les données qui ont ressorti au niveau des barrières auxquelles les femmes font face, c'est de ne pas être crues, d'être revictimisées par le système légal, juridique et policier, le manque de compassion, être jugées, être étiquetées par le système médical, ne pas être écoutées et avoir à répéter, et le manque de communication entre la cour familiale et la cour criminelle dans les situations de violence faite aux femmes.

Au niveau de la confidentialité, il faut aussi que vous compreniez que dans une région comme la nôtre, où tout le monde se connaît ou tout le monde est de la famille, la confidentialité, ce n'est pas évident.

On a aussi une grande région avec plusieurs services, mais on n'a pas de centre de traitement. Donc, si les femmes acceptent de passer à travers la trousse médico-légale, elles doivent embarquer dans une voiture de police ou un taxi avec un étranger et se rendre à une heure de route. Si vous venez de vous faire violer, je ne suis pas sûre que ce soit tout le temps la meilleure solution.

Je voulais vous parler un petit peu de l'importance de la prévention, de la sensibilisation et de l'éducation. Il faut mettre beaucoup plus d'emphasis et d'importance sur la prévention, parce que c'est comme ça qu'on va réussir à éliminer la violence faite aux femmes.

Je voulais vous mentionner, vite fait, le fait que le financement est un problème. Les femmes ont besoin de ces services-là, les services que nous offrons, donc on doit avoir un financement qui est respectable et qui respecte les femmes qui travaillent dans ces CALACS-là.

La communication entre les ministères, mais aussi la communication avec les groupes comme l'Action ontarienne contre la violence faite aux femmes, qui représentent nos organismes en français, doit continuer parce que ce sont eux qui nous permettent d'aller plus loin dans nos revendications.

Donc là, ce que je voudrais faire c'est de laisser la place à trois femmes de chez nous qui voudraient vous parler un peu de leur histoire. Je vous demanderais de les croire, de les écouter, de prendre le temps de le faire, de vous rappeler que l'agresseur est responsable de ses actions et que la victime n'est que la victime.

Je leur laisse maintenant la parole. Elles ont eu beaucoup de courage de se présenter aujourd'hui, donc je vais les laisser prendre la place, si vous voulez rendre la salle à huis clos, s'il vous plaît.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. We're going to ask the members of our audience if you wouldn't mind stepping out for about 10 minutes, as we are now going to hear from our next witnesses in private.

The committee continued in closed session from 1333 to 1350.

CHIEFS OF ONTARIO FIRST NATIONS WOMEN'S CAUCUS

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would like to call forward representatives with the Chiefs of Ontario First Nations Women's Caucus. Please come forward. Good afternoon.

Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish: Good afternoon.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Make yourself comfortable. Pour yourself some water, if you'd like. You will have up to 15 minutes to address our committee, and that will be followed by questions for you. Please begin, for the record, by stating your name.

Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish: I'm Denise Stonefish.

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

Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish: Good afternoon, everyone. On behalf of the Chiefs of Ontario, we appreciate the opportunity to share our submission on sexual violence and harassment with the Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment. We believe that our experiences as First Nations peoples, a demographic that is largely over-represented as victims of sexual violence and harassment, will bring a unique perspective and insight that will inform the committee.

The Chiefs of Ontario is a political forum and secretariat for collective decision-making, action and advocacy for 133 member First Nation communities located within the boundaries of the province of Ontario.

For the purposes of today's submission, the Chiefs of Ontario has chosen to bring forward input from Ontario families of murdered and missing indigenous women and girls.

The Chiefs of Ontario, through its technical coordinating body, the First Nations Women's Caucus, held a planning gathering for the families of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls in Thunder Bay on February 10, 11 and 12, 2015.

The planning gathering was a closed session between 19 Ontario First Nations families of murdered and missing indigenous women and girls and the Ontario First Nations leadership. This forum allowed for the families to share stories of their loved ones, to identify barriers and challenges that they encountered in seeking justice for the death or disappearance of their loved ones, and to provide direction on a mandate and structure of an Ontario-specific First-Nations-led inquiry to offer guidance on the purpose and role of an independent national commission of inquiry.

As an overarching principle, we believe that in order to fully understand sexual violence and harassment, we submit that it is important to consider these issues within a broader context that includes impacts to the victims, impacts to the victims' families and impacts to the victims' communities.

I'm presenting a number of points. The first one is the post-colonialism shift in perception. At the planning gathering, families shared how colonialism has led to a major shift in the perception of indigenous women and girls; the general undervaluing of the lives of indigenous women and girls, who are treated as expendable; ongoing sexual and racial violence; and the loss of our traditional teachings and understanding of what our respective roles and responsibilities are as both indigenous women and men.

Under point 1, our recommendation is to review Ontario's curriculum materials to ensure that they are free of direct or indirect racism.

Point 2: violence against First Nations women and girls. At the planning gathering, families shared how their loved one left the family home due to sexual violence in the family and that their belief was that there was a link between childhood sexual violence and the

vulnerability of young women to become involved in the sex trade.

Our recommendation 2 is that education and awareness on sexual violence and harassment must be delivered in schools and in communities.

Number 3 is the lack of support services. The families also shared:

- that there was a lack of support services available, including the following: police services, counselling, healing and understanding the justice system;

- that when they accessed existing support services, they experienced indifference and a general lack of compassion by service providers;

- that support services that are specific to First Nations culture and teachings were the most helpful to them and their families; and

- that their First Nations culture and teachings helped them to heal, mainly because these traditional methods allowed them to gather with other individuals who had similar experiences, and that left them feeling supported.

Our recommendation 3 is that culturally appropriate healing and support services are needed.

Recommendation 4 is that First Nations and knowledge keepers should be involved in the development, design and implementation of any support services to ensure that they are culturally appropriate.

Recommendation 5 is to increase coordination in the types of support services that are funded by Ontario to avoid duplication of services in one area.

Recommendation 6 is to ensure that information about support services is widely and publicly distributed to maximize use.

Recommendation 7 is to explore development, training and certification for culturally appropriate support services in rural areas—for example, safe homes, volunteers to drive victims to urban shelters etc.

Under our point 4: Programs focused on healing and taking an inclusive approach. Again, at our planning gathering, the families shared that:

- children are often directly or indirectly impacted;

- there are limited supports for the children who are impacted directly or indirectly;

- the perpetrator continues to reside in close proximity to the victim; and

- interconnectedness, whether it be within the family or within the same community, raises challenges in healing and causes fear and anxiety.

Our recommendation 8 is that culturally appropriate support services must allow for a wholesome and healing approach and include the children and other family members who witnessed the sexual violence and harassment.

Recommendation 9 is that support be provided for the implementation of community mediation programs to be designed and delivered by First Nations communities, First Nations organizations and/or First Nations experts.

Point 5: Systemic barriers for First Nations peoples.

The families shared:

- how police investigations were often improperly conducted;

- how police investigations often blamed the victim;

- how there was presence of a conflict of interest in the investigation;

- how the perpetrator is often not charged and held accountable for their offending behaviour;

- their belief that the justice system has been a profound failure;

- the fundamental differences between mainstream society's understanding of justice versus the indigenous views of justice, which is primarily based on the search for truth and closure and addressing the root causes of the offence;

- the unfairness of the offender receiving more programs and services than the victim and their family; and

- how mainstream society does not give consideration to a more serious offence against a pregnant victim.

Our recommendation 10 is that there is a need for police training and sensitivity to the issues specific to First Nations victims to allow for appropriate police response.

Recommendation 11 is that First Nations communities must be more involved in police investigations.

Recommendation 12 is that reports of police misconduct must be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly.

Recommendation 13 is that elders should be involved in police services.

Recommendation 14 is that harsher legislation is required for offences involving pregnant women.

Recommendation 15 is to support First Nations to examine their own systems of justice.

Systemic barriers faced by First Nations victims of sexual violence and harassment must be recognized and addressed. The systemic prejudices listed above, and others that are not identified within our submission, not only alienate First Nations people, but they also limit any productive relationship between First Nations individuals and law enforcement services.

1400

In closing, we wish to reiterate our view that considerations that we bring forward to you today have the potential to begin to address the overrepresentation of First Nations individuals as victims of sexual violence and harassment. By considering the unique circumstances of First Nations victims, their families and their communities, we firmly believe it will be a step forward toward reconciling the overrepresentation of First Nations individuals as victims of sexual violence and harassment and moving towards healing First Nations persons and communities.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. We have some questions for you now, beginning with our Liberal caucus. MPP Fraser.

Mr. John Fraser: Thank you very much, Chief Stonefish, for your presentation and your very detailed set of recommendations. I wanted to just say at the outset that the lack of inquiry into the missing and murdered aboriginal women is really something that's of great national concern.

I wanted to ask you about two things, though. In terms of a distinction between rural and urban settings, is there any differential? I know we're talking a lot about rural and policing. Is that where you see the challenge with policing, in smaller communities?

Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish: I think in terms of what the families had shared with us, there was no real distinction between on- and off-reserve.

Mr. John Fraser: Okay, that's great. That's helpful.

The other question: You spoke about harsher penalties for offences committed against pregnant women. Could you elaborate on that a little bit more?

Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish: One of the families had shared with us, when her daughter was murdered, that she was pregnant at the time. She felt that the courts made no consideration in sentencing when the perpetrator had, in fact, taken two lives instead of one.

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 before us today. You gave a lot of information, and we have a short time for questioning. We were in northern Ontario and heard from northern Ontario aboriginal communities. We've heard from southern Ontario aboriginal communities. You mentioned about servicing with police. Is there a best practice there or a combination of something, whether it's RCMP, OPP or First Nations? We actually heard that with First Nations investigations, sometimes there's a conflict because, as you said, it's small, it's rural, and everybody knows each other. Can you address that in kind of a short way? If you can't, you can email the answer in, too.

Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish: Well, if I can't specifically, I have my colleagues with me. They certainly will follow up in more detail.

I think, initially, when they talked about—there is that closeness and interconnectedness because sometimes our communities are policed by our own First Nations constables, which does at times make it difficult. That's where we feel that there need to be more thorough police investigations. Being that some of our officers may be related to the victims—we can't just dismiss what has happened based on conflict.

Ms. Laurie Scott: But you have to ask as First Nations for another police force to come in. How difficult is that—being women, I just want to say that, predominantly?

Ms. Karen Restoule: As long as they're working together.

Ms. Laurie Scott: What was the answer?

Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish: The little voice on my shoulder—

Ms. Laurie Scott: That's fine.

Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish: As long as both agencies are willing to work together.

Ms. Laurie Scott: That's what we always hope for.

Can I ask one more quick question?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Sadly, we're out of time. You know how behind we are. We don't want to inconvenience the other people who are waiting.

Our final question for you is from MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much. One of the continuing themes of this committee is the importance of validating the experience of survivors and those who are going through these issues dealing with sexual violence and harassment. I really appreciate the fact that these recommendations are based on people's reality. One of the things you said was around the lack of support services but later you made a recommendation around ensuring better coordination to avoid duplication. Was there ever a sense that there was a duplication of services even in the face of a lack of services?

Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish: I think that at one point there may have been a duplication of services that one of the families had encountered.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: In what area?

Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish: Jeez, I'll have to—

Ms. Peggy Sattler: We can follow up later.

Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish: I'll have to call upon—

Ms. Karen Restoule: We could get that information and forward it when we submit the written brief.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Sure. That would be excellent.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We would very much appreciate that.

Ms. Karen Restoule: For the record, Karen Restoule, director of justice with the Chiefs of Ontario. I'm the technical support to Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ms. Scott, do you have a request?

Ms. Laurie Scott: I just wondered if you could also forward—I'm doing a separate segment on human trafficking, so anything you have with aboriginal women and human trafficking—

Ms. Karen Restoule: Yes. I was going to come around to you to ask you what your additional question was.

Ms. Laurie Scott: That was it.

Ms. Karen Restoule: Great.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): So please submit any other information you have to our Clerks' office.

Ms. Karen Restoule: Perfect.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You have that email.

Ms. Karen Restoule: Yes.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much for your presentation today. We invite you to join our audience now, if you wish to.

CALACS FRANCOPHONE D'OTTAWA

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would like to call on our next presenter to come forward: Josée Guindon.

Interjection.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'm sorry. Josée, please correct me on the pronunciation of your last name.

M^{me} Josée Guindon: It's okay. I'm used to it.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You will have 15 minutes to address our committee. Please begin by stating your organization's name and your name for the record.

M^{me} Josée Guindon: Josée Guindon, du CALACS francophone d'Ottawa.

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

M^{me} Josée Guindon: Le CALACS est un centre d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel qui a été créé en 1995, suite à l'adoption de la Loi sur les services en français. Financé par le ministère de la Procureure générale de l'Ontario, nous offrons des services aux femmes francophones survivantes d'agression sexuelle. Nos services comprennent un programme de prévention et de sensibilisation qui contribue, depuis 20 ans, à changer des attitudes et engager la communauté francophone et francophile dans la lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel.

Aujourd'hui, je veux vous parler spécifiquement de notre programme de prévention et de sensibilisation qui, selon nous, est la porte d'entrée pour les services aux survivantes. On peut à tort vouloir séparer la prévention et la sensibilisation de l'offre de services directs aux victimes, mais bien que nos services soient publicisés, la majorité des survivantes qui y accèdent ont tout d'abord été en contact avec une intervenante qui était sur le terrain. À chacune des activités que nous faisons dans la communauté, des femmes nous dévoilent avoir été agressées sexuellement et de plus en plus d'hommes dévoilent avoir été témoins d'agression ou de harcèlement sexuel.

Au cours des 20 dernières années, nous avons offert plus de 5 000 ateliers dans la communauté, principalement auprès des jeunes du secondaire, des collèges et des universités. Il faut savoir qu'à Ottawa nous avons deux universités et deux collèges et deux conseils scolaires francophones qui incluent 13 écoles secondaires francophones—tout ça pour une seule intervenante en prévention et sensibilisation. Ça fait beaucoup de gens à voir pour une seule personne.

Parler d'une agression sexuelle n'est pas facile. La survivante doit être dans un environnement où elle se sent en confiance et en sécurité. Notre programme de prévention et sensibilisation offre cet environnement. Les jeunes filles et les femmes qui se confient à nous vont, pour la majorité, entamer par la suite des démarches pour des services, soit au CALACS, mais aussi au niveau juridique et dans le secteur de santé et services communautaires.

Selon notre expertise, nous savons que la clé du succès pour offrir le meilleur service possible aux survivantes est d'être sur le terrain. Nous devons rejoindre directement les jeunes filles, les femmes, les garçons et les hommes dans leur environnement et leur donner les informations nécessaires pour qu'ils puissent prendre action et dénoncer. Nos ateliers sont conçus de manière à laisser les participants trouver eux-mêmes les solutions au lieu de leur en imposer, et cela fait toute la différence.

Maintenant, je vais vous donner trois exemples de projets en prévention et sensibilisation. Le premier est notre recherche action sur la cyberagression sexuelle. Je vais faire suivre le lien pour un rapport qu'on vient tout juste de publier. C'est un projet qui est financé par Condition féminine Canada qui nous permet d'aller rencontrer des jeunes filles et garçons dans leur environnement, à l'école. Les jeunes nous partagent des cas vécus, des comportements enracinés, trouvent des solutions et font acte d'engagement concret.

1410

Lors d'une présentation, Julien—nom fictif—nous a partagé que, lui, il a partagé la photo de sa blonde nue. Puis il a fait une prise de conscience en disant : « C'est elle qui s'est fait manquer de respect dans cette histoire alors que c'est moi qui n'en mérite pas. J'ai honte, j'ai vraiment honte. Elle m'a fait confiance en m'envoyant sa photo et je l'ai complètement trahie. » Puis là, il s'est tourné, il a regardé ses collègues de salle de classe, puis il a dit : « Pensez-y deux fois avant de diffuser une photo qui ne vous appartient pas. » Ça, c'est un exemple concret d'un jeune qui entend un message, qui intègre et qui dit : « Voici, moi, j'ai appris quelque chose et qu'est-ce que je peux faire pour ne pas le reproduire et pour éviter que ce soit reproduit par d'autres personnes? » Permettre aux jeunes de s'exprimer et parler de leur réalité quotidienne les encourage à devenir des agents de transformation et les résultats sont concrets : dévoilement, dénonciation, accès à des services.

