

OFFICE OF CAMPUS SEXUAL
ASSAULT SUPPORT & ADVOCACY

SVNB ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024



ESSENTIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Sexual Violence New Brunswick (SVNB) is located on the traditional unceded territory of the Wolastoqiyik, Mi'kmaq and Peskotomuhkati peoples and our work takes place throughout Wabanaki territory. This territory is covered by the “Treaties of Peace and Friendship” which did not deal with the surrender of lands and resources but established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations.

SVNB is an organization that began as a grassroots movement that was, and continues to be, guided by those affected by sexual violence. The founders of many rape crisis centres were largely white, middle-class and urban-based women who worked primarily with all-white survivors. In recognition of this history, we practice as an intersectional and trans-inclusive feminist Collective that functions from a survivor-centred, trauma and violence-informed perspective, whose primary goal is reflected in our work to build communities safer from the impacts of sexual violence.

We cannot participate in anti-violence work without recognizing the role of colonialism and other oppressive systems in causing and upholding violence. We strive to center and elevate the work of those most impacted by systemic oppression and violence. SVNB is committed to recognizing and honouring our collective responsibility towards Reconciliation and decolonization; a process that must centre Indigenous voices and work toward building meaningful partnerships throughout the province.

We credit the knowledge and work of trauma and violence-informed care to activists within the Queer and Trans communities, as well as Black, Indigenous, and racialized individuals who have persevered through extreme barriers to amplify messages of equity in our society. We are thankful for our partnerships throughout the province and we commit to taking an anti-colonial and inclusive approach to the work we do.



A MESSAGE FROM YOUR CSASA TEAM



The 2023-2024 academic year came with excitement and change. We started the year by hosting our second round of Sex Trivia events during orientation week with roughly 700 participants. These events continue to be a huge success and something that we hope can continue to gain popularity.

We created our “Healing Happens Here” campaign and enlisted the help of SVN staff to create beautiful and empowering posters. We hosted a survivor love letter writing event, where students created their own survivor love letters with powerful and caring messages.

With the new merge of the UNB Fredericton and UNB Saint John Campuses, our office began providing services to the Saint John campus in Spring 2024. This was an exciting change for us, as we began to navigate what it could look like to expand our services outside of Fredericton.

We continued to offer both in-person and virtual trainings and had roughly 500 participants from UNB, STU, and NBCC.

Perhaps the biggest change of all, this year marked the end of our amazing CSASA Hilary Swan’s time on campus. Hilary began her role as a CSASA in 2018 and has always brought passion and creativity to her work on campus. Hilary has been a caring and compassionate advocate for survivors on campus and has been an invaluable member of the campus community. While we will miss Hilary greatly, we are so excited for her new role as Clinical Lead with SVN.

Thank you for the continued support of our partners at UNB, STU, and NBCC. The important work and contributions made by the CSASAs are only possible with their assistance. We also want to extend gratitude to the survivors of sexual violence who have trusted us with their stories. Your courage, resilience, and determination inspire everything we do. Thank you for allowing us to be a part of your healing journey. It is an honour to support you, and we remain committed to working towards a safe and empowering space for all.

Campus Sexual Assault
Support Advocate

Campus Sexual Assault
Support Advocate

TRI-CAMPUS SEXUAL ASSAULT STRATEGY

This strategy and agreement formalized ties between Sexual Violence New Brunswick (SVNB), University of New Brunswick (UNB), St. Thomas University (STU), and New Brunswick Community College (NBCC) in Fredericton to address sexual violence at the PSIs. The uniqueness of this Campus Sexual Assault Strategy emerges from the collaboration and partnership with community agencies. Each institution is contracted to contribute financially to SVNB, where the work will be housed as a team approach rather than resting solely on the shoulders of one office on campus. The data represented in this report reflects cases connected to all three institutions.

Addressing the issue of sexual violence requires thoughtful planning and strategy. Communities would be remiss to only consider one side of the matter, such as interventions, without careful consideration of prevention, education, and strategic development.

This strategy was co-developed to address the following key outcome areas of:

- Strategic Development,
- Prevention and Awareness,
- Interventions and Response, and
- Education and Professional Development

With these key result areas, PSIs will have a stronger approach to addressing this issue. The key outcome areas to this strategy are outlined through this report to highlight the ways in which the three PSIs have been working to address sexual violence on campus.



