

# Sexual Assault Prevention Education for Boys and Male Youth

## Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre

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## **Executive Summary**

Kawartha Sexual Assault Center (KSAC) is interested in exploring the establishment of sexual assault education and prevention programs targeted to boys and male youth in its catchment area. The student will undertake a comparative critical analysis examining youth initiatives and male focused programs nationally and internationally (e.g. White Ribbon Campaign, Draw the Line Campaign Men of Strength Programs etc.) The research and results will be focused on three groups: elementary, high school, college and university.

## **Introduction**

The project focus on existing programs aimed at educating youth boys and males on sexual assault prevention. This is not possible without first framing the issues at hand concerning the statistics about sexual assault in Canada and the attitudes and beliefs that men in Canada hold in regards to sexual assault and its prevention. This background knowledge on the issue is important for this report but it is pivotal for the success of any program aiming at lowering statistics of sexual assault. After framing the issue, promising practices in engaging boys and young men in sexual assault prevention are presented.

I wish to disclose my position before beginning this report. I was tasked with making recommendations for the Peterborough community. Through reviewing the literature, key promising practices emerged that I believe would work for a program in Peterborough. However I am not from the Peterborough community. I have spent four years here where my experience has been isolated mainly to Trent University. It is also important to note that I am not an expert on sexual assault and educational programs aimed at sexual assault prevention. Lastly I would like to recognize that this research is aimed at boys and young males. I am not a male. Although I have dealt with the issue of sexual assault and sexual harassment in my own personal life, I do not know how these issues are experienced by males.

## **Research Questions and Methodology**

The research methodology had two main components. The first consisted of a comparative analysis of literature and follow up interviews with key informants. The second component involved recommendations for Peterborough. This consisted of conducting interviews with key stakeholders in Peterborough including Lisa Clarke from KSAC and Jack Lapum from the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board.

The analysis of literature began with researching and reviewing existing academic literature and grey literature on educational programming. This was done to create a basic knowledge of what constitutes sexual assault and the programs and approaches to prevent it. The existing literature will come from a series of sources provided by Lisa Clarke. The core research questions were about the determinants of success and failure for programs directed at boys and male youth in other jurisdictions. The second core research question examined during the literature review was how masculinity plays a part in sexual assault and what strategies have been used to challenge masculinity in regards to sexual assault.

The research will be used to determine which programs demonstrate promising practices in prevention efforts including bystander intervention. Three semi structured interviews were conducted with key informants in organizations dealing with the issue of sexual assault. The core objective was to determine what works and what doesn't work for their programs and how they have measured

success. Programs and policies on an international level were also researched to add to the literature of what may fit with Peterborough.

The second part consisted of conducting interviews in the Peterborough area. The first with Lisa Clarke from the host organization and the second will be with Jack Lapum from the Kawartha Pine Ridge District. Other key informants from within Peterborough will be interviewed. The purpose of these interviews was to gauge the potential benefits from a program directed at educating boys and male youth on sexual assault protection. The interviews were also used to determine the specific issues surrounding sexual assault in Peterborough.

## Literature Review

There is a growing focus on the issue of engaging men and boys for the prevention and reduction of gender based violence (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). There is a growing acceptance in Canada and across the globe that men and boys need to be involved to achieve gender equality and to end gender based violence (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011).

Gender based violence can be narrowed down to two root causes:

1. Fundamental condition of gender inequality for women;
2. The violent, harmful and controlling aspects of masculinities which are the result of patriarchal power imbalances.

The White Ribbon Campaign is the largest effort of men and boys working to end violence against women and girls. It began in Canada in 1991 in response to the death of 14 women at the December 6<sup>th</sup> Montreal Massacre (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). It was one of the first campaigns that started as a grassroots movement which aimed at engaging men in taking responsibility and having an active role in stopping violence against women (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). It takes the perspective that men can have a different role beyond being the perpetrator and instead can be an ally in stopping gender based violence.



Recently, over the past decade or so, there has been a shift from why we should engage men in sexual assault prevention to how we will engage men to prevent sexual assaults (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). This comes from numerous studies and testimonies from workers that believe men's role in prevention work is critical. Firstly, this is because work with men and boys is necessary as statistically they remain the major perpetrators, therefore are the target audience for changes in attitudes and social norms (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). Secondly, work with men and boys can be effective. Data, lessons and best practices point to the fact that this may be the missing component to decades of past work (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). Thirdly, work with men can have a positive transformation impact for the lives of women and girls, but also for the lives of men and boys (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). This approach can have an impact on sexual assault incidences but can also have a greater positive impact for society at large. Men do not just take on the role of perpetrator. They can possess positive roles in regards to preventing sexual assault. These positive roles can free them from the harmful and limiting aspects of masculinity. By engaging with men and young boys the issue of gender inequality can be brought into the spotlight.