Deuxième exemple de projet, c'est notre projet Outreach envers les femmes immigrantes francophones d'Ottawa. C'est un projet qui est financé par la Fondation Trillium, et qui nous a permis d'embaucher une intervenante qui rejoint les femmes immigrantes directement dans leur milieu de vie.

Cette approche permet une augmentation substantielle du nombre de femmes immigrantes qui décident de dévoiler, dénoncer et accéder à des services. Au cours du dernier mois seulement, l'intervenante a rencontré une quarantaine de femmes immigrantes francophones et 75 % d'entre elles ont entamé des démarches pour obtenir des services au CALACS ou au niveau juridique.

Dernier exemple : notre travail terrain, en collaboration avec l'Université d'Ottawa. Suite aux cas d'agressions sexuelles qui ont été beaucoup médiatisés l'an dernier, l'Université d'Ottawa a reconnu l'importance et la pertinence de travailler avec le CALACS francophone d'Ottawa, un service qui est établi depuis 20 ans et qui a l'expertise pour soutenir les survivantes et pour former le personnel.

Cet été, nous offrirons une formation au personnel de l'université qui va porter sur la notion de consentement, les mythes, les formes d'agressions sexuelles, mais aussi leur transmettre les connaissances nécessaires qui leur permettront de mieux soutenir et diriger les victimes vers les services appropriés.

De plus, nous offrirons, dès l'automne, des services de soutien directs aux survivantes, étudiantes et membres du personnel, sur le campus et hors du campus. Ces services

seront totalement indépendants de ceux de l'université, ce qui permettra de réduire les craintes concernant l'administration et la confidentialité et ainsi, nous prévoyons qu'un plus grand nombre de victimes choisiront de dénoncer.

Notre collaboration comprend également une campagne promotionnelle qui informera les étudiants et le personnel des ressources et services disponibles et ce, avant même le début des cours en septembre et tout au long de l'année.

Malheureusement, les exemples de projet que je viens de vous donner ont une courte durée de vie. Il est assez facile d'aller chercher du financement pour faire du développement de services, mais il est quasi impossible d'aller chercher du financement pour en assurer la viabilité. Vous voulez faire preuve d'audace, de dynamisme et moderniser vos efforts? Je vous dis : investissez dans les programmes de prévention et de sensibilisation des CALACS.

Les campagnes de prévention et sensibilisation développées au niveau provincial sont de très bonnes initiatives sauf que, à notre avis, elles doivent être élevées à un niveau local. Ce que je veux dire par là, c'est qu'on a beau créer les plus belles et les plus percutantes campagnes, si on ne donne pas des ressources aux CALACS qui travaillent sur le terrain, on passe à côté de l'objectif.

Un exemple concret, la campagne Traçons-les-limites est une excellente campagne qui vise à engager l'entourage dans l'action. Les CALACS, on reçoit des centaines d'outils, mais on ne reçoit pas les ressources humaines pour en faire adéquatement la distribution, offrir des ateliers sur le terrain et engager la conversation avec les gens pour faire changer les attitudes.

Puis il est aussi temps pour un virage technologique afin de rejoindre plus de gens, particulièrement les jeunes. Les posters, ça ne donnent plus les mêmes résultats qu'il y a 20 ans. Il faut passer à autre chose. Il faut de l'interaction avec le public. Exemple : vous voyez un poster de la campagne « Don't drink and drive », versus vous participez à une discussion sur l'alcool au volant. D'après vous, qu'est-ce qui va donner le meilleur résultat au niveau du changement d'attitudes?

Je veux maintenant vous parler de l'importance et des droits des survivantes à l'accès à des services en français. Les gens qui s'engagent dans une cause le font parce qu'ils se reconnaissent, parce qu'ils peuvent faire des liens, mais ça aussi s'applique aux francophones. L'affaire Ghomeshi est un exemple. Très peu de francophones le connaissent. Pourquoi? Parce qu'il ne fait pas partie de notre quotidien. Par contre, parlez de Nathalie Simard aux francophones, et là vous allez avoir l'attention des francophones parce qu'elle fait partie du quotidien, et on peut faire des liens.

Le dernier plan d'action du gouvernement de l'Ontario ne comporte aucune clause concernant les services en français, contrairement au plan précédant, et ceci est très inquiétant. Les initiatives financées par le gouvernement doivent impliquer dès le départ la communauté

francophone afin d'en assurer le succès. Des initiatives développées par la majorité anglophone, ensuite traduites en français, ne répondent pas aux besoins et aux droits des francophones en Ontario. Nous l'avons déjà vécu trop souvent, malheureusement.

Encore trop de survivantes n'ont pas accès à des services en français, non pas parce qu'il n'en n'existe pas mais plutôt parce qu'elles ne sont pas toujours informées de leur existence et de leurs droits linguistiques. Le règlement des tierces parties de la Loi sur les services en français a permis d'améliorer, sur papier, la loi, mais dans l'application à tous les jours sur le terrain, la réalité est très différente.

Le gouvernement de l'Ontario doit maximiser les investissements, et pour ce faire, nous vous disons, ne réinventez pas la roue. Les CALACS ont été créés pour une raison et ont développé des expertises et des outils qui donnent des résultats. Depuis quelques années, nous sommes témoins de la multiplication de services, et cela nous inquiète. Malgré le nombre de services existant pour les victimes et qui sont supposément complémentaires les uns des autres, les CALACS ne reçoivent presque pas de références. Il y a définitivement un problème à ce niveau. Il faut apporter des changements pour que les victimes soient dirigées vers les services appropriés dans la langue de leur choix.

On a une solution. Ça s'appelle la collaboration : collaboration entre les ministères et collaboration entre les tierces parties de tous les secteurs, ce qui va permettre d'améliorer la communication et la prestation des services, et créer un continuum de services. Par exemple, le gouvernement désire créer un programme pilote pour offrir des conseils juridiques. Pour assurer le succès de cette initiative, il faut que le secteur juridique travaille avec des organismes terrains comme les CALACS, sinon on risque de reproduire ce qui existe actuellement : travail en silo, on ne rejoint pas la clientèle cible et le dédoublement de services.

Le nombre de victimes qui portent plainte étant minime, cette initiative doit avoir une composante pour rejoindre toutes les femmes qui ne dénoncent pas, et pour cela, le travail en collaboration avec les CALACS est essentiel.

Il faut aussi éviter de créer des structures complexes qui risquent d'ajouter des barrières à l'accès aux services.

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

M^{me} Josée Guindon: All right. Oh, my God.

Nous souhaitons que le gouvernement prenne en considération tout le travail fait depuis 20 ans en Ontario par les CALACS, qui sont aux premières lignes et qui possèdent l'expertise nécessaire pour mettre fin aux agressions sexuelles en partenariat avec le gouvernement.

Dernier point important : j'ai besoin de souligner les conditions d'emploi des intervenantes des CALACS. Saviez-vous que les salaires des intervenantes qui travaillent dans des CALACS sont 26 % moins élevés que les salaires des intervenantes dans des emplois comparables dans d'autres secteurs, et que les intervenantes

n'ont pas accès aux fonds de pension? C'est prioritaire que le gouvernement se penche sur une stratégie pour éviter que les intervenantes, qui passent leur vie à lutter pour les droits des femmes et contre la pauvreté des femmes, ne se retrouvent pas elles-mêmes à vivre dans la pauvreté.

Trois mots pour terminer, trois mots qu'on entend beaucoup aux CALACS par les survivantes : croire, vouloir et pouvoir. Je souhaite que le gouvernement va croire aux CALACS, va croire aux services en français et va vouloir apporter des changements parce que c'est vous qui avez le pouvoir.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): Merci beaucoup. La première question est de MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I just want to say thank you, and if you have more to say, go for it. You can take my time.

Ms. Josée Guindon: Well, you'll have the text—I'm going to send the text.

Ms. Laurie Scott: That's fine. Thank you very much. It was great. I'm sorry; we tried—

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Any questions from MPP Sattler?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: You hastily, at the very end of your presentation—can I speak in English?

Ms. Josée Guindon: Yes.

1420

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. At the very end of your presentation, you mentioned “avoid creating complex structures that might in fact reinforce barriers or create new barriers.” Were you thinking of something specific when you said that?

M^{me} Josée Guindon: Oui. Dans le plan d'action, il y a une mention à un moment donné concernant peut-être des—je n'ai pas la terminologie devant moi, mais les comités de coordination ou coordination de services et tout ça.

Les victimes d'agressions sexuelles sont déjà référées d'un service à un autre. Souvent, le point d'entrée—par exemple, elles vont arriver à un service qui offre des services en anglais, puis en suite, quelque temps plus tard, elles vont être référées à un service en français, puis en suite—c'est très difficile.

Donc, n'ajoutez pas d'autres services complexes, références et tout ça. Il existe des services qui sont vraiment outillés pour répondre aux besoins des femmes et ça ne sert à rien de réinventer toute une structure.

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

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Bonjour. Rebonjour. Comment ça va?

M^{me} Josée Guindon: Ça va.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Très bonne présentation. Merci beaucoup. C'était très pertinent, très éducatif. Tantôt j'ai posé une question, mais je vais essayer de changer un petit peu. Tu nous disais qu'il y avait quand même des services qui étaient offerts mais que l'information souvent n'était pas là. Ça serait quoi ta recommandation? Comment peut-on les informer, les

gens à travers la province, des services en français qui sont offerts?

M^{me} Josée Guindon: C'est certain que l'application du règlement des tierces parties a besoin d'être vu à ce niveau-là. Ça va au-delà d'informer les gens qu'il existe des services en français. Ça va de l'obligation et de la responsabilité du gouvernement de s'assurer que les organismes qu'il finance et qui ont un mandat pour offrir des services en anglais, offrent des services en anglais et réfèrent automatiquement aux services qui sont désignés pour offrir des services en français.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Parfait. Merci beaucoup. Merci de ta présence.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much for your presentation to our committee today. We invite you to join our audience now, if you wish to.

DRAW THE LINE

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

Good afternoon, Ms. Lalonde. You're going to be talking to us about Draw the Line and Hollaback! Ottawa?

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Yes.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. So you will have 15 minutes to speak about both organizations.

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Perfect. I have material. Do I just leave them here for distribution after?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Our Clerk is going to come and get them from you.

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Wonderful. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): For the record, please begin by stating your name and the organizations you represent.

Ms. Julie Lalonde: My name is Julie Lalonde, and I'm the project manager of the Draw the Line campaign and the site director of Hollaback! Ottawa.

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

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Wonderful. I'm going to speak about Draw the Line first, if that's okay.

I actually do public speaking for a living, and so this is generally not a stressful thing. But it's very ironic that I'm here today, because I've been doing nothing but press around workplace sexual harassment since this morning, because yesterday CBC broke the story of how I gave a presentation at RMC in the fall that went very, very badly and, as a result, after five months I finally got an apology letter from—I can't remember; Meinzinger is his last name.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): The commandant.

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Yes, the commandant of RMC. So it's very relevant for me to be here. Why I was at RMC was actually in my role with Draw the Line. What I do is, I travel across the province and I talk to everybody from very adorable, keen grade 6 students sitting cross-legged in the library, to folks working on Parliament Hill,

to campuses, to workplaces of every variety, talking about not only sexual violence but the role of bystanders.

What's exciting about Draw the Line is, as my colleagues at Action ontarienne and CALACS d'Ottawa have said, it's one of the only, if not the only provincial campaign that was developed in English and in French from the start. So the fact that myself and my colleagues at the CALACS across the province are giving the same content is remarkable.

As a Franco-Ontarian, I also appreciated that it's a campaign that's truly bilingual and not just a translation, which is great. But it's our approach, I think, that has gotten us the most success. What we hear from people is, "I had a total expectation of what I thought you were going to say, and that wasn't it at all. You're not here to tell me that all men are perpetrators or all women are going to be victimized. You're saying, 'I believe everyone is a good person who's going to see or hear things and they don't know what to do.'"

My message is: (1) We need to keep funding prevention. We treat sexual violence as inevitable in this country. Unequivocally, we treat it as inevitable and we need to change that, and part of that is investing in prevention. Yes, we need to give money to sexual assault support centres. We need to invest in people doing aftercare for trauma, but we also need to believe that sexual violence can be prevented.

I believe it, and I believe that when we frame it in that way, people are actually empowered to make a difference rather than feeling very discouraged, because I can tell you that after last fall, after everything that blew up—we all heard the stories, whether it was CBC, Parliament Hill, the military—people are bummed out. People are not feeling empowered to make a difference. People are saying, "Every time I turn around, I turn on the TV and some other area of my world is consumed by rape culture." That's not motivating people to get up in the morning and make a difference. It's making them feel like this is inevitable, that there's no point in even trying.

What is so important about Draw the Line and campaigns like it is that we give people tools. So yes, I'm going to start off by bumming you out by saying workplace sexual harassment is a thing that exists. That's the Debbie Downer part of the presentation, a little Negative Nancy. But then I follow it up with, "Here are four tangible things you can do, people to talk to, the sentence to say. What does it mean to support someone?" And it works. People love it.

I think my experience of presenting at RMC in the fall speaks to how important it is. I gave the exact same content there, with the exception of a scenario around alcohol-facilitated sexual assault, to grade 6 students, and those grade 6 students were more mature and responsive. When I'm speaking to a group of RMC students in first year and the first slide is "What is consent?" and half of the room bursts out laughing, we have a problem. We have a problem that needs to be addressed. For me, I think oftentimes we overestimate people's knowledge base, when we don't even have basic concepts of consent down pat.

I just want to leave you with one of the things that I found—and Josée Guindon spoke to this, really importantly—about our approach to talking about online sexual violence: We don't talk about how women should not be sending naked selfies. We talk about how this is not sexting; this is sexual violence. When we refer to it as sexting, we're giving a cutesy name to a form of sexual violence, and that's not acceptable.

But every single time I give that talk in high schools, I have at least two women come up to me afterwards to say, "Thank you for being here, because I haven't slept in a week, because I've been going back and forth as to whether or not I should send a photo to this guy who has been pressuring me to do so." So people don't understand what consent is, but they also don't understand what coercion is. If I ask people what consent is in a room, maybe half of them have an idea; I ask them what coercion is and I get blank stares. That is part of our conversations around consent.

I just want to encourage you to really think about the framing of the discussion. I cannot emphasize this enough. We are constantly making it seem like sexual violence is inevitable. I don't agree with that, and I do believe that that ethos is sort of framing our discussions about it: "It's going to happen, so when it does, know where your local sexual assault centre is." I don't think that's the right approach, and I think it's not resonating with people. As I said, the fact that their takeaway from last fall was "There is nothing I can do because everything is terrible" doesn't make people want to get involved and do something.

Campaigns like Draw the Line/Traçons-les-limites and things like it—I think we're on to something, and I want to see that continue. The number one thing I hear from people is, "I love your campaign. Why have I never heard about it before?" I think we have the power to change that, and I would like to see that.

Do we want to do questions for that now, or do you want me to put my other hat on?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): It's entirely up to you.

Ms. Julie Lalonde: What makes sense for everyone?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Why don't we ask questions on this, and then we'll go to the next topic?

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Perfect.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We're going to begin with our NDP caucus with MPP Sattler.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Okay. Draw the Line is delivered only in educational institutions? You talked about grade 6 classes and also RMC. Is it targeted to students generally, or—

Ms. Julie Lalonde: No. I think what's really remarkable about Draw the Line—and, truthfully, I don't even think we knew that when we planned it; I like to pretend we did, but we didn't—is that by giving a variety of scenarios that fall along the sexual violence continuum, there are scenarios that are relevant for every age group and every demographic.

For example, one of the scenarios is—and I have examples of all of them here for everyone—your sister

tells you her husband made her have sex last night. Do you change the subject? It's a really important conversation we've had about disclosure. It's one thing to say that someone you know has been sexually assaulted and you put on your superhero cape, but what if the person who assaulted them is your brother-in-law? How do you challenge family violence?

The scenarios are very, very relevant for different groups, but we just go wherever we're invited. We just don't have the capacity to be knocking on all the doors that we want to be knocking on, to be in all the spaces where I think we need to be.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you for the work you're doing, by the way. It's excellent.

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Thank you so much. I appreciate that.

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

Mr. Han Dong: Thank you very much for the presentation. I think we need to hear from someone who has been dealing with our youth in our public system. As you know, the government is rolling out the physical health curriculum this fall. Much of what you just said supposedly will provide the tools for the teachers to go about this.

