



ST. FRANCIS XAVIER
UNIVERSITY



Visible@X

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-25

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St. Francis Xavier University

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Executive Summary

In 2024–25, St. Francis Xavier University (StFX) reaffirmed its commitment to fostering a safe, respectful, and inclusive campus through a comprehensive review and expansion of its sexual violence prevention and response efforts. This year marked a pivotal period of growth, reflection, and action, guided by the findings of the second independent review of the university’s Sexual Violence Response Policy, conducted by Watershed Legal Projects.

Key Achievements and Progress

- **Policy and Structural Enhancements:** Building on the 2019 review, the 2024 Independent Review Panel (IRP) offered 30 recommendations, many of which are already in progress or completed. Notably, a second full-time staff member—the Sexual Violence Prevention Education Coordinator (SVPEC)—was hired to expand education and outreach capacity.
- **Cultural Shifts and Awareness:** There has been a marked increase in awareness among students and staff about where to seek help, with the SVPRA role widely recognized and trusted. Targeted interventions in residences and athletics have begun to shift harmful norms and foster safer environments.
- **Education and Engagement:** Over 1,000 students participated in Waves of Change bystander intervention training, with both Basic and Advanced sessions tailored to student groups. Visible@X hosted 15 campus-wide events, reaching 1,400+ participants, and expanded its social media presence to deepen student engagement.
- **Support and Advocacy:** The SVPRA provided approximately 115 individual support meetings, primarily with students, offering trauma-informed guidance, academic accommodations, and safety planning. Formal reports of sexual violence tripled from the previous year, reflecting increased trust in institutional processes.
- **Data Transparency:** The report includes detailed, anonymized data on disclosures, types of violence, relationships between parties, and outcomes of formal reports. This year saw 63 disclosures, 11 formal investigations, and six findings of responsibility under the SV policy.
- **Provincial Leadership:** StFX continues to play a leadership role in provincial initiatives, contributing to curriculum development, policy co-design, and communities of practice focused on gender-based violence prevention.

Looking Ahead

The university remains committed to implementing the IRP’s recommendations and enhancing its prevention and response framework. Plans for 2025–26 include expanded faculty/staff training, new culturally grounded programming, and signature events such as Consent Awareness Week and Sexual Health Week. The updated Sexual Violence Policy is set to take effect before September 2025.

Visible@X continues to evolve as a model of trauma-informed, student-centered, and community-driven sexual violence prevention and response in post-secondary education.

Advancing Campus Safety and Culture – Sexual Violence Policy Review

St. Francis Xavier University (StFX) reaffirmed its commitment to fostering a safe and respectful campus environment by commissioning a second independent review of its sexual violence policies and practices in 2024. This review, conducted by Watershed Legal Projects, follows the initial 2019 review that led to the implementation of our current stand-alone sexual violence policy in February 2020.

Background and Scope

The 2024 review was broader in scope than its predecessor. In addition to evaluating the implementation of the StFX Sexual Violence Response Policy, Watershed was tasked with examining the broader campus culture, including power dynamics, consent education, and the influence of social norms—particularly within residences and athletics.

The Independent Review Panel (IRP), composed of legal experts Joanna Birenbaum (Chair), Professor Elaine Craig, and Professor Maria Dugas, led the review process. Over six months, the IRP engaged in extensive consultations, including eight days of in-person and virtual meetings with students, faculty, staff, and senior administrators. The panel also reviewed anonymized case files and facilitated a full-day Expert Advisory Group workshop to refine its recommendations.

Key Findings and Progress

Since the 2019 review, StFX has made significant strides in policy reform, structural improvements, and cultural change:

- **Policy Implementation:** The new Sexual Violence Response Policy was implemented in Feb. 2020.
- **Specialized Support:** A full-time Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Advocate (SVpra), with a background as a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner, was appointed to lead support and education efforts.

- Cultural Shifts: Targeted initiatives within residences and athletics have begun to address the social conditions that contribute to sexual and gender-based harm.
- The SVPRA role has been widely recognized as a cornerstone of the University’s response framework. While feedback was overwhelmingly positive, concerns were raised about the role being under-resourced, with the current workload exceeding what one individual can sustainably manage.

Awareness and Engagement

A notable improvement since 2019 is the increased awareness among students and staff about where to seek help. While many community members remain unfamiliar with the technical details of the policy, most now know to contact the SVPRA directly for support—often referring to the advocate by name. Faculty and staff also demonstrated a clear understanding of their responsibilities in referring disclosures appropriately.

Looking Ahead

The IRP’s final report was released in summer of 2024. The reviewers made thirty recommendations for continued progress and StFX remains committed to implementing these recommendations in collaboration with the campus community to ensure that future actions are informed, inclusive, and impactful. The full report is available [here](#).

Our progress in implementing recommendations specific to the work of the Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Advocate and the Sexual Violence Prevention Education Coordinator is outlined in Table 1.

Table 1. Status of IRP recommendations relevant to SVPRA

IRP Recommendation	Status	Timing/next steps	Leads/partner/etc
#5- Waves of Change Training be mandatory annually for both varsity and club coaches, trainers and assistant trainers for the next five years, to be completed in the fall term. The training may be modified or updated for staff who have taken the training multiple times.	In progress – Coaches Session held in July 2024 Initial planning meetings to implement training for club sports complete	July-Aug Scheduling training for varsity, club, training staff	SVPEC and Manager of Athletics will coordinate training dates/times SVPEC/SVPRA to facilitate
#6 Waves of Change Training be mandatory for club athletes once per academic year, and for varsity athletes twice per academic year; once in August/September and a second time in the Winter term.	In progress – successfully implemented twice annual training for Varsity athletes. Will pilot club sessions in later September.	Varsity Aug-Sept – Varsity teams receive Basic WoC Jan Feb – Varsity Teams receive Advanced Club: Sept	SVPEC & Manager, Athletics Coaches to contact SVPEC to schedule training. There is no clear mechanism to mandate training for students participating voluntarily. 2025-