CAMPUS SEXUAL ASSAULT SUPPORT ADVOCATES (CSASA)

The CSASAs function as the recommended first point of contact or referral for any member of the university community who has experienced a sexual assault related to their campus experience. The CSASA provides initial and ongoing support including:

- Confidential and trauma-informed counselling services
- Consultation for students, faculty, and staff on issues of sexual violence
- Referrals to other campus and community resources
- Advocacy for support on campus
- Support through complaints processes
- Facilitate prevention and education activities
- Consultation for policy development and reform
- Collection of data related to sexual violence on campus

INTRODUCTION

This report covers the activities of the CSASA over the reporting period of one full year, July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024. This report speaks directly to the cases related to individuals on campus and although some have been connected to the criminal justice system, details of those cases are not highlighted here. Numbers for UNB Saint John do not begin until May 2024, as this is when our contract with this campus began.

A YEAR IN REVIEW

CLIENTS SUPPORTED

Throughout this timeframe, we supported 44 individuals who had been affected by sexual assault during their campus experience. In recent years, we were requested to scope our services to only providing access to individuals who had experienced sexual assault as a member of the campus community, therefore these numbers no longer include cases of childhood sexual abuse that past reports would have included.

INTERSECTIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Sexual violence is a product of the oppression produced within the power systems that govern our communities. Sexual violence, in adulthood, is experienced predominately by those who identify as women, transgender, or other gender non-conforming categories such as two-spirit, non-binary, or agender (95% of CSASA clientele). Further, clients who identified their sexuality as being represented within the 2SLGBTQIAP+ spectrum (41%), as having a disability (25%), or as being marginalized by racism or colonization (18%) are highly represented within our program. International students made up 18% of our clients.

These insights provide us with consistent data that reinforces our need to create stronger preventative measures and cultural change. Equity initiatives and visibility for those who are pushed to the margins on our campus can start to make changes in ways we haven't been able to before.

INTERVENTION BEYOND THE NUMBERS

STRATEGY

The office of CSASA offers feminist and trauma-specific counselling of up to 15 sessions for those who have experienced sexual assault related to their campus experience. This approach focuses on creating safety, teaching emotional regulation, processing trauma, as well as providing options for medical, legal, and campus needs. We also offer advocacy within the campus structures to support their identified goals.

A DEEPER LOOK

Depending on the nature of sexual violence, many types of interventions are required. A survivor may need emergency and ongoing health care, police services, crisis intervention, counselling, community programs, advocacy, as well as victim and court support services. The CSASA office is one link in the extensive chain of support available to survivors. Our focus has been to mitigate the secondary wounding that occurs through the process of a person reaching out for help, offering support, and providing effective responses in a timely fashion.

IMPACT

Sexual violence is unique to other forms of hardship that students may experience. Anxiety over being around others, particularly their offender, often hinders their ability to go to class, the library, or meal halls. Intrusive thoughts may get in the way of concentration, being attentive in class, or finishing homework. Secondary wounding due to responses from peers or school administration often causes survivors to avoid classes, transfer to other institutions, or drop out altogether.

When asked about their experience with the CSASA program, clients have shared feedback such as: *"[My counsellor] made me feel safe and validated and I was able to reach my healing goals with her help! She's a wonderful counsellor."*

INTERVENTION ACTIVITIES

- Provided advocacy and support to students from a trauma-informed perspective.
- Connected students to trauma-specific counselling, support groups, and/or crisis support services.
- Helped survivors access medical care and follow-up services in a timely fashion.
- Provided support and advocacy through the court process.
- Advised faculty on survivor-centred handling of disclosures.
- Facilitated access to services through the use of disclosure cards.

212

SESSIONS

In-person therapeutic sessions were utilized by campus survivors of sexual violence

FORMAL COMPLAINTS

Sexual violence has one of the lowest police reporting rates for all criminal offences, often less than 5% to legal authorities (Statistics Canada, 2014). Complainants often feel frustrated, blamed, and shamed by society, stalling their ability to achieve justice and support.

There are three levels of formal help-seeking on campus:

- Disclosure, where the complainant seeks support but no further action;
- Informal Complaint, where the complainant wishes certain steps to be taken but does not wish to enter into a formal process that could lead to discipline against the respondent; and
- Formal Complaint, where the complainant wishes to bring formal charges against the respondent (under the Student Discipline Code or under appropriate staff/faculty policies).

