

**More Than Consent and Conviction: Can Forensic Science Help Prevent Sexual Assault?**

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## Abstract

Sexual violence on university and college campuses has occurred for years, but it is only more recently that the policies, procedures, and resources have become widely available to students. The next step is trying to determine if what is being done already is enough. Interviews with staff on Trent University's campus has provided insight into what is being done by the school for the students regarding sexual violence, including the resources available to both on- and off-campus students, and possible future steps to further the development of resources for sexual violence. By having sexual violence policies, procedures, and resources laid out clearly, it can be ensured that students can easily access them when needed. Further research needs to be done to determine why students are unaware of what is being offered to them. By developing this research further, student voices will be heard and will allow for the development of more resources, that will be utilized by students who live both on and off campus.

## Introduction/background

The purpose of this project is to ensure that Trent University is keeping their students, faculty, and staff as informed and educated as possible when it comes to sexual violence in the school community. This could be done in many ways including training and educational lectures. By having resources available to students, but not being used by students is a problem in of itself. There are efforts being made by the school to provide sexual violence resources to students, but students are unaware that they are even being offered. By interviewing and talking with staff on campus, it can be determined what is

being done by the school. The focus will be to learn about the current resources, policies, and procedure that are currently available and not to try to change what is already being done. There is no need to change what is currently being done in regards to sexual violence on campus, unless it is shown to be ineffective or counter-productive to the final goal, which is to lower sexual violence on campus, and to make sexual violence policies, procedures, and resources more accessible to students.

Sexual violence, although a world problem, is also very prevalent on university and college campuses, it is estimated that approximately 1 in 5 women will experience sexual violence during their time at a post-secondary institution (1). University can be considered a high-risk environment; young adults are in a position with very little adult supervision and there is an increase in alcohol and drug use, while there is an increase in stressful activities (3). Schools, specifically Trent University, have tried to combat sexual violence with consent education and sexual violence policies, which need to be reviewed every two to three years (2). As defined in Trent University's sexual violence policy, sexual violence is "any sexual act or act targeting a person's sexuality, gender identity or gender expression, whether the act is physical or psychological in nature, that is committed, threatened or attempted against a person without the person's consent, and includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, stealing, indecent exposure, voyeurism and sexual exploitation." (2) This definition encompasses many different terms and ideas that may seem confusing to some individuals, due to this, Trent University runs a program, "Consent at Trent" during orientation week. "Consent at Trent" is designed and run by Trent University Student Affairs, and focuses on educating the incoming class of students on the importance of consent, both in sexual

and non-sexual relations with individuals. This is considered to be a mandatory orientation week event, that all students need to attend in order to gain access to other events during the week, which is one of the ways Trent University tries to ensure incoming students education on the matter, and the available resources. By having programs in place such as “Consent at Trent”, Trent University is taking responsibility to educate students on consent culture and the sexual violence resources available to students both on and off campus.

This project aims to determine how informed and educated students are when it comes to sexual violence on campus, and how the school can ensure that the students are knowledgeable and protected regarding sexual violence. While being organized by Trent Community Research Centre, this project is also being completed with *Arthur Newspaper* as the hosts. *Arthur Newspaper* is the Trent University and Peterborough-Nogojwanog Independent Free Press. While completing this project a series of three articles will be written and published in *Arthur*. These articles will be focusing on the findings of this project as well as the progress being made throughout the year. These articles are to make community-based research projects more accessible to students who may not be aware of projects such as this one. As originally proposed by the host, the focus of research was and still is sexual violence. Since there has been a shift in focus, the policies, procedure, and resources available to students on Trent University’s campus is now being looked at, to determine the knowledge that students at Trent University have on sexual violence on campus, and what resources are available to them, both through the school as well as within the Peterborough-Nogojwanog community.

Sexual violence has been a problem on university and college campuses for many years (3). While there has not been a noticeable change in the statistics, as they are relatively the same compared to studies done in the 1990's (3), there has been changes to the sexual violence policies that these schools are required to have by the government.