1430

In your thoughts, do you have any suggestions for us in terms of rolling out the curriculum, or some of the potential challenges or potential ways that we can roll it out so that we can really get to the youth and really get the message across? Any advice for us?

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Certainly. I would say first of all that our biggest obstacle is connecting with EDU and making sure that this material is integrated into the content of the curriculum. What we're seeing with the curriculum is that the resources exist; there are just no connections being made and it's very siloed. We don't need to create new content. It's there. Every single sexual assault centre in the province has a public educator who is trained in delivering this content. You can have them come speak at your local school. Making that connection is really, really important.

But I would say that the biggest thing that needs to be put across to folks is that you need buy-in. When a teacher is delivering content that they're not really invested in, students get that, right? They know that. So we need the educators to believe in the content. I want every teacher who is telling a grade 7 student what consent is to believe that that's an important thing for them to learn.

Mr. Han Dong: I've just got a quick follow-up: In your experience of teaching kids and doing speeches and stuff, do you get support from the parents? What kind of feedback do you get from parents and teachers?

Ms. Julie Lalonde: I would say the biggest barrier to getting into schools is the fear that parents are going to call them. Yet what we tend to do is that I prefer to actually do presentations during the day with the students and in the evening with the parents. Once parents

actually see what we're doing, they're on board, but there is so much mythology around the content that people go into it resistant. Then they realize, "Oh. This makes perfect sense." We need more of that. We need to be engaging parents around this curriculum.

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

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you very much, Julie. I was listening to your CBC interview on the way back from Kingston last night; I found it quite interesting.

I have two quick questions for you. One is on the funding for the program: Where are you receiving that from and how is that going? Also, just as a general question, in your experience, is it that there is more media and more attention to sexual violence and harassment, or is there just a greater frequency of it happening, or a combination of that? Just in your own experience, from all your travels and your discussions.

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Yes, speaking to Monsieur et Madame Tout-le-monde across the province. One, I can say that we can now proudly say that we are funded by the province of Ontario, and we have been since the start. We were not able to say so until recently, but it was part of the 2010 sexual violence action plan, which is great. We are funded by the province, and we're hoping to see that funding continue. We're feeling positive about that.

Mr. Randy Hillier: And which ministry is it?

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Ontario Women's Directorate, OWD. Part of one of the recommendations that was made by the sexual violence action plan was to develop a prevention campaign, so that's why the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres and Action ontarienne contre la violence faite aux femmes were engaged to do that work.

The second question is one that I get a lot, which is: "Are youth more corrupt today than they were back in the day?" I don't believe so. I believe we are finally shedding light in dark places and it's finally safe enough for people to come forward. Because the kinds of, quite frankly, garbage that we're seeing over the last couple of months—nothing is new. In fact, I would say that social media, as much as it can be a weapon used against youth and young women in particular, has also allowed us to tell stories that the mainstream media were not originally covering.

I think of Rehtaeh Parsons, for example. Social media was used to make her life miserable, but social media is the reason why we know her story and why we're now fighting for justice for Rehtaeh. So I think it sounds worse, but it's because we're hearing about things that were going on behind closed doors for decades.

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you.

HOLLABACK! OTTAWA

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Julie Lalonde, we're going to have you switch hats now, and you will speak to us about Hollaback! Ottawa.

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Thank you. One, I really love hearing people talk about Hollaback! Seeing middle-aged

men on TV say “Holler back Ottawa” makes me laugh every time. Hollaback! is an international movement. We are now in 92 cities and 32 countries around the world, in over a dozen different languages.

We were started in New York, around 2005. A young woman was taking the subway when a man started publicly masturbating in front of her. She was just fed up with it. At that time, cell phone cameras were brand new technology, so she took out her phone, took a very grainy photo of this person and showed it to the NYPD, and they said, “There are millions of people who live in New York. What do you want me to do with that?”

At the time—this was before Facebook and Twitter—she put it on Flickr, which is a social media photo-sharing site, and it went viral and ended up on the cover of tons of papers in New York. It really ignited a conversation about the prevalence of street harassment.

What’s important to know about street harassment is that it is probably the most pervasive form of gender-based violence, but it’s also the least legislated against. The vast majority of people have no idea what I’m talking about when I say “street harassment,” but when I say “catcalling” or when I go through the list of stories of what people have experienced, you can see this moment in their head of, “Wow, that is a form of violence.” It is so mundane. It is so status quo for women and LGBTQ folks to be walking down the street, particularly in the summer, and to have people yell things at them, to be groped on public transit. It’s just commonplace for people. In fact, some of the language is quite strong, but I do want to read directly from people’s testimonials.

We have a website, and part of the resources I have left here with you is some information about who we are but also what it looks like. In cities around the world, over 92 cities—which I think is absolutely astounding—people can submit their stories of street harassment.

For example: “I was walking down Rideau. This thing happened to me. I was angry. I was appalled.” You submit it through an app or through our website and a little dot goes on the map. So we’re actually tracking where street harassment happens, which is a great public policy tool. When we had an election last year, we approached everyone running in the different ridings to say, “Your riding has the highest level of street harassment in the city. What are you going to do about it?” So it gives us a tool in order to do that, but it’s also incredibly validating for someone who has experienced a form of harassment—which, overwhelmingly, is witnessed by other people who don’t do anything—to be able to go onto the site and say, “This happened to me,” and have other people go on board and click on it to say, “I’ve got your back. What happened to you is disgusting and we need to do something about it.”

Some of the examples here in my wonderful city of Ottawa: Jess’s story, saying, “Leaving work downtown at 11 p.m. and a car full of” men “literally BARKED at me, followed by yelling a slew of ‘hey baby’ and ‘where you going?’” Without even looking over I threw my middle finger in the air for nearly a block, which of course turned me from ‘baby’ into ‘bitch!’”

Yami, a woman, said, “I was waiting for the bus heading to Orléans and this man took it upon himself to grab my ass and call me a” N-bomb. “Nobody said anything” and “just watched.”

“I was riding my bicycle down MacArthur on Monday around noon when some guys yelled at me from their car as they passed me. The passenger leaned out, yelling, ‘Hey girl, come ride my cock like you ride that bike’ and ‘I’m gonna grab you off that bike and squeeze your tits’ then proceeded to speed off.”

Lastly, another story—and, I mean, you could go on our website and just read this all day long. This is what’s happening every single day in Ottawa. Allison’s story: “I was walking back to my office during lunch when I passed a young-ish guy who looked like he was rolling a joint or a cigarette.” I’m not sure. “We briefly made eye contact. When I looked away, he began to yell ‘How’s it going bitch? Bitch come here!’ I kept walking and didn’t look or say anything but he kept yelling stuff till I was gone. There were a lot of people around” and it was really humiliating.

What we know about street harassment—the biggest thing I hear is: “It’s a compliment. You should just take a compliment. You can’t take a compliment.” What we know about street harassment is that it might start off sounding like a compliment, but the second you don’t react in the way that they want you to—which, how am I supposed to know?—it very quickly turns hostile and it very quickly turns into what it really was, which was: “I’m trying to put you in your place. I’m trying to remind you that you are public property and you are walking down the street, so I can say whatever I would like to you.”

I’m talking about girls as young as 12 or 13 years old who have this happen to them. In many cases, the moment they start experiencing street harassment is the moment they believe that they are now a woman. I hear that from young women: “I know I look like a woman now because I get yelled at by cars when I go to school.” What does that say?

And so the reason why Hollaback! wanted to be here today is because we want people to recognize that street harassment is on the sexual violence continuum. We saw this with the infamous—and I don’t need to repeat it—disgusting things that have been yelled at female journalists over the past couple of months that is an online sensation. That’s street harassment. What’s been ironic for me is that the same people who tell me, “Why don’t you focus on real forms of violence?” are calling me to say how appalling that woman’s experience was. That’s street harassment. Because she was at work and because there was a microphone there, it’s somehow elevated, but if I’m just walking to go to the coffee shop and someone yells something at me, we should be equally as appalled.

What we know is that it’s not a criminal justice response that’s going to end street harassment; it’s a cultural shift. It’s talking to young boys and saying, “If you think this is how you impress other men”—we know

that it's typically groups of men who engage in this behaviour—"it doesn't work. You don't get dates from it. Women don't like it."

That's why we teach bystander intervention. We have a specific program where we talk about "direct, delegate, distract, delay," and we really challenge a lot of myths around bystander intervention, in which you think it's going to lead to escalation, it's going to lead to violence, but it's as simple as asking someone, "Hey, I need to get off the bus at Rideau. Do you know which stop that is?" You're interrupting a moment.

1440

So we need further education on bystander intervention. My hope today is that you begin to understand where street harassment fits on the sexual violence continuum and that someone yelling, "Hey, baby" at me and throwing things at me or groping me on the bus is directly connected to sexual violence in the way it's traditionally understood. Thank you.

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

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Hello. If you don't mind, I'm going to speak in English. Is that all right or—

M^{me} Julie Lalonde: Oui, oui, c'est correct.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you very much for this wonderful presentation. Actually, that was great. We've heard in Toronto about—I think it was in Toronto—street harassment and some of the work, and I think they referred—

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thunder Bay.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Pardon me?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thunder Bay.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thunder Bay—and she referred actually to this program. So that's great.

I want to broaden that and maybe touch on your perspective, and I wanted to ask you, in the very large term, what are the root causes of sexual violence and harassment among our young people?

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Misogyny. If you were raised in a world in which women don't have the same value as you, they're disposable, they're objects or they are there to help you elevate your status, then that needs to change.

So when I'm working with youth and young men can proudly talk about how many photos of nude women they have on their phones, but every single one of those women is individually viewed as a slut, we're perpetuating the idea that women are a status symbol, and if they don't give you what you want, they're disposable. If we don't talk about sexual violence as a form of misogyny, and if we don't talk about it as gendered, that women and men are not implicated in the same way, we are not going to solve the problem.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: So when you talk about the prevention component, if you were to make recommendations, how do we start with prevention?

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Prevention starts with having the conversations with kids in kindergarten about body parts. What we know about ending childhood sexual abuse is, if children have shame around their sexuality, they're not

going to speak out about what they're experiencing. So it starts that young. For me, it's about having concrete conversations about what prevention looks like. "If you see something, say something" doesn't compel people. "I don't know what I'm looking for, and I don't know who to talk to."

People do not know what sexual violence looks like. Everywhere I go, people think, "Oh, that's just a new term for 'rape.'" People know what rape looks like, and when they talk about bystander intervention, they imagine, "I'm going to see a woman being raped in the alley, and that's when I'm going to intervene." That's not what you're going to see. That's not what you're going to hear. You're going to hear allusions. You're going to see someone isolate someone else. Those are the kinds of things where we need to give people concrete tools, and it has to start early and it has to start often.

Nobody is too old either. Yes, it's not okay that we're waiting until people are in university, but we should still be having that conversation in university.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: I'm just going to end by saying that this morning, when we started our day, we had this wonderful group called ManUp—

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Love them.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Okay.

Ms. Julie Lalonde: I presented with Longfields-Davidson Heights. They give me so much hope. I swear to you, on bad days I wake up in the morning and I'm like, "Okay, ManUp exists. It's worthwhile for me to get up." I presented Draw the Line to them and it brought me to tears how they engaged with the material, in a very realistic way. They're phenomenal.

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

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Merci.

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

Ms. Laurie Scott: Amazing presentations—both of them were fabulous.

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Thank you.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I was going to ask—and it may be partially answered. So ManUp did it themselves. Are you able to get into schools? When you go to the schools, do you talk about Hollaback! in a way that you can—

Ms. Julie Lalonde: We try to.

Ms. Laurie Scott: —age appropriate?

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Yes, yes.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay. The girl from Thunder Bay—she was a student who did a presentation. It was fabulous. We all, as women, have experienced—I mean, we can all tell a hundred stories each.

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Yes.

Ms. Laurie Scott: It goes on and on. So it is cultural.

When we saw the reporter last week or the week before now, Shauna Hunt, were more bystanders who were encouraging those guys yelling at her. Despite the fact that it was this phenomenon that had been going on, which I wasn't aware of, but we just actually saw—can you just comment on what the heck went on besides they were drinking at a soccer game?

Ms. Julie Lalonde: We see it, though. I think the biggest thing about street harassment, if you've never experienced it—which, bless your heart; please, I would love to be in your shoes—all of the attention is put on you. I can speak of my own experience. I was physically and sexually assaulted on public transit here in Ottawa, at 8 a.m., a totally quiet bus, packed. Everybody stared at me. Everybody was just staring at me, aghast as to what happened. No one came to my help. Everybody just stared at me.

When you teach women to be polite, no matter what, and that the second you stand up for yourself you're a bitch or you think you're better than everybody else, then we're also encouraging women not to speak out. In that moment, the second I defended myself, it was like, "Whoa, lady, you're making a mountain out of a mole-hill," right? We saw that when that woman defended herself. It was like, "This isn't about you." He was indignant with her because she challenged him.

That's the bystander effect. We live in a culture in which, when we talk about bystander intervention, people say that we don't have each other's backs. No, we do. We just defend the wrong people all the time, and we need to change that.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you so much.

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

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you so much for coming to talk to this committee. Cultural shifts are hard to make. This program you mentioned, Hollaback!, is in 92 cities around the world. Is there any kind of research or data about the impact of Hollaback! in moving the culture and achieving this kind of cultural shift?

Ms. Julie Lalonde: Well, here in Ottawa, for example, we have zero funding, so we are a volunteer-run organization, but the Hollaback! movement as a whole—what they have been able to do is to get some pro bono research looking at how as a survivor, when you tell your story, it does actually have an impact in reframing your experience. For a long time, you believed that it was your fault or that you were being dramatic, but by telling your story, you actually begin to reframe it and you become politicized. You realize that your story is everyone's story and that it was not acceptable what happened to you.

Bystander intervention campaigns—our campaign specifically comes from Green Dot, which is out of the United States. You can look it up. It's one of the best, most highly awarded bystander intervention campaigns in existence. But equally importantly for me, I want women to not feel crazy when they're upset by street harassment. We have been able to show that Hollaback! does that, and I think that's tremendous.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Great. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Julie Lalonde, thank you so much for coming and making your presentations here to our committee. It's very informative. We invite you to join our audience now, if you wish to.

CENTRE DES RESSOURCES
DE L'EST D'OTTAWA

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call up our next presenter, Danielle. Danielle, I will spare you the discomfort of having to hear me try to pronounce your surname. I'll let you do it when you come up to the front. Please have a seat. Make yourself comfortable. If you'd like some water, just pour some for yourself. You will have 15 minutes to present to our committee, and that will be followed by questions for you. Can you please begin by stating your name and the name of your organization?

M^{me} Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: Danielle Pécore-Ugorji, intervenante en appui transitoire pour le Centre des ressources de l'est d'Ottawa et le bureau satellite de Pembroke dans le comté de Renfrew.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): Commencez.

M^{me} Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: Bon après-midi. J'ai une deuxième copie de ce que je vais dire cet après-midi, s'il y a quelqu'un qui prend des notes ou pour la traduction, qui en aurait besoin, mais je ne vous ai pas amené des copies parce que je voudrais que vous m'écoutez au lieu de lire ce que j'ai écrit.

Merci de m'accueillir au comité cet après-midi. Je pense que c'est important que vous entendez des voix des communautés minoritaires et des communautés rurales, malgré que vous ne veniez pas chez nous.

Comme je vous ai dit, je travaille depuis environ cinq ans avec les survivantes d'agressions sexuelles dans le comté de Renfrew, à la fois dans mon poste actuel en tant qu'intervenante en appui transitoire pour le CREO, mais aussi en tant que bénévole active du Centre d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions sexuelles du Comté de Renfrew et membre active, encore, de plusieurs associations francophones dans le comté, dont la Fédération des femmes canadiennes-françaises.

Je suis originaire de Pembroke. C'est un lieu que je connais très bien. Comme la majorité des gens de chez nous, surtout des francophones, j'ai quitté la région pour poursuivre mes études postsecondaires. Je suis revenue dans la région seulement après avoir complété mes études et commencé une carrière.

J'ai travaillé avec des populations vulnérables partout dans le monde, surtout en Asie et en Afrique, et je vous dis aujourd'hui que j'ai vu des camps de réfugiés où les survivantes ont un meilleur accès aux services que les survivantes francophones d'agressions sexuelles dans le comté de Renfrew.