		Club teams are offered basic in September	26 will focus on building relationship and communication pathways with club sport leaders and X-Rec
#14 Further to Recommendations 16 and 18 below, an expanded SVPRA office should assist with residence by engaging in targeted follow-up, prevention and education at residences where harmful traditions persist and in better training and supporting CAs.	In progress – SVPEC toured and met student staff in each residence. Programming in Residence implemented in winter term	June-July – finalize Prevention Education Plan July-Aug – Meet with RLC’s to develop training priorities	Topics for outreach in fall were suggested during winter of 2025
#16 A second full-time SVPRA staff person should be hired, whose focus in the first few years should be prevention and education, including education with respect to the Policy. The SVPRA position should, like the first position, require expertise in sexual violence and trauma-informed practice, as well as skills or experience in education, communications, and training.	Completed – Sexual Violence Prevention Education Coordinator joined in Oct. 2024	Fall of 2025 – SVPEC will be lead on prevention initiatives	SV Ed. Plan (Appendix A) reflects the increased capacity.
#17 For the next two years, StFX should establish a summer student position of no fewer than 20 hours per week to support the work of the SVPRA, including to develop and deliver the Waves of Change training commencing in August and September of the following term.	Tabled – With the additional full time position added in fall 2024 the workload is managed without the additional part time coordinator.		
#18 Assign the SVPEC the role of working with communities, such as CAs in a residence, a residence community, or the athletics community, to de-escalate, and educate in response to, or in the context of, incidents of sexual violence. Recommendation	In progress – The SVPEC will participate in Res. Life training and team meetings to build collaborative relationships with student teams.	Aug 25 – Student staff training begins. Responding to disclosures, SV policy, behind closed doors for CA’s. Responding to disclosures/ways to intervene XP’s	The SVPEC will not be providing direct response to incidents of SV in residence, but will provide info about the policy and available supports.
#19 Require RLCs to include the SVPRA in residence staff meetings, at least once per semester to educate, debrief and provide support.	Complete – The SVPEC met with each RLC and student team during winter of 2025.	Goal is to meet with each student team once/term to discuss the specific needs of each campus community.	SVPEC to connect with RLC’s in early September and ask to join a team meeting to introduce herself, the role, and potential workshop/engagement sessions.
#21 Establish a Sexual Violence Internal Review Team to meet at regular intervals to share anonymized information and to discuss, with a focus on procedure and practice, what issues/incidents have arisen or been disclosed, the nature of the incidents, the presence of any existing or emerging risk factors or trends on campus, and whether	In progress – Student services staff involved in SV formal reports (investigator, student life, Res. Auth., Health & Counselling met in spring to conduct case review and discuss processes and policy impl.		

communications or procedures need to be refined, considered or addressed			
#22 StFX prioritize publishing annual data on sexual violence disclosures and reports, detailed to the extent possible while complying with privacy legislation.	In progress – Sexual Violence Prevention Committee discussed approach to publishing data that provides a high level of confidentiality.	Current – new data reporting structure adopted in this report.	Once approved report will be published here
#23 The President attend the President’s SVPR Committee meeting at least once per year, to receive and discuss the SVpra’s annual report and prioritize resources and initiatives, including implementation of the recommendations in the IRP report.	In progress	Current – President will attend at least one SVPC meeting annually beginning in summer 2025	
#28 Build on and develop Waves of Change training, as delivered at StFX, to better incorporate diverse experiences, in particular, those of 2SLGBTQIA+, racialized and Indigenous students.	Completed –	Maintain current CQI approach to WoC revision. Bi-Weekly Advisory meetings with provincial coordinator continue.	A wide range of scenarios have been developed to allow sessions to be adapted to best meet the needs of participants. Participant and facilitator feedback collected by SVpra and Provincial WoC Coordinator.

Sexual Violence Prevention Committee – Policy Review Sub-Committee Update

The StFX Sexual Violence Prevention Committee established a Policy Review Sub-Committee (“the sub-committee”) in January 2023 to lead the revision of the StFX Sexual Violence Policy (“the policy”). The sub-committee reconvened in Fall 2024 to incorporate recommendations from the Watershed Review.

A draft of the revised policy was presented to the full Sexual Violence Prevention Committee and subsequently submitted to the Executive Council in December 2024. Feedback from the Executive Council prompted a brief consultation period with the sub-committee and key stakeholders, leading to a second draft being submitted to the Executive Sponsor in February 2025.

In May 2025, gaps were identified in Section 11: The Formal Reporting Review Process. The University’s legal counsel proposed revisions to address these gaps, which are currently being integrated into the policy.

The updated policy is scheduled to take effect before September 2025.

Policy Review Sub-Committee Members:

Dr. Cathy MacDonald, Associate VP Academic Affairs

Dr. Jacqueline DeLeeBeeck, Director of Student Life

Randy Peters, Director of Security and Risk

Jacob Cruchet, VP Academic Affairs, StFX Students’ Union

Dr. M.Shajahan Gulam Razul, Faculty of Chemistry

Dr. Robin Neusteadler, Faculty of Education

Alison Sampson, Manager People & Culture

Heather Blackburn, Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Advocate (Lead)

Provincially Scoped Work

The SVPRA actively contributes to provincial initiatives aimed at enhancing sexual violence (SV) prevention and strengthening front-line response efforts across Nova Scotia’s post-secondary institutions. Drawing on the success of prevention education at StFX, the SVPRA brings leadership, experience, and expertise to several key provincial committees and working groups.

- **Provincial Sexual Violence Prevention Committee – Dept. of Advanced Ed.**
Representing StFX alongside the Director of Health, Counselling, and Accessible

Learning, the SVPRA participates in this bi-monthly (and ad hoc) committee focused on advancing SV prevention strategies across the province.

- **Waves of Change Content Advisory Group**

This bi-weekly advisory group includes Olivia Landry (Provincial SV Education Coordinator), Dee Dooley (SVPRA, SMU), and Heather Blackburn (StFX SVPRA). The group provides mentorship and consultation on content revisions and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) initiatives for the Waves of Change program and the provincially funded Sexual Health and Safety Educators.

- **Provincial GBV/SV Front-Line Community of Practice**

Facilitated by Olivia Landry, this monthly community of practice offers a space for front-line SV support staff to share updates, seek feedback, and address emerging challenges in the field.

- **Man Made Community of Practice**

Resuming in 2025, this group is consulting on provincial curriculum revisions for the Man Made program. The initiative is led by Mount Saint Vincent University and includes contributions from the SVPRA.

- **Whole of Society Working Group – Co-Designing GBV/IPV and Bystander Education**

The SVPRA was invited by the Office of Citizen-Centered Approaches to join this cross-sectoral working group. The group is tasked with advancing Recommendation 17 of the Mass Casualty Commission Report by co-designing gender-based violence (GBV), intimate partner violence (IPV), and bystander education across schools, universities, and workplaces.

Provincial Grants

StFX has received a small provincial grant to support our sexual violence prevention efforts since 2017. Unfortunately the grant fund and the Provincial SV Prevention Coordinator position funding was not renewed in the 2025-26 provincial budget. The committee requested that StFX rescind our funding request for GuysWork adaptation in Post Secondary to allow an additional year of Peer Educator funding. We agreed to this change, so we have secured funding for our Visible@X Peer Educators until March 31, 2027. The committee chairs are actively looking for alternative funding sources for future projects and has approved MSVU using carry over funds to overhaul the ManMade program.

We received funding from the provincial government to evaluate the effectiveness of the Waves of Change program at StFX. Dr. Laura Lamb and Dr. Elvira Prusaczyk are leading this research, supported by Emilia Stewart, RA and Visible@X peer educator. Data collection will begin in July 2025.