Recently, the province of Ontario introduced Bill 132: *Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan Act (Supporting Survivors and Challenging Sexual Violence and Harassment)*, 2016. This act makes all government funded institutions required to have separate sexual violence policies, which outline how reports of sexual violence will be handled by the administration of the institution (2). The legislation outlined the requirements of these policies, which includes an outline of the steps that administration will follow in the event of a report, annual reporting by the school on rates of reports, and students must be included in the creation and revisions of the policy. This allows for students to have a say in how a sexual violence incident will be handled by the school's administration, which also hold the school accountable.

Students going to university and college are already in a vulnerable state, as this is the first time living away from home for most students, and there is less supervision in both classes and living arrangements than previously experience by students (3). Students are 17-20 years in age, and have likely never lived away from home for an extended period of time before. The access to both alcohol and drugs is also increased with, again, a decrease in supervision. With this combination of conditions, it is no wonder that individuals in their first and second year at school face higher rates of sexual violence, more specifically, females in their first and second year at school (1). This has been dubbed the "Red Zone" by many researchers as they see higher rates of sexual violence in this population than others. (3) There are many side effects of sexual violence on

individuals including physical injuries, but also unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections (STI's) and sexually transmitted disease's (STDs), depression, anxiety, suicide ideation, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). With these negative effects caused by sexual violence, we also see an increased drop-out rate among the survivors (3), making it seem like the school is not supporting students during traumatic events. This in turn make students feel as though they are not supported by the administration.

Although studies and surveys have been done at Canadian post-secondary institutions, specifically looking at sexual violence and student knowledge of sexual violence policies, the results are often inaccurate. The *Student Voices on sexual Violence* survey, which was released to be answered by Ontario students in the spring of 2018, focused on multiple aspects of sexual violence including report rates and student knowledge on recourses on campus. (4) This survey specifically, reported that Trent University had a high rate of sexual violence incidences defined in the following survey question;

“... how often have you been in a situation in which someone:”

- a) Treated you differently because of your gender identity or sexual orientation.
- b) Displayed, used, or distributed materials that were offensive to you based on gender identity or sexual orientation.
- c) Made negative remarks about someone based on their gender identity or sexual orientation.
- d) Put you down or was condescending to you because of your gender identity or sexual orientation.
- e) Repeatedly told sexual stories or jokes that were offensive to you.

- f) Tried to talk to you about sexual matters when you didn't want to.
- g) Made remarks or gestures or used body language of a sexual nature which embarrassed or offended you.
- h) Continued to ask you for dates, drinks, dinner, etc., even though you said "No".
- i) Touched you in a way that made you feel uncomfortable.
- j) Made you feel like you were being bribed, or implied better treatment, if you were to engage in sexual behaviour.
- k) Made you feel threatened or treated you badly for refusing to have sex.
- l) Sent or posted unwelcome sexual comments, rumours, jokes, or pictures of you by text, email, social media, or other electronic means.
- m) Mocked or harassed you on the internet using slurs or name-calling related to your gender identity or sexual orientation.

at 68.9% of participants disclosing sexual violence. By looking at the previous statistic, it could be concluded that Trent University has a high occurrence rate of sexual violence within their community. However, it cannot be determined if this statistic is accurate due to all the uncertainties. For this specific question on the survey, only 2,516 individuals answered, when at the time of the survey Trent University had a population of 7413 undergraduate students and 495 graduate students, this is therefore not the entirety of the Trent University population, and may not be an accurate determination. Statistics regarding sexual violence are rarely accurate due to underreporting (1). There are many reasons an individual may not report a sexual assault to the proper authorities, such as fear of repercussions, the perpetrator is an acquaintance, or they do not even know they have been assaulted. Due to situations like these, it is important that faculty and staff are properly trained to properly handle disclosure of sexual violence



from students and to know where to direct students who would like support. By looking at the general knowledge level among students on sexual violence policies, procedures, and resources on Trent University's campus, it can be determined if more should or could be done to make sure students are safe while getting their education.