Over the course of this reporting period, we had less than 5 survivors initiate a formal complaint. We cannot include numbers below 5 for confidentiality reasons, but we would like to point out that the number of students choosing to report has been lower in the past few years. The reasons for these numbers are multifaceted, however, the CSASA team continues to advocate for changes that will lead to improved trust in the complaint processes and a sense of safety for survivors on campus. As we do not adjudicate these files, this number may not be inclusive of all those who sought the administrative process at UNB, STU, or NBCC Fredericton Campus.



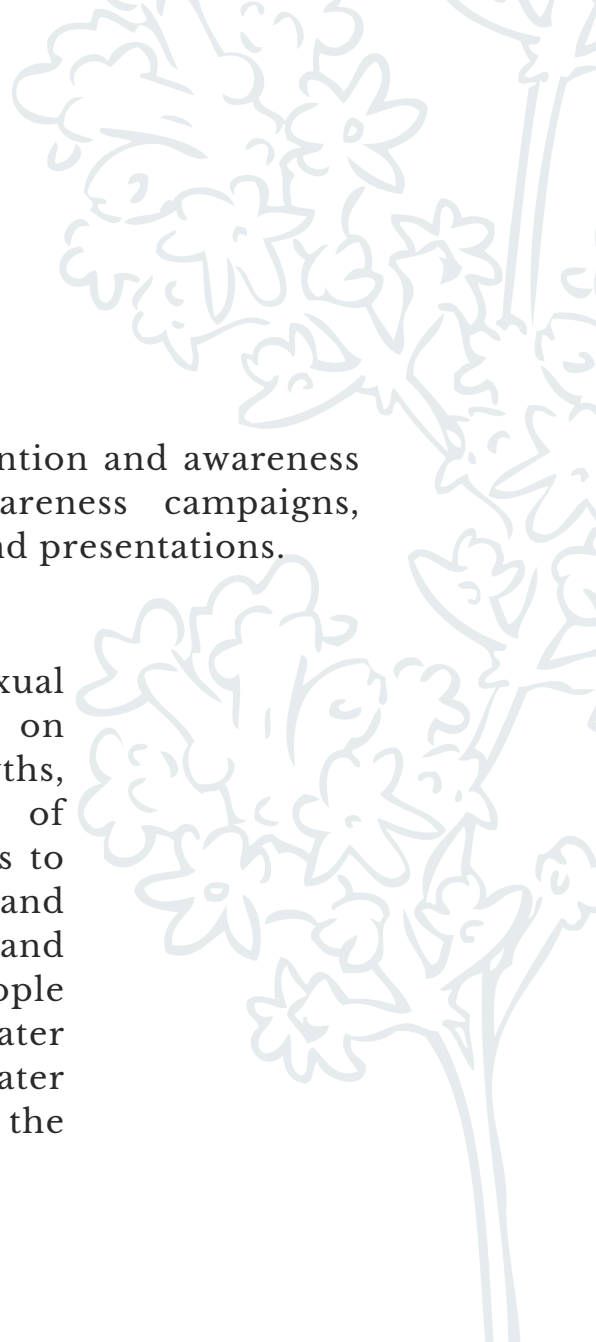
PREVENTION BEYOND THE NUMBERS

STRATEGY

Through the tri-campus sexual assault strategy, prevention and awareness activities include information booths, annual awareness campaigns, support to student committees, events and activities, and presentations.

A DEEPER LOOK

Awareness is crucial to enhancing our response to sexual violence. To decrease the amount of sexual violence on campus, a cultural shift away from sexual assault myths, victim-blaming attitudes, and the objectification of women and gender non-conforming individuals needs to occur. Further, without a dismantling of colonial and white supremacist systems and structures, women and gender-diverse people, Indigenous, and racialized people will always be oppressed through sexual violence. Greater community awareness of these dynamics leads to a greater understanding of the issue and a dismantling of the structures that facilitate this type of violence.