Comme beaucoup de femmes, j'ai connu le harcèlement sexuel en milieu de travail et dans les rues, ce que Julie Lalonde vient de nous décrire mieux que je ne le pourrais. Mais c'est vraiment au nom et en l'honneur de deux amies que je suis ici aujourd'hui. Elles m'ont vraiment motivé dans mon travail—deux amies qui m'ont dévoilé à l'adolescence deux expériences d'agressions sexuelles. Elles n'ont jamais reçu les services dont elles avaient besoin. Donc, je poursuis ce travail en honneur d'elles.

Je pense que vous avez entendu ce matin deux de mes collègues du comté de Renfrew : Bev Ritza, du centre d'aide et de lutte contre l'agression sexuelle; et aussi Jen Valiquette, du « regional assault care program ». Donc, vous connaissez déjà les caractéristiques clés de la région du comté de Renfrew. Mais j'imagine que vous avez aussi entendu plusieurs voix depuis elles, donc je vais vous rappeler un peu d'où je viens et les caractéristiques du comté de Renfrew.

Vous savez déjà que nous sommes une région très grande, très rurale et avec une population très éparpillée. Vous savez que nous n'avons aucun transport en commun. Vous savez aussi que nous avons une grande base militaire à Petawawa et une communauté d'Algonquins à Pikwàkanagàn. Nous avons été touchés par la violence sexuelle au sein de l'Église catholique. Notre population vieillit et en général se rattache aux traditions et aux valeurs religieuses. Nous avons notre part de mythes par rapport à l'agression sexuelle, ce qui rend difficile la vie des victimes d'agressions sexuelles. Celles qui osent s'avancer ne sont pas crues ou se font très souvent blâmer pour ce qui est arrivé.

Je vais vous parler maintenant un peu des communautés francophones dans le comté de Renfrew. Je dis bien « des communautés », au pluriel, parce que nous avons quand même une diversité. Il y a environ 5 000 francophones dans le comté de Renfrew. Ce sont les dernières statistiques. Par contre, ces statistiques excluent les familles militaires qui habitent sur la base de Petawawa. Il est difficile d'estimer le nombre de familles francophones sur la base parce que, d'abord, la base ne garde pas ces statistiques-là, ou ne les partage pas en tout cas, mais aussi parce que ça varie.

Vous savez aussi que la Loi sur les services en français de 1986 donne le droit au grand public de recevoir des services en français de la part des ministères et des organismes du gouvernement de l'Ontario situés dans trois régions désignées du comté de Renfrew, donc la ville de Pembroke; les cantons de Stafford, qui font maintenant partie de Laurentian Valley, qui est vraiment collée sur Pembroke; et les cantons de Westmeath-La Passe.

Je parle bien de communautés francophones au pluriel parce que la communauté francophone ne forme pas une seule communauté homogène. Les francophones de la base militaire ont des besoins différents que les francophones qui habitent en région rurale à l'ouest du comté, par exemple. Les francophones qui habitent la ville de Pembroke n'ont pas les mêmes défis que les francophones, par exemple, à Combermere, Killaloe ou Barry's Bay. Il n'est pas rare non plus que les francophones du côté du Québec, dans le coin de Chapeau, viennent chercher des services ou socialiser dans le coin de Pembroke. Nos enfants vont à l'école ensemble, etc. Donc, il y a un manque de services du côté du Québec, et ces gens-là viennent chercher des services en français dans la région de Pembroke.

Les survivantes francophones—Bev vous a parlé par rapport au projet de recherche financé par Condition

féminine Canada et des expériences particulières des femmes rurales. Ce projet a également consulté, évidemment, des francophones dans le comté de Renfrew, donc ces informations s'appliquent également aux communautés francophones du comté.

Mes collègues vous ont parlé des défis des survivantes dans le comté de Renfrew : les services peu nombreux; la mentalité conservatrice, surtout par rapport aux rôles stéréotypés des hommes et des femmes; les grandes distances à parcourir pour avoir accès aux services; les préoccupations par rapport à la confidentialité; la pauvreté très répandue; la présence d'armes à feu, pour la chasse, par exemple; le nombre restreint d'emplois, surtout des emplois bien rémunérés; l'isolement extrême des minorités culturelles, raciales et religieuses; et l'oppression continue des membres de nos Premières Nations. Certains de ces défis sont multipliés pour les victimes francophones d'agressions sexuelles.

La confidentialité : les communautés francophones sont petites. Les gens se connaissent très bien, souvent depuis toute leur vie, et sont souvent liés de parenté entre eux. Les membres de la communauté francophone militaire apprennent souvent à se connaître très rapidement et se voient très souvent en raison de l'isolement des francophones militaires, surtout ceux qui ne parlent pas très bien l'anglais. Comme elles n'ont généralement pas beaucoup de famille dans le coin, elles dépendent de leurs consoeurs francophones pour un appui émotionnel et pratique.

Les francophones de la région de Pembroke se voient régulièrement, socialisent, éduquent leurs enfants, travaillent, fréquentent la même église et font leurs achats ensemble à la même épicerie où elles savent qu'elles peuvent recevoir des services en français.

Donc, lorsqu'une survivante et un agresseur viennent tous les deux de la même communauté francophone, ils se côtoient régulièrement et peuvent rarement s'éviter. Cette réalité multiplie généralement l'inconfort de la survivante, surtout dans une communauté qui jase beaucoup, mais aussi rend impossible certains aspects de la vie quotidienne. Par exemple, j'ai connu une survivante qui n'a pas pu retourner au travail car la seule place disponible dans une garderie francophone pour son enfant qui convenait à ses besoins était chez un membre de la famille de son agresseur.

La confidentialité au niveau de l'accès aux services peut également être compromise dans une communauté où tout le monde se connaît. Dans une communauté où l'avocat francophone est marié à l'agent de probation qui offre des services en français, où le policier est le beau-père de l'accusé, où l'enseignante de son fils est la meilleure amie de la travailleuse sociale, les survivantes n'ont jamais tout à fait confiance dans la confidentialité de leurs propos. Celles qui assurent réellement la confidentialité doivent redoubler leurs efforts et rassurer leur clientèle, vraiment, à chaque rencontre.

Il y a aussi peu d'opportunités d'emplois en français, ce qui veut dire que la plupart des francophones travaillent aux mêmes endroits, surtout celles qui

travaillent, par exemple, pour la base militaire ou pour les deux seules écoles francophones. Il est souvent impossible pour une survivante de changer de lieu de travail pour éviter son agresseur ou les membres de la famille de l'agresseur. En cas de harcèlement sexuel en milieu de travail, ça veut souvent dire que la survivante doit choisir entre gagner sa vie et éviter le harcèlement et la revictimisation.

Si la survivante travaille pour une des écoles francophones ou pour le militaire, elle risque de ne pas pouvoir s'échapper ni de son agresseur ni des jugements de ses collègues, qui apprendront sans doute tous les détails de la situation. Si la survivante travaille dans une entreprise où elle dessert le public, les clients qu'elle dessert risquent d'entendre ce qui s'est passé et de lui en parler, de l'intimider ou de la revictimiser. Par exemple, une survivante serveuse dans un restaurant a connu une augmentation de harcèlement sexuel de la part de ses clients suite à la publication dans le journal local des détails d'un procès. Comme elle avait déjà changé d'emploi pour éviter un patron qui la harcelait, elle n'avait plus vraiment d'autres options. Donc elle se trouvait contrainte à tolérer le harcèlement sexuel dans son milieu de travail, faute d'autres opportunités.

L'intersection de la pauvreté et de l'oppression : pour une minorité privilégiée dans le comté de Renfrew, la réponse au manque de services en français est le déplacement en ville, soit à Ottawa à l'est ou à North Bay à l'ouest, donc à environ 150 à 200 kilomètres de chez elles. Anglophones et francophones, nous avons un peu pris l'habitude de devoir nous déplacer, que ce soit pour des rendez-vous médicaux chez CHEO, chez un spécialiste quelconque ou pour acheter de l'équipement médical. Par exemple, il est impossible d'obtenir un avortement dans le comté de Renfrew. Donc, on s'entend qu'on a l'habitude de se déplacer pour des services quand même de base.

Certains n'osent même plus demander des services en français car leur expérience leur démontre qu'ils auront à attendre plus longtemps pour un service médiocre par une employée qui travaille normalement dans un autre département et qui se débrouille à peine en français, ou ils auront affaire à une employée anglophone hostile, qui leur en veut de demander le privilège—puis on s'entend que c'est un droit et non un privilège—de recevoir des services en français. Finalement, se déplacer peut éviter pleins de tracas.

Par contre, un très grand nombre de femmes survivantes de violence sexuelle ne peuvent se permettre de se déplacer pour recevoir des services en français, d'abord parce que les femmes gagnent normalement moins d'argent que les hommes, ont plus souvent des responsabilités parentales qui rendent les absences dispendieuses et difficiles, mais aussi parce que l'impact de l'agression sexuelle peut rendre plus vulnérables les femmes, soit économiquement ou socialement. Si une femme doit changer d'emploi ou laisser un emploi pour éviter le harcèlement sexuel, si elle quitte son partenaire en raison d'agressions sexuelles envers elle ou envers ses

enfants, si elle doit déménager pour éviter tout contact avec son agresseur, elle risque d'avoir moins de temps et moins d'argent pour veiller à ses propres besoins. Donc le découragement vécu au quotidien, les séquelles de l'assimilation et le jugement des gens peuvent aussi lui faire croire qu'elle ne mérite pas un service adéquat dans sa langue.

Jusqu'à maintenant, les services offerts aux survivantes francophones d'agressions sexuelles ont été offerts soit par des agences basées dans la région d'Ottawa en personne, par exemple le bureau satellite du CREO, à Pembroke, ou virtuellement au téléphone surtout, ou par des agences du comté qui trouvent les moyens d'offrir un service à temps partiel, souvent financé par des levées de fonds, donc c'est des postes instables à court terme. Souvent les agences de la région d'Ottawa ont dû faire exception à leurs politiques afin de desservir des clientes dans le comté de Renfrew qui ne pouvaient pas se déplacer. Autre que l'intervenante en appui transitoire du CREO, donc moi-même, il n'y a aucune présence régulière d'une intervenante francophone dans le comté de Renfrew en violence faite aux femmes, encore moins spécialisée en agression sexuelle, et mon poste est maintenant à temps partiel.

1500

Être la seule intervenante francophone autour de la table rend également très difficile la collaboration. Malgré les bonnes intentions des intervenantes anglophones extraordinaires autour de la table, c'est épuisant d'être la seule à rappeler chaque fois l'absence de francophones dans un processus, le besoin de fournir des informations dans les deux langues et la nécessité de consulter les membres de la communauté francophone. Évidemment toutes les rencontres sont en anglais et si quelque chose doit être traduit, ça revient à moi. Malgré une participation maximale, compte tenu des heures de travail restreintes, les efforts ne portent pas toujours des fruits. Par exemple, le protocole de violence sexuelle du comté n'a jamais été traduit en français et aucun francophone ne fait partie de sa gestion—le protocole qui gère tout le comté.

Donc j'ai maintenant des besoins et des recommandations que je vous amène aujourd'hui. D'abord, nous avons besoin d'une offre active de services en français bien connus de la population par des intervenantes compétentes qui travaillent à temps plein, le par et pour les femmes francophones, comme le demande toujours Action ontarienne.

Un financement adéquat afin de permettre l'annonce des services et le transport aux quatre coins éloignés du comté, une éducation du public pour changer les mentalités, et les fonds pour se déplacer pour servir chaque cliente, peu importe son lieu de résidence.

Une variété de services en français pour qu'une femme puisse choisir une intervenante qu'elle ne connaît pas personnellement ou qui ne connaît pas son agresseur ou sa famille, si elle le désire. Par exemple, dans les cinq ans que je rencontre des survivantes francophones dans le comté de Renfrew, je peux compter sur une main le nombre de femmes que je ne connaissais pas déjà ou le

nombre de situations où je ne connaissais pas déjà l'agresseur ou les membres de sa famille.

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

M^{me} Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: Parfait.

Les survivantes ont besoin d'avoir accès gratuitement à un service de counseling à long terme spécialisé en agressions sexuelles. Présentement aucun service de counseling à long terme spécialisé est offert par le comté, et les femmes n'ont pas toujours les moyens, soit de payer, même si les services étaient disponibles, ou de se déplacer.

Elles ont finalement besoin d'un accès assuré aux services de justice en français, avec de l'aide juridique gratuite ou à peu de frais en français. Nous avons tous besoin d'un système de justice qui tient les agresseurs sexuels responsables de leurs actes sans revictimiser les survivantes.

Merci de votre temps.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. May we question in English, or would you prefer French?

M^{me} Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: Je préfère que vous posiez des questions en français, mais en anglais, ça va. Je suis parfaitement bilingue.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): Alors, la première question est de John Yakabuski.

Would you like someone to translate for you, John?

Mr. John Yakabuski: That's fine, because I won't be able to converse in French. Sorry.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Okay, Marie-France, would you ask the question for us if John lets you know?

Ms. Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: I am completely bilingual, and I can answer your question.

Mr. John Yakabuski: So is English okay for you?

Ms. Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: Absolutely, John.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Oh, we can ask in English. Okay. Thank you very much.

Mr. John Yakabuski: That is the crux of your presentation, Danielle, and thank you very much for joining us. Unfortunately, Jennifer was unable to be here today; she was unable to make it. We were advised that she was not feeling well.

Ms. Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: Well, it's a fantastic program that she runs, so please look into it.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Yes, Ms. Ritza mentioned to us that she was not feeling well.

Anyway, you covered a lot of stuff, and I'm glad my box here worked pretty well, because it hasn't been working that well today. But it worked well for your presentation. I'm thankful for that. You covered a lot of stuff about basic French-language services, which clearly you feel are lacking in Renfrew county.

But let's concentrate on the part that this committee is tasked with, on the issues of sexual violence and harassment. One of the things you talked about was the inability, or the unwillingness maybe, for people to come forward because of the fact that the communities are so small, and everyone knows each other. If you're a victim,

the fact that you've come forward could offend somebody who was friends with the perpetrator etc., which makes it a huge challenge for them to come forward because they fear ostracization within their own families or communities.

How would you advise us to attack that or try to break that barrier down? To be fair, that's not just an issue in the francophone community; it's an issue for us in all communities but particularly in rural communities because, like you say, everyone knows each other. So if something has happened within one group, one family, what do we need to take back as a recommendation to help break down that barrier?

Ms. Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: I just want to highlight, like I said in my presentation, that it may happen in other communities and it may happen in the anglophone communities, but the impact on the survivor is multiplied in the francophone community when she literally has to see her aggressor or members of his family every day for various basic services that she cannot avoid. The impact is greater in the francophone community.

I think one of the first things that we need to do is to have an engagement, the kinds of programs that Julie was talking about. When people are talking about sexual violence, they're talking about how it's not okay; they're talking about what to do when someone comes forward. Just having those conversations happening in the community, especially in the community in French, even if a survivor never comes forward and never says anything, she's receiving support from the community because she's hearing people tell her indirectly that it's not okay what happened to you and we would believe you if you did want to say anything.

I think women always have to have the absolute choice on whether or not to come forward. Unfortunately, our research shows in Renfrew county that family members and friends of victims are often those who make the decision on whether or not she comes forward, and that's unacceptable. Making sure that we respect women's choices and making sure that we give her the multitude of choices—maybe she doesn't feel comfortable asking for service in French because she knows people. Maybe she'd rather get service in English; let her. Maybe she'd rather leave the county, if she can. Maybe we can support women, who otherwise financially couldn't, to get service that is actually anonymous and she feels comfortable sharing her story.

I think, second of all, breaking the isolation, giving women more opportunities to talk about these subjects and to talk about them openly and honestly, is really important. The work that the women's sexual assault centre in Renfrew county does is really key in terms of reaching women and creating safe spaces for women to talk about these issues.

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

Mr. John Yakabuski: Thank you very much.

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

M^{me} Eleanor McMahon: Merci beaucoup. J'allais poser la même question en fin de compte, par rapport à la confidentialité. Moi, j'ai vécu à Eganville. Alors, je connais le coin.

Interjection.

M^{me} Eleanor McMahon: Ça va?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): No, continue.

M^{me} Eleanor McMahon: Excusez-moi.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I'm having a brain fade. It's been a long day.