In addition to creating positive roles for males by engaging with them to prevent sexual assault, this approach also helps to eliminate the negative effect of gender based violence and masculinity on men or what is called a "crises of masculinity" (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011, p. 10). Although men largely benefit from the system of patriarchy there are also costs including economic costs whereby men are expected to work longer hours because of the pressure to provide for the nuclear family structure (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). The gendered aspects of the work force have effects on overall prosperity for society. In societies that have equal access to education, employment experience improved health outcomes and experience the less violence the evidence is

clear those countries perform better on every indicator (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). There are societal costs which link the effects of patriarchy to crime, war and violence (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). There are emotional and psychological costs of masculinity. This includes conformity into traditional masculine stereotypes. This can lead to depression and disconnection. Lastly, there are health costs including higher suicide rates, stress related illnesses, and more likely to be in jail for those who are the perpetrators of sexual violence (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011).

In Canada, among experts in the field, there has been an acceptance that men need to be part of the conversation, playing a positive role, in stopping gender based violence and sexual assault. Yet in Canada there is not a national organization or network that is working for gender equity and examining violence against women on a strategic national level (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). Instead efforts are local and often small scale. One issue is that often these programs are not grounded in evidence-based best practices (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). Yet there is not enough investment to fund research into these existing programs and their promising practices. This research in turn would help to create a base for nationwide best practices. If there was a national strategic body to organize and articulate the research findings it could create a national narrative of promoting gender equality and ending gender based violence. There is a need to fund project mapping which will provide evidence to decide what is needed for “capacity building, skills development, and network building” (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011, p. 6). In Canada there are still major gaps, particularly in a number of key areas. There is a lack of research into men’s, male youths and boys beliefs and attitudes on gender equality and gender based violence. This lack of evidence, in regards to engaging men to lower incidences of sexual assault leads to a lack of consistency and evidence based

in program development. There is not a national network or forum to encourage conversation and to create a collective national strategy. Another key component missing is a gendered approach to early childhood education such as character development based in promoting gender equality at a young age (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011).

Part of the reason that there is a lack of research and of organizations dealing with the issue of gender based violence is that in Canada violence against women receives very little political attention in regards to public policy, the justice system, public health and safety issue (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). This does not reflect the reality of the everyday lives of Canadians. Statistics show that gender based violence has an impact on a large part of the Canadian population. In fact every minute of every day, a Canadian woman or child is being sexually assaulted (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011, p. 7) Statistics Canada found that just over half of Canadian women, 51%, have experienced at least one incident of physical or sexual violence since the age of 16. Only 22% of spousal violence victims stated that the incident was reported to the police and in 2009 victims were less likely to report an incident than they were in 2004 (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). This has an impact on the women and families experiencing the sexual violence that is beyond the scope of this project to explain. Research shows a person witnessing and or experiencing violence early in life are more likely to be violent or experience violence later in life (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). UNICEF estimates that 360,000 children in Canada are exposed to violence. There are costs beyond individuals and their families as spousal violence costs are estimated at about \$4 billion annually accounting for expenditures related to social services, criminal justices, lost employment and health care (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011).

According to Lisa Clarke, from the Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre, sexual assault incidences are intrinsically linked to power and control (Clarke, 2015). In regards to engaging men in the conversation in preventing sexual assault it begins with the fact that 97% of perpetrators are men (Clarke, 2015). Identifying and developing critical thinking skills as a key element in an educational program which is aimed at boys and youth males in sexual assault prevention. It is about males being able to question what they see and hear and what they are witnessing in every day interactions and in the media (Clarke, 2015). To critically think about what advertisers and the media are portraying as feminine and masculine and how gendered power structures impact our government system.

The statistics on sexual assault in Canada remain staggering and it remains shockingly common. Statistics Canada found one in four girls and one in eight boys have been sexually abused by the time they are eighteen (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). Other estimates from Kawartha Sexual Assault Center put conservative estimates on sexual assault at 1 in 2 girls and 1 in 5 boys will be sexually assaulted at some time in their lives (Kawartha Sexual Assault Center, 2014). For sexual assault, girls and young women between the ages of 15-24 are the most likely victims. The myth around 'stranger danger' is dispelled by the fact that 69% of those assaulted were assaulted by people known to them (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). The fact is that sexual assault happens within relationships and marriages. The facts about sexual assault make learning to identify sexual assault and understanding the options to get justice ever more important. It is important to know the fact and not the myths to properly understand what sexual assault is and to be able to identify it when it happens. College and university aged individuals are in the high risk category for a sexual assault to occur. With undergraduates at Canadian university there are 29% of reported incidents of sexual assault that happened with dating relationships (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011, p. 14). Rape

in marriage did not become illegal until 1983. Despite the legislation 29% of women who have been married or lived in a common law marriage have been assaulted by their partner (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). Close to one third of university students and women in marriages have experienced sexual assault and reported it. This alarming statistic points to the fact that sexual assault does not primarily happen exclusively with strangers. Instead it is important to know the facts about sexual assault and to feel empowered to seek safety and help when an incident has occurred.