Other provincial updates

The Provincial Waves of Change Coordinator, Olivia Landry, resigned from her role in June 2025. Dee Dooley (SMU) and Heather Blackburn (SVPR at STFX) will manage content edits and access and will assist with distribution of Waves of Change material until a replacement is found.

Sexual Violence Response at StFX

At St. Francis Xavier University, the Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Advocate (SVPR) serves as a confidential, trauma-informed resource for individuals impacted by sexual violence. The Advocate provides personalized support, facilitates access to accommodation and services, and assists with disclosures, reporting, and resolution processes. In addition to direct support, the Advocate plays a central role in prevention education and campus-wide awareness initiatives.

Scope and Limitations of Response Data

Cases are recorded based on the academic year in which the incident was initially disclosed/shared with the SVPR. Participation in disclosure meetings and providing information about incidents of sexual violence is voluntary.

The data presented in this report reflects only the disclosures made directly to the Sexual Violence Advocate and should be interpreted as a limited snapshot rather than a comprehensive representation of sexual violence on campus. We recognize that not all individuals who experience sexual violence choose to report or disclose their experiences. Fluctuations in the number of disclosures from year to year should not be interpreted as definitive increases or decreases in the overall prevalence of sexual violence within our campus community.

To further protect the privacy of individuals and reduce the risk of identification—particularly given the small number of disclosures in some years—we have chosen to present bridged data spanning the past four years. This approach allows us to identify broader trends while maintaining confidentiality and ensuring that no single disclosure can be linked to an individual.

Terminology

- Victim/Survivor: Individuals subjected to sexualized violence.
- Reporting Party: Victim(s)/Survivor(s) who have requested a formal resolution through the Sexual Violence Policy.
- Alleged Perpetrator: Individuals alleged to have caused harm.
- Respondent: Alleged perpetrators during the formal investigation/resolution process.

Sexual Violence Policy Data

The SVPRA is committed to transparency while prioritizing the confidentiality and well-being of victim(s)/survivor(s). Our primary responsibility is to provide person-centered, trauma-informed services to those impacted by sexual violence within the campus community.

As outlined in Section 16 of the Sexual Violence Policy, the SVPRA maintains and publishes annual aggregate data on:

- Number of disclosures received
- Nature of disclosures (e.g., sexual assault, harassment, social/electronic media, location)
- Whether the identity of the Respondent was disclosed
- Alternative measures requested or accessed
- Peer-on-peer student sexual violence
- Anonymous and third-party reports
- Disclosures that proceeded to formal report
- Outcomes of those reports (finding/no finding)Annual Summary:

16.1 (i, iv)

During the 2024-25 academic year, the SVPRA received sixty-three (63) individual disclosures of sexual violence. Most disclosures were from students (n=60)

The types of disclosures included:

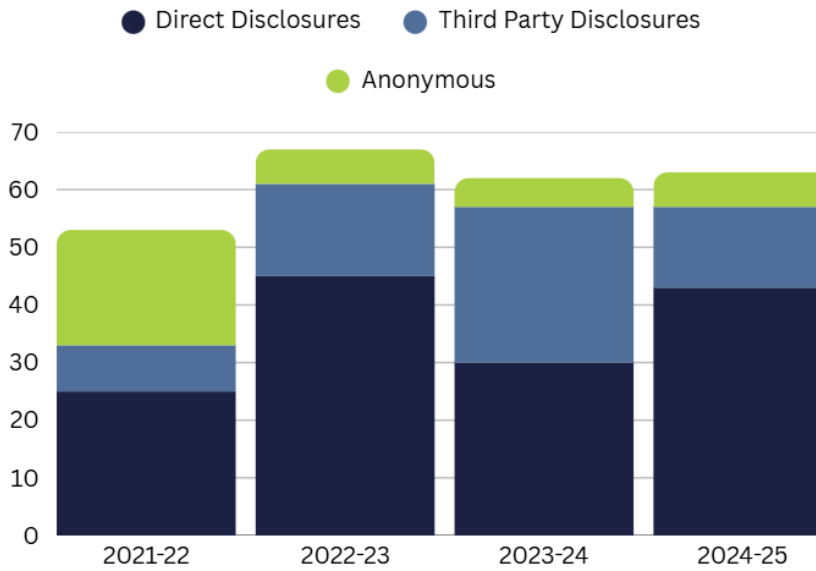
- Direct disclosures from victim(s)/survivor(s): n=43
- Third-party disclosures: n= 14
- Anonymous disclosures via REES platform: n= 6

There are two types of third-party disclosures:

1. Disclosures from Residence Life team members where the victim/survivor does not engage with the SVPRA.
2. Disclosures from individuals other than the victim/survivor, with or without their knowledge.

We are limited in how we can respond to third party disclosures; however, they do provide important insight into the current experience of SV on campus. It also allows Student Services to conduct risk assessments and monitor patterns of behaviour that we would not know otherwise. Figure 1 compares disclosure data between 2021-22 and 2024-25.

Figure 1 - Types of disclosure by academic year.

