ENDING GENDER-BASED SEXUAL VIOLENCE ON CANADIAN CAMPUSES: PEER EDUCATOR PERSPECTIVES

JASON A. LAKER
SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY

Abstract

Gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) remains a pervasive problem in higher education, disproportionately affecting marginalized students and undermining their safety, well-being, and academic success. Post-secondary institutions (PSIs) increasingly rely on peer educators (PeerEds) to deliver prevention and response programs, leveraging their shared student experience to foster trust and engagement. This study explores the motivations and experiences of GBSV PeerEds in Canada and the United States, revealing how personal trauma, institutional critique, and allyship drive their involvement. Findings highlight the emotional labour, secondary trauma, and systemic constraints PeerEds face, alongside their contributions to campus culture and advocacy. The study critiques institutional reliance on marginalized students' compassion and calls for trauma-informed practices, sustainable funding, and structural reform. Future research should examine PeerEds' influence on campus subcultures, administrators' complicity, and the broader legitimacy of peer-led GBSV initiatives. Meaningful change requires confronting institutional complicity and reimagining ethics of care.

Keywords*:* gender-based sexual violence, peer educators, higher education, campus safety, trauma-informed practices, institutional accountability

Résumé

La violence sexuelle fondée sur le genre (VSFG) demeure un problème persistant dans l'enseignement supérieur, touchant de façon disproportionnée les personnes étudiantes marginalisées et compromettant leur sécurité, leur bien-être et leur réussite. Les établissements d'enseignement postsecondaire font de plus en plus appel à des pairs éducateurs et paires éducatrices (PE) pour mettre en œuvre des programmes de prévention et d'intervention, tirant parti de l'expérience étudiante partagée pour favoriser la confiance et l'engagement. Cette étude explore les motivations et les expériences des PE en matière de VSFG au Canada et aux États-Unis, révélant comment les traumatismes personnels, la critique des institutions et l'alliance inclusive motivent leur implication. Les résultats mettent en lumière la charge émotionnelle, les contraintes systémiques et les traumatismes secondaires auxquels les PE sont confrontés, ainsi que leur contribution à la défense des droits et à la culture

des campus. La présente étude critique la dépendance des établissements à l'égard de la compassion des personnes étudiantes marginalisées et plaide pour des pratiques tenant compte des traumatismes, pour un financement durable et pour une réforme structurelle. Les recherches futures devraient examiner l'influence des PE sur les sous-cultures des campus, la complicité des administrations et la légitimité plus large des initiatives menées par les pairs en matière de VSFG. Un changement significatif exigerait de s'attaquer à la complicité institutionnelle et de repenser l'éthique du care.
Mots clés : Violence sexuelle fondée sur le genre, pairs éducateurs, enseignement supérieur, sécurité sur les campus, pratiques tenant compte des traumatismes, responsabilité institutionnelle

INTRODUCTION

Gender-based sexual violence (GBSV) remains a pervasive issue that undermines students' safety, well-being, and academic success in higher education. Survivors experience acute and chronic psychological effects—including anxiety, depression, PTSD, substance use, and suicidality (Dworkin, 2020; Serrano-Rodríguez et al., 2025; Voth Schrag et al., 2022)—and often face academic challenges such as impaired concentration, attendance, performance, and persistence (Molstad et al., 2021; Scott et al., 2015; Stermac et al., 2020).

The first comprehensive study of Canadian university women since the 1990s (Senn et al., 2014) found that 35% of first-year students had experienced sexual assaults since the age of 14. They "are generally unprepared for the perpetrators they may face during their academic years" (p. 1). In 2019, 71% of Canadian post-secondary students experienced or witnessed unwanted sexualized behaviour, and 10% of women were sexually assaulted (Burczycka, 2020).

Gender-based sexual violence is "never distinct from larger systems of social inequality and power" (Merry, 2009, p. 23). Students with minoritized gender or sexual identities face higher victimization risks and rates, often compounded by stigmatizing encounters within heteronormative campus cultures (Blayney et al., 2023; Coulter & Rankin, 2018; Fedina et al., 2024). Campus climate strongly influences sexual assault risk and prevalence. As Gartner et al. (2025) state, "Hostile climates normalize the dehumanization and subjugation of community members, facilitating acts of violence; conversely, the presence of this violence without community accountability enables continuous hostility and microaggressions" (p. 382).