M^{me} Eleanor McMahon: Il y a plein de choses qui se passent en même temps.

J'ai vécu à Eganville, ce qui fait que je connais le coin. Je comprends les besoins, en tout cas, dans la région. Ma question c'est : quels sont les besoins au niveau des services nécessaires pour les Franco-Ontariennes, pensez-vous?

M^{me} Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: Bien, les services, c'est vraiment tout. Il n'y a aucun service d'hébergement qui offre des services en français. Il n'y a aucun service de counseling à long terme, que ce soit pour les femmes survivantes de violence, point final, ou les survivantes d'agressions sexuelles. Il y a très peu pour les femmes qui cherchent à se rééduquer pour changer d'emploi. Les francophones du comté de Renfrew doivent quitter pour survivre en français. Donc il y a eu des améliorations au niveau des services de santé, par exemple, dans peut-être la dernière décennie, mais les services sociaux en français n'existent que très peu. Les services directs pour les femmes survivantes existent très peu. Donc, vraiment, si j'avais à choisir deux services prioritaires, pour moi, ce serait les services de counseling à long terme spécialisés en agression sexuelle et l'appui ou les informations juridiques en français à la fois au criminel et au familial.

La Présidente (M^{me} Daiene Vernile): Oui, une question?

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: J'ai une question. Merci de votre présentation. Combien de femmes franco-ontariennes rejoignez-vous par année en ce moment?

M^{me} Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: Au niveau de services directs ou au niveau de présentations?

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Oui, excusez, de services directs.

M^{me} Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: Évidemment, comme je suis la seule personne dans le bureau, j'offre un éventail de services. Donc, une présentation dans une école, ça peut aussi être une intervention directe. Une présentation pour un groupe de femmes, c'est aussi un service direct, mais je rencontre aussi des femmes une à une. Donc c'est—

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: On parle de combien, environ, par année, de femmes—

M^{me} Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: Si on inclut les un-à-un seulement?

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: Oui.

M^{me} Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: Je dirais une vingtaine de différentes femmes.

M^{me} Marie-France Lalonde: OK. Merci beaucoup.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): And last, but not least, I apologize, MPP Sattler, for unfortunately skipping over you. We'll give you an extra minute. How's that?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much for the presentation, and apologies for not being able to ask this question in French.

You mentioned at the beginning about serving 5,000 francophones in Renfrew county and an unknown number of French-speaking military families who reside on the base. That got me wondering about what happens when there is sexual assault on a military base, because all of the issues around confidentiality are magnified in a very small community like that. Do many women from military families end up seeking support and services from the surrounding community, and do you have a relationship with any services that are available on the base for these women?

1510

Ms. Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: I just want to correct you and say that I don't pretend to serve all of the 5,000 francophones in Renfrew county, but there are approximately 5,000 francophones in Renfrew county, in addition to the women on the military base.

So what happens when a woman on the military base is sexually assaulted? Generally, very little is known about it in the community. There is an effort to, my understanding is—my father served in the military, so I do have a significant understanding of what happens on the military base. But generally, women try not to allow that to be known in the community.

That being said, the services that are offered outside of the military base are becoming better known, I would say, on the military base, so both the women's sexual assault centre and the service that I offer with CREO. So approximately half of the women I've seen one to one in the last year have been from the military community.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Really?

Ms. Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: I think it's changing a little bit, but I think there's a significant fear of women to hurt their husbands' careers, damage their reputations, damage the reputation of the military. There's a lot of really significant concerns around that when something does happen, and there's a very strong message that they receive from the military community that they need to not share that publicly. So there really is a silencing of women, I would say, very strongly on the military base, but I think that that's changing.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Even more so than in the other community.

Ms. Danielle Pécore-Ugorji: I have very good relationships, for example, with the PMFRC. The PMFRC, the Petawawa Military Family Resource Centre, they don't offer necessarily direct services to women, but they are very good at referring women who do come forward.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. Merci beaucoup for coming here today and appearing before our committee and sharing your infor-

mation with us. We invite you now to join our audience, if you wish to.

CRIME PREVENTION OTTAWA

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenters to come forward, with Crime Prevention Ottawa.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: So we asked your Clerk—it's Friday afternoon. This is hard, hard material to talk about. Do you want to stand up and stretch, because you kind of look tired?

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): That's a great invitation to do so. Let's do that.

I had one presenter at the end of the day who said, "I know I'm the only thing standing between you and your dinner, but we've got a few more to go."

Ladies, thank you very—

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: We know.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much for coming and appearing before this committee. Please begin by stating your names and the name of your organization for the record.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: I'm Nancy Worsfold, executive director, Crime Prevention Ottawa.

Ms. Lucya Spencer: And my name is Lucya Spencer. I'm a board member of Crime Prevention Ottawa and also the executive director of Immigrant Women Services Ottawa.

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

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: Thank you so much for having us. To explain who we are, Crime Prevention Ottawa is a local board of our municipality. So we're a quasi-independent municipal board and we have three priorities: youth, neighbourhoods, and violence against women. Within that, our mission is to contribute to crime reduction and enhance community safety through evidence-based crime prevention.

The three main points that we want to make this afternoon reflect our mission, especially the questions of collaboration and an evidence-based approach.

Our role is to build capacity, and we've worked very deliberately with our community here in Ottawa to build a prevention culture within the violence-against-women agencies here in Ottawa. While we recognize the incredible importance of victim services, our comments this afternoon will be exclusively with regard to prevention, so stopping things before they happen.

Our role in the city is, we do events, research and publications. I've got a big stack here of our research. We've addressed issues of alcohol and sexual violence, social media and sexual violence, and safety and the sex trade. We'll leave the stuff with you, but we've tried to look at the issues which are affecting our community and the issues that are emerging in our community. We know that the local agencies have been using our material extensively and we've engaged with our partners to do so.

We are also a funder. I heard earlier that you had heard from the ManUp kids—a wonderful group. That's

one of the projects we fund. We've invested, since 2007, approximately \$620,000 on violence-against-women projects.

I just want to bring to your attention, because they're very much within the provincial realm, that over the years we have spent \$152,000 on engaging the school boards in delivering the Fourth R program. Have you heard about the Fourth R program? Yes? No?

The Fourth R program is one of the few evidence-based programs with regard to the prevention of violence against women. It's a curriculum-based program to be delivered in grades 7, 8 and 9. It's literally dozens of lesson plans for teachers to deliver in the classroom focused on the triad of risk factors being sexuality, personal relationships and substance abuse, because so often these issues occur at the confluence of those three.

It's an active curriculum based on role playing and focused on the development of healthy relationship skills, particularly in our higher-risk kids. They don't necessarily know what a healthy relationship looks like if they're not seeing that modelled at home; they're certainly not seeing that modelled in the media. We're very proud of that, but it's very much that we're spending money in your schools.

In addition, we have invested over the years \$149,000 on the Neighbours, Friends and Families program, which was a provincially based program, which I hope you've heard about because it came from the province. Yes? No?

Neighbours, Friends and Families was provincially funded. The province developed a bunch of materials to increase the engagement of neighbours, friends and families in engaging—

Interjection.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: Yes.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: The yellow signs everywhere around the city, right? You're talking about friendly-neighbourhood-type things?

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: No.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Okay. No, I don't know. I don't know your program.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: No, it's not our program. We funded local delivery of a provincial program that you haven't heard of. That's a worry.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Maybe talk about it.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: No. I'm going to talk about what we—

Interjection.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: But I would encourage you to look at what the OWD has already done on prevention.

We've also funded various other campaigns: Don't Be That Guy. I don't know if you're interested. A lot of them are about sexual assault. These were—

Interjection.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: Yes. The actual art for Don't Be That Guy was developed by the Edmonton police and they've allowed us and many others to deliver the program. We had them on all OC Transpo buses twice. We've also had partnerships particularly with the enter-

tainment district in Ottawa; it's called the Market. We had a partnership with the Market BIA.

We've really tried hard to get our messages out there, but our three key messages for you guys this afternoon are: Include a wide range of partners; focus on the evidence in terms of prevention; and be ready for long-term commitments.

I'm going to hand it over to Lucya.

Ms. Lucya Spencer: And I'll focus on the first point: Include a wide range of partners for effective prevention. Many of the presenters, I believe, who will be presenting to you will talk from the service perspective but we are looking at attacking the issue before it actually happens. Nancy has already communicated quite a bit to you about the work that has been done by CPO to date.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment is not a women's issue. Neither is it confined to one or two communities. It's all communities that are affected. The previous speaker spoke about the francophone community or the French-speaking community and the difficulties they have encountered as a result of people coming forward to talk about sexual violence. Many of our communities, including the immigrant community, have the same experience. Therefore, that's why it's important that through this process you speak to all communities, because all communities are affected in one way or the other.

It's also important to reach the broadest audience possible and to engage them in the discussion on this particular issue. I don't have to tell you what the statistics are saying outside there about people coming forward to talk about this particular issue. Therefore, opportunities like the one we have right now allow people to come forward. It may not be a victim, but at least somebody who knows about the victim will be able to come forward and talk about the issues as they see them in that particular community.

1520

We also need to keep the discussion at all levels, not just at the community level. We also need to engage faith groups, sports teams, homework clubs and everywhere else we know where we need to talk to folks. It's important to do so.

Nancy spoke a minute ago about the Fourth R and what is happening within the schools, engaging young people in the schools to discuss this particular issue. Speak with schools; speak with teachers; speak with educators out there. Find out what is happening in the respective schools and do something before the situation escalates.

The provincial government: We have to look to it for ideas and opportunities. When we look at what your work involves at the community level, you regulate liquor, security guards, police etc. Think about all of these other individuals outside there who we can get to or speak to in the area of building partnerships, and at the same time making sure that we address the issue, again, before it happens.

There are dozens—I'm not reading everything because you do have the documentation. There are dozens of

opportunities within your control and we encourage you to use these opportunities so you can get a broad-based level of information.

Finally, and perhaps most important for us, is for you to engage with your municipal partners. CPO is connected with the local municipality, and we are very much involved in the work that we are doing there in addressing this issue from a preventive point of view. So connect with other municipalities across Ontario. Find out what they're doing and see what we can do to help to address this issue. These issues play out in our cities. Our police serve these clients; our bylaw officers monitor the bars; our financial assistance offices and housing offices work with victims every day. We know this is a real issue in our society. It's no longer a hidden issue. We need to address it at all levels of government.

As I said earlier, it is not a women's issue. That's why I'm very pleased to see the number of men who are sitting in the room this afternoon as you listen, because it's only when all of us are working together that we can achieve success.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: Thank you, Lucya.

I'd encourage you to look at the evidence, particularly with regards to prevention. There are way too many things that have been done in the name of preventing crime that simply don't work. I'd harken back to the most famous example of the Just Say No campaigns, which, when they were evaluated, at best did nothing, and at worst actually encouraged experimentation with drugs. Evaluation is really important and looking honestly at what we do is really important.

I've been very impressed, we've all been very impressed, with your current TV ads. I love them. The best thing about them is the simplicity; it's not complicated. The message is clear and anybody can see their role in ending sexual violence. And it's understandable, but good ads only matter if they produce behaviour change. We all need to measure that.

We know that our work has changed some behaviour. We strive to base our work on the known evidence and to evaluate as much as feasible. With some of our projects we have detailed evaluations, such as the community-based project of the Fourth R program. We can demonstrate behaviour change in the young people who are engaged.

It's much harder with the big public campaigns to do that. We know, anecdotally, that the Don't Be That Guy campaign generated a discussion and was noticed. We know, anecdotally, that the ManUp project at Longfields-Davidson has affected their school climate significantly. But anecdotal evidence is not ideal. It's a start; it's not ideal. But you have the means to measure public attitudes on this kind of campaigning. I really encourage you to look at doing that. We don't really have the means for that kind of evaluation, but you do. Please consider it.

We would encourage you to consider working with academics and evaluation experts. At the Crime Prevention Ottawa level, we have numerous academics who sit on our committees with us and work with us. It's a very

fruitful partnership. I'm sure, at the provincial level, you could do the same.

We'd like to suggest that you consider the long term when you're looking at sexual violence. Sexual violence is a complicated issue; it's not going away quickly. It's been with us as long as anybody can remember. We need to be realistic with the programs and the investments that we make.

The Fourth R, which I described earlier, the curriculum-based program, is not a workshop that lasts for one school period. It's dozens of lesson plans over three years. It's meaningful engagement with a young person to help them develop healthy relationship skills.

Changing people's behaviour, changing people's lives—it's not as simple as a TV ad. A TV ad is very important because it changes the mood, it creates an opportunity for discussion. But if you want to change behaviours long term, you need multiple levels of intervention and prevention. We need a range of these approaches.

You have at the province so many of the big publicly funded services that you can look at where you can engage. You can engage with the school system, but you can engage with family doctors. You can engage with recreation programs. I'd encourage you to consider particularly vulnerable populations such as the homeless, foster children aging out of care, offenders, disabled people. There are particularly vulnerable populations for which you fund extensive amounts of services. You've got lots of opportunities within the provincial government to look at.

We can make a difference. We encourage you to measure it. But I want to warn you, if you do your job really well, sometimes the result doesn't look that good at first, because increased awareness and improved response may lead to increased reporting of sexual violence. You've heard extensively, I'm sure, about the low levels of reporting. If you guys do your jobs well, you may increase reporting—

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

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: Okay. So just be prepared for increased levels of reporting. It's a good thing.

Ms. Lucya Spencer: And to conclude, I'd just like to point out again the three messages: collaborate broadly across sectors, focus on the evidence, and be ready for the long term.

I want to stress the point of the long term because, according to the statistics, of every 100 incidents of sexual violence that happen in our society, only six are reported to the police. So what happens to the other 94? It's going to take us a long time in order to get to the results that we want to see in our respective societies.

What we believe from our world view is that every home should be safe, everyone should be free to walk the streets, to be in a particular workplace, and we want to make sure that happens.

The challenges are many, but with you taking the time to be here to listen to the voices of individuals across the

sector, it tells us that you recognize the issue, and we want to go forward to make sure that we succeed in making our society a better place.

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

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you very much. I am from London, which is where the Fourth R and Neighbours, Friends and Families were both developed, so I'm delighted to hear you speak like that about those programs and I'm proud to take that back to my community.

I had a question. In your written brief you talk about the need to engage with municipal partners. Now, are you thinking specifically of these crime prevention committees that every municipality has or were you thinking in different ways about municipal engagement? Can you just expand a little bit about that as a recommendation for this committee?

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: I went and visited London and I've wondered what you put in the water there because you've got some of the best work happening.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: It's really impressive.

There are a number of points, because municipalities do a lot of different things. So yes, definitely the crime prevention committees, and there's also talk of adding community safety planning to either the Municipal Act or the Police Services Act. If you do that, I would encourage you to include violence against women within that mandate because it's not the most present compared to youth violence and neighbourhood issues.

Depending on the way the municipalities are organized, there are so many services delivered by the municipalities that are inter-linked with particularly domestic violence issues. All of the financial assistance programs—there's a big survivor-assistance piece that happens between the shelters, the community agencies and the city. Engaging the cities is important.

1530

I know that Toronto has a big funding program. I can't remember what it's called. I think it used to be called Breaking the Cycle. They were specifically funding violence-against-women work, too. It's not just us who are interested.

Interjection.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We're seeing a nodding head from the back of the room from MPP Soo Wong, who has joined us. She's from Toronto, and she says, yes, that's the name of the group.

Our next question for you is from MPP Lalonde.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you. I—

Interjections.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Okay, guys. Shh.

Thank you very much, Nancy and Lucya, for your excellent presentation. I guess I'm going to have to familiarize myself a little bit more with one of the programs that you made a reference to, but I guess my question would be—and I'm going to maybe centre not only provincially, but here locally—is there a particular community, based on your evidence that you've collected

or that you're aware of, that is most at risk here in Ottawa?

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: Young people.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Okay, that's easy. So what are we doing—

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: Definitely young people.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: So is that why your efforts in terms of supporting some local initiatives have come from helping them, such as ManUp? Is that what you're referring to in terms of—so our youth are at risk. What would you recommend to this committee in reaching out, but also preventing them from either being sexually assaulted or becoming the aggressor or the perpetrator?

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: Well, use the tools where kids already are. The schools have kids in their hands five hours a day, five days a week, 10 months a year, so the school system is key. Then there are all of the ways in which we are already engaging with kids; whether it be the homework clubs, the after-school programs or the recreation pieces, kids already are in a lot of collective places where they congregate.