Sexual assault is a horrendous crime. One that is too common within Canada. It impacts everyday relationships and has an impact on both genders, on politics and the economy. The issue of sexual assault is linked to an overarching issue of gender inequality and patriarchy. Sexual assault can be linked to sexual objectification and sexual harassment which women experience in their everyday lives. All of these experiences stem from the constructed idea of men dominating women which is supported through patriarchy and gender inequality. In a survey of girls between the ages of 9 and 19 80% reported experiencing some form of sexual harassment and half reported experiencing it daily (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). Sexual harassment includes sexual jokes, comments, gestures, threats (Clarke, 2015). Sexual objectification is women's sexuality being repressed, controlled and commercialized (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). This happens within relationships, in everyday interactions, and it permeates our media. For Clark (2015), sexual assault is not the only issue but instead oppression is the issue. Gender-based violence is the issue. Sexual abuse for children and sexual assault and different types of harassment, workplace harassment, and harassment in the hallways, street harassment, all of this is part of the continuation of oppression (Clarke, 2015).

Sexual objectification is about promoting an “acceptable” form of pleasure for men’s sexual gratification (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). This is amplified by the availability of resources such as online porn that convey this idea. Young boys and males are bombarded with the easy access of online porn. As Clark (2015) stated, most of the time parents have no idea about what their children are up to and this issue was brought up a lot in the focus groups with frontline staff. It is important for parents and young boys and male youth to have open and constructive conversations about sexuality and what the media presents. It is important for parents to understand information about healthy relationships and sexual consent and be able to articulate that to their young boys and male youth (Clarke, 2015). Being bombarded with sexual images of females and the open availability of sexualized content such as porn has created the idea (for some men) that woman’s bodies are at men’s disposal for admiring and consuming (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011, p. 14). Young men also suffer from the sexualisation of the female body. If sexual objectification is about the presumed right of a man to dominate a woman than boys and young males are pressured to accept this image. It is not just a gender construct that girls and young women are pressured to accept but also boys and young men are pressured to assume their role. Young men are too often encouraged and praised for having sexual prowess, having multiple partners and harmful masculine sexual activities (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). To begin such a process it is about giving support to young men in thinking about what it means to be a man and how society is representing them. Moreover, it entails questioning if that is authentic to who they are and then switching that lens and understanding how society represents women and if that’s what women are actually like (Clarke, 2015).

In order to change sexual assault and sexual harassment, attitudes and beliefs need to change. There must be a change in the social construct that men are supposed to dominate and women are

supposed to be subservient. This is intrinsically tied to gender inequality and women being dominated through the patriarchal system. In regards to sexual assault, beliefs play a huge role as to why it is so prevalent and why it too often goes unreported. These beliefs are held by both men and women and are perpetuated in society and mainstream media. A pivotal piece of educational programs needs to be aimed at dispelling sexual violence myths. This would mean an attempt to deconstruct the beliefs that society, in this case boys and young males, hold in regards to sexual assault and instead replace them with the facts and prevention strategies. The conversation needs to talk about rape culture, and deconstruct what rape culture is because in part it enables sexual assault and sexual violence (Clarke, 2015). Rape culture is made up of a number of myths. These myths surround gender, rape and men who are supposed to be and what is the role of men in society (Clarke, 2015). Such sexual violence myths include, but are not limited to, the belief that men's violence is misconstrued as impulsive and uncontrollable (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). In regards to boy and male youth there is the prevalent belief that "boys will be boys" which is the misconception that sexual violence is somehow of men's sexual development (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). Deconstructing masculinity is a pivotal piece of education programs. Teaching what is healthy masculinity and making it known that harmful aspects of masculinity are not natural. With this being included in education programs aimed at sexual assault prevention, it places boys and young males in a position which they can learn to understand their role in the issue. In addition it is also about the fact that the program can have positive potential for them as they can be released from negative aspects of masculinity. Other myths include the myth of "stranger danger" which is debunked by the fact the 69% of people know the person who sexually assaulted them. Another myth which is that sexual violence is somehow created or caused by a women's sexuality (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). Dispelling this

myth will change the responsibility of sexual assault. This leads to other myths being dispelled including blaming the victim. Instead it directs attention to creating support for the victim and holding the perpetrator responsible.

An important aspect of any educational program is exploring the idea of enthusiastic consent. This is important in regards to creating healthy relationships but also in preventing sexual assaults and sexual violence. Creating a safe environment in these programs to have discussion on their desires and openly communicate before and along the way of sexual experiences (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). This is for programs aimed at educating boys and male youth but it is certainly applicable to girls and young women. For Lisa (2015) it is important to have consent as a part of the main conversation. Understanding what consent is, and that consent is not yes or no but a constant affirmative yes (Clarke, 2015). In addition there needs to be conversations and understanding on the effects of alcohol on sexual consent (Clarke, 2015).