There have been multiple studies that have shown individuals who are part of sexual and gender minorities are more likely to experience sexual violence during their years attending university or college (5). There are two theories that may explain why this may happen. The minority stress theory states that individuals among sexual and gender minorities are at an increased risk of victimization due to stigmas associated with their identities. The routine activity theory revolves around the idea that engagement in certain types of activities increases the risk of victimization (5). An example of the routine activity theory is that bisexual women are at a higher risk of experiencing sexual violence than gay women. This is due to the idea that since bisexual women have sexual relations with both men and women, and gay women only have sexual relations with women. This also includes the myth that men are more likely to commit sexual violence than women, and since bisexual women have relations with men and gay women do not, the risk is increased. If this is a phenomenon seen on Canadian post-secondary campuses, then there needs to be programs and resources that reflect the diversity in sexual violence survivors, including the LGBT+ community.

Over the years, schools, as a whole, have tried to develop ways to protect and educate students, by developing both consent education lectures but also by improving and updating their sexual violence policies (4). One method that has become increasingly

popular is bystander intervention training. Bystander intervention training takes the focus off the victims and perpetrators and places it on bystanders. It is thought that sexual violence occurs when a set of criteria is met. There needs to be a motivated perpetrator, a potential victim, and an absence of “capable guardians” or someone to tell the perpetrator that something is wrong (5). Bystander intervention is supposed to show individuals how to be the “capable guardian” in situation. Individuals are trained how to intervene in situations that do not seem safe for individuals. They are taught when and how to intervene safely, which can potentially save someone’s life. Bystander intervention training addresses assault at all three levels; primary (before the assault), secondary (during the assault), and tertiary (after the assault). Trent offers a certificate that includes bystander intervention training, at no cost to students through Trent University Student Affairs. By having individuals who know how to properly handle hostile or dangerous situations, in turn there is the potential for sexual violence incidences to decrease both on and off campus within the Trent University and Peterborough-Nogojwanog communities.

By implementing resources on campus, such as bystander intervention training and consent education lectures, occurrences of sexual violence on campus should decrease. However, if students, faculty, and staff are unaware of the resources and education provided by the school, they will not be utilized. Schools need to ensure that resources, policies, and procedures are accessible by students in multiple ways.

## Methodology

Throughout the course of the project, there were multiple steps completed before coming to any conclusions. First an in-depth ethics application was completed and approved by the Forensic Science Department Ethics Board. This application was required for all research that is being completed through Trent University, and involving human participants. The ethics application went over many different aspects of the project including the risks and benefits of the project. An informed consent form was needed to ensure that all participants are informed of the purpose and possible outcomes from the interviews.

The risks outlined in the ethics application were the possibility of emotional or psychological discomfort. This was due to the sensitive nature of the questions being asked during the interviews. Due to the risk, safety measures were put in place. During the online survey, the participant will be informed of the sensitive nature of the questions before they start, as well as resources provided at the end of the survey if students require them. Along with the disclosure before the survey and the resources at the end, participants will also be informed that if they wish to end the survey at any time they are welcome to do that and only their completed responses will be included in the data analysis. The survey will be completed online through a site such as *Qualtrics*, which ensures that participants remain anonymous and answers cannot be attributed to individuals. No identifying information, such as names, student numbers, or emails will be collected. The principal researcher will be the only person to have access to the raw data. The data will be stored on an encrypted computer. During the interviews,

participants will be asked to complete two copies of the informed consent form, one for their records and one for the researchers record. The informed consent form outlines that the participant can end the interview at any time or to have the option to not answer specific questions.

During the course of this project, multiple different methods of data collection occurred. An in-depth literature review, looking at previous studies regarding sexual violence at Canadian post-secondary institutions, as well as school policies and provincial legislation were analyzed. This allowed for a general understanding of what is being done not only by Trent University, but also other Canadian schools. By searching key terms such as “sexual violence”, “Canadian”, “post-secondary” and other variations, there were many articles which provided information to build a base for the project. The purpose of this step was to create a base for the rest of the research and to ensure there is minimal overlap in this research. The literature review also provided reference for questions that should be asked during interviews and the survey, to ensure that the answers can lead to useful answers and data. The main focus with the literature was to determine if this topic was something that was being looked at by other institutions, and if it was, what they were doing in regards to the issue at hand. By looking at the research being completed at other post-secondary institutions, it allowed the scope of the research question to be narrowed. By doing this, there would be a greater emphasis on an area that needs improvement rather than looking at an already developed area of question. Once the literature review was complete, the development of the survey and interview questions occurred.