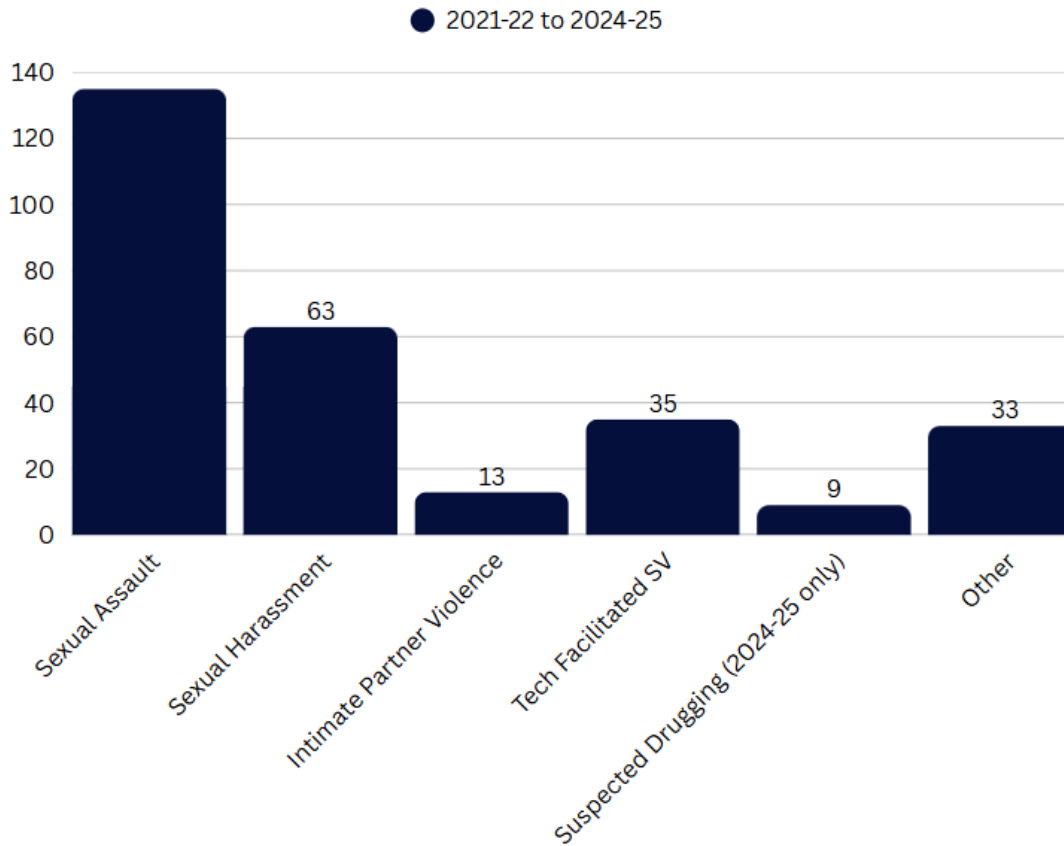


16.1 (iii) - Nature of violence disclosed

The StFX SV Policy defines sexual violence as: *“any act targeting a person’s sexuality, gender or gender expression, whether the act is physical or psychological in nature, that is committed, threatened or attempted against a person without that person’s consent, and includes the Criminal Code Offences of sexual assault, indecent exposure, voyeurism and non- consensual distribution of sexual/intimate images. Sexual violence also includes sexual harassment and stalking, cyber harassment, and cyber stalking of a sexual nature”.*

The SVPRA hears disclosures of a broad range of violent behaviours impacting the campus community each year. For ease of reporting and discussion, the SVPRA has organized disclosed acts of sexual violence into categories. These categories help the campus community understand the lived experience of those subjected to sexual and gender-based violence. However, they do not offer insight into the level of harm or trauma experienced by those subjected to these acts of violence. Figure 2 outlines the nature of violence disclosed to the SVPRA from 2021-22 to 2024-25 academic years.

Figure 2 – Nature of disclosed acts of violence 2021-22 to 2024-25

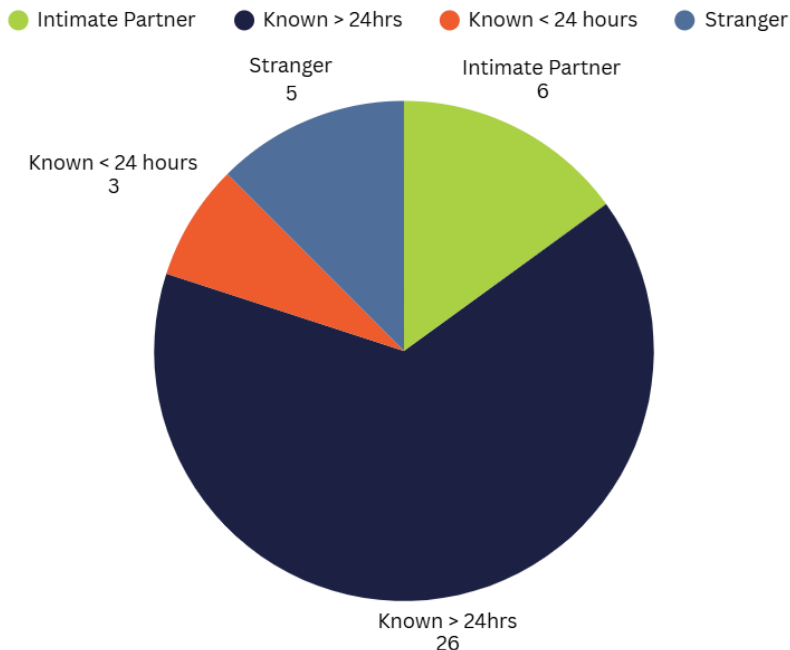


The StFX Sexual Violence Policy defines sexual assault as “Any kind of sexual contact without consent”. The Sexual Violence Prevention Committee has requested the SVPRA provide a more detailed breakdown of disclosed sexual assaults to better understand the true nature of the violence disclosed on campus. In 2024-25 the SVPRA received a total of 23 disclosures of Sexual Assault. Of those nine (9) described unwanted touching of a sexual nature (Kissing, touching, groping, grabbing without consent, or not stopping these actions once consent was revoked). Seven (7) of the disclosed assaults described non-consensual sex acts, which can include the actions above but typically extend to forced or coerced penetration/intercourse and five (5) individuals disclosed drug/alcohol facilitated sexual assaults. The latter is categorized when alcohol or drugs was used as a mechanism to facilitate violence (like spiking a drink or assaulting someone who has passed out from too much alcohol). Two (2) of the sexual assaults disclosed to the SVPRA this year included some of the behaviours listed above, but the violence resulted in physical injury and/or risk of lethality. The SVPRA is referring to this category as “aggravated” to refer to the increased risk to individuals and the campus community.

Relationship of alleged perpetrator to victim

In 2024-25 most acts of sexual violence disclosed to the SVPRa occurred among peers (n=51). Peer-to-peer violence refers to disclosed incidents of sexual violence where both the victim/survivor and the alleged perpetrator(s) are StFX students. In most instances, the victim/survivor knew the alleged perpetrator for at least 24 hours prior to the incident (n= 31). There were fifteen (15) disclosures alleging a stranger had perpetrated sexual violence, and the remainder did not disclose whether they had any relationship to the alleged perpetrator (n=17). These numbers reflect the accepted reality that in most cases of sexual violence, the perpetrator is known to the victim. The identity of the alleged perpetrator was disclosed to the SVPRa in 22 disclosures. At the request of the Sexual Violence Prevention Committee, we have applied the term “disclosure of historic SV” to refer to any disclosure of violence received this reporting year describing acts of sexual violence which occurred prior to the victim/survivor joining the StFX campus community. This year the SVPRa received five (5) historical disclosures of Sexual Violence. As we had not been collecting this data previously, there is no comparative data available.

Figure 4 – Relationship of victim/survivor and alleged perpetrator



Location of incidents

The location of incidents of SV are categorized as on-campus, off-campus, or not disclosed. This year there were 29 disclosures where SV occurred on campus, 19 occurred off campus, and

there were 15 incidents where the location was not disclosed. On campus violence typically occurs in residences (n= 25).

Immediate Measures & Accommodation

The StFX Sexual Violence Policy does not require a formal report of SV to initiate immediate safety measures. Immediate measures are **non-punitive** in nature and are imposed to ensure the requesting party can resume normal campus life safely. Typically, measures that only impact the victim/survivor are referred to as *accommodations* with the term *Immediate Measures* used to describe measures imposed on the alleged perpetrator. Table 2 lists the total number of immediate measures requested and approved under the SV policy from 2021-22 to 2024-25.

