Introduction

In March 2015, Niagara College launched its first ever stand-alone Sexual Assault and Sexual Violence Policy. The policy was vetted extensively through a provincial-wide task force with established input from various stakeholder groups and colleges and was implemented in accordance with the directive of the Committee of Presidents of the 24 colleges.

The following report was created to highlight statistical data and educational initiatives pertaining to Niagara College’s commitment to the education, prevention, response, and awareness of sexual violence, including information about our Sexual Violence Taskforce. Sexual violence is defined as, “any sexual act or act targeting a person’s sexuality, gender identity or gender expression, whether the act is physical or psychological in nature, that is committed, threatened or attempted against a person without the person’s consent and includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, indecent exposure, voyeurism, and sexual exploitation” (Ministry of Colleges and Universities Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan Act – Supporting Survivors and Challenging Sexual Violence and Harassment, 2016, S.O. 2016, c. 2 – Bill 132).

The Ministry of Training, College and Universities Act requires that every college board receive a report annually on the following:

1. The number of times supports, services and accommodation relating to sexual violence are requested and obtained by students enrolled at the college and information about the supports, services, and accommodation.

2. Any initiatives and programs established by the college or university to promote awareness of the supports and services available to students.

3. The number of incidents and complaints of sexual violence reported by students and information about such incidents and complaints.

4. The implementation and effectiveness of the policy.

1. The number of times supports, services and accommodation relating to sexual violence are requested and obtained by students enrolled at the college and information about the supports, services, and accommodation.

In the reporting period of January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019, 97 students accessed supports, services or accommodations related to sexual violence through Health, Wellness & Accessibility Services and the Student Rights & Responsibilities Office (SRRO), compared to 78 in the previous year.
Students impacted by sexual violence typically request the following accommodations:

1. Residential accommodations
2. Change to a different section or program
3. Extensions for completing assignments and deferred test-taking dates
4. Approved absence from class for attending health appointments and/or reporting incident to police
5. Compassionate withdrawal and tuition refund

Supports and services accessed by students on campus included individual counselling services and health services. Furthermore, supports through the SRRO included reviewing reporting options to ensure students make an informed decision about options and supports, as well as to facilitate referral to external supports. In addition, supports offered through Campus Safety/Security included comprehensive on-campus safety plans, access to the SafeWalk program, specialized parking arrangements, and a variety of safety programs offered through Campus Safety/Security. Referrals to the following off-campus partners were also made to assist students in accessing specialized services and supports in the local community:

1. Niagara Region Sexual Assault Centre
2. Niagara Health Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Treatment Program
3. Niagara Regional Police
4. South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario
5. Victim Services

2. Any initiatives and programs established by the college or university to promote awareness of the supports and services available to students.

The SRRO, in collaboration with internal and external partners, is committed to building strong partnerships within the community to ensure students have access to a variety of support services that are inclusive and best suit the needs of our diverse student body. In 2019, Niagara College arranged for the Executive Director of the South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario to provide a comprehensive presentation to a variety of college staff on forced marriages and the supports/services offered by the clinic to individuals impacted by intimate partner violence. Furthermore, Campus Safety led the initiative to hold a collaborative meeting with Detective Sergeant Matthew Hodges from the Niagara Regional Police to improve processes particularly surrounding parallel investigations and supports for students impacted by sexual violence. Further to that, in co-ordination with the international department, the SRRO provided in-depth consultation to update the Be World Ready Misconduct Abroad policy to include relevant information pertaining to sexual violence.

The SRRO is committed to initiating, creating, and delivering educational programming for students and staff. The Consent is Key campaign plays an integral role in highlighting the College’s dedication to preventing and addressing sexual violence. The Consent is Key website allows any member of the College community to seek information on how to file a complaint, what to do if they witness and/or experience sexual violence on campus, how to respond to a
disclosure, and how to obtain on-campus and inclusive off-campus resources. In addition, *Consent is Key* resource post cards were distributed to incoming students during orientation. *Consent is Key* coasters, which include the link to the website and contact information for the SRRO, have also been distributed to students and are placed in student centres including The Core and The Armoury on campus. In collaboration with NCSAC, *Consent is Key* information was also included in the student handbook. This year we purchased *Consent is Key* signs that will be prominently featured on campus and during awareness campaigns.