Due to time constraints, the survey was not released to students. With the delay in ethics approval it would make it difficult to be able to release the survey, and leave a reasonable amount of time to analyze the data. After discussions with the host, Ryan Sisson, and faculty supervisor, Dr. Joel Cahn, it was concluded that instead of releasing the survey, further development of the survey could take place. The survey could then possibly be used for future research opportunities, looking at the same topic.

Development of the survey consisted of editing it to be easier for students to take. By cutting out unnecessary questions as well as simplifying the language being used to ensure that the participants understood what was being asked for each question. Many survey questions that relate to this topic are produced by American post-secondary institutions. From the survey questions published through American schools, some things need to be changed in order to be applicable to Canadian students and institutions. By editing and further developing the survey, it can provide for more accurate results if used in the future.

Individuals, such as the Trent University College Principals and members of the Trent Central Student Association (TCSA), were contacted via email regarding participation in the interview portion of the project. The email sent consisted of a brief background and outline of the projects, as well as some sources regarding the topic of research. The informed consent form was included in following emails; this was to ensure the participants were aware of the project and the intended purpose of the research. The interviews were 20-30 minutes in length and were taped to ensure that the researcher could go back and review what was said. Interview questions can be seen in Appendix A.

The purpose of the interviews was to talk to staff on campus to see what is being done by the school regarding sexual violence policies, procedures, and resources. These individuals consisted of three College Principals; Michael Eamon, Melanie Buddle, and Christine Freeman-Roth; as well as TCSA President Ann-Majella McKelvie. These individuals were contacted to be interviewed because they are active individuals on campus with both the students but also with staff members and faculty. This would provide opinions and feelings that take a larger population into account, rather than just the student or the staff population. The intended purpose of interviewing staff and student union members instead of students, was to see what is being done in regards to training staff on how to handle disclosures of sexual violence and if staff know how to properly direct students who have experienced sexual violence to the available resources on and off the Trent University campus. The thought process is to see what is being done at different levels within the Trent University school structure before talking to students to hear what they have to say. By doing this, it can be determined if there are any miscommunications happening between departments and individuals, or if enough information is being provided to ensure students know what is going on around campus. The reason that there is a need to decrease miscommunications is because there should be the same answer to certain questions no matter where an individual goes. If an individual is getting multiple different answers to the same question it can make a disclosure more traumatic than it should be.

Once the interviews were completed, comparisons were made between the answers from the participants. This helped solidify conclusions that were being made, as well as supported findings from the literature review. By examining the answers of specific

questions from all the participants, similarities in the answers can be found. By looking for key terms, such as “resources”, “methods”, and “procedures” helped with the analysis of the interviews. These words are related to the research question and helped with the making of conclusions.

A requirement of this project, as outlined by *Arthur*, is that a series of three articles be written and published. This approach was a new idea brought forward this school year as a way to make community-based research more visible and accessible to a broader range of students. These articles consist of findings from the research as well as thoughts from the researcher during the course of this project. Ranging in length from 600-800 words, findings were condensed and put into lay-person terms so the targeted audience would be able to read and understand the purpose and findings of the research. This allowed for the audience of a research project be broadened beyond the typical scientific community. Links to *Arthur Newspaper* articles can be found in Appendix A.

### Results/Major Findings

The survey was developed with students in mind, the main population that this project is focusing on. By developing a survey of 25 questions, the main question of student knowledge of sexual violence police, procedures, and resources will be answered. Survey questions can be seen in Appendix A. It was planned that the survey would be released to students via both the forensic science office and on social media. *Arthur Newspaper* was also willing to put an ad in an edition of the paper for wider distribution. The

survey would be open online for a select amount of time. Once closed nobody would be able to answer, and the existing data would be downloaded by the principal researcher and analyzed. When analyzing the survey data, quantitative conclusions would hopefully be made, as there will be numerical values associated with the findings (e.g. the number of people that selected 'a' as the answer for question 3).