I wouldn't make a separate thing over here. I'd add in to what you're already doing, because I know there's a lot of youth programming in Ottawa who are seeing, for example—we did research on sexual violence in social media because we were seeing it emerge as a problem. Most of who we started engaging with were the violence-against-women agencies, but then it's the Boys and Girls Club who are begging me: "Well, Nancy, what do I do? Because they're doing it in our after-school program." So it's engaging with kids where they are.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you.

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

Mr. Randy Hillier: Thank you very much for being here. I would like to ask you to expand on two elements of that. The first is the Fourth R. Is that a provincial program? Is that being implemented in all school boards, or is that being done on an individual basis? If you could expand a little bit on that.

The second one is on the "evidence-based." You've got a statement in here that too many things have been done in the past that simply don't work. You mentioned one, Just Say No. Is there any body that is doing an evaluation on these different programs? Who is that body, what are those bodies and, of course, are they third party—not the people who are doing the programs themselves—doing the evaluation of those programs? Expand on that a little bit.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: The Fourth R is a curriculum. What we have been paying for is the training of teachers and the purchase of the curriculum materials, which were developed by the University of Western Ontario, CAMH and the Thames Valley school board. For school boards to use the curriculum, they have to purchase it. It's a curriculum that we have supported because of the strength of it.

Mr. Randy Hillier: How widespread would its adoption be?

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: In Ottawa, we've pretty much covered the two English boards, and we've engaged successfully with one of the two French boards. In the rest of the province, you'd really have to ask them. I know that they've kind of looked to me with, "Can you get other cities to do this, too?" I know that they've got a real big pickup in London.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: And in the US.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: Well, they've got big pickup outside of Ontario, too, but you'd have to ask them because that's really about their sales.

In my personal opinion, what the province should do is purchase the curriculum and make it available for all schools all the time. That's just my personal opinion.

Mr. Randy Hillier: That's what we want to hear.

Ms. Nancy Worsfold: With regard to evaluation, there are significant departments of criminology at the two universities here in Ottawa, Carleton and Ottawa U, and I suspect that's the same in most universities. We work with the criminology departments.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ladies, I want to thank you both very much for coming and giving your presentation today. We very much appreciate it. We invite you to join our audience now, if you wish.

CORNERSTONE HOUSING FOR WOMEN

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I will call on our next presenters, Cornerstone Housing for Women, to come forward. Please make yourselves comfortable. Have a seat. You will have up to 15 minutes to make your presentation to our committee. That will be followed by questions by our committee members. Please begin by stating your names for the record.

Ms. Sue Garvey: Thank you very much for having us this afternoon. My name is Sue Garvey. I'm the executive director of Cornerstone Housing for Women. I'm here with my colleagues Elissa Scott and Arwen McKechnie, both of whom work with me at Cornerstone.

Just a little bit about us: We are an organization here in Ottawa that provides emergency shelter and safe, affordable housing for women who have been homeless and who are still at risk of homelessness. We see about 400 women every year who live with us for either short or longer periods of time, many of whom are living with a combination of mental health issues, long-term trauma and abuse, and the effects of sexual and physical violence that have been extreme in their lives, often from day one and early childhood.

We wanted to speak to you today because homeless women in particular—it was interesting because Nancy, in her presentation earlier, was talking about special populations. Homeless women are often invisible in their communities. You may not see them as much as you see homeless men. They're invisible for a reason, and the reason is because of sexual violence and the violence that they are subjected to all the time. They live in fear of the violence of life, often in their inadequate housing, but certainly on the street.

As part of your hearings, first of all, I want to say thank you for this process that you're going through. As I was sitting there listening to the other presentations, it was very sobering to recognize that sexual violence is just so pervasive, that so many people from all these different backgrounds are coming to speak to you. I'm sure it must be overwhelming at times to hear all of that and to think, "Oh, my God, it's so big. How can we possibly even begin to address this?" It's encouraging, on the other hand, that we are addressing it and we're talking about it. I really applaud the Premier for this initiative and all of you who are participating in it as well. We do look forward to hearing the results of what you come up with at the end.

We did want to make sure that homeless women were heard about, and stories were told about the particular situations that they face. Their lives are so subject to sexual violence that it's really important that you hear about them. This afternoon, we'll try to highlight some of the main issues that face homeless women in particular, and we're going to talk to you a little bit about the issues, some recommendations, and our hopes for the future for them as well.

I'll hand it over to Elissa and Arwen.

Ms. Elissa Scott: Thank you. "Homelessness" is a term that reflects broad groups of people and circumstances. People can experience chronic homelessness, meaning they repeatedly cycle in and out of emergency shelters, or episodic homelessness, which occurs when people experience a short period of homelessness after a life crisis. There are also the hidden homeless: people who are forced to couch-surf among their networks of friends, family and sexual partners.

1540

Most people have an idea of what a person experiencing homelessness looks like, but the reality is much more complex, particularly for women. Homeless women comprise a large and diverse population, but in particular homelessness affects women who experience multiple barriers based on their ability, ethnicity, class and/or gender presentation. Homeless women encompass many sub-groups, including teenagers, lone parents, trans women, single women, aboriginal women, immigrant and refugee women, and senior women. Among the population of women experiencing homelessness are also those with severe and persistent mental health issues and those with chronic health conditions.

Despite the diversity in the female homeless population, they all overwhelmingly share one common experience: repeated exposure to sexual violence. Sexual violence against women is deeply interconnected with women's homelessness or unstable housing. Many homeless women have experienced a history of abuse—physical, sexual and/or emotional—that began in childhood at the hands of people they trusted and that continued into their adult lives and their domestic relationships, making home life intolerable.

Women flee their homes to escape violence, only to encounter it again on the streets. Even once re-housed,

women may find themselves the victims of an apartment takeover, an increasing trend in Ontario in which women find themselves at the mercy of unwelcome houseguests who move in without their consent and who often target them for sex.

Many large-scale studies report findings that repeatedly emphasize the violence and traumatic lives of homeless women. Violence is the most important issue facing homeless women, more so than mental health or addiction problems. A staggering 92% of homeless women experience severe physical and/or sexual assault at some point in time in their lives. Based on our experience as front-line staff working directly with homeless women, we feel the percentage would be more accurately closer to 100%.

One disturbing aspect of repeated exposure to sexual violence that we have noted in our work with homeless women is that sexual violence becomes a normalized and somewhat expected part of life. While this does not diminish the trauma of a survivor's experience, it does impede them from accessing important resources, like health care and police services.

A range of factors increase homeless women's risk of adult sexual victimization, including:

- childhood abuse;
- substance use;
- length of time homeless;
- engaging in economic survival strategies, such as panhandling or involvement in sex work;
- location while homeless, such as sleeping on the street versus sleeping in a shelter; and
- the presence of mental illness.

Women with no history of mental health issues can develop post-traumatic stress disorder, clinical depression and anxiety disorders. Women may also turn to substance use as a tool to cope with their trauma, which in the short term may numb or mitigate the trauma of their experience, and in the long term place them at greater risk for sexual violence.

Ms. Arwen McKechnie: An experience that has always stuck with me from my experience in front-line work—not through Cornerstone, but through a different shelter—is this woman who was staying at the emergency shelter I worked at who was sexually assaulted in a parking lot on a busy downtown street on a weekend in the middle of July—like, a dozen people passed by and saw her. She was a habitual crack user, and she got high and passed out and was assaulted. When she came to, she was devastated, as understandably anyone would be. She didn't want to go to the police; she had a history with them. She was not at all sure that they would take her seriously, that they would be sympathetic. She was using crack to escape the trauma of her experiences, and it led to further victimization. It's indicative to me of how coping mechanisms can be good to a point, and then more support is needed or they become hazardous themselves.

Ms. Elissa Scott: Many women who already experience mental health issues because of the trauma of their

childhood experiences will have their conditions exacerbated by being homeless. Homelessness is a major health issue for women with serious implications, such as sexual victimization, engaging in sex work as a means of economic survival, unavailability of contraception, uncertain fertility and the desire for intimacy, which may result in an unplanned pregnancy among homeless women. Homeless women who are pregnant are at risk of complications because of lack of prenatal care, poor nutrition and exposure to violence.

Homeless women are at increased risk for HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C and other sexually transmitted infections.

Homeless women encounter systemic and personal barriers which impede their access to preventive and acute health care services.

Toronto-based doctor Stephen Hwang, a leading authority on morbidity and mortality among the homeless, notes that homeless women 18 to 44 years of age were 10 times more likely to die than women in the general population of Toronto.

Ms. Arwen McKechnie: That was a lot of sad information. Homelessness is a very sad phenomenon.

That being said, we have some recommendations that we think could make a huge impact on the lives of women experiencing homelessness. Homeless women, like all women, deserve to live lives free from violence. This isn't a health issue, it's not a safety issue; it's a fundamental human right that all people should enjoy. The following recommendations, we feel, are a good starting point to ending the violence that permeates the lives of women living on or near the streets.

First off, we desperately need more safe, affordable housing mandated in urban centres. There are already-existing models to follow in Canada that promote mixed-use buildings and support the integration of affordable housing into new housing developments, including in the city of Toronto. Inclusionary zoning practices are also being followed in Montreal and Vancouver. Private members' bills which can strengthen the ability of cities to create affordable housing have already been tabled in this provincial Legislature five times by NDP MPP Cheri DiNovo and, most recently, by a member of the current government, the MPP for Etobicoke-Lakeshore, Peter Milczyn, last November. It would make a huge difference. Safe, affordable housing also includes giving people the tools to ensure they can maintain their housing regarding apartment takeovers; and giving them the support to prevent family violence from occurring, which is a later predictor of homelessness.

We'd also like to see more sensitization and training among the major service providers that homeless women interact with regularly—that would be the police, the hospitals and the corrections system, including provincial jails. Specifically, we'd like to see trauma-informed training, including explicit training in working with marginalized populations, and greater awareness of issues relating to mental health, addictions and homelessness. As front-line workers, we see the direct impact of police officers who have had mental health training.

Ms. Elissa Scott: We thought it was inherently important to give you concrete examples of why this is beneficial.

A few weeks ago, I had a client come into the homeless shelter who had been brutally sexually assaulted as well as physically assaulted. As a result of complications regarding this assault and mental health issues, she became quite delusional and quite violent, so we had to call the police to come and help us with the situation. Two police officers showed up. One had mental health training; the other did not. The first officer, who did not have mental health training, proceeded to get quite aggressive with the woman and tried to cuff her because he wanted to bring her to jail, whereas the other officer, who had mental health training, was able to quietly talk with the woman, de-escalate the situation, escort her successfully out of the shelter—without cuffs, which is important—and take her to the hospital. It's quite a concrete example of the benefits of mental health training.

Ms. Arwen McKechnie: Generally speaking, when survivors of sexual assault are treated well, as in any kind of circumstance, they tend to be more responsive and more receptive to receiving support; they're more apt to report. They're also less likely to experience re-traumatization based on the dismissal of their story or their inherent value.

Improved sensitization would also mean better coordination between emergency rooms and emergency shelters and rape crisis centres to prevent homeless women from being retraumatized after an assault.

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

Ms. Arwen McKechnie: Okay.

We'd like better discharge planning between hospitals, corrections and shelter services so that women aren't just left on a shelter doorstep. We would also, ideally speaking, like to work collaboratively, like a lot of service providers have talked about before you, on improving linkages between different service providers and helping women navigate access to the services they need in a fairly complex system.

We'll do our part to remove the barriers between services available to homeless and abused women and strengthen relationships between different agencies with these mandates. We'll also build on the collaborative work already under way in this city between violence-against-women shelters and child welfare systems.

Ideally speaking, we would also like to see rape crisis centres have the capacity to deliver on-site support within places homeless women access services, like emergency shelters and day programs. The Ministry of the Attorney General of Ontario already provides core funding to rape crisis centres. A very small increase might allow them to provide this essential service.

1550

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

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you very much for being here. I have to say that we don't know each

other, but I was on the task force at the United Way for affordable housing for seniors. Our chair referred all the time about her involvement with—

Ms. Sue Garvey: Carol Burrows.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Yes.

I guess I want to maybe broaden our question in asking you that: We're hearing a lot about the distinction between sexual violence and domestic violence. Based on your opinion, and the clients you are helping, what do you think about that? Is there a difference? Is that something we should differentiate, or are they something similar?

Ms. Sue Garvey: There's a fair amount of overlap between the two, and we often get confused with violence-against-women shelters. That's because there is a lot of overlap and a lot of similarity, the main similarity being the fact that women have all experienced sexual violence.

The difference is that in our situation, women are coming to us primarily because they don't have anyplace to stay tonight—they don't have a home—where women in violence-against-women shelters are leaving their home because of violence within their home. It's a little bit of a distinction.

Probably more than anything else, the distinction is in two things. One is the way we get funded. We are funded under the Ministry of Community and Social Services, where they are probably funded from the same ministry, but under the violence-against-women section.

The other thing is that the women who live in homeless shelters have a high incidence of mental health issues as well. So there is that extra complication that they have, which just makes their issues a little bit different.

In violence-against-women shelters, there is a lot of work around custody issues with children and that sort of thing: How do we get people to have their rights under the law? We're working primarily to get people safely housed, first and foremost, because we know that they can't even begin to look at pulling their lives together unless they have a safe place to live.

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

Our next question for you is from MPP Scott.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Did you want to finish anything that you didn't get to in your presentation? I certainly don't mind if you want to say a few more things. I am willing to donate my time, because this is your presentation.

Ms. Arwen McKechnie: That's very kind.

Ms. Laurie Scott: It's not a problem. I admire your work, so please.

Ms. Arwen McKechnie: I think we covered everything in the written brief.

Ms. Laurie Scott: I will ask a question, then. Sue, I know you've got a very long history of helping homeless women. Is there a model anywhere? It doesn't have to be in Canada.

Ms. Sue Garvey: Pardon? Say that again?

Ms. Laurie Scott: Is there a model to help homeless women? As you explained to Marie-France, it's very

different than someone fleeing violence and looking for shelter. These are homeless women who may need help for the rest of their lives. Is there a model anywhere, a best practice that you could help guide us to? I mean, we're underserved everywhere with the housing supply, in every capacity.

Ms. Sue Garvey: Absolutely. It's great to be able to be here and draw the connection between sexual violence and affordable housing. For us, if you said, of the three areas of recommendation we made today, what do we feel is at the bottom of it all, we would probably say it really is safe, affordable housing. You can't really begin to do anything with your life until you have a safe place to live. Women who are living in unsafe situations are staying in them. They're staying in unsafe relationships, on the street and domestically, because they don't have anyplace to live.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Is there anyplace—any church, organization or anybody—that has a program?

Ms. Sue Garvey: There are lots of them. I mean, at Cornerstone, we have four just in our—

Ms. Laurie Scott: Four, yes.

Ms. Sue Garvey: —and we have lots of community partners as well who do—

Ms. Laurie Scott: Okay.

Ms. Sue Garvey: I think there are some great models going on right now. In most affordable housing communities, you will find lots of work being done around sexual violence as well. The two come together.

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

Ms. Peggy Sattler: I come from London, and there's a project currently under way to apply a gender lens to a Housing First approach for homeless women.

Ms. Sue Garvey: Yes, I read that.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: There is a lot of focus on Housing First approaches, but they were designed with homeless men in mind. So there has to be some acknowledgement of the particular experiences of homeless women, and you've really done a great job with this brief in setting that out.

Is this something that you're also interested in, applying a gender lens to Housing First approaches? Or is this—I'm trying to understand. I'm thinking of my knowledge of what's going on in London versus your recommendations here.

Ms. Sue Garvey: Yes, and the Housing First model is something that is really sweeping the whole country, as you probably know, and that is a factor of some good research that has been done and also just decisions that the federal government has made, in terms of its policy directions.

The jury is still out in Ottawa in terms of how successful Housing First is going to be. It's dependent on a number of factors coming together, one of the biggest ones being that we're expecting the private market to step up and take incentives to actually house people who are at risk of homelessness, many of whom live with mental health issues. So we're really hopeful.