Table 2 – Immediate Measures granted under the SV policy 2021-22 to 2024-25

Immediate Measure	Total times imposed
no-contact orders	21
residence relocation	10
residence suspension	4
residence guest ban	13
restricted access to campus	6
other	6

16.1 (v, vi) Formal Reports of SV

Although formal reports of sexual violence under the policy have remained low, this year saw a three fold increase in formal reports of sexual violence from last year and the largest number of formal reports under the SV policy at StFX to date.

Eleven (11) formal investigations of SV/GBV were initiated in 2024-2025. Most were cases of peer-to-peer violence, where both the reporting party and respondents were students (n= 7). The University initiated four (4) investigations under section 6.4 of the policy due to multiple victims/survivors naming the same alleged perpetrator(s). All cases were investigated

internally by the Director of Human Rights and Equity or the Director of People & Culture except for one case which went external due to investigators’ capacity. The formal reporting process is clearly outlined in section 10 of the StFX Sexual Violence Policy.

Findings

There were six (6) individuals found responsible for violating the StFX SV policy in 2024-25. There was one (1) instance where the respondent was found not responsible for violating the SV policy. This year one formal report was withdrawn, another was suspended, and two (2) investigations were ongoing at time of reporting. This year there was one (1) request for formal review of the process and/or outcomes of an investigation. The findings of the review were not available at time of reporting.

Table 2 Formal Reports of SV investigated at StFX (2021-22 to 2024-25)

Formal Reports	2021-22 to 2024-25
Total	27
Withdrawn/suspended	5
Found responsible	17
Found not-responsible	5

Outcomes

Outcomes for respondents found responsible for SV policy violations are decided by the responsible authority on a case-by-case basis in consultation with key stakeholders (including reporting parties). This year the outcomes imposed on respondents included: continuation of immediate measures (n=6); Educational outcome (n=5); Team/leadership suspension (*); letter of apology (*); residence ban (*) campus ban (*) and suspension (*). Table 3 shows outcome data bridged over the last 4 years to protect the privacy and confidentiality of respondents.

(*) = total numbers are small and could be identifying to respondents if reported.

Table 3 - Outcome data (2021-22 – 2024-25)

Outcomes	Frequency
no-contact order	15
Educational outcome	13
Residence Suspension	2
Residence Guest Ban	7
Restricted Access to campus	4
Other	2

Alternative Resolutions

There was a total of six (6) requests for alternative resolutions this year. Three (3) were at the request of respondents and three (3) at the request of the victim/survivor. In three (3) instances the other party declined an alternative resolution. Two (2) proceeded with internal investigations and one (1) proceeded to an alternative resolution under People & Culture. In the instance that proceeded with an alternative process, both parties reported satisfaction with the outcome.

SVpra – Victim/survivor support and advocacy

The Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Advocate (SVpra) serves as a vital support for individuals impacted by sexual violence within the campus community. Acting as a confidential and trauma-informed resource, the SVpra provides a safe and accessible point of contact for students, staff, and faculty seeking guidance, support, or advocacy. Through personalized assistance, the Advocate helps individuals understand their options, navigate disclosure and reporting processes, and access medical, academic, and emotional supports both on and off campus. In addition, the SVpra plays a key role in safety planning and coordinating accommodations to ensure survivors feel secure and supported in their academic and personal lives. In 2024-25 the SVpra provided ~115 individual support meetings to members of the campus community. The majority were students (n=92). The type of support provided varies widely as does the duration of meetings. Meetings range from 30 minutes to 120 minutes depending on the needs of client with an average meeting duration of 90minutes. Types of support include (but are not limited to):

- Confidential disclosures (n = 44)

- Supportive counselling and empowerment (no data available)
- Safety Planning (safety assessments and planning are ongoing and occur with each new client and as needed).
- Accompaniment (interviews and appointments n= 15)
- *Academic/workplace accommodation – (n= ~82)

The majority of faculty are very supportive of requests for academic accommodation and support. There were only three (3) instances this year where faculty & teaching staff refused to accommodate a victim/survivor's legitimate request for extensions on assignments/course work. The SVPRA is not currently collecting data on the frequency specific types of academic support requests, however, the vast majority of requests are for extensions on assignments and coursework. Exam deferrals and leaves of absence are the most common request made to the associate VP Academic affairs and Deans. The SVPRA is heartened by how supportive our academic staff and faculty have been.

* Often academic accommodation, advocacy and referrals can be requested and implemented without the need for a support meeting. The numbers presented here may not accurately reflect the volume of support provided via email/phone.

Trends emerging from data in 2024-25

As per the StFX Sexual Violence Policy, the SVPRA is tasked with reporting emerging or identifiable trends in the data. The SVPRA is reporting on one noticeable trend identified by both the advocate and the director of Human Rights and Equity at StFX.

In 2024-25 male international students of color were disproportionately represented in reporting data. There were three cases in which the SVPRA initiated a formal report under section 6.4 of the policy due to repeat disclosures naming the same individual(s). All these respondents identified as Black men and were all international students, but from three different home countries.

The intersection of sexual violence and racism is well documented in the existing literature. It is accepted that while women, girls and gender diverse individuals of color are more likely to be subjected to sexual violence, Black men and other men of color are more likely to be reported for sexual violence than are White men.

This year, all three respondents acknowledged that they felt their race and international student status contributed to the formal action taken by the University. All three also articulated that cultural differences in accepted behaviour towards women in their countries of origin was a contributing factor to the harm experienced by the women who came forward.

This is a complex and nuanced issue that cannot be understood by the limited data available in this report, however, the SVPRA, SVPEC will work closely with the Human Rights and Equity advisors to ensure we are developing intersectional programming to address race, student status, and sexual violence on campus in 2025-26.

Sexual Violence Prevention Education

Introduction

This report provides an overview of our education and training programs, campus-wide initiatives, social media engagement, reflections and lessons learned, and a forward-looking plan for the 2025–2026 academic year. Key areas include:

- Waves of Change: Basic and Advanced Bystander Intervention Training
- Campus Events and Tabling Initiatives
- Social Media Strategy and Student Engagement
- Reflections and Organizational Learning
- Future Programming Plan and Signature Events

The 2024–2025 academic year marked a significant period of growth and impact for Visible@X, the sexual violence prevention response and education initiative at St. Francis Xavier University. Led by the Sexual Violence Prevention Response Advocate and Sexual Violence Prevention Education Coordinator, and supported by dedicated student educators and campus partners, Visible@X delivered proactive, trauma-informed, and community-centered programming throughout the year. This report outlines the scope, reach, and impact of our core initiatives, highlighting student engagement, learning outcomes, and cultural transformation across campus.

Student Education & Training Initiatives

Waves of Change: Bystander Intervention Training

Overview

Waves of Change is our signature bystander intervention program designed to empower students to recognize, disrupt, and respond to situations involving sexualized violence, harassment, and boundary violations. In 2024–2025, Visible@X offered both Basic and Advanced-level workshops, allowing for deepened engagement and tailored learning across student groups.

