



ANNUAL REPORT

September 1, 2023 - August 31, 2024

The Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office (SVPRO) provides support and education to students, staff, and faculty around gender-based and sexualized violence. Educational opportunities focus on prevention, intervention, student engagement, and raising awareness. Support can look like work or academic accommodations, referrals to organizations and services such as, but not limited to: Victim Services, mental health crisis intervention, counselling services (on or off campus) and/or legal information. The SVPRO values self-determination, empowers the client to lead the process and strives to be trauma-informed and anti-oppressive in its approach. With the consent of the client, the SVPRO Manager, Candice Perry (she/her), explores options including informal disclosure, formal complaint to the University against the Respondent, formal report to the police, and/or visiting the hospital to receive medical assessment. Restructuring of the office happened in May 2024 and new positions and staff were added to the team in August of 2024.

Prevention and Education

Between September 2023 and August 2024, a total of 1669 students, staff and faculty attended 37 various SVPRO facilitated educational sessions on campus that included:

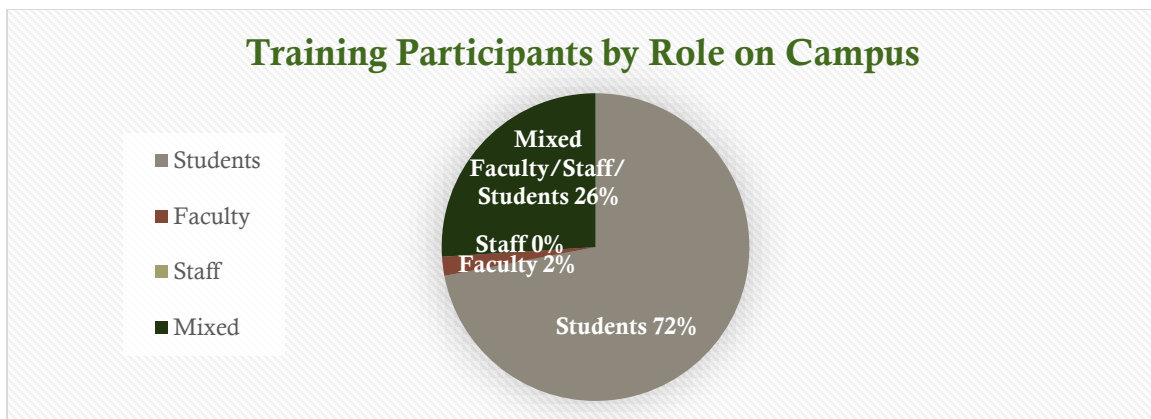
- Six tables/booths on campus that helped to increase awareness of SVPRO services and supports. The booths included information on topics like consent, emotional well-being, the importance of self-care and identifying personal boundaries. 360 students participated/visited them as well as a mixed audience (students/faculty/staff) of 338.
- “Intro to SVPRO” sessions that were attended by 413 students. These presentations described the role of the SVPRO and introduced the people that work in that office. They discussed what to expect when reaching out to the SVPRO, how you can help a friend that has experienced sexual violence and gave a brief overview of the Sexual Violence and Fair Treatment Policies.
- “Interrupting Harm” presentations that were attended by 420 participants. These presentations focused on how to identify Gender-Based Violence (GBV) that can lead to sexualized violence and taught how to safely intervene if you see GBV or sexualized violence occurring. They allowed participants to contemplate various scenarios, work out how they might interrupt harm, consider the safety of everyone



involved, and empower those witnessing GBV to act.

- “Recognize, Respond & Refer” training that was attended by an audience of 41 students/faculty/staff including 5 students from the AVC. This presentation aided students, staff and faculty in recognizing that acts of sexual violence are a spectrum of behaviours that impact survivors in many ways and helped them understand how to interrupt harm when they see it. This presentation discusses how to be a supportive person when someone discloses that they’ve experienced sexual violence and participants also learn how and when to refer to the Sexual Violence Policy and SVPRO.