Findings from the interviews and literature review can be broken down into two different categories. The first being what is currently being done by the school and the second being what could be done by both the school and students. The reason for the distinction between what is being done and what can be done, is because there are things that are currently being done well by the administration, such as consent education and bystander intervention training workshop; but there are also things that can be implemented, such as mandatory training for professors and staff members. By looking at what is being done and what can be done, there will be opportunities for improvement.

One program that was mentioned by all participants was "Consent at Trent". This is Trent University's version of a consent education lecture. Administered through Trent Student Affairs for students in first year, it is designed to teach students what consent is. This is a mandatory event for all first years during their orientation week, as they have to attend if they plan to go to other orientation week events later in the week. Designed by Robyn Ocean, Trent University's sexual violence prevention coordinator, "Consent at Trent" is intended to educate students on what consent is and situations when consent is given. According to this program, consent is defined as "an active, direct, voluntary,



unimpaired, continual and conscious choice and agreement between persons to engage in physical contact or sexual activity.” (7) There is a benefit to this program, as it allows for the school to ensure that students are aware of what consent is, and how consent is gained in physical and sexual activities. The reason this resource is so important in relation to the research question is because it is the first resource that students are made aware of when coming to Trent. This lecture takes place within the first week of being a first-year student. Students are being educated early in their university career, but what is being taken from this? If this is only something that happens within their first couple days of a 4-5 year degree, is it as effective at the end of a student’s time at Trent as it is at the beginning, when they first learn what consent is?

STEPS (Skills To Enhance Peer Support) is a program offered to Trent University students by Student Affairs, that aims to develop skills so students feel comfortable providing resources and referrals to individuals who may be experiencing stress or distress. The STEPS certificate is received after the completion of a series of five workshops that focus on communication skills, diversity and inclusion.(8) These workshops are as follows; bystander intervention, how to support a friend who has experienced sexual violence, active listening and conflict resolution for student peer supporters, safeTALK: suicide intervention training, and LGBTQ2S+ allyship training. With workshops and training like this, the school is providing valuable skills to students with no charge but yet not many students are taking advantage of this program. During th interview with Gzowski College Principal, Melanie Buddle, she stated that it is hard to make students interested and involved in events. There is no way to force them to do something, so if they are not interested they will not participate in workshops. Whether

this is due to lack of interest or because students are not aware that this is being offered is unknown, but further research could be done to determine this.

During the interview process, it was mentioned by multiple individuals that the college office staff are trained with the STEPS program but also will receive additional training to deal with sexual violence disclosures. These individuals include academic advisors as well as residence life coordinators and residence life dons, who are individuals that interact with students living on and off campus on a regular basis. By training staff who interact with students regularly, allows for a larger support system, which in turns makes students feel safer and more comfortable when disclosing violence or other sensitive information. The intended plan for training college staff, was to train those who would be more likely to experience disclosures, or those who would be involved in the reporting process, such as academic advisors who would help with the rearrangement of course schedules ore residence life coordinators who would be helping by moving the individual into a temporary safe room or even moving them into a new room if possible. This option is part of the reporting process at Trent University.

Trent University has a multi-pronged approach when it comes to reporting sexual violence. The complainant can report to Trent University directly or they can report to the Peterborough Police, whatever they choose they will also have access to supports provided by the school or through the Peterborough community. When reporting through the school there are two options. Individuals can choose to seek accommodation and/or support for the restorative process. With these options, students can access resources such as counselling services with both the health center or with

Trent University Student Affairs. This option also allows the complainant to participate in a negotiated/restorative process with the respondent, with the help of campus staff. The second option offered to students on campus is reporting to campus security. With this options complainants can go through with the formal report process which involves an investigation conducted by campus security, or the complainant can go through the negotiated/restorative process with the respondent. Both of these options are supported through the school and by staff on campus. If it is decided to report through the police, then it is a police investigation. It is stated that if charges are laid by the police, then all internal investigations being conducted by campus security are halted. However, if charges are laid interim measures through Trent may still apply; this includes academic conditions and residence changes. By having this approach to disclosures and reports, the individual can choose where they would like support and who they want involved in this matter. Since individuals and situations differ drastically, this approach allows for choice, and has better outcomes than if there were a standard, uniform reporting procedure like other schools have.