Total Sessions Delivered

- 18 training sessions
- 1,007 students trained

Training Types

- **Basic Bystander Intervention:** Introduces foundational concepts, including sexual violence definitions, consent, bystander roles, safe intervention strategies, and how to respond to disclosures.
- **Advanced Bystander Intervention:** Builds on core principles with scenario-based practice, peer influence analysis, and skill development for effective intervention.

Groups Trained

Fall 2024

- 800+ First-year students (Orientation Week)
- Women's Basketball, Men's and Women's Soccer
- Cross Country & Track and Field, Rugby, Football, Hockey, Basketball

Winter 2025

- Men's Basketball (Advanced)
- Women's Rugby (Advanced), Women's and Men's Soccer (Advanced)
- Women's Basketball (Advanced), Track and Field (Advanced), Football (Advanced)
- Open Student Session (Basic), Women's and Gender Studies Class (Basic)

Impact Highlights

- **Cultural Shift:** Athletic teams increasingly recognize their role in creating safer campus culture.
- **Engagement Growth:** Higher receptivity and openness, notably from teams previously resistant to intervention education.
- **Peer Leadership:** Students expressed interest in leading future sessions.
- **Layered Learning:** Advanced training fostered deeper discussion and more confident intervention practice.

Guest Lectures and class presentations

The SVPRA and SVPEC are happy to develop guest lectures or presentations at the request of STFX faculty. This year we were invited into the classroom three times. All three invitations came from different faculty members in the Women & Gender Studies faculty.

Campus Events and Initiatives

Visible@X hosted and co-facilitated 15 campus-wide events, reaching approximately 1,400 participants. Our events ranged from tabling campaigns and rallies to healing-focused spaces and collaborative wellness outreach.

Fall Term Highlights

- **The Blitz / New Student Training (Sept 2)** – Waves of Change for incoming students.
Impact: Established early awareness of consent and campus values; need identified for more residence staff collaboration.
- **Healing Blooms (Sept 19) in collaboration with Flourish@X** – Survivor-centered floral event.
Impact: High participation and emotional resonance; valued as peaceful and empowering.
- **Take Back the Night with Sisters in Spirit (Oct 2)** – March focusing on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit People.
Impact: Strengthened collaboration with Indigenous students and community trust.
- **Scrunchies Against Sexual Violence (Oct 3)** – Drug-facilitated sexual assault awareness through crafting.
Impact: Small group, but intimate and meaningful conversations occurred.
- **Not Your Typical Sex Ed with Venus Envy (Oct 8)** – (Led by GSD Advisory) Inclusive, pleasure-based sex education.
Impact: Positive student response; strong demand for more inclusive education.
- **Consent and Ice Cream (Oct 9)** – Drop-in consent talk with treats.
Impact: Modest turnout, but deep, impactful discussions held.
- **Trans Day of Remembrance Panel (Nov 19)** – In partnership with Gender and Sexual Diversity Office and Transcontigenta.
Impact: Elevated trans voices and explored gender-based violence through lived experience.

- **Mask of Masculinity (Nov 18–22) in collaboration with Student Life team**– Reflection and dialogue on emotional suppression in men.
Impact: Over 50 responses displayed throughout November; several male students engaged in future Visible@X involvement.
- **Movember Event (Nov 20) in collaboration with Flourish@X**– Men's health and violence prevention tabling.
Impact: Strong engagement; opened dialogue on men's emotional health.
- **Evergreen Healing Blooms, collaboration with Bloomfield hub (Nov 28)** – Winter edition of Healing Blooms.
Impact: Sustained attendance; reaffirmed importance of creative healing spaces.
- **National Day of Remembrance (Dec 6) in collaboration with Antigonish Women Centre** – Vigil for victims of École Polytechnique massacre.
Impact: Unified community remembrance and institutional reflection.

Winter Term Highlights

- **Mental Health Awareness Info Booth (Jan 23)** – With Flourish@X and Naomi Society.
Impact: Linked sexual violence prevention to mental wellbeing.
- **Sexual Health Week (Feb 3–7)** – Tabling and residence outreach in collaboration with Student Life. Incredibly successful event in terms of participation and engagement.
Engagement: 150+ participants; 45 STI tests (StFX) vs. 42 (Acadia).
Impact: Increased recognition of Visible@X as an accessible, educational presence.
- **Love Me or Love Me Not (Feb 13)** – Relationship red/green flag game.
Impact: Sparked discussion and student curiosity around dating patterns.
- **Ladies & Leaves (Mar 8)** collaboration with Bloomfield hub– Potting and reflection event for International Women's Week.
Impact: Calming, well-attended space to reflect on growth and womanhood.
- **Sexual Assault Awareness Month Coffee House in collaboration with The Grind House (Mar 28)** – Music and performance event.
Impact: Powerful kickoff to the month; creative expression led to healing and solidarity.

Social Media Strategy

Instagram served as a powerful outreach tool, enhancing education and event engagement.

Highlights

- **Reels and Stories** during Sexual Health Week sparked wide interest and follower growth.
- **Interactive Polls and Prompts** helped students share perspectives on gender, sexuality, and relationships.
- **Student-led Content** became the most shared and celebrated posts.

Impact

- Increased visibility of the Visible@X brand and mission.
- Students began identifying the office as a key support and education space.
- Based on feedback, a **TikTok account** will be launched in the coming year to reach more students in authentic and informal ways.

Reflections & Learnings

- **Early Orientation Programming** is crucial for setting cultural expectations.
- **Healing-centered events** like Healing Blooms provide essential support spaces.
- **Collaborative programming** increases reach and authenticity, especially with equity-seeking student groups.
- **Gender-inclusive outreach** remains a priority, especially in engaging male students and trans communities.
- **Strategic timing and pacing** of events matter—student burnout impacts attendance.
- **Social media** continues to be one of the most effective tools for normalizing conversations among peers.
- **Evening residence outreach** will be a future area of focus to improve accessibility and connection in familiar student spaces.
- **Layered educational models** like the addition of Advanced Waves of Change deepen engagement and empower student leaders.
- **Creativity in outreach** (e.g., competitions, music, interactive games) proves vital in reaching students authentically.

Staff & Faculty Training Initiatives

Despite the creation and hiring of the Sexual Violence Prevention Education Coordinator in October, the SVPRA did not meet the goals set for staff & faculty training again in 2024-25. Education delivered to staff and faculty this year included a 60 minute presentation on the StFX SV policy and our approach to responding to disclosures at New Faculty Orientation in August 2024.