There are many marginalized communities and populations that experience unique forms of sexual assault but in addition often experience heightened incidences of sexual assault because of their are marginalized. Moreover the resources and strategies in prevention and in seeking help after a sexual assault may not apply to these marginalized communities. These groups include but are not limited to the LGBT and Transgendered community, the elderly, people with disabilities, and Indigenous communities. For a short example as to how experiences of sexual assault differ we can look to Indigenous communities. The impact of colonialism, institutional violence and personal and systematic racism has led to the fact that Indigenous women between the ages of 24-44 are five times more likely to die as a result of violence than any other women of the same age group (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). A campaign in Ontario called Kizhaay Anishinaabe Niin (I am a Kind



Man) utilizes primary, secondary and tertiary prevention strategies (these strategies are introduced in the findings section). This campaign promotes men to learn about the causes of violence against women and girls and invites them to join in solidarity to end this violence (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). The campaign is also about providing a safe place for men to learn their roles and responsibility in this process to end the violence against Indigenous girls and women. This is one example of a program that is designed to reach a specific target audience. This approach is culturally sensitive to the realities that indigenous communities face. In order for any approach to be practical, whether it is for a marginalized population or not, it needs to be culturally and place specific in order to reflect the needs and realities that each community faces with their own experiences of sexual assault.

From the Casey Report, three programs demonstrated promising practices including Expect Respect Program, Men Can Stop Rape's, Men of Strength Clubs and Mentors in Violence Prevention. There are limitations for programs engaging men in sexual assault prevention that relate to each of these programs. Firstly, there are limitations on empirical knowledge on sexual assault prevention (Casey). This includes the issue of causality. It is hard to prove that one program was the cause of a lower statistic of sexual assault. This limitation is intrinsically link to other impediments including that prevention programs engaging boys and men are rather recent. Men have only recently been engaged in a positive manner in regards to sexual assault prevention. Many programs aim at attitudes, behavioural and larger societal change which is often something that can change within a matter of weeks or months. Instead it is a lifetime process that reaches males at all ages and time of life. Other limitations include high cost for evaluations which is coupled with little investment into the subject matter (Casey). In Canada, as stated before, there is no national organization to promote gender

equality. There is also no central organization or state authority to collect and report on promising practices. Many of the programs and therefore existing literature comes from college campuses which limits the scope and cannot be generalized across communities

The first program evaluated was the Safe Dates which was found to be a promising program that occurred in North Carolina in 1994 in public schools mainly aimed at middle and high school students. The aim of the program was “to challenge violence-supportive attitudes and norms” (Casey, p. 7) specifically in regards to relationships. Relationships meaning any sustained interaction. Not just committed relationships but also on dates and in everyday interactions. The program also included a section that taught how to seek help for violence related incidents. The program focuses on healthy relationship skills including reducing physical and sexual abuse and victimization (Casey). Focusing on relationship made the issue of sexual assault relatable to everyone as they were growing up and engaging in relationship. Promoting healthy relationship is a way to engage boys and male youth to take action in their own experiences to stop gender based violence and sexual assault.

The program’s success was due to the nature of the subject matter namely promoting healthy relationship but also because it had several components to program. This included “a 10-session school-based curriculum delivered in 45-minute segments, a school-wide poster contest, parent materials, and a teacher training outline” which aimed to engage all students in one aspect or another (Casey). Another key aspect was having a follow up booster session and a script for a dramatic play to be carried out by the school and its students (Casey). In a randomized control trial in 1994, the post intervention follow up found that students participating in the program had significantly less physical and sexual violence with dating partners (Casey).

The second program is Expect Respect is a program which focused on bullying and sexual harassment not sexual violence prevention. The program included a classroom curriculum for fifth grade level it was aimed at bullying and for grades from six until twelve it focused on healthy relationship skills (Casey). The program also included staff training which information as well as intervention strategies were taught. For the school a policy was created to introduce a school wide anti bullying and harassment policy (Casey). In addition parent education was included (Casey). Lastly there were support groups for victims of bullying and sexual harassment (Casey).

Lastly there is the program Men of Strength Clubs (A program of Men Can Stop Rape). The program aims at engaging youth and young men in a 16 week curriculum designed to evaluate conceptualizations of masculinity and explore new ways of conceptualizing male “strength” (Casey). The program included capacity building activities to increase their ability to become leaders and role models in anti-violence activism (Casey). After evaluation most participants stated a willingness to intervene and a better understanding of the steps to take to prevent or intervene in violence against women (Casey).

For the Men of Strength Team at Fleming College in Peterborough the goal of the program is to raise awareness around the positive role that men can play in prevention violence against women and promoting healthy masculinity (Fleming, 2015). The program will include training, organizing tools and assistance for participants and a steering committee. Working together these elements hope to establish peer education, the team’s involvement in events, the mentoring, and partnering with the campus and community groups (Fleming, 2015). The team has established some values around the Men of Strength team that include, but may not be limited to non violence, violence prevention, male positivity, and gender equality (Fleming, 2015).