Other presentations were created for specific events, organizations or audiences. The SVPRO partnered with BIPOC USHR, a non-profit that advocates for Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) to present “Taboo: What does consent look like in your culture?” and partnered with PEI Rape and Sexual Assault Centre (PEIRSAC) as well as Venus Envy to host “Hooking Up on Campus”, which is a guide to consensual sexual relationships. “Consent 101” was presented to the Student Union and “Thank you for Being a Friend” is a presentation that helped individuals learn to provide a trauma-informed response if a friend discloses an experience of sexual violence. Lastly, “Creating a Culture of Consent” was a part of a Management Learning Series for Faculty that coincided with Goal 3 of the Implementation Plan, “Improving UPEI’s Campus Culture”. In total 47 individuals (students/staff/faculty) attended these customized presentations.





SVPRO prevention initiatives included:

Prevention Activities September 1, 2023 – August 31, 2024				
Title of Session	Participant Type	Number of Participants	Event/ Education Type	Date
<i>NSO Welcome Fair</i>	Student(s)	90	Table/Booth	1-Sep-2023
<i>Panther Kickoff: SVPRO Intro</i>	Student(s)	237	Presentation	1-Sep-2023
<i>NSO information sessions: SVPRO Intro</i>	Student(s)	45	Presentation	5-Sep-2023
<i>MBA Global Leadership: Interrupting Harm</i>	Student(s)	40	Presentation	7-Sep-2023
<i>Men's Hockey: Interrupting Harm</i>	Student(s)	26	Presentation	8-Sep-2023
<i>Women's Hockey: Interrupting Harm</i>	Student(s)	26	Presentation	15-Sep-2023
<i>Cross Country: Interrupting Harm</i>	Student(s)	21	Presentation	8-Sep-2023
<i>Track and Field: Interrupting Harm</i>	Student(s)	41	Presentation	14-Sep-2023
<i>ISO: What Does Consent Look Like in Your Culture (w/ BIPOC USHR)</i>	Student(s)	4	Presentation	14-Sep-2023
<i>Hooking Up on Campus (w/ PEIRSAC & Venus Envy)</i>	Student(s)	6	Presentation	18-Sep-2023





<i>Thank you for being a friend</i>	Student(s)	3	Presentation	19-Sep-2023
<i>Consent Pizza</i>	Student(s)	200	Table/Booth	20-Sep-2023
<i>Engineering Society: Interrupting Harm</i>	Student(s)	6	Presentation	20-Sep-2023
<i>AVC Wellness Fair</i>	Student(s)	30	Table/Booth	22-Sep-2023
<i>PsyD Program: Interrupting Harm & Trauma-Informed Care</i>	Mixed	30	Presentation	3-Nov-2023
<i>AVC Peer Helpers</i>	Mixed	4	Training Session	8-Nov-2023
<i>Self-Care Fair</i>	Mixed	300	Table/Booth	22-Nov-2023
<i>ISO: Recognize, Respond, Refer</i>	Mixed	6	Presentation	24-Nov-2023
<i>Music Dept. Interrupting Harm</i>	Mixed	40	Presentation	19-Jan-2024
<i>AVC: Recognize, Respond, Refer</i>	Student(s)	5	Presentation	23-Jan-2024
<i>Info Booth re: Consent</i>	Student(s)	40	Table/Booth	14-Feb-2024
<i>Creating a Culture of Consent 2.0</i>	Faculty	30	Presentation	22-Feb-2024
<i>Interrupting Harm</i>	Mixed	8	Presentation	2-May-2024
<i>Explore Program: Introducing the SVPR Office</i>	Student(s)	30	Presentation	28-May-2024
<i>Interrupting Harm for Coaches</i>	Staff	7	Presentation	20-Jun-2024
<i>Interrupting Harm for PrideFest</i>	Community / students	10	Training Session	5-Jul-2024
<i>Interrupting Harm for PrideFest</i>	Community / students	5	Training Session	7-Jul-2024
<i>Interrupting Harm for NSO Leaders</i>	Student(s)	30	Presentation	10-Aug-2024