In 2019, the Niagara College *Consent is Key* video was played at various orientation program sessions to highlight the college’s dedication to addressing and preventing sexual violence to incoming students. Additionally, student leaders were provided with comprehensive training to become more aware of sexual violence, develop the skills to respond to disclosures of sexual violence, and lastly, understand how to assist a member of the college community with reporting guidelines as outlined in the Sexual Assault and Sexual Violence Policy. The following training sessions were offered in 2019:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Description</th>
<th>Audience</th>
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| *Consent is Key* Orientation Presentations (awareness messaging, policy/protocol, consent is key video) | • Fall 2019 Orientation Program Sessions  
• Spring 2019 International Student Orientation |
| Sexual Violence Awareness Training (definitions, facts, consent, how to respond to disclosures, reporting process as outlined in policy) | • Student Administrative Council  
• Orientation Leaders  
• Residence Advisors and Residence Life Coordinators  
• Be World Ready Faculty/Staff Leads  
• Sexual Violence Task Force |
| *Bringing in the Bystander* Training | • Positive Body Image Course students (Winter 2019 and Spring 2019)  
• All student athletes |
| Sexual Harassment & Discrimination Workshop | • Event Management Students |
| South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario Presentation | • HWAS staff, SRRO staff |
| Online Sexual Assault and Violence Policy Training Module | • Mandatory training for all Niagara College employees |
3. The number of incidents and complaints of sexual violence reported by students and information about such incidents and complaints.

For this report, an *incident* of sexual violence entails a disclosure of an occurrence of sexual violence experienced or witnessed and a *formal complaint* entails an occurrence of sexual violence, where an internal investigation may have been conducted.

Data collected between January 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019, by the SRRO at all Niagara College campuses indicated the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric 1</th>
<th>Total number of Formal Complaints or Incidents of sexual violence</th>
<th>32</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metric 1 (a)</td>
<td>Total number of formal complaints or incidents of sexual assault</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metric 1 (b)</td>
<td>Total number of formal complaints or incidents of sexual harassment</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metric 1 (c)</td>
<td>Total number of formal complaints or incidents of stalking</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metric 1 (d)</td>
<td>Total number of formal complaints or incidents of indecent exposure</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metric 1 (e)</td>
<td>Total number of formal complaints or incidents of voyeurism</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metric 1 (f)</td>
<td>Total number of formal complaints or incidents of sexual exploitation</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Please note that the sum of Metrics 1(a) through 1(f) may be greater than Metric 1 if a formal complaint or incident consists of multiple categories of sexual violence*

In accordance with Niagara College’s Sexual Assault and Sexual Violence Policy and the Student Code of Conduct, the SRRO plays an integral role in using a trauma informed lens to conduct investigations following the principles of due process and procedural fairness. It is also important to note that not all students who report and/or disclose an incident of sexual violence choose to proceed with an investigation. Nevertheless, the college endeavours to support all students regardless if they choose to file a formal complaint.

4. The implementation and effectiveness of the policy.

Since the implementation of the policy and the heightened climate surrounding sexual violence, it is evident from the statistics that there has been an increase in the number of students making formal complaints/reports of sexual violence to the SRRO. This increase might be an indicator that survivors feel safer coming forward, that they are aware through campus-wide messaging the support that is available to them, and that they are also aware of the survivor-centered approach that is embedded within the college’s policy.
Lastly, it is important to recognize that the work surrounding sexual violence is on-going and evolving and the college is committed to ensuring its compliance with ministry regulations and best practices.

**Sexual Violence Taskforce:**

The government of Ontario mandated that each publicly-assisted College create an independent taskforce responsible for assessing the sufficiency of the College’s sexual violence policy, assessing the effectiveness of current programs and services to combat sexual violence on campus, and providing recommendations on the additional steps that the College may take to ensure a safe environment for all. Specifically, Niagara College’s taskforce:

- Reviews existing College policies around complaints of sexual violence;
- Reviews current programs and initiatives aimed at generating cultural change surrounding sexual violence;
- Reviews current communication strategies;
- Researches best practices within the postsecondary sector relating to sexual violence education, management and prevention;
- Makes any recommendations for improvement for consideration by the college.

It is important that the taskforce have a broad representation from our student body including some key staff partners. The composition of the taskforce is as follows:

Director, Student Services, Chair
2 SAC Representatives
2 Domestic Students, not in residence
2 International Students
2 Indigenous Students
2 Student Athletes
2 Students from residence
2 Faculty Members
1 Counselling Representative
1 Campus Safety Representative
1 Human Resources Representative

Student Rights and Responsibilities Office – Resource Person
Residence – Resource Person

We have met twice thus far with plans to meet again this fall. We are in the process of seeking new student representatives as several have already graduated.