## Findings

This potential program is aimed at engaging boys and male youth in discussion on sexual assault prevention. It is important to stress women's safety. Sexual assault is not a completely gendered issue as men experience it. Indeed there are gendered aspects as women are three times more likely to be physically injured by spousal violence (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011, p. 12). Despite the myth of symmetry in regards to gender based violence, and recent claims that violence in intimate partner's relationships is symmetrical, the reality is that men's violence against women is more harmful, more frequent, there is a greater chance of it being fatal, it is used less in self defense, and is a continued too used to enforce power and control (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011).

One challenge that was previously expressed is that there is very little known about men's attitudes and beliefs in Canada so in 2005 the White Ribbon Campaign conducted a survey across Canada. The survey found that 75% of Canadian men view speaking about issues of violence against women as an important issue and 66% felt they could personally do more and yet only 50% said they were willing to intervene when confronted with peer's sexist language or behaviour (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). Most men seemed caught between knowing that intervening is important but lacking the skills and or knowledge to intervene when such a situation or issue arises. Some of the

responses for not being getting involved included that they were not asked to get involved and many perceived themselves as being part of the problem not the solution (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). That is why positive programs encouraging male engagement are so important. They encourage men and boys to get involved and understand why it is their issue as well and that they have a responsibility to act. In addition, such programs, give boys and young men the tools they need to have the courage to intervene in a sexual assault, but in addition discourage rape culture amongst their friends and peers.

There is tremendous work to be done in Canada. This is in regards to sexual assault and its prevention but also in changing attitudes and beliefs. The same survey from the White Ribbon Campaign found that one in three males still hold dangerous ideas such as rape results from men not being able to control a need for sex or that women make up false accusations about violence (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). There is a powerful link between sexism and violence against women.

There are many barriers to overcome in order to properly engage men to have a positive role in sexual assault prevention. These barriers can be summarized with four over arching themes. First there is the prevalent idea held by men that I am not the problem and it's not my problem to deal with (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). Often if men don't consider themselves as a perpetrator then they view themselves as having no role in affecting the issue. Men often do not view violence against women as their personal issue (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). This is linked to understanding their role in dealing with gender inequality and gender based violence. That it is an issue that affects genders, politics, the economy and society in general. In addition men face challenges in recognizing their roles and positions in a patriarchal system (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, &

Jones, 2011). Recognizing privilege within a patriarchal system may be a basis as a form of engagement. It is because of the privilege that a man may be able to stand up to another man. All of these barriers can be solved through raising awareness and creating multi faceted approach to change attitudes and behaviours.

Yet there are many barriers in creating and raising this awareness. Firstly, many men don't view violence against women as a serious issue and "one of the most powerful tactics of systems of power and privilege is to render itself invisible" (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011, p. 9). In this regard it is not just about sexual assault prevention but deconstructing the system that it is attached to. In order for gender inequality to become plausible there needs to be advocacy for clear, fair and enhanced representation in media and cultural and political landscape (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). Recognizing privilege could provide an opportunity for men to prevent sexual assault while also dismantling the patriarchal system. Although men benefit from patriarchy there are many negative affects as well (outlined in literature review). Another issue in raising awareness is that there is the tendency to point the finger to other men as the 'real' problem (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). This is intertwined in power and privilege as they have levels within masculinity and patriarchy. There is the misbelieve that certain type of men that are abusive such as those that suffer from mental health issues, addictions, those that live in less progressive communities, men from immigrant communities (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). Although these communities do have sexual assault incidents the issue is not limited to these men and these spaces. This is a dangerous misconception because when this belief is held, by men and women, it makes it difficult to identify sexual assault outside of these circumstances. Such as leading to beliefs such as I am not that guy, and this is not what happened here, I am not like that, and my family is not like that.

The last barrier is men's silence. This is where education program aimed at boys and youth males could have a tremendous impact on. As programs could give boys and male youth the tools they need to have the courage to break this silence. The barriers too often lead to men taking a position of silence. In fact many men say they don't possess proper tool to intervene; moreover, there is the pressure to be informed when intervening (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). Meaning that without the right tools boys, youth males and eventually males will not be empowered to stand up and intervene in a sexual assault incident. Going further, these tools need to be aimed at not just identifying and intervening in a sexual assault incident but in addition being empowered to stop sexual harassment and objectification. For many men they have never been asked or challenged to speak up or on the opposite hand have personal experiences that make it difficult to speak up (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). Even if a man considers intervening he often believes that he cannot make a difference. It is crucial that boys and male youths need to understand their role and responsibility in the issue of sexual assault and how they can play a positive role. Troubling is the fact that some males respond with silence because they want to protect other men that may be using the violence or worried what other men will think (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). This is wrapped up in patriarchy and masculinity. In order to enact change for the issue of sexual assault needs to be deconstructed and understood based off facts not off myths or cultural norms.