The Canadian Psychological Association (2010) argues that eliminating GBSV requires a multipronged, integrated approach focused on research, prevention, and remediation (p. 1). In 2017, the Canadian federal government launched a strategy to prevent and address gender-based violence, investing over $820 million into prevention, survivor support, a responsive justice system, and targeted initiatives for Indigenous populations. This was reinforced in 2022 through bilateral agreements with provinces and territories to implement the National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence (Women and Gender Equality Canada, 2025). Provincial governments have increasingly required institutions to develop prevention and response policies, such as Ontario's Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan (Government of Ontario, 2015), British Columbia's Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy Act (2016); and Quebec's Bill 151, An Act to Prevent and Fight Sexual Violence in Higher Education Institutions (2017), among others.

Within this context, Canadian post-secondary institutions have developed professional roles to expand prevention programs, improve reporting, and enhance survivor support (Marques et al., 2020). However, research shows limited success in prevention-focused programs (Schipani-McLaughlin et al., 2024; Wong et al., 2023). Despite laws, policies, and funding aimed at reducing campus sexu-

al assault, incidence rates have remained unchanged in both Canada and the United States for decades (Armstrong et al., 2006; Laker & Boas, 2024).

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN GBSV PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

Students have long advocated for institutional accountability in addressing GBSV, calling for stronger policies, prevention programs, and survivor support (Simon, 2022). In Ontario, nearly 9,000 students walked out of Western University after reports of over 30 assaults in one weekend (LeBel & Bogdan, 2021). Students at the University of Saskatchewan rallied for reform after a peer was assaulted by a non-student (Giesbrecht, 2021). In 2022, a coalition of student union leaders representing 1.2 million students launched *Our Campus, Our Safety*, urging institutions and governments to renew commitments to eliminating campus GBSV.

Post-secondary institutions (PSIs) engage students in prevention through bystander intervention training (BIT), teaching tactics to intervene directly, distract, or delegate to others (DeFazio et al., 2024), especially in social situations where assaults most often occur, such as parties or dates (Harrigan et al., 2020; Marques et al., 2020). Although BIT formats and outcomes vary (Evans et al., 2019; Kettrey & Marx, 2021), it remains a popular strategy.

Some PSIs also recruit students as peer educators (PeerEds) to continue peer education's longtime role in health promotion. Despite its prevalence, the field lacks standardized definitions, role descriptions, and empirical evidence (Fields & Copp, 2015; Penney, 2018; Southgate & Aggleton, 2017; Wawrzynski, 2018). PeerEds' prevention work typically includes disseminating policy information, hosting workshops, and offering one-on-one support, while responsive roles may involve referring survivors to resources or providing moral support during investigations.

Research indicates that survivors more often disclose assaults to peers than professionals (Allen et al., 2015; Mennicke et al., 2022; Ullman et al., 2020). Disclosures to campus administrators often result in negative or retraumatizing impacts, affecting survivors' mental health, even leading to suicidal ideation and/or attrition (Mathieu & Poisson, 2014; Smith & Freyd, 2013). PeerEds' shared student experience enhances credibility and trust, fostering openness about sensitive topics such as sex, consent, and sexuality (White et al., 2009); though evidence of their impact on behavioural change—particularly reductions in sexual aggression—remains limited (Benton et al., 2020; Turner & Shepherd, 1999; Wawrzynski et al., 2011; Wong et al., 2019).

Southgate and Aggleton (2017) highlight tensions in evaluating the "effectiveness" of peer education, noting its reduction to a technical delivery mechanism. They highlight three "problematics": (1) oversimplifying peer education as procedural rather than pedagogical, (2) "black box" analyses focusing on inputs and outcomes rather than socially mediated processes, and (3) neglecting the role of social dynamics in educational outcomes. They urge scholars to engage pedagogical theory to better understand peer education's mechanisms:

> Together, these three interconnected problematics point to an unexamined assumption underpinning peer education – namely, that the 'peer is the pedagogy'. At a common-sense level, this may be true; hence, the focus is on selecting of the 'right' type of peers for programmes. However, even when the 'right' peers are selected based on 'fit' with the target population, there is an assumption that their 'peerness' will be enough to promote learning. A further assumption, that specific types of peers (e.g., people who inject drugs) will educate in a similar way within and across intervention contexts, is speculative at best. (p. 7).