Although there are multiple programs that Trent University has implemented for sexual violence prevention education and resources, there is also room for improvement and further development of programs and resources. It was noted that the advertisement of resources and programs on campus could be improved. While talking with Gzowski College Principal Melanie Buddle, she stated that poster campaigns often do not work simply because students do not necessarily read the posters. She also said that adding something to the weekly college newsletter would also not reach the desired number of students, as the weekly newsletter is not always read by students before the email is

deleted. This type of improvement would need to come from the students themselves. Either students are actively wanting to learn more about sexual violence prevention, or they provide feedback on how they would like to receive this type of information.

One issue that was noticed as a student researcher was a slight problem with the “Consent at Trent” lecture; there is no way to ensure that all first-year students are participating. Yes, it is required for students to be able to participate if they want to attend events later in the week, but this does not cover students who do not want to participate in general or students who live off campus who do not attend all the events. This makes it difficult to ensure that all students are attending the session. Quebec bill 151 is very similar to Ontario’s bill 132, but being introduced one year later (9). This type of module can be compared to the academic integrity module that is required by professors before students can submit assignments. The purpose of this module is to teach students what academic integrity is and what punishments accompany academic dishonesty. A similar idea goes along with a sexual violence prevention module. Educate students on what consent and sexual violence is, and then also inform them of the consequences and punishments of committing such acts.

One individual on campus that has helped significantly with the development of policies, procedures, and resources is Trent’s sexual violence prevention coordinator. The coordinator assists with both “Consent at Trent” but also provides counselling services for individuals who have experienced sexual violence, whether it has occurred recently or not. This is a significant role on campus, and they are one of the first individuals who people talk to regarding sexual violence. Although this role is a great

resource to have, it is currently one person. As Trent grows in population, so do the demands of the students and jobs that are currently being done by one person will also have to grow to accommodate students properly. By adding even one more individual who is doing the same job or even similar job will provide more resources for students who need help or support. This also goes for the counselling services provided through Trent's health services. They need to be increased to deal with the increase in the student population. You cannot properly support a student if they can only talk to a counsellor every 5 week and only more often if they are considered "emergency" cases. More needs to be done to ensure that students are being properly supported, whether it is for sexual violence or not.

Everybody that was interviewed, especially the college principals, all agreed that Trent University has plenty of resources available on-campus but are also aware of off-campus resources for students. Even though Trent is making sure there are programs and individuals available to help in the case of sexual violence, there is room for improvement. If that means having better advertisement for programs being offered to students, or having more individuals available to assist in the event of a student disclosing sexual violence, then that should be considered.

## Discussion

While conducting interviews with staff on campus, the common theme being discussed was "yes, Trent is doing stuff but more can be done". With programs such as the STEPS certificate students can get involved, but that is only if they are aware that is offered.

Unfortunately, a lot of available resources for sexual violence on campus are reactive programs, such as counselling services, or they are there to support after an incident of sexual violence, and students are only aware of them because they have been involved with sexual violence. This goes for a lot of resources on campus, students may not be aware of them until they need to access them, as they have never had a need to access them before. This goes for resources not related to sexual violence, but is not relevant to the research question at hand.

The “Student Voices” survey played a large role in developing questions for interviews, as well as providing general knowledge for the researcher. This survey, however, made it difficult to come to sound conclusions regarding sexual violence on Trent University’s campus. This is due to incomplete data being released to the public. Not all of the data was released to the public, only data to specific questions and this does not allow for proper conclusions to be made. The data that is currently available can make for incorrect interpretations, which in turn caused incorrect conclusions to be made that will affect sexual violence policies, procedures, on campus. One cannot properly interpret results from a survey when the full set of data is not available. There is no way to determine if the number of sexual violence incidents that occurs within the community is large just because the number of reported incidences is high. The community may have a high rate of reporting, or the community could have a high rate of incidences in general; there is no way to know which conclusion is more correct than the other. What this means for the survey being developed is that the focus should not be on incidences of sexual violence on campus, as those statistics are often inaccurate,

but should focus more on student knowledge of sexual violence policies, procedures, and resources offered by Trent University.