Our agency is one of the ones that has been impacted negatively in that we have received funding cuts as part of the reallocation of funds, but also we're going to do our best to make this work, because we do believe that, in the end, we don't want people living in shelters. The longer someone lives in a shelter, the more vulnerable they become, the more time is wasted not being able to move on in their lives. So we're doing our very best to make this new model work, but certainly one of our things is about how it is going to impact women.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Ladies, I want to thank you very much for appearing before our committee today, and I invite you to join our audience now if you wish to. We need to continue with our next presenters.

LABOUR OHCOW ACADEMIC RESEARCH COLLABORATION

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I would like to invite members of labour occupational health clinics academic to come forward. Thank you. Good afternoon. Please make yourselves comfortable. You will have up to 15 minutes to address our committee, and then they will ask you some questions. Please start by stating your names for the record.

Ms. Laura Lozanski: Laura Lozanski

Ms. Katherine Lippel: And Katherine Lippel.

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

Ms. Laura Lozanski: Katherine and I will share the speaking. I will speak to the document that you have that says "LOARC" on it, the blue on it. Katherine will speak to the other documents.

My role is, I'm a former nurse but an occupational health and safety officer for the Canadian Association of University Teachers, who are part of this group. We felt it was really, really important to address this issue. Our focus is on workplace safety, so we felt it was really important to address this issue in particular.

I'm just going to do the Coles Notes version of the document. I'll go through, hit the highlights, and then I would like to turn it over to Katherine.

Just starting at the beginning, it says, "Twenty-eight percent of Canadians say they have been" sexually harassed or—"sexually-charged talk while on the job." That was from the Premier's own task force.

"Forty-five percent of ... workers report being bullied on the job."

Senator Michael Kirby has noted that, "Ten to twenty-five percent of Canadian workplaces [are] effectively mentally injurious—not good for the mental health of their employees" and the "leading cause of short-term disability and long-term disability—it's the biggest single reason people are off work for periods of time."

Out of that came the new CSA psychological standard. I was a part of the group on developing that and will mention it as I go through. But just in short terms, we believe that harassment should not be looked at in isolation. It's one of a continuum of behaviours in the workplace. Those of us who work for labour organiza-

tions see that in the course of our duties. So it's important to recognize and address these unwanted behaviours early, because they can lead to workplace violence.

We're all about prevention. What can we do to identify and prevent it? Lori Dupont is a very well-known case that has been recognized.

Workers experience sexism and misogyny as well as other types of harassment, such as homophobia, transphobia, racism, colonialism and ableism. So there's a whole continuum and a whole set of triggers around why people get harassed in the workplace. We believe it's time to look beyond the physical impacts of the harassment spectrum of behaviours and pay attention to the mental injuries as well.

1600

In April 2014, the Ontario Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal—WSIAT—decided on a constitutional question of a case that was a study into a manager's unabated, escalating, verbal and emotional harassment that left a nurse very sick with PTSD. In a precedent-setting decision, the WSIAT allowed the appeal and determined that WSIAT sections denying entitlement for mental stress violate the charter and are therefore unconstitutional. I'd really like to keep that at the forefront of what we're talking about.

While we are pleased that the Premier has launched the action plan, we really want to find some ways to concretely deal with it. One of the things that was mentioned by the Premier was that they wanted to introduce legislation to strengthen the Occupational Health and Safety Act to include a definition of "sexual harassment." We'll speak to that later in the document. The legislation would set out explicit requirements for employers to investigate and address workplace harassment, and that's the key to what we need to talk about.

Work organization tends to be a trigger, and harassment may be affected or influenced by high work demands, poor work organization, lack of organizational response, condoning etc. We saw that through all the research we did as the committee on the psychological standard.

Up until now, the focus of workplace law, policy and action has been on what management is doing to react to individual harassment of other individuals at work, and we need to see this in the context of a holistic approach to harassment, period. While individual behaviour plays an important role, the strategy does not address why the frequency of harassment is still increasing.

Our research suggests that failure to reduce harassment is a failure to address the role that corporate policy, particularly the organization of work, plays in accepting, fostering and encouraging harassment and other adverse behaviours.

Work overload, lack of recognition and rewards, unreasonable and unmanageable deadlines, short-staffing situations, difficult working relationships—it could go on and on and on—are all catalysts to harassment in the workplace. They are not the only catalysts—there can be many others—but they are certainly a large part of it. The

LOARC research suggests that when managers are the source of bullying and harassment, workers are more likely to suffer physical and mental effects.

We need to look at the significant invisible injuries that are happening in the workplace. Psychological hazards are the most common workplace hazards that we face currently; it's the big thing on the list. We've developed, along with many other researchers, highly reliable tools to investigate and evaluate psychological hazards that can lead to harassment in the workplace.

In Europe and at the International Labour Organization, there are guides for inspectors—and this is key for us, because right now, the inspectors cannot investigate harassment, with the way the act reads at this point in time. There are guides for the inspectors on how to address psychological hazards. The particular training and support that inspectors need is known. In this submission, we would like to bring that to your attention.

How can we address the hazards? We need to restate the question. We have to first understand how workplace hazards are currently handled. In Ontario, hazards are handled in three ways: compensation, prevention and enforcement. Compensation is the responsibility of WSIB, and prevention and enforcement are the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour, so sometimes it's not connecting.

Under WSIB, we've lost the ability for compensation that used to exist at one point in time. There is little that can be done at this point in time if a person is suffering severe stress from harassment of any kind in the workplace.

Under the Ministry of Labour, there is no enforcement. The inspectors simply can't do anything around that, except to ensure that there is a policy in the workplace, but they can't even really enforce that either. The ministry direction to staff ensures limited enforcement. Its policy manual restricts the inspectors' roles and responsibilities when addressing harassment. It reinforces the message that the inspector is restricted to enforcing only the explicit statutory requirements that the employer have a policy and inform its employees, which really amounts to nothing because employers don't take that seriously.

"The inspector shall not issue an order to an employer to follow its own policy or program. The inspector shall not issue an order to an employer to have its harassment program in writing." How can you have a program if it's not in writing?

There's an important link between harassment and exercising health and safety rights. We're concerned about reprisals. Reprisals have been a very large issue for us, whether it's non-unionized or unionized members. If a member puts forward a complaint around harassment in the workplace, that there have been reprisals, it's often referred to the OWA or the Toronto Workers' Health and Safety Legal Clinic. There's no mechanism currently that can effectively deal with reprisals under section 50 in the act as it is. We need to look at prevention. Roméo Dallaire certainly spoke to this issue several times with the ministry, recognizing an honourable injury, as he called it.

Ministry attention to the female-dominated health care sector is also disproportionate to the comparative size and injury rate of this sector. There's a perfect wall: no compensation, no enforcement, no protection of workers who complain and no prevention. What can we do to change this? We need to look at the current role and how the structure is laid out. The prevention division needs to step up and take proactive measures to fully and authentically promote existing available tools, approaches and preventive measures.

The CSA standard Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace—Prevention, Promotion, and Guidance to Staged Implementation is a useful starting point. The mental health commission has promoted this widely. It also speaks to work organization. Can employers, workers and joint health and safety committees accurately and reliably assess their workplace for psychosocial hazards? Yes, they can, and in fact, the CSA addresses that very issue and encourages that to happen.

The MIT strategy: I'm also part of another group called the mental injury team. We have a Mental Injury Toolkit strategy, and many of the members of the LOARC group are part of that group with others. We're a mix of researchers, health care professionals and unions. We also developed a tool which was presented to the ministry last year. The Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire, COPSOQ, is an internationally accepted and reliable construct that is a good survey that employers can use in the workplace. It's been used many, many times through the MIT organization. In fact, there have been at least 15 events, 55 workplaces and 1,800 surveys. This survey helps the workplace capture what's going on and develop some strategies around dealing with that.

The last thing that I would say is that we would suggest that sexual harassment be part of a sexual harassment continuum instead of being defined separately.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): You have three and a half minutes remaining in your entire presentation.

Ms. Katherine Lippel: Thank you very much. Very briefly and quickly, I hold the Canada Research Chair in Occupational Health and Safety Law. I'm not a member of LOARC, but I have read their brief. I'm here, first of all, to make myself available to support the content and provide you with the scientific background that underpins what they said.

I was listening to what was being asked before, and the distinction between sexual violence and violence against women. I think our brief speaks to this in the sense that sexual harassment is a subset of psychological harassment, which is also part of work organization and psychosocial hazards at work. If we look too narrowly at the issue and just look at sexual harassment, we're going to miss the issues that are making women ill at work because of sexual violence that is much more subtle than sexual harassment.

You've got three documents that I've brought. This one is the report of a survey by the national institute of public health in Quebec. I was first author on the chapter on violence. That's at page 9 of that document. So if

you're going to read anything else besides their excellent brief, read pages 9 and 10, because what you'll see is that sexual harassment represented about 3% of the Quebec population—this is the only Canadian study on violence in the workplace including psychological harassment, sexual harassment and physical violence in the workplace. In all three cases, women are more exposed than men. Some 3% of workers are exposed to sexual harassment, 15% to psychological harassment, and 19% of women and only 14% of men are exposed to psychological harassment. There are a lot of factors that lead to psychological harassment. I don't have time to get into that, but if there are questions, I will answer them.

1610

You have two other documents. One is written by me, on workers' compensation across Canada. The issue in the LOARC brief is that mental injuries are not adequately compensated in Ontario, and they're right. The long version is in the article as to why they are right. The other article is also written by me, on the regulation of violence in the workplace across Canada.

In closing, what I would like to say to you in relation to this is that it's a gender issue. Women are more exposed to violence in the workplace than men. One of the key findings of our Quebec study was that the higher up men went in the hierarchy, the more they were protected from psychological violence—so the university-educated men will not be targeted—but in the case of women, the university-educated women were just as vulnerable to psychological violence as the women at the bottom of the ladder.

We need good tools, and in a nutshell, Ontario's legal instruments are inadequate right now.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much for that information. Our first question for you is from our PC caucus, from MPP Yakabuski.

Mr. John Yakabuski: Thank you very much for joining us today. You covered a lot of ground, but I think I'll restrict the question to one area; otherwise, I won't get it in.

In talking about sexual harassment in the workplace, I think there's a pretty clear lack of understanding about what even constitutes sexual harassment. A lot of people think the bar has to be way up here and really feel that they're not even guilty of it. In some of the things that I've learned, people think that a lot of things are just okay.

I was more taken by what is apparently a lack of protection from reprisals if someone files a complaint. You were talking about the difference between here and British Columbia. What do we need to do to level that field so that workers under the Occupational Health and Safety Act here are getting the same kind of protection? If they're a victim of sexual harassment and then they raise the issue, what do we need to do to protect them from reprisals more than, clearly, we're doing?

Ms. Katherine Lippel: There are two issues. There's sexual harassment, and there's harassment because you're a woman, for instance, which is not quite the same

thing. Both of them are problems; both of them should be looked at. If the legislator wants to avoid getting into legal battles about, "Is this sexual harassment or sexist harassment or just harassment?"—all three are going to make people sick, so the first thing is to have a broader definition and not just restrict it to sexual harassment.

The Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act looks at psychological harassment, which would include sexual harassment within it, but the only protections that are given in the OHS Act in Ontario are much more restrictive than if we're talking about prevention of violence.

Physical violence: You, as a worker, have the right to protection from that. If you file a claim and there's a reprisal because you complained, there is recourse.

Psychological harassment: The language in the law is too narrow, so that the only requirement as the Ministry of Labour interprets it now—and correctly so, I believe—is that the employer has to have a policy.

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

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Thank you for taking the time to come to this committee.

Earlier this week, we received a brief from the Ontario Federation of Labour with some specific recommendations for amendments to the OHS Act. One of the things that they really stressed was the need to have a joint investigation process involving both the employer and a worker representative. I wondered if you had any comments on the investigation process and the importance of a joint process.

Ms. Katherine Lippel: I have a doctoral student who has studied this in Quebec. I haven't studied it in Ontario. She was looking at unionized workplaces and harassment prevention. When labour relations are good, it's excellent to have a joint committee. It's much more effective, much more credible. When relationships are bad, however, it's not necessarily going to work. But this said that if there is a joint mechanism available, it has been shown to be more effective in those places where collaboration is possible.

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

Ms. Eleanor McMahon: I just want to echo the comments of my colleagues. It was really good of you to come today; in particular, because it's so useful for us to have the kind of legislative construct recommendations that you're proposing. As you're probably aware, stronger workplace safety legislation is envisioned as part of the action plan, so this is really helpful in that context.

I've asked some presenters on this topic—we haven't had many, which is why it's so great to have you here—to really envision for us what a harassment-free workplace would look like. I know that's a paradigm shift for you, because it's thinking out of the box. But it's Friday, and I wonder, in addition to legislative constructs you've addressed here, if perhaps you could really think about employee supports. For example, we've heard that more empowerment is necessary and more education is necessary for employees. Is that something that resonates

with you? Could we be doing that, and should we be doing it?

Ms. Laura Lozanski: Certainly, in the union and labour movement, it's always been an issue around empowerment in the workplace for different issues, particularly around joint health and safety issues in the workplace. So for us, it's effectively using the joint health and safety committee. The employer will set the tone in the workplace. If the employer sets a good tone of expectations and takes effective, proactive, timely action on these issues in the workplace, it goes a long way.

Absolutely, we feel that there are already mechanisms available. Empowering workers to feel comfortable and safe to speak up is one of those mechanisms.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much. We invite you, if you wish, to join our audience now for our final presentation. We appreciate your presentation this afternoon.

OTTAWA RAPE CRISIS CENTRE

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): I now would like to call up the Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre. Welcome. You have the distinction of being the very last presenter, not only today but after two weeks of travelling for this committee.

Ms. Sunny Marriner: Wow. Thank you.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Please begin by stating your name for the record.

Ms. Sunny Marriner: My name is Sunny Marriner. I'm the executive director of the Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre. I should say that I'm not accustomed to reading scripted remarks, but I'm also not widely known for my brevity, so I thought this would be the best way to go.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Well, just to remind you then, you have 15 minutes to address this committee.

Mr. John Yakabuski: This Chair is very, very precise.

Ms. Sunny Marriner: I've noticed this.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): But you know, if I didn't do this, we'd be about an hour or two behind, so I want to accommodate you.

Ms. Sunny Marriner: Thank you.

I want to thank the committee for hearing from me today and to recognize the difficult work that you're engaged in. In preparation for my testimony, I have reviewed the transcripts of all of your hearings that are available online to date, and I applaud you on the diversity of voices that you've included.

As you know, the topic you're charged with tackling, sexual violence and harassment, is vast and critically important to women and children, to all members of civil society, and to legislators, policy-makers and ministries. You have a large job ahead of you, and I know you've had a very long day today. So as I've said, thank you for sticking through it with me.

As committee time is precious, I've tactically decided that my time with you will be most valuable if I address

some specifics that I think you may not have already heard from others. That said, I'd like to fully endorse the comments of the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres and the many front-line sexual assault centre workers who have testified to date, including my colleagues from Cornerstone and SASC today.

I assure you that I would repeat all these comments in their entirety to you, if I didn't have a very limited amount of time to try to summarize my learning from almost 20 years of work with survivors of sexual violence. With that in mind, I'm going to be focusing on what I'll call the 90 and the 10: the 90% of survivors who do not report sexual violence to hospitals or the criminal justice system and the 10% who do. I'll offer you five recommendations, and believe me, it was very difficult to pick which ones, as I have many. Then, I'll look forward to taking your questions.

My comments to you today are drawn from my experience as a front-line worker, a legal advocate, a researcher and, now, the head of Canada's third-oldest rape crisis centre. ORCC has the distinction of being one of the first three centres in Canada, with Toronto preceding us by only a few months. This means that as much as Ontario is leading the discussion on sexual violence in the country today, we were also leading it over 40 years ago when no one in Canada or, indeed, the world was willing to speak openly about sexual assault and child sexual abuse, or that they slow the progress of full equality and equal participation in civil society, particularly for women and girls.

1620

In thinking of how Ontario can best support that 90% of survivors who never report, it's important to understand the sexual assault centre history. Sexual assault centres formed because survivors themselves created them in response to very negative experiences with institutionally based services, many of which you've continued to hear about here at this committee. Survivors built sexual assault centres on volunteer labour, without funding, as an answer to the stigmatization, psychiatrization, disbelief and deeply flawed responses they found with those who were being deemed the experts in sexual violence.