As much as there are barriers to engaging men and boys there are many benefits to gender equality. It is important to frame the issue in this context because boys and young males can understand that promoting gender equality can benefit everyone. Deconstructing patriarchy would mean that men would give up some of their privilege but they can still prosper in a gender equal society. As an example in societies that have equal access to education, employment, experiences

improved health outcomes and experiences the less violence (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). The evidence is clear those countries perform better on every indicator, in regards to health, GDP and more (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). Conversations focus more on rights and equality for women and girls which is completely legitimate and should be enough of a motivator to act and create change. Yet in addition there are economic social and political benefits for all of society that create more reasons to enact change. Benefits for men of gender equality include trust, better health and relationships (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). Males no longer being part of the stereotypical group of “men”; furthermore, males will not have to conform to negative aspects of masculinity (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). Also there is more freedom to pursue any activities of interest. Breaking down gendered occupations of work can lead to both genders not feeling restricted from pursuing their interests and talents (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). For males, gender equality means less pressure to be sole provider and protector. Moreover, it means more economic prosperity for all.

According to the White Ribbon Campaign there are non-negotiable conditions in approaches to work with men and boys to prevent and reduce gender based violence. The first is that any program must be framed within human right and women’s rights. With a focus on understanding that men’s power and privilege is perpetuated and sustain by violence or the threat of violence (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011, p. 24). The second is transforming harmful aspects of masculinity. Again understanding that gender is a relational term it is both masculine and feminine. The condition of both men and women is not predetermined. The third is that it is based on evidence with making clear direct and informed decision based on the data and research (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011).



There are generally accepted approaches of violence prevention. This is a three tiered system with primary, secondary and tertiary prevention (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). Primary prevention is responding before the problem starts. Secondary prevention aims at responding once the problem has begun and tertiary prevention responds afterwards. A successful program aimed at engaging boys and male youth in education programs on sexual assault prevention deals with all three prevention strategies. It mainly focuses on the primary strategy by dealing with the attitudes and beliefs that contribute to sexual assault incidents (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). These programs also include identifying and understanding sexual assault. This relates to secondary prevention because once a sexual assault has occurred it is easier to seek the proper means of help and intervention if those involved are aware of the options. Finally by engaging the schools and communities in this process of sexual assault prevention it is assisting in the tertiary prevention by responding continuously to incidences of sexual assault.

In regards primary prevention it aims to lessen the chance that men and boys will use violence in relationships. This is done through education efforts, awareness campaigns, mobilizing communities and challenging and changing social norms (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011, p. 24). If there is more focus on primary prevention then the other two prevention methods are lessened. Despite this, it has been traditionally been the least likely prevention method in strategies to stop gender based violence and sexual assault (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). The attitude change is not limited to boys and young males. Instead attitudes must change with those whom hold the responsibility in implementing primary prevention programs. There needs to be a culture shift in support of these programs first, with the aim of increasing access boys and male youth.

Secondary prevention includes support and transition services for women and families and on the other side providing alternative opportunities for men who are at high risk of perpetrating violence (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). The tertiary prevention strategies include the criminal justice response and prevention and intervention of re-occurrence of violence (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). The system needs to be improved so when people experience sexual violence there are procedures that protect people (Clarke, 2015). However, it's not always going to be that the legal and justice system is the right path for every victim of sexual violence but instead having great community support and great healing opportunities from friends, family, peers and from support services are some of the biggest keys in terms of healing and moving through the stages of trauma recover (Clarke, 2015). Boys, young men, and men in the community through ally programs need to mirror this by being allies to survivors of sexual assault at every stage in a person's life (Clarke, 2015)

From the White Ribbon Campaign there are seven key elements that every man can do to help prevent sexual assault to get closer to gender equality (Minerson, Carolo, Dinner, & Jones, 2011). First, listen and learn from women and their experiences around violence. Second, challenge sexist language and jokes that degrade women. Third, get involved with the White Ribbon Campaign's educational efforts. Fourth, support local women's programs. Fifth, examine how one's own behaviour might contribute to the problem. Sixth, try and understand the roles you can play as a father, a mentor, a role model. Finally be an advocate for change.

The best programs are interactive, multi-session, tailored and culturally-specific, presented to single gender audiences and which challenges rape- supportive attitudes and norms (Casey). Impactful sexual violence prevention programs are likely to contain three key elements. First, adopting existing, tested or promising programming, secondly, have community education-based approaches for long

term attitude and knowledge change (Casey). Finally, it includes a community mobilization approach. In regards to promising practices criteria it includes these practices to be 'formalized' to the extent that other agencies can make use of them (Casey). Something important is that all effective programs do not deal with sexual assault as the sole issue instead it is generally a secondary outcome next to primary purpose of program (Casey).

Some strategies to reach these promising practices include participation and commitment of community members ensured sustainability of change. Community members should be involved in understanding the language used for discussing the issue and what the beliefs are on the solutions (Casey, p. 17). Another promising practice is that program's are multi layered and aim at "implementing two or more change strategies that address different levels of risk simultaneously" (Casey, p. 18) for example to aim for change at individual level along with changes in community or at the school. It is Important to enhance community strengths as it is not just about prevention but also "promotion" of men's role in preventing sexual assault (Casey). Positive shifts in attitudes and behaviours are sustained by social support, positive role modeling (Casey).