<i>Women's Rugby: Interrupting Harm</i>	Student(s)	42	Presentation	20-Aug-2024
<i>Men's Soccer: Interrupting Harm</i>	Student(s)	24	Presentation	20-Aug-2024
<i>Women's Soccer: Interrupting Harm</i>	Student(s)	23	Presentation	21-Aug-2024
<i>AVC Orientation: SVPRO Overview</i>	Student(s)	71	Presentation	26-Aug-2024
<i>RLA Training: Interrupting Harm</i>	Student(s)	40	Presentation	26-Aug-2024
<i>ISO Online Training: SVPRO Overview</i>	Student(s)	30	Presentation	27-Aug-2024
<i>Men's Basketball: Interrupting Harm</i>	Student(s)	31	Presentation	28-Aug-2024
<i>NSO Welcome Fair</i>	Mixed	38	Table/Booth	30-Aug-2024
<i>ISO Orientation</i>	Student(s)	50	Presentation	31-Aug-2024

Community Engagement

Developing supportive relationships with community organizations and their members is an important part of a post-secondary institution's sexual violence prevention strategy. It allows the SVPRO to access up-to-date trends and training in the GBV sector, inform and update students and the public on its work, share their expertise, partner with organizations that may benefit the UPEI community and access alternative funding possibilities to enhance their work. The SVPRO Manager continued to develop these relationships and contributed to the prevention of sexual violence by participating in the community initiatives which are listed in the table below:

Community Engagement September 1, 2023 – August 31, 2024				
Organization	Type of Event	Number of Participants	Details	Date
<i>CBC Compass</i>	Interview	N/A	Re: "Preventing Sexual Violence" course at UPEI	7-Nov-2023
<i>New African Canadians</i>	Event	15	"Mental Wellness and Substance Misuse"; Opportunity to listen to	16-Nov-2023



			speakers from NAC, Health PEI, Dr. Michael Gardham, Mayor Philip Brown, IRSA, Alzheimer’s Association, Salvation Army, UPEI President, IKERAS and Richard Pellissier-Lush.	
<i>Sexual Assault Awareness Group</i>	Meeting	10	Planning “Consent Awareness Week”	20-Nov-2023
<i>ActionNow Atlantic</i>	Meeting	6	Community collaboration	25-Nov-2023
<i>Canadian Women's Foundation Funding Committee</i>	Meeting	10	Re: Allocating grant funds to community organizations across Canada who fund GBV programs	28-Nov-2023
<i>RCMP Sexual Assault Internal Review Committee</i>	Committee Work	6	Review SA cases that did not result in a charge and gave feedback to RCMP Professional Standards Unit about best practices in SA investigations	11-Dec-2023
<i>PEIRSAC, PEERS Alliance, Women's Network, PEI Status of Women. FVPS</i>	Meeting	10	Meeting with a Peer Counselor re: hosting a focus group	9-Jan-2024
<i>Pathways to Thrive Advisory Group</i>	Committee Work	10	Included PEI Status of Women, Black Cultural Society, BIPOC USHR Women's Network, Provincial Sexual Assault Response Coordinator,	30-Jan-2024





			PEERS Alliance, Aboriginal Women's Association to explore healing modalities for survivors of GBV.	
<i>Interministerial Secretariat Status of Women</i>	Focus Group	8	Feedback re: The Province's public awareness campaign	20-Mar-2024
<i>Mawi'omi Center</i>	Event	30	Two- Spirit Person's Day event on campus	21-Mar-2024
<i>PEI Advisory Council Status of Women</i>	Event	50	Panel discussion re: GBV in PEI	16-Apr-2024
<i>Sexual Assault Prevention Advisory Group</i>	Committee Work	10		7-May-2024
<i>Sexual Violence Prevention Strategy Partners Meeting</i>	Meeting	15	Interministerial Women's Secretariat SV Prevention strategy partners meet to share projects completed in the last year and projects slated for future development in the coming year.	11-Jun-2024
<i>Sexual Assault Prevention Advisory Group</i>	Committee Work	10		9-Jul-2024
<i>Sexual Assault Prevention Advisory Group</i>	Committee Work	5	Subcommittee of the Premier's Action Committee to Prevent Family Violence	06-Aug-2024