Over the ensuing 40 years, these survivors and their centres have led almost every discipline and sector, including academia, in developing evidence-based practices, programs, policy, public education, prevention and law. As one of my colleagues from London said earlier, to use a medical analogy, we are the surgeons or specialists working with general practitioners in our communities.

This is important because one of the themes I've noted in reviewing the transcripts is that many of the needs that you've heard about, such as survivor-based centres, experts with specialized training, legal advocates, public education and prevention experts, 24-hour crisis lines—these things do exist and they've been highly developed by sexual assault centres across the province, which I think inevitably leads us to the question: If they're here,

then why doesn't everyone know about them and why can't everyone access them?

By way of a partial answer, I'll share with you that my advertising and promotion budget last year was \$500. That's barely enough to print a pamphlet, as you can see, let alone to publicize what we do, to survivors and to the other organizations that need and come to us for this expertise. But lest you think this is simply a plug for funding, I'll refer back to what others have noted before this committee: An inevitable effect of the increased focus on sexual violence and the Premier's laudable action plan will be that more survivors will be coming forward to seek support.

At ORCC this past fall, when sexual violence discussions were peaking in the media, we had a 300% increase in requests for support in less than a month. This is how you get waiting lists, something that we should all consider totally unacceptable. If we're going to urge survivors to come forward and report, there's a moral imperative that we be prepared to support them when they do with free, confidential survivor-based support that doesn't require that they access the justice system. Part of this will mean ensuring sexual assault centres can publicize and expand what we do, so all survivors know about it, and that other concerned groups are not inadvertently creating duplications of expert services that already exist, as this not only creates confusion and incoherence for survivors in communities but it also exponentially increases our costs.

This leads me to my first two recommendations. First, build on the network. Don't be led to believe that you have to reinvent the wheel. When trying to respond to complex problems, we tend to believe that bigger is better, and I understand this temptation. We want to provide the best services and supports to the widest number of people equally in every part of this province. I will share with you, though, that decades of research shows that, overwhelmingly, survivors report having been most helped by supports they received from independent sexual assault centres. I think we can all agree that adaptation is not the strength of large bureaucracies, but adaptation is what's required to meet survivors' unique needs and communities' unique needs, particularly as these needs become more and more complex, which I know you've been hearing about a lot at this committee.

This is what sexual assault centres do well: We adapt, we fill gaps, we respond, and we've been teaching other people how to do this too for 40 years. Crucially, also, our services are free and 100% confidential, which empowers survivors to control their own information and means that marginalized communities of women and girls most vulnerable to violence can actually access free counselling and legal advocacy. That said, I urge you to build on that network of independent sexual assault centres across the province so that the work of survivors isn't lost.

The second piece is, don't try to improve access by cutting services—not to say that you would, but we have seen this before. We need to resist the temptation to

address waiting lists by shortening or limiting the amount of support available to survivors through sexual assault centres. In other efforts to revamp services, we've seen shortages of resources addressed by cutting back on long-term support. Survivors are very concerned that this might happen with sexual violence too. Survivors of sexual violence, as you've heard, are often faced with very complex, layered social oppressions, and new issues can and do arise over time. Limiting long-term counselling and advocacy flies directly in the face of what evidence shows is best practice in helping to empower survivors and help them heal.

Turning to the 10% of survivors who do report to the criminal justice system, I'll be spending more time there than I usually would want to, but I think that there are some drilling-down points that might be helpful.

I need to add that for 15 years, I've specialized in supporting and advocating for women and girls who have unsuccessfully attempted to report their abusers to police. Over this time, I've learned a lot, often by asking the wrong questions, but this has also taught me how to focus on the right ones. I'm hoping to share some of those with this committee to spare you my 15-year learning curve.

A common question that you've heard asked over the last nine months is, why don't more women report? I know you've asked it, and I know you've heard it. I'd like us to reframe that question to, what would change today if all women and girls did go and report sexual violence? I submit to the committee that the answer is, unfortunately, very little. I believe the subject of our focus should not be the number of reports, although that's important, but instead what happens to those reports after they're made.

This information is astonishingly difficult to get. I've been working for many years to get comprehensive, seemingly simple statistics from police services, and the only time I've had any success was when the University of Ottawa faculty of law used its human and financial resources to file freedom-of-information requests. It should not be this difficult for the community to find out what's happening to women after they report to police. I believe in community-based responses, but those start with standardizing public knowledge so that we're responding to the right things.

The statistics that we did receive told a very frightening story. We learned that over six years—that was the information we were able to get—32.3% of sexual assault reports were classified as unfounded. "Unfounded" literally means that the police don't believe it; she made it up.

This number is astonishing, as all literature and research evidence shows that the rate of false reports of sexual assault is the same as, or lower than, all other types of crimes, which is to say somewhere between 1% and 5% at the most. Yet our analysis showed that almost seven times that number of women were being told they were not believed. We knew this in our centres, because women were coming to us in desperation.

Now, as important as these "unfounded" numbers were, another number is equally, if not more, informa-

tive. I learned this a little bit late. This is the average charge rate. Over the same six-year period, police laid charges in only 16.1% of all reported cases. What this means is that 84% of women who reported to police in those six years went home without charges being laid against anyone.

Thus, my third recommendation: Ensure that police sexual assault statistics are published regularly by city and by region, including “unfounded” numbers, those coded “founded but not enough evidence” and charge rates. As a province, we cannot, in good conscience, tell women they should report if we can’t comprehensively speak to what’s going to happen when they do.

If, as in our sample, police are disbelieving a third of them and only laying charges in 16% of them, adding an additional 100 or 1,000 reports will do nothing to address the reality that the overwhelming majority of women may as well have stayed home.

My next recommendation is that survivors whose cases are not going to result in charges be given written reasons when the police close the file. When we give nothing documented to women, they are trapped thereafter in a he-said-she-said with the police, who have infinitely more power and control. When we consider that these same women have already been caught in a he-said-she-said with an abuser who had more power and control, perhaps you can understand how asking women to engage in a second battle with police is what some people call secondary victimization.

It’s entirely reasonable to document the reasons cases are not proceeding for complainants, so if there’s a problem, she doesn’t have to spend another 10 years trying to prove what happened when she reported.

I actually got an email from a woman in this situation yesterday. It’s now 13 years after I met her, and we still can’t get her files to find the reasons. Written reasons would have saved us and her 13 years.

Now, I don’t want to send you all home in total despair and depression, especially on a Friday, so I’m going to finish with a bright light. There are mechanisms for us to create measurable, reviewable, actionable progress in policing sexual violence. I’ve been advocating regionally and provincially for a number of years for pilot projects based on what’s known as the Philadelphia model.

Philadelphia police have, for the last 14 years, partnered successfully with their local rape crisis centre and women’s legal advocates to conduct annual three-day reviews of their closed sexual assault cases, including all the cases that were coded “unfounded.” This unprecedented project was in response to scandals in the Philadelphia PD’s handling of sexual assault files, including “unfounded” rates of up to 50% and inaccurate case classifications that hid the majority of sexual assault reports without investigating.

What Philadelphia knew when this was discovered was that policing wasn’t going to change in a lasting way without independent, ongoing, collaborative oversight relationships with the front-line workers who are the

experts in sexual violence. They also knew they weren’t going to regain their credibility as a police service without that.

By allowing this institutionalized case review by VAW advocates, Philadelphia went from being the most scandal-ridden sexual assault unit in the United States to today having their model described repeatedly as the gold standard in sexual violence policing, including twice being reviewed by Human Rights Watch.

1630

In my own conversations, of which I’ve now had many, with the Philadelphia groups who developed the model, including the captain of their sexual assault unit, I’ve heard nothing but unprecedented praise for its effectiveness for all parties. I can tell you that it is not every day that I hear front-line rape crisis centre workers praising the police as their partners, and certainly not vice versa.

I’ve spoken a lot about best practices in supporting sexual assault survivors, but best practices in policing similarly tell us that the wave of the future must be transparent, accountable and measurable. It’s not enough for us to say that we want women’s experience of reporting to change. We need to be implementing proven practices that allow us to measurably identify where the problems are occurring that lead to inflated “unfounded” rates and the shocking level of attrition whereby only a tiny percentage of charges are laid. The Philadelphia model is a road map to how we can do that, thus improving women’s confidence in reporting as an option for sexual assault.

I’m encouraged by the fact that step 3 of the Premier’s action plan singles out best practices in policing and also by the fact that several MPPs have been very open to learning more about this model. Ottawa has already, in 18 months, come a very long way down this road, and I’d encourage this committee to contact me if you’d like to learn more about what we’re trying to do to improve reporting outcomes.

Finally, I’d like to return to the 90% who so frequently have no voice on a provincial level. I do want you to know that there are several survivors who, I believe, have critical and instructive experiences that this committee could learn an enormous amount from. If we could have made it happen for them to be here safely, I would have happily turned over all of my time so their voices could have been heard directly. I would still like to make this happen, and I say so because I believe it could be of benefit to both you and them. So if there are any opportunities for them to bring their information to you over the next few months, I hope you will help me in empowering these amazing women to speak for themselves.

In summary, those final recommendations:

(1) Build on existing networks.

(2) Don’t increase access by cutting services.

(3) Ensure that police sexual assault statistics are published regularly by city and region, including “unfounded,” those coded “founded but not enough evidence,” and charge rates.

(4) Require that survivors whose cases are not going to result in charges be given written reasons when police close the file.

(5) Consider implementing pilot projects using the Philadelphia model of independent case review by front-line VAW experts in partnership with police.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you very much, Sunny. For your information, any voices that you want to be heard by this committee can put their information in writing, or they can actually call in to us in Toronto and we'll certainly listen to them. You have Will's address or email address, so you can communicate with him.

Ms. Sunny Marriner: Wonderful. Thank you.

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

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Hi. Thank you so much for sticking with us for the whole day and keeping our attention so well during your presentation. I really appreciate that.

I'm interested in this Philadelphia model, which you and others have described as the gold standard of sexual violence policing. Has it resulted in an increase in reporting within Philadelphia?

Ms. Sunny Marriner: I think that's a great question, and I unfortunately don't know the answer. I know that it has resulted in a decrease in unfounding and an increase in charges, but I don't know if it has directly impacted the reporting rate. The reporting rates are very, very high, but I could get that information for the committee quite easily because I'm in contact with them.

Ms. Peggy Sattler: Great. Thank you.

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

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Sunny, I want to say thank you for being here. We had a great conversation not too long ago. It was very much appreciated, actually, that you came today, and I know you're our last person.

I don't know if you want to share more things with this committee. I know you've touched on five direct recommendations, but you mentioned that you had many more. Is there something else that maybe you could share that's sort of the wish list of all of the recommendations you could make?

Ms. Sunny Marriner: Well, there's certainly one—thank you for inviting me to do that. I did cut recommendations off my list, as I said. One thing that I think is important is step 10 of the sexual violence action plan. If you look at step 10, what it says is providing legal advocacy for “survivors whose cases are proceeding toward a criminal trial.” But if you look at just the snapshot of statistics that I just gave you, there's only 16.1% of charges, and we know 50% of those don't proceed to trial ever. So that's maybe 8% of women who would be able to access that legal advocacy.

What we've learned is that women need the legal advocacy when their cases are not proceeding to trial. That's when they come to us and say, “What do I do? I was sexually assaulted. I'm not being believed. I want to

go forward. Who do I talk to?” Women in those situations actually have no access to legal aid. They have no access to legal advocacy, apart from what they receive from us. So I would really encourage the province to consider expanding that recommendation to include women who have reported, whether or not their cases are proceeding to a criminal trial. I think that's deeply important.

Mrs. Marie-France Lalonde: Thank you.

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

Ms. Laurie Scott: Thank you very much, Sunny. You have a great name—

Ms. Sunny Marriner: Thank you.

Ms. Laurie Scott:—and a tough job, so thank you for doing that.

Following up, just quickly, on Peggy's about the Philadelphia model: If you could connect with our researchers—one of my asks is, what is the Philadelphia model?—so that we know, and make recommendations.

Ms. Sunny Marriner: Yes.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Quickly, the other was, when you mentioned the publishing—you had to go to the FOI, and they published the results, the 33% and the 16%. If that was published, how do you think that reaction would be—the women? Because even fewer would come forward, in my mind.

Ms. Sunny Marriner: I think that a lot of women already know that, which is why you see 90% of them refusing to access the criminal justice system. They hear it from their friends, from loved ones, from people who report—and just from their own experiences. But I do understand that concern.

I think, however, that for women, or certainly the women I've worked with, it would be really meaningful for them to actually be able to see what's going on. It presents a huge barrier for survivors that, once they move past the inside of that police station wall, nobody knows what happens on the inside. Nobody can access it. Nobody can get any information about it. That puts them in total isolation. As I said, they do come out saying, “These are the experiences that we're having,” but it turns into an argument of trying to prove it. We've certainly experienced that, over a long period of time, for large groups of women.

At least by having those statistics, not only can we get past the argument of proving whether or not there's a problem—which is where we're very stuck a lot of the time—but then we can also have something to measure how we improve.

If “unfounded” rates go down, that does not necessarily mean that the problem is improving, because what we've learned from other jurisdictions, particularly Philadelphia, is that sexual assaults just get re-coded another way. But if “unfounded” rates go down and charge rates increase, and we can see that happening, that is a demonstrable, evidence-based, measurable indication that something is shifting in our criminal justice system. I think that without that, we're not going to be able to re-inspire public trust.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Good. Thank you so much, Sunny.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Thank you. Sunny Marriner, we want to thank you and express our gratitude for providing such an interesting presentation, our very last presentation while travelling.

Ms. Sunny Marriner: Thank you for your patience and for the incredibly long day that you've had. Did you actually start at 8 today?

Interjections: Yes.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): We sure did.

Ms. Sunny Marriner: Okay. Enjoy the rest of your evening.

The Chair (Ms. Daiene Vernile): Committee members, I would like to personally thank you all for the wonderful questions you have asked all week, for hanging in, for providing such interesting travel.

We should also thank the Clerks' office for all of their hard work. To the Hansard folks, to our translators and to our technical people: This has been a tremendous experience. I look forward to seeing you all next Wednesday, May 27, at 4 p.m., as we begin our report-writing.

The Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment is now adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 1638.

Continued from back cover

Cornerstone Housing for Women	SV-543
Ms. Sue Garvey	
Ms. Elissa Scott	
Ms. Arwen McKechnie	
Labour OHCOW Academic Research Collaboration	SV-547
Ms. Laura Lozanski	
Ms. Katherine Lippel	
Ottawa Rape Crisis Centre	SV-550
Ms. Sunny Marriner	

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CONTENTS

Friday 22 May 2015

Strategy on sexual violence and harassment	SV-489
ManUp	SV-489
Mr. Travis Wing	
Mr. Belal Qayum	
Mr. Euan Scoffield	
Mr. Elias Papoulias	
Canadian Federation of Students.....	SV-495
Ms. Bilan Arte	
Prostitutes of Ottawa/Gatineau Work, Educate, Resist.....	SV-498
Ms. Frédérique Chabot	
Carleton University Graduate Students' Association.....	SV-502
Mr. Theo Hug	
Ms. Alannah James	
Koala Place	SV-505
Ms. Franca DiDiomete	
Ms. Elyse Lauzon-Alguire	
Sisters Achieving Excellence.....	SV-508
Ms. Bailey Reid	
M ^{me} Isabel Rodrigue.....	SV-510
Action ontarienne contre la violence faite aux femmes	SV-513
M ^{me} Maira Martin	
Women's Sexual Assault Centre of Renfrew County	SV-517
Ms. Bev Ritza	
Sexual Assault Support Centre of Ottawa.....	SV-520
Ms. Zahrah Hajali	
Ms. Brie Davies	
Centre Novas, CALACS francophone de Prescott-Russell.....	SV-523
M ^{me} Anne Jutras	
Chiefs of Ontario First Nations Women's Caucus	SV-525
Deputy Grand Chief Denise Stonefish	
Ms. Karen Restoule	
CALACS francophone d'Ottawa	SV-527
M ^{me} Josée Guindon	
Draw the Line.....	SV-530
Ms. Julie Lalonde	
Hollaback! Ottawa	SV-532
Ms. Julie Lalonde	
Centre des ressources de l'est d'Ottawa.....	SV-535
M ^{me} Danielle Pécore-Ugorji	
Crime Prevention Ottawa.....	SV-540
Ms. Nancy Worsfold	
Ms. Lucya Spencer	

Continued on inside back cover