A survey found that approximately one third to one half of college students in America state that they have experienced dating violence (Weisz & Black, 2001). This can however be influenced by gender based violence prevention programs. For a dating violence prevention program that aimed to tackle these issues there were a number of topics and lessons carried out in a five session program (Weisz & Black, 2001). Its topics and lessons could be used as a guideline for programs in Peterborough (Weisz & Black, 2001).

Topic	Lesson
Gender definition and roles	- Definitions of gender roles

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Connections between roles and violence</li> <li>- Growing up male and female</li> <li>- Media messages</li> <li>- Non sexist language</li> </ul>
Healthy relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Importance of equality and respect</li> <li>- Rights and responsibilities in relationships</li> <li>- Power and control</li> <li>- Healthy relationships</li> <li>- Fighting fair</li> <li>- Definitions of love</li> </ul>
Dating Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Definitions of dating violence</li> <li>- Prevalence</li> <li>- Excuses people make for dating violence</li> <li>- Effect of dating violence on people's feelings</li> <li>- Resources for help</li> </ul>
Sexual assault	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Definitions and types of sexual assaults</li> <li>- Misconceptions about sexual assault</li> <li>- Impact of sexual assaults</li> <li>- Prevention techniques</li> <li>- How to help a friend</li> <li>- Resources for help</li> </ul>
Sexual Harassment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Definitions of sexual harassment</li> <li>- Why sexual harassment happens</li> <li>- Drawing the line between flirting and harassment</li> <li>- How to respond to sexual harassment</li> </ul>

Grades seven through ten seem to be a peak period for changing perceptions for boys and youth males (Clarke, 2015). It is a good age to start the conversation but the issue must be readdressed in post secondary institutions because so many sexual assaults happen in the first eight weeks of college and university as women of the age between the years of 15-24 are at the highest risk of sexual violence (Clarke, 2015). Classrooms provide a unique opportunity for intervention and

implementation of educational programs on sexual assault prevention. This is because teachers are natural allies in the conversations of healthy relationships (Clarke, 2015). Teachers are spending six to eight hours with students and see firsthand the effect of healthy relationships and how students interact with each other (Clarke, 2015). As far as the research shows they are absolutely shocked and dismayed about what is happening in the hallways, classrooms and out in the school yard and they want to see change happen (Clarke, 2015). Many face the challenge of not having the right educational resources for support (Clarke, 2015). By engaging and empowering teachers to implement programs that have the opportunity to create tangible solutions and material to work with students (Clarke, 2015).

In regards to sexual violence prevention single gendered programs are more effective than mixed gender approaches (Haskell, 2011). This is supported by the finding that men have powerful influence on one another which means men can support and challenge each other to take a positive role in regards to sexual assault prevention (Haskell, 2011). In fact one study found that the strongest influence on whether men were willing to intervene to prevent violence against women was their perception of other men's willingness to do so (Haskell, 2011). A single gender approach is important as it provides a safe environment to explore prevailing understandings of masculinity and gender stereotypes in male-only groups (Haskell, 2011). Men are more likely to engage in discussions that present positive aspects of masculinity. Some promising practices include having the right messenger that is equipped with the right message. The most effective messenger is someone who can be trusted by the audience and are viewed as knowledgeable on the subject matter (Haskell, 2011).

Something to consider is that although most of the academic literature states this it may not always be the case. As Lapum (2015) from the Kawartha Pine Ridge District pointed out this was not the case in a program carried out by the school board a number of years ago. In the high school's there was a day long program about healthy relationship that took a single gendered approach (Lapum, 2015). The young women felt more comfortable expressing themselves in this environment but there was pushback from the young men (Lapum, 2015). They were confused on the separation because they claimed it was the young women they would be engaging in relationships in (Lapum, 2015). Lapum (2015) suggested a graduated system may work. Such as having separate programs with younger grades and then have everyone included in discussion in older grades. Or maybe it means to have part of the program in single gendered education and part of it being about interacting with the different genders.

A key element in a program aimed at education boy and youth males on sexual assault prevention is addressing who will deliver the program. Having the right message, that is based on evidence, is a key first step it is just as important to have the right messenger (Haskell, 2011). The message is reinforced or undermined by the choice of messenger (Haskell, 2011). A fundamental question to answer in constructing an effective sexual violence public education campaign is who will your audience listen to most?

According to Clark (2015) she identifies the wrong facilitator in the room as being one of the most detrimental pieces for a program engaging boys and young males along with that facilitator having the wrong information. Stating that in this day in age conversation on abstinence does not make sense instead it important to focus the conversation on sexual health, sexual education and

healthy relationships. The topic delivered needs to be relevant to them but also the facilitator needs to be relevant to the audience. If it's a group of males participating in a program aimed at sexual assault education and prevention the facilitator, according to research, says that that should be a cool male guy telling them important stuff about healthy relationship and how to understand consent with really relevant and accurate information (Clarke, 2015).