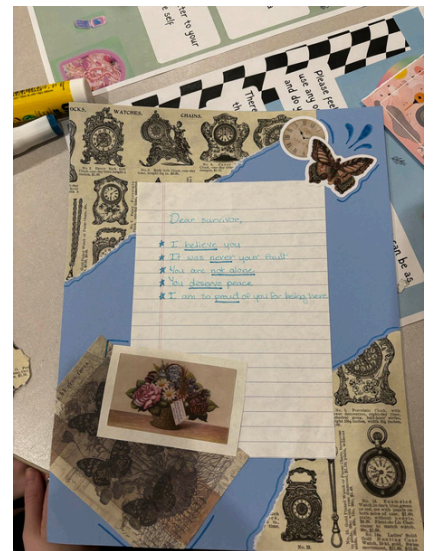
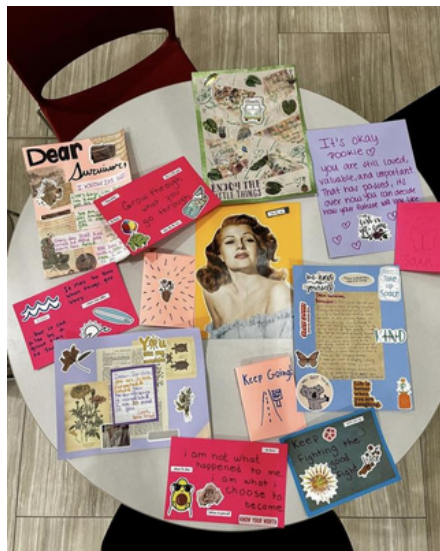
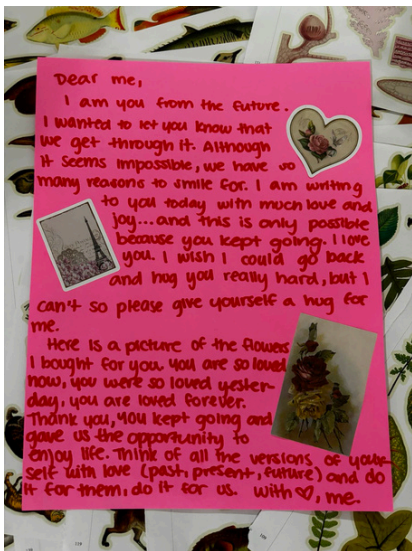
PREVENTION

BY THE NUMBERS

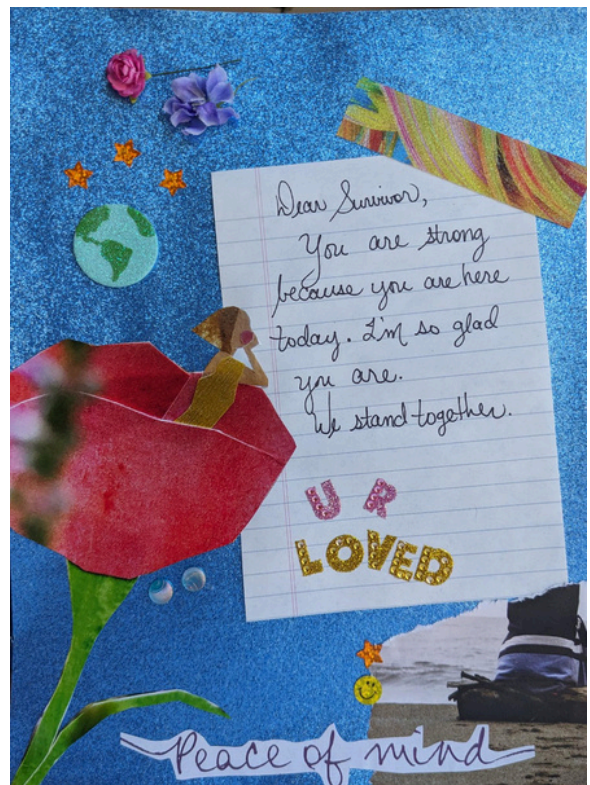
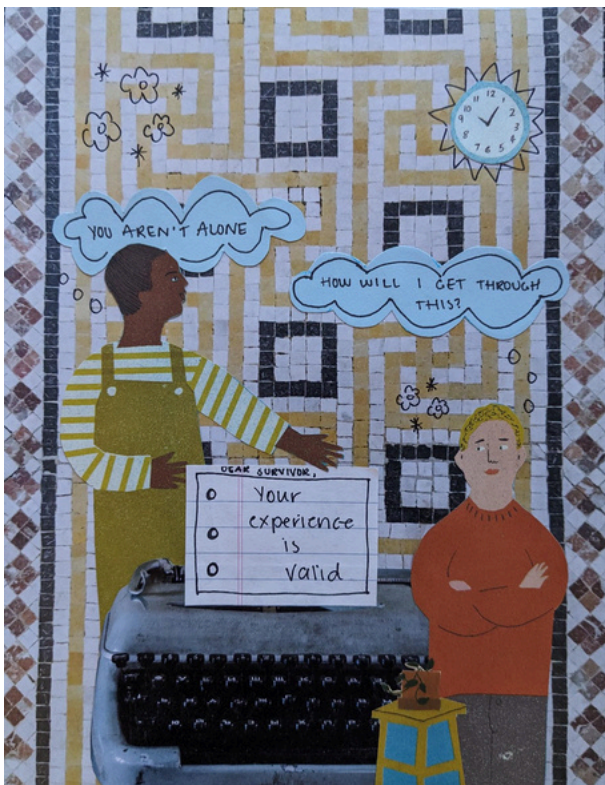
Each year, we strive to find creative ways to raise awareness of sexual violence on campus. This year, we also wanted to think of a campaign idea to show survivors care and compassion. This led us to create our “Healing Happens Here” campaign, which is our version of the Survivor Love Letter Writing campaign. The Survivor Love Letter writing campaign was started by filmmaker and activist, Tani Ikeda in 2012, and has since become a social movement. Our SVN staff created, collaged, and wrote survivor love letters by hand, which we turned into posters for our campaign. During the Student Union’s Sex Week in February, we hosted a Survivor Love Letter writing event, where students were invited to come and create letters of their own. We were grateful to have the help of our social work student, who assisted us with this event.