By interviewing staff and student union members on campus, it helped understand what is currently being done as well as what resources survivors of sexual assault may be directed to. This allowed for a deeper understanding of the current resources and programs that are offered, as well as how to handle a sexual violence claim all while gathering information from secondary sources to support the information coming from the interviews. Mentioned by multiple participants was the “Student Voices on Sexual Violence” survey, conducted in 2018 by CCI Research Inc. on behalf of the Ministry of Training with results being published in 2019, which when reviewed stated that only 25.9% of the respondents agreed/strongly agreed that they were aware of the policies, procedure, and resources available to them through the school. This statistic is showing that students are unaware of the policies, procedures, and resources available to them on campus. The conclusions drawn from the interviews was that the staff are knowledgeable on where to go when faced with a sexual violence disclosure. Why is there a discrepancy between staff knowledge and student knowledge of these important resources offered on campus?

## Conclusion

Throughout the course of this project, there were many different opinions on the research. Some individuals were very interested in participating in interviews, but others were more hesitant due to the nature of the research as well as articles being

published in *Arthur Newspaper* with their words in them. By interviewing multiple different individuals to gain an understanding of the topic, it led to multiple different discoveries, such as the types of resources available to students and what is being done by the school to help with the prevention of sexual violence. The conclusion can be drawn that Trent University has many different resources for sexual violence prevention and sexual violence survivors. However, there is evidence that supports that students are not aware of these resources, or even the policies and procedure surrounding sexual violence in the Trent community. By implementing more programs, like mandatory consent education modules, more students will be educated and in turn will hopefully lower the rate of sexual violence on and off campus. The question now is how can this be done without changing the effective programs and resources that are currently available to students.

There are possibilities leading to future research building off of this project. Next steps could include a student survey, either the one developed for this project or one that is more focused on a specific aspect of sexual violence policies, procedures, and resources that are provided at Trent University. The survey would be beneficial to gain a greater understanding on general student knowledge of sexual violence within the community. The interviews allowed for a base, the survey would be building off of what was noted during the interviews with staff members. There are also further interview opportunities, branching from staff down into students. By talking to residence life coordinators as well as residence life dons, it can be determined what is happening in each specific college residence regarding sexual violence prevention. This would be beneficial to the research question at hand because these individuals communicate and



even live with students for eight months of the year. They see first-hand how sexual violence affects not only an individual but also the community they are a part of.

Interviews with students can also help create more sound conclusions on why students do not know about sexual violence prevention efforts on campus. By starting with staff and moving down to talking to students after a solid base has been made, it allows for more questions to be answered with more solid findings, leading to better conclusions which makes it easier to implement new ideas.

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<https://www.trentu.ca/currentstudents/work-lead/training/skills-enhance-peer-support-steps> (Accessed March 31, 2020)
10. Bill 151 An Act to prevent and fight sexual violence in higher education institutions, 2017

## Appendix A

### Survey Questions

1. What is your age?
  - 17 years of age or younger
  - 18-20
  - 21-24
  - 25-28
  - 28-30
  - 31 years of age or older

\*If participants are not 18 years of age, they will not be able to continue with the survey and it will automatically end\*

2. Which describes your affiliation with Trent University the best?
  - Undergraduate student
  - Graduate student
  - Professional
3. What year of study are you currently in?
  - 1
  - 2
  - 3
  - 4
  - 5+
4. Is Trent University the only Canadian post-secondary institution you have attended?
  - Yes
  - No
5. If you answered 'No' to question 4, how many years have you attended Trent University?
  - 1
  - 2
  - 3
  - 4
  - 5+
6. What course-load are you currently enrolled in at Trent University?
  - Part-time (3.0 credits or less)
  - Full-time (3.5 credits or more)
7. Are you currently an international student?
  - Yes
  - No
8. Which of the following describes your gender identity best?
  - Woman
  - Man
  - Transgender woman
  - Transgender man
  - Genderqueer/Gender non-conforming