## **Recommendations Developing Programs within Peterborough**

The preceding analysis leads to the following recommendations for Peterborough

1. Emphasize women's safety and rights
2. Have the focus be on education about sexual assault, about gender and about healthy relationships
3. Deconstruct rape culture and harmful aspects of masculinity
4. Make space for men to have a positive role in sexual assault prevention
5. Focus on changing and challenging attitudes and beliefs
6. Have a long term process of implementation for long term results
7. Have single gendered approaches
8. Have a system of checks and balances to ensure programs success "comprehensiveness"
9. Involve multiple parties on various levels such as engaging in community and school mobilization

In regards to the ninth recommendation KSAC is already in the works of involved a range of community stakeholders in such a program. KSAC is working with twenty consulting agencies to create a city and county wide needs assessment. This includes talking to 130 frontline staff and 30 survivors (Clarke, 2015). The purpose of the assessment is to create a city and county wide collaborative agreement on prevention and response in the hopes of building prevention programs at many different levels with many different agencies.

## **Recommendations Going Forward**

A program being implemented in Peterborough will need further research. This gives space for future projects between Trent, KSAC and Trent Community Research Centre. Future projects could include running focus groups with the target audience of boys and young males. This would give valuable feedback on how such a program would be received. Another project could be further research in engaging boys and youth males. Another project could be assisting KSAC during a programs implementation phase with creating outline or gaining approval from the school district. Another project could be measure the success of the Men of Strength Team at Fleming College and its impact on the college and greater community.

There is a need for another program but this is quite possibly outside the reach of the Peterborough community. There is a need to close the discrepancy between the literature presented and the national discourse. There needs to be the creation of a national organization that is fighting for gender equality and ending gender based violence. Such an organization could change local promising practices, such as those presented in this report, and create national narratives and discourse. This could have a large impact on the public perception on the issue of gender equality and gender based violence. If programs aimed at boys and male youth on education on sexual assault prevention is



happening on a local scale it could help if the national narrative was supporting these types of programs.

## **Conclusion**

There is a growing acceptance that engaging boys, male youth and men in conversations is sexual assault prevention is critical to create change. Males have a positive role to play in the process of prevention sexual assault and promoting gender equality. It is important for boys and youth males to receive the facts about sexual assault. It is key that they understand the harmful and constructed aspects of masculinity. An educational program should equip boys and male youth with tools and strategies to intervene in sexual assaults but also sexual harassment and rape culture perpetuated amongst peers. Gender inequality and gender based violence remains a pressing issue in Canada and yet does not seem to receive enough public attention. There are many changes that need to happen on a national scale to influence future programs aimed at sexual assault prevention. This report presented a number of promising practices that engage boys and male youth in sexual assault prevention. With the creation of a national organization focusing on gender equality these promising practices could translate into a national narrative.

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## Appendix

### Interview Questions with Lisa Clark

1. What specifically should be included in a program for Peterborough to encourage its success?
2. Speaking from your experience is there anything that can be detrimental to a program?
3. What would you like to be the programs goals and objectives?
4. Are all goals and objectives the same? As in should the program be aimed at minimizing incidents of sexual assault? Much of the literature said most programs were not directly aimed at lowering incidents of sexual assault but instead that was an outcome of other programs.
5. Should programs challenge the social conceptions of masculinity? How central are the ideas and social constructs of masculinity to sexual assault?
6. Are there other organizations in Peterborough doing similar programming?
7. Does KSAC want to work with other organizations or run its own program?
8. Long term programs were a central feature in the literature. Would Peterborough and KSAC have the resources to implement a long term program?
9. Another feature for success was a program that was implemented at various levels and engaging boys and male youths in a variety of ways. Is that something KSAC aims to accomplish or should it be a single, one goal program?
10. What is the target population for boys and youth males How will the program engage boys and youth males?
11. In your experience what has been a successful way to engage and connect boys and youth males?
12. What's a way to approach youth boys? Is it in the classroom is focus groups?
13. What are some common challenges to engage boys and youth males?

14. How will the identity of at risk boys and youth males be determined?

15. Do you have anything else to add?

#### **Interview with the Key Informant From Fleming**

1. In your experience what do you believe men and boys need to know about sexual violence and sexual assault?
2. What is the school (school district) currently doing in regards to sexual assault prevention?
3. What are your recommendations in preventing sexual assault?
  - In your experience how does the school play a role
4. How can teachers become better allies in regards to sexual assaults?
5. What is the Men of Strength Program?
6. What are the key components you identify with that will ensure success?

#### **Interview with Jack Lapum**

1. What is the school (school district) currently doing in regards to sexual assault prevention?
2. Do you believe that the response to a sexual assault is adequate?
3. In your experience what do you believe men and boys need to know about sexual violence?
4. In your experience how does the school play a role in preventing sexual assault?
5. How can teachers become better allies in regards to sexual assaults?
6. What are some elements that a program should include in regards to education programs aim and boys and male youth on sexual assault prevention?