1,085
CONNECTIONS MADE

We were able to reach over 1000 people through the various prevention and awareness activities in person on campus.



BUILDING AWARENESS

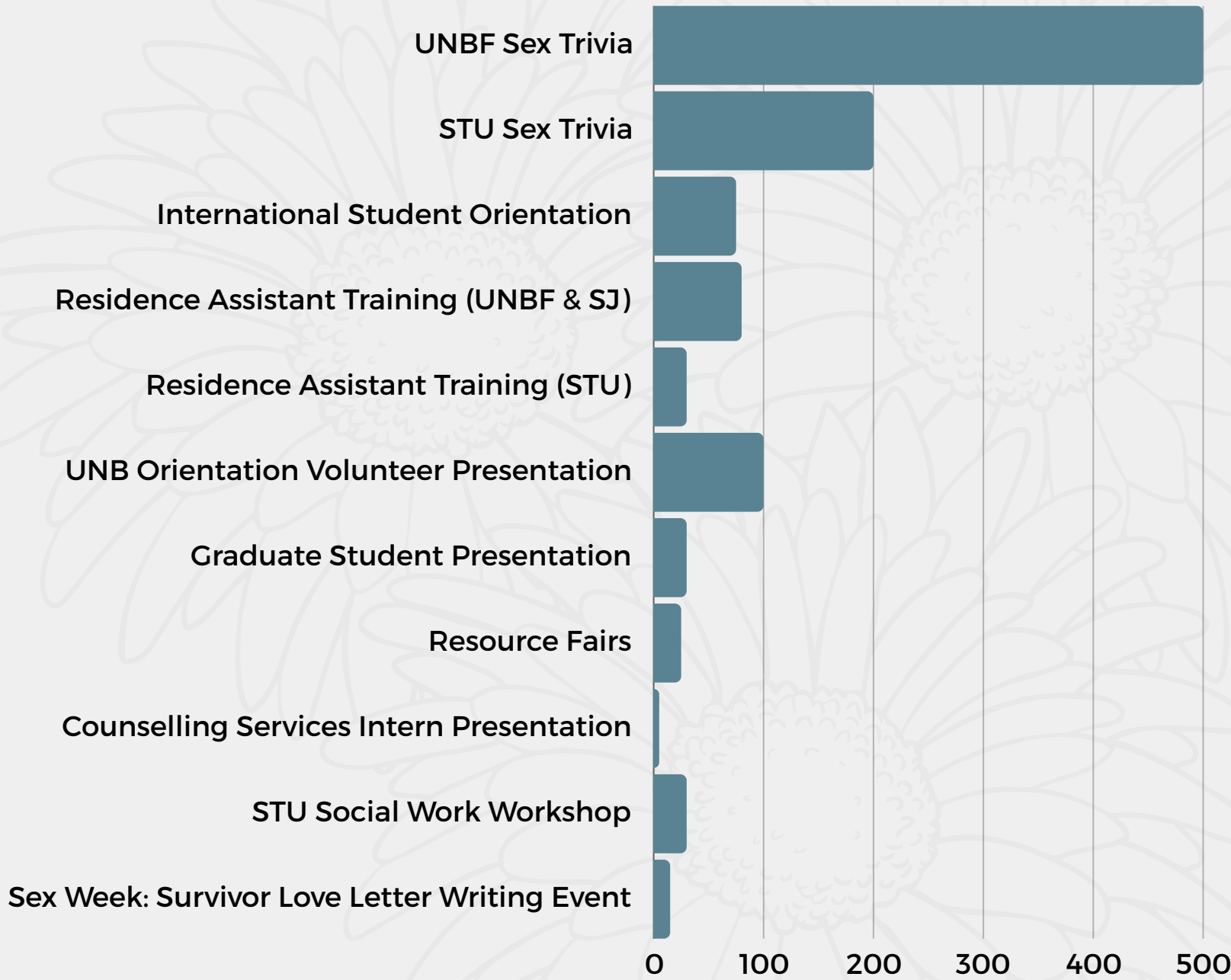


SEX TRIVA

2023 marks the second year that we ran our Sex Trivia event. This event was even more successful than last year, with roughly 500 participants at UNB, and roughly 200 participants at STU. This event was co-hosted by our office, Ashley Young, our Education Lead at Sexual Violence New Brunswick, and Stacey Taylor, a Nurse Practitioner with the Student Health Centre. Barb Wire, a local Drag Queen in Fredericton also helped with co-hosting and gave a fun performance. Through an engaging trivia game, we were able to educate first-year students on consent, sexual health, pleasure, and myths and misconceptions about sex.



ENGAGEMENT



EDUCATION

BY THE NUMBERS

256

VIRTUAL LEARNERS

Students, student athletes, and leaders completed the Online Seeds of Change Bystander Intervention Training

“

I think the training was very well done and I appreciated the sections that made you reflect on your own life. There are too many training programs like this that don't make that personal connection and the techniques don't seem applicable to real life. Making the program about not just preventing sexual assault, but also how it impacts the lives of survivors was very well done and another thing that often gets neglected in education on these topics.

”

- Participant after completing Seeds of Change

IMPACT

Members of the larger SVN team partnered to facilitate educational opportunities such as:

- Workshops that address why sexual violence happens (including education on myths and stereotypes, gender roles, privilege and oppression, as well as consent and coercion) and how to support a friend;
- Tri-campus A,B,C's of Receiving a Sexual Violence Disclosure" training for faculty and staff
- Training for receiving and handling disclosures for residence life student staff at UNB and STU;
- Training for those adjudicating sexual assault files;
- And online modules for bystander intervention skills, awareness of sexual violence, consent, how to receive a disclosure, and support one's own wellbeing from the impacts of trauma.