Response

In the 2023-2024 school year, the SVPRO Manager continued to provide direct response services to members of our campus community who have experienced sexual violence, those supporting survivors of sexual violence, and those looking for information about the services of the UPEI SVPRO and the Sexual Violence Policy. Response work is always





provided in the manner most comfortable to the person receiving services. Themes that emerged when responding to individuals included, but are not limited to:



Approximately 40% of response work for the SVPRO in the 2023-2024 school year also included responding to the needs of close contacts who support survivors (Third Party). Survivors often tell two to three people, who they trust about their experience of sexualized violence, before accessing professional support. The SVPRO worked collaboratively with support persons on campus to help remove barriers that survivors face in accessing the services they need. These contacts may also personally be experiencing distress or secondary trauma and require support. The SVPRO Manager assisted them in accessing services to support them as well. The tables below reflect services that are based on the identity of the client being served (Please note: The client is not always the survivor of sexual violence). For clarity, virtually every client receives information and for this reason the number of people who receive “information and support” is reflective of the overall number of requests for services. Some clients will also receive other support.

This table outlines response activities for students in alignment with the requirements of the PEI *Post-Secondary Institutions Sexual Violence Prevention Policies Act* regulations.

Response for September 1, 2023 - August 31, 2024 (student clients)					
SVPRO Requests for Services (Students)	Support/ Services/ Accommodations (Obtained by students)		Incidents or Reports (Students)	Form of Violence Reported (Students)	
	32	32		Information and Support	32
18		People who received referrals (on and off campus)	10	Sexual Harassment	
7		Accommodations	5	Other Sexual Violence	
6		Formal Complaints			
20		Other Services			





The following table outlines response activities for faculty and staff as an additional transparency measure beyond the requirements of the PEI *Post-secondary Institutions Sexual Violence Policies Act* regulations:

Response for September 1, 2022 - August 31, 2023 (faculty/staff clients)					
SVPRO Requests for Services (Faculty/ Staff)	Support/ Services/ Accommodations (Faculty/Staff)		Incidents or Reports (Faculty/ Staff)	Form of Violence Reported (Faculty/Staff)	
18	18	Information and Support	18	2	Sexual Assault
	1	People who received referrals (on and off campus)		12	Sexual Harassment
	1	Accommodations		4	Other Sexual Violence
	1	Formal Complaints			
	12	Other Services			

When we combine the information regarding students, faculty, and staff, we can see an overall picture of the types of sexual violence that the SVPRO responds to, as well as the clients being served.

Changes to Office Staff and Structure

The creation of the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Human Rights (EDIHR) Department, which includes the SVPRO, is one recent, and major, goal of the University’s 5-year Action Plan. The EDIHR Department has been able to hire staff to grow and support the SVPRO such as administration, coordination and other leadership positions, and has moved to a more visible and accessible location on campus. The expansion of the office will enhance the ability of staff to:

- Attend to the needs of those that have experienced sexual violence,
- Nurture partnerships with other UPEI departments and community organizations,
- Heighten awareness of relevant policies and educational elements such as interrupting harm (aka bystander training), healthy relationships, consent, etc.
- Magnify its capacity to engage with students, staff and faculty and
- Contribute to a positive shift in campus culture.





In August 2024, the SVPRO welcomed Kelly Robinson (she/her) to the office to fill the newly created position of Sexual Violence Prevention & Education Officer. Kelly was able to meet with various groups within the campus community, particularly athletes and Atlantic Veterinary College students, who conduct their orientation earlier than other students.

Pamela Atkinson (she/her) also joined the team in August 2024, as the SVPRO Coordinator. In the upcoming year Pam will be coordinating office projects, providing direct support to members of the university community who have experienced sexual violence and collaborating with the Sexual Violence Prevention & Education Officer and the Sexual Violence Response Navigator, which is now Candice Perry’s position. With the addition to new members of the team, Candice will be able to devote her time to supporting UPEI victims and survivors of sexual violence. Within the new structure, Patti Wheatley (she/her) is in the newly created position of Human Rights Counsel and provides leadership and oversight to the SVPRO team.