- Prefer not to say
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_
9. Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?
- Heterosexual/Straight
  - Gay
  - Lesbian
  - Bisexual
  - Asexual
  - Questioning
  - Prefer not to say
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_
10. Which of the following best describes your race?
- Caucasian
  - African American/Black
  - Asian
  - First Nation
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_
11. How problematic is sexual violence on campus at Trent University?
- Not at all
  - A little
  - Somewhat
  - Very
  - Extremely
12. How likely do you think it is that you will experience sexual violence on campus at Trent University?
- Not at all
  - A little
  - Somewhat
  - Very
  - Extremely
13. How knowledgeable are you about how sexual violence is defined at Trent University?
- Not at all
  - A little
  - Somewhat
  - Very
  - Extremely
14. How knowledgeable are you about where to get help at Trent University if you or your friend experiences sexual violence?
- Not at all
  - A little
  - Somewhat
  - Very
  - Extremely

15. How knowledgeable are you about what happens when a student reports an incident of sexual violence at Trent University?
- Not at all
  - A little
  - Somewhat
  - Very
  - Extremely
16. Think back to orientation when you first came to Trent University. Did that orientation include a training or information session about sexual violence?
- Yes
  - No
  - Did not attend orientation
  - I don't remember
17. Overall, how useful was that session?
- Not at all
  - A little
  - Somewhat
  - Very
  - Extremely
18. If someone were to report sexual violence on campus to an official at Trent University, how likely is it that students would support the person making the report?
- Not at all
  - A little
  - Somewhat
  - Very
  - Extremely
19. If someone were to report sexual violence on campus to an official at Trent University, how likely is it that the offender(s) or their associates would retaliate against the person making the report?
- Not at all
  - A little
  - Somewhat
  - Very
  - Extremely
20. If someone were to report sexual violence on campus to an official at Trent University, how likely is that campus officials would take it seriously?
- Not at all
  - A little
  - Somewhat
  - Very
  - Extremely
21. If someone were to report sexual violence on campus to an official at Trent University, how likely is it that campus officials would protect the safety of the person making the report?

- Not at all
  - A little
  - Somewhat
  - Very
  - Extremely
22. If someone were to report sexual violence on campus to an official at Trent University, how likely is it that campus officials would conduct a fair investigation?
- Not at all
  - Likely
  - Somewhat
  - Very
  - Extremely
23. If someone were to report sexual violence on campus to an official at Trent University, how likely is it that campus officials would take action against the offender(s)?
- Not at all
  - Likely
  - Somewhat
  - Very
  - Extremely
24. If someone were to report sexual violence on campus to an official at Trent University, how likely is it that campus officials would take action to address factors that may have led to the sexual violence?
- Not at all
  - A little
  - Somewhat
  - Very
  - Extremely
25. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following scale of “strongly disagree”, “disagree”, “neither agree nor disagree”, “agree”, “strongly agree”.
- a) Consent must be given at each step in a sexual encounter
  - b) If a person initiates sex, but during foreplay says they no longer want to, the person has not given consent to continue
  - c) If a person doesn’t physically resist sex, they have given consent
  - d) Consent for sex one time is consent for future sex
  - e) If you and your sexual partner are both drunk you don’t have to worry about consent
  - f) Mixed signals can sometimes mean consent
  - g) If someone invites you to their place, they are giving consent for sex

#### Interview Questions

1. What is your position within the Trent University community?
2. How long have you been in this position?

3. Would you say that it is regular for you to talk to and interact with students and faculty?
4. What do your interactions with students normally consist of?
5. In your personal and professional opinion, do you think Trent University has a sexual violence problem?
6. If someone were to disclose sexual violence to you, do you feel like you are trained enough to handle the disclosure?
7. If someone were to disclose sexual violence to you, what resources would the school be able to provide to them?
8. In your personal opinion, do you think that Trent University can be doing anything more to combat sexual violence?

#### Arthur Articles

1. Arthur Newspaper X Trent Community Research Centre: Sexual Violence Policies and Procedures on Campus <http://www.trentarthur.ca/tcrc-frsc-pp-study-1/>
2. Arthur X TCRC: Trent Student Knowledge of Sexual Violence Resources Low <http://www.trentarthur.ca/tcrc-frsc-pp-study-2/>
3. Arthur X TCRC: Learning about Trent's resources through Community Research <http://www.trentarthur.ca/tcrc-frsc-pp-study-3/>