Looking ahead:

- The SVPRA and SVPEC will offer a “Summer workshop series” for faculty and staff in July/Aug 2025. Topics will include:
 - Putting policy to practice – StFX SV policy
 - Responding to Disclosures
 - Bagels and Boundaries for faculty

Acknowledging the Heart of This Work: Our Student Team

At the core of Visible@X are the students who bring compassion, creativity, and courage into everything we do. When we began the academic year, we were joined by four incredible student educators: Lauren MacDougall (Coordinator), Emilia Stewart, Akwaima Akpan, and Savannah Hanifen. From day one, they led with heart. They weren’t just educators, they were collaborators, visionaries, and constant sources of inspiration.

In the winter term, our team continued with three of these leaders, Lauren, Emilia, and Akwaima, who became the backbone of our programming. Their energy, bold ideas, and ability to hold space for tough conversations kept this work both grounded and alive. We’re especially proud that Emilia dedicated her undergraduate thesis to exploring the impact of Waves of Change training, an academic reflection of her deep personal investment in this work.

Though Lauren and Emmy graduated this year, we’re lucky to still have Emmy with us, now in a new program and continuing to support the work she helped shape.

We also welcomed two new peer educators, Marley Ryan and May Bergeron, who have already brought fresh energy and insight to our team.

And looking ahead, we’re excited to share that 12 additional student facilitators have been hired to support Waves of Change training during 2025 Orientation. Their passion ensures that our incoming students will be welcomed into a community grounded in care, accountability, and connection.

To all of them, thank you for showing up so fully. Your voices, your effort, your stories, and your presence have made this work matter in ways that can't always be measured but are always felt.

Acknowledging Our Collaborators

Collaboration has been a key part of the work of Visible@X this year. Most of our events were created in partnership with others, and this approach helped us reach students in more meaningful and engaging ways. Working together allowed us to connect across different communities, offer diverse perspectives, and build a stronger foundation for prevention and education.

We're grateful to all the collaborators who supported and contributed to this work, on campus and beyond. Thank you to the Bloomfield Hub, the Student Life team, the Gender and Sexual Diversity team, International Student Peer Educators, and community partners like the Antigonish Women's Resource Centre, Naomi Society, Venus Envy, REES, and Acadia University. Your support made this year's programming more thoughtful, inclusive, and effective.

As we look ahead to the next academic year, we're excited to continue these partnerships and build new ones, as we prepare for more campus-wide initiatives. We know that collaboration continues to be one of the most effective ways to create a safer and more supportive campus community.

Conclusion

The 2024–25 academic year reflects substantial progress in strengthening StFX's sexual violence prevention and response strategy. Guided by the recommendations of the Independent Review Panel, the university has implemented key structural changes, including the addition of a full-time Sexual Violence Prevention Education Coordinator, and has expanded its education, outreach, and support services.

With this renewed commitment and investment of additional resources, Visible@X delivered bystander intervention training to over 1000 students, hosted 15 campus-wide events, and provided individualized support to more than 100 community members. The increase in formal reports and disclosures suggests improved awareness of available resources and growing confidence in institutional processes.

The university has also made strides in data transparency, policy revision, and provincial collaboration. The updated Sexual Violence Policy is scheduled to take effect before the 2025–

26 academic year, and new initiatives are planned to enhance faculty and staff training, culturally grounded programming, and student engagement.

Looking ahead, the focus will remain on continuous improvement, cross-campus collaboration, and the implementation of evidence-informed practices. Visible@X will continue to serve as a central resource in advancing a safer, better informed, and supportive campus community.

Appendix A – Sexual Violence Prevention Education Plan 2025-26

This Sexual Violence Prevention Education Plan outlines our strategic vision for the 2025–2026 academic year, rooted in evidence-informed practices and student-centered learning. Guided by the CDC’s STOP SV technical package—an integrated framework that emphasizes strengthening supports, teaching protective skills, empowering individuals, creating safe environments, and supporting survivors—our approach is both comprehensive and action-oriented. In alignment with the StFX Student Experience and Opportunities Plan, our programming is designed to foster identity and belonging, interpersonal skills, cultural humility, community engagement, and wellness. Through a series of thoughtfully curated modules, workshops, and awareness campaigns, we aim to bridge strategy with practice—building understanding, capacity, and connection across our campus. What follows is a detailed overview of the initiatives that will shape our prevention efforts in the year ahead.

CDC Stop-SV Technical Package – evidence informed best practices

	Strategy	Evidence Based Approaches
S	Promote Social Norms that protect against violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bystander Approaches • Mobilizing men and boys as allies
T	Teach Skills to prevent sexual violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social-emotional learning • Teaching healthy, safe dating and intimate relationship skills to students • Promoting healthy and inclusive sexuality • Empowerment based training
O	Provide Opportunities to empower and support women and gender diverse people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen/create economic supports • Strengthen/create leadership opportunities
P	Create Protective environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving safety & monitoring on campus • Consistently applying campus policies • Addressing community-level risks through environmental approaches
SV	Support Victims/Survivors to lessen harms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person-centered services • Specific supports/resources for victims/survivors of SV

StFX Student Experience and Opportunities Plan

Alignment with the StFX Student Experience and Opportunities Plan

The Sexual Violence (SV) Prevention Education Plan is intentionally designed to align with the broader goals of the **StFX Student Experience and Opportunities Plan**, ensuring that prevention efforts are not only evidence-based but also developmentally meaningful and student-centered. This alignment strengthens the impact of our programming by embedding SV prevention within the fabric of the student experience.

At the heart of this integration are five core student learning goals:

- **Identity & Belonging:** Programming fosters inclusive environments where students feel recognized, respected, and valued. Initiatives such as *Consent is Visible@X* and *Stories of Strength* create space for students to explore their identities and connect with others through shared values of respect and safety.
- **Interpersonal Skills:** Trainings like *Waves of Change* equip students with essential communication, intervention, and boundary-setting skills—tools that are critical for building healthy relationships and preventing harm.
- **Community Engagement:** Events such as the *Moose Hide Campaign* and *Mic On Campus* encourage students to take active roles in shaping a safer, more accountable campus culture. These initiatives promote peer leadership and collective responsibility.
- **Cultural Humility:** Programming such as *Heart of the Berry* and the *Trans Day of Remembrance* centers diverse voices and lived experiences, fostering respectful cross-cultural understanding and challenging systems of oppression that contribute to sexual violence.
- **Wellness & Coping:** Survivor-centered activities like *Healing Blooms* and wellness-focused events such as *Consent & Comfort Snacks* support emotional resilience, normalize healing, and promote mental health as a key component of prevention.

By aligning SV prevention efforts with these learning goals, the plan ensures that students are not only informed but also empowered to contribute meaningfully to a culture of consent, care, and accountability. This strategic integration bridges institutional vision with everyday student experiences—making prevention education both relevant and transformative.

From Vision to Action

Bridging Strategy to Practice

Now that we've explored the CDC STOP SV prevention strategy and the StFX Student Experience and Opportunity Strategic Plan, its pillars and student learning goals, let's shift focus to how our Sexual Violence Prevention Education Plan puts that vision into practice.