 <p>Candice Perry she/her</p> <p>Sexual Violence Response Navigator</p>	 <p>Pam Atkinson she/her</p> <p>Sexual Violence Prevention & Response Coordinator</p>	 <p>Kelly Robinson she/her</p> <p>Sexual Violence Prevention & Education Officer</p>	 <p>Patti Wheatley she/her</p> <p>Human Rights Counsel</p>
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Other Activities

In addition to the prevention, education, community engagement, and response work, the SVPRO also continues to engage in other important initiatives. Some important projects to note are the continued work on reviewing and revising UPEI’s Sexual Violence Policy and the completion of Year 0 of the *UPEI Action Plan: Building A Culture of Trust, Safety and Inclusion*:





Implementation Plans – Year 0 and Year 1. Within Year 0, the development of the EDIHR Department has been achieved and the SVPRO, in cooperation with the Registrar’s Office and the Teaching and Learning Centre, successfully launched the “Preventing Sexualized Violence” online course as a graduation requirement for students.

The provincial government, through the Interministerial Women’s Secretariat (IWS), in partnership with the federal government, through Women & Gender Equality Canada (WAGE), granted the SVPRO funding to purchase branded materials to increase awareness of SVPRO, such as door hangers for each room in residence with the SVPRO contact information.

In March 2023, the Government of PEI launched its strategy for preventing and responding to adult sexual violence, called “Creating A Culture Of Care”. The SVPRO continues its commitment to the IWS, service providers, non-profit organizations, governmental sectors and other post-secondary institutions to work on a robust response to all forms of sexualized violence on PEI.

In addition to consulting with other university departments to coordinate appropriate responses to incidents of sexual violence, the SVPRO Navigator continues to contribute to provincial committees focused on sexual violence, including the Sexual Assault Prevention Advisory Group (SAPAG) of the Premier’s Action Committee, and the RCMP Sexual Assault Internal Review Committee.

Policy Effectiveness

Over the past several years of operating under the current Sexual Violence Policy, SVPRO has identified areas for potential improvement in order to enhance the services provided by the office. These proposed policy changes are being pursued through the ongoing Sexual Violence Policy review process, which was initiated during this reporting period and remains in progress.

UNIVERSITY of Prince Edward ISLAND | SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION *and* RESPONSE OFFICE

Want to Talk?

You are not alone.

The Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office (SV-PRO) is here to listen and to help you explore your options

Visit: Kelley Memorial Building, Room 115-118A (first floor), call 902-620-5090

sv-pro@upei.ca

upei.ca/svpro

[/lupeisvpro](https://www.instagram.com/lupeisvpro)

Funded by the Interministerial Women’s Secretariat with financial support from the Government of Canada Department for Women and Gender Equality in support of the National Action Plan to End Gender Based Violence.



Above and beyond the formal review of the policy, the SVPRO continually seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of policy they work under, which is inherently challenging, particularly when the goals of the policy are subjective and somewhat difficult to quantify. As part of this ongoing evaluation of the Sexual Violence Policy's implementation and effectiveness, various indicators have been assessed alongside the policy's overarching goals to determine its impact and areas for improvement. The goals of the current policy include:

- **Fostering a culture where attitudes and behaviors that perpetuate sexual violence are rejected:** The SVPRO regularly collected qualitative and quantitative data from students, staff and faculty in the form of surveys, feedback forms and verbal interactions that were used to inform training, education and student engagement opportunities aimed at changing attitudes and behaviors that contribute to sexual violence. The office also monitored the number of students, faculty and staff utilizing services and participating in training, as well as measured faculty/staff engagement.
- **Survivors are supported:** The SVPRO has not tracked statistical data on the satisfaction of survivors, as the concept of 'feeling supported' is subjective and varies greatly from person to person, with individual expectations of service and interaction differing widely. There are, however, specific practices that can help survivors of sexual violence feel supported and, to ensure the best possible care, the SVPRO Navigator has regularly participated in up-to-date training, conferences, webinars, and in-person educational and community building sessions to ensure best practices are being observed. The SVPRO always takes into consideration the unique needs and circumstances of each survivor and their intersecting identities and has been committed to making the process of seeking support after experiencing sexual violence as barrier-free, trauma-informed and anti-oppressive as possible. As an example of the policy supporting survivors and, in alignment with evolving best practices for addressing sexual violence complaints within the postsecondary sector, a Complainant who is acting in good faith, will not be subject to actions for violations of the University's policies related to drug and alcohol use at the time the sexual violence took place. In addition, a survivor is able to disclose and receive supports without having to file a formal complaint and there is no time limit for making a report as long as the respondent is still a member of the UPEI community.