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VIRTUAL LEARNERS

Faculty and staff completed the Online ABC's of Receiving Sexual Violence Disclosures



STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY

The office of CSASA supports the tri-campus community in the evaluation and updating of their current sexual assault policies. Although the responsibility is not on the CSASAs to perform policy updates, the information, research, and experience from this office is offered to support institutional endeavours. The office of CSASA supports the tri-campus community through coordinating and collaborating on research of sexual violence issues, policies, and programs to inform the work of this strategy. The office identifies appropriate evaluation methods to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of this strategy and uses the results to inform future actions.

A DEEPER LOOK

Institutional policies and protocols outline the vision, stance, and structure from which sexual violence is addressed. While each institution may vary on the details of how reports of sexual violence are handled internally, it is essential that there is a cohesive perspective through which sexual violence is understood. Policies need to be clear and relatable to campus community members so that individuals can see themselves within the definition of sexual violence and know where to go to receive support or file complaints.

In spring 2024, The UNB Sexual Assault Task Force began meeting again, which in turn, also started the process of reviewing and re-writing the UNB sexual violence policy. We look forward to continuing to meet with the Task Force and continuing to consult on the policy writing.

IN CONCLUSION

SVNB's post-secondary sexual violence programming has become recognized nationally for the innovative partnerships that are working to create safer campus communities. Our CSASA office is one piece of the approach to addressing the impacts of sexual violence in the post-secondary community, and we appreciate all the partnerships that come together to make a united front on this issue.

For more information or to contact the CSASA office, please...

EMAIL

csasa@svnb.ca

PHONE

Campus Office: (506) 453-4530

SVNB Home Office: (506) 454-0460