Through thoughtfully aligned modules, workshops, and student-driven campaigns, each initiative you're about to see reflects the commitment to building understanding, capacity, and connection across our campus community.

➤ Trainings

Consent is Visible@X

Part of "X starts here" module

- STOP SV Strategy: S, T
- Pillar: Build Understanding
- Learning Goal: Identity & Belonging
- Description: A mandatory online module integrated into the X Starts Here Orientation program. It introduces all new students to the language of consent, the FRIES model, power dynamics, and institutional resources.
- Target Groups: First Year Students
- Completion Goal: All incoming students are expected to complete this training before arriving on campus. If not completed by the end of the academic year, a registration hold will be placed on their student account.
- **Waves of Change (Basic Bystander Training)**
- STOP SV Strategy: S, T
- Pillar: Build Capacity
- Learning Goal: Interpersonal Skills
- Description: Consent-focused bystander education delivered to over 800 students during orientation. Introduces intervention tools and core SV definitions.
- Target Groups: First Year Students in, Residents, Athletes, Student Leaders & **Club Sports (new)**
- Completion Goals: Incoming Students living in residence will be trained during Welcome Weekend. All Varsity athletes in Fall sports will receive Basic Bystander Training within the first 8 weeks of the term. Winter sport athletes will complete this training within the first term. Club sports teams will be offered Waves of Change training in the fall term for the first time.
- **Waves of Change (Advanced Training)**
- STOP SV Strategy: S, T, P
- Pillar: Build Capacity, Build Connection
- Learning Goal: Community Engagement
- Description: Scenario-based workshops for student leaders and athletes. Focuses on peer influence, coercion, power dynamics, and context-specific interventions.
- Target Groups: Varsity Athletes, Student leaders

- Completion Goal: All Varsity athletes will receive Advanced Bystander Training before Reading Week of the Winter term.

Visible@X Programming Plan 2025–2026

Timing	Focus Area	Proposed Initiative	Delivery Format	Target Group	Expected Impact	STOP SV Strategy	Pillar	Learning Goal
Sept	SV Prevention & Consent	The Blitz: Waves of Change	First-year student training during O-Week	First-year students	Establish foundation in sexual violence prevention and consent culture.	S, T	Build Capacity	Interpersonal Skills
Sept 19	Survivor Support	Healing Blooms: Autumn Edition	Survivor-centered floral activity	Open to all students, survivors	Normalize healing and foster emotional reflection.	SV	Build Connection	Wellness & Coping
Sept 30 <i>National Day for Truth and Reconciliation / Orange Shirt Day</i>	Indigenous Allyship	Truth and Reconciliation Tabling	Tabling with Indigenous Student Affairs	General student body	Encourage learning and allyship among non-Indigenous students.			
Early Oct (Week 1)	Consent Culture	Consent Awareness Week	Week-long tabling + games + speakers	All students, residence outreach	Deepen understanding of consent in a visible, participatory way.	S, T, P	Build Understanding	Community Engagement
Early Oct (Week 2)	Indigenous Allyship & Reflection	Heart of the Berry: Strawberry Reflections	Culturally grounded reflection card activity	All students	Uplift Indigenous teachings and support healing practices.	O	Build Understanding	Cultural Humility
Mid-Oct	MMIWG2S Awareness	Moose Hide Campaign Collaboration	Distribution, info cards	General campus, Indigenous communities	Foster commitment to ending violence against Indigenous women and girls.	O, P	Build Connection	Community Engagement
Oct	Boundaries & Relationships	Bagels & Boundaries	Workshop with food and facilitated discussion	Residence outreach, tabling in every residence	Empower students to set and maintain emotional	T	Build Capacity	Interpersonal Skills

					and physical boundaries.			
Oct	Global Perspectives	Love Across Borders	Interactive map with dating customs worldwide	International students, General students	Encourage cultural curiosity and normalize differences in dating.	T	Build Understanding	Cultural Humility
Oct (Midterm Week)	Self-Care & Consent	Consent & Comfort Snacks	Residence drop-in with cozy items	Residence students	Reinforce boundaries and support mental health in a familiar space.	SV, P	Build Connection	Wellness & Coping
Nov <i>Men's Mental Health Awareness Month</i>	Healthy Masculinity	Mask of Masculinity & Movember	Tabling, reflection walls, art displays	Men, male-identifying students	Encourage men to reflect, express, and engage with prevention work.	S	Build Understanding	Identity & belonging
Nov (Mid)	Male Allyship	"Nailed It, Bro"	Nail painting & casual conversation	Men	Break gender norms and invite men into the conversation.	S	Build Connection	Interpersonal Skills
Nov 20 <i>Trans Day of Remembrance</i>	Trans Awareness	Trans Day of Remembrance Vigil & Panel	Evening panel + ceremony	Trans and gender-diverse students	Center and uplift trans voices in gender-based violence work.	SV	Build Understanding	Cultural Humility
Dec 6 <i>National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women</i>	GBV Remembrance	National Day of Remembrance Vigil	Ceremony + engineering recognition	Campus community	Honour lives lost and recommit to prevention and advocacy.	P, SV	Build Understanding	Community Engagement
Jan	Relationship Wellness	Boundaries & Intimacy Workshop	Storytelling + role-play activities	Residence Outreach	Explore the links between emotional health and relational safety.			

Feb 3–7 <i>Sexual and Reproductive Health Awareness Week - Canada</i>	Sexual Wellness	Sexual Health Week	Residence visits, tabling, Jeopardy Game	Residence outreach, Games, competitions among residences	Demystify STIs, contraception, and pleasure-focused health education.	T, S	Build Capacity	Wellness & Coping
Feb 14 <i>Valentine's Day</i>	Relationship Literacy	Love Me or Love Me Not	Interactive red/green flag game	All students	Encourage critical thinking about relationship patterns.	T	Build Understanding	Interpersonal Skills
March 8 <i>International Women's Day</i>	Women's Empowerment	Ladies & Leaves	Potting and reflection session	Women-identifying students	Celebrate care, growth, and connection.	O	Build Connection	Wellness & Coping
March <i>Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM)</i>	Creative Survivor Voice	Stories of Strength Zine + Coffee House	Call for stories + reading launch	Survivors, Creative writers	Celebrate creative resistance and student storytelling.	SV	Build Connection	Identity & Belonging
March–April	Peer Engagement	Mic On Campus – SAAM	Reels + social media Q&A	All students	Normalize conversations on consent, dating, and SV prevention.	S	Build Connection	Community Engagement

Looking Ahead – 2025–2026

The upcoming year's prevention plan continues to grow from student insight, lived experience, and our collective commitment to cultural change. With over 20 events planned, including foundational modules, culturally grounded reflections, visibility campaigns, and creative storytelling, we're keeping momentum alive.

Whether it's through residence-based peer sessions, athlete involvement, social media engagement, tabling, workshops or other campaigns, we're making prevention work visible, personal, and ongoing.