The SVPRO Navigator has continued throughout the year to be engaged in committee work and collaborated with organizations and government departments within the





Gender-Based Violence community to learn and share current research, resources and initiatives in the community.

- **Those who commit sexual violence are held accountable:** According to Canadian Women’s Foundation, “The odds of sexual assault being reported to police are about 80% lower than for other violent crimes¹” which leads us to believe there are many personal reasons why survivors of sexual violence do not want to follow through with formal reports or complaints. While the UPEI Policy allows Complainants to file a Formal Complaint at any point, the timing of the complaint can complicate matters further, such as the end of the school year, during a break or exams. Many survivors that come to the SVPRO prefer to mitigate the impacts they have experienced through avenues like workplace/academic accommodations, safety planning, education on Gender-Based Violence, referrals to support and services or other informal processes that meet the needs of the survivor. This is demonstrated by examining the SVPRO files that were opened in 2023-2024. Approximately 40% of the files opened were “Third Party” disclosures looking for support and information to help a friend, colleague or student and about 60% were Complainants themselves. Of those Complainants, 17% proceeded with a formal investigation either under the Sexual Violence Policy or the Fair Treatment Policy and 100% of those files ended with a finding of a violation of policy and some type of sanction.

Without the desire of the Complainant to file a Formal Complaint and participate in an investigation, holding a Respondent accountable proves difficult. The Respondent is only made aware of the complaint when a Formal Complaint is submitted. The only exception is when a University Initiated Complaint is filed, which allows for action to be taken without the Complainant’s directly filing a Complaint. In 2023-2024, the SVPRO did not conduct any University Initiated Complaints which only happens considering (but are not limited to) the following circumstances:

- 1) the severity of the incident and the harm inflicted;
- 2) the potential risk to other members of the community;
- 3) the location of and circumstances in which the incident took place and;

¹ [Sexual Assault & Harassment | Violence prevention | Canadian Women's Foundation](#)





4) the likelihood of the effective resolution without the involvement of the person who experienced sexual violence.

“Accountability” is subjective term that can be challenging to define and quantify but given that 100% of Formal Complaints in 2023-2024 found a violation of policy, the SVPRO is confident that we are doing everything we can to hold those that commit sexual violence accountable. Due to the privacy and confidentiality of the Respondent, however, the SVPRO does not receive information about what kind of sanction they are given unless it directly affects the safety of the Complainant. This may result in the Complainant not fully understanding what steps have been taken or consequences there were for the Respondent, and they may not feel like adequate steps were taken, given the lack of information they are able to access.

Moving Forward

Filing a formal complaint with the SVPRO can be a daunting process, as it requires revealing the Complainant's identity to the Respondent, which can trigger fear of retaliation. Additionally, the process involves the potential of a heavy emotional burden as well as time and effort, including meetings with SVPRO staff and an investigator. The SVPRO will, however, continue to working to ease any anxiety surrounding the reporting/disclosure process by being trauma-informed, becoming more visible in the campus community, hosting student engagement and community building events and activities, working to revise the Sexual Violence policy to reflect the needs of survivors and creating a safer space for anyone involved in sexual violence to seek support or information. The SVPRO team will continue to ensure that survivors are fully informed of their options and provide them with the knowledge and resources they need to make empowered decisions. Through the Educator, the campus community will have access to updated and expanded training sessions and the office will be better able to engage with students, staff and faculty in meaningful and productive ways to create change, safer spaces and healthy communities. We look forward to another year of providing supports and services to survivors and working with the entire campus community to reduce sexual violence at UPEI.

Prepared by:

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Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office Coordinator