Their critique underscores the contested meaning of effectiveness and the tendency to treat PeerEds as institutional instruments rather than collaborators (Bull, 2023). The stagna-

tion of GBSV rates suggests that existing strategies have not meaningfully reduced harm. If, as Southgate and Aggleton propose, the peer itself is the pedagogy, this project seeks to recentre their humanity—their motivations, identities, and lived experiences—in service of more nuanced evaluative frameworks and actionable approaches toward the long-elusive goal of reducing campus sexual violence.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: PEER EDUCATOR AS "MAGNIFIED MOMENT" AND "HEGEMON"

Efforts to prevent and respond to gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) are entwined with institutions' ethical, legal, and reputational imperatives. Ahmed (2021) critiques the institutional logic that reframes harm as a threat to the institution, stating, "The harm experienced by the person harassed is displaced as harm to the institution. Damage limitation as a tactic for handling complaints can operate to minimize and displace harm…[and] can also be achieved silently or through silence" (p. 252).

Amid expanding mandates, media scrutiny, and student protest, sustaining such "damage limitation" through performance rather than reform has become untenable. Delegating GBSV prevention to students seems paradoxical—unless it functions as mitigation or optics.

Gender-based sexual violence PeerEds offer rich sites for examining higher education's logics, strategies, and representations regarding this pervasive issue. They occupy a dual role as both institutional constituents and visible representatives of each institution's stance on sexual violence. Unlike other peer positions (e.g., tutors or residence assistants), GBSV PeerEds engage with uniquely charged, contested, and often traumatic subjects involving coercion and violence (Tremblay et al., 2008). Given institutions' reliance on them and students' tendency to confide in peers, understanding PeerEds' beliefs and experiences is vital for informing program design, support, and reform.

In this sense, GBSV PeerEds embody what Hochschild (1994) calls *magnified moments*: "episodes of heightened importance…in which things go intensely or meaningfully wrong… metaphorically rich, unusually elaborate and often echo later" (p. 4). Such moments, Messner (2000) adds, offer "a window into the social construction of reality" (p. 766), exposing gendered meanings and institutional logics.

The institutional logics underpinning GBSV prevention—its causes, remedies, who performs the work, and what success means—reflect hegemony: "the relatively dominant position of a set of legitimizing ideas…inhibiting the dissemination or articulation of alternatives" (Rosamond, n.d., para. 1). The university itself operates as a hegemon—an imagined cultural ideal and lived environment. Students arrive with prior socializations—gender, sexuality, identity scripts, and assumptions about campus life as distinct from the places they left and those they'll enter after completing their studies—a belief encapsulated in the phrase, "when you get out into the real world."

PeerEds thus personify institutional ideology without being policy makers. Believing their work to be restorative or transformative, they pursue counter-hegemonic goals within hegemonic structures that rely on their compliance. This framework humanizes PeerEds by foregrounding their identities, motivations, and experiences before assessing "effectiveness," resisting their use as scapegoats for institutional failure.

IMPETUS FOR THIS STUDY

This project extends the principal investigator's research on sexual consent communication among post-secondary students across diverse genders, orientations, and practices (e.g., monogamy, hookups, kink/BDSM). Prior findings showed that consent policies and education are often technical, verbose, and compliance-driven—serving institutional rather than student needs (Laker & Boas, 2024). Related, Hardesty et al. (2022) found that, "Affirmative consent assumes…sexual situations are a clearly definable

category of activity, whereas student accounts suggest…sexual and non-sexual situations bleed into one another, making it difficult for students to establish consent via clear communication before sexual encounters begin" (p. 1114).

Participants identifying as kink-practising (i.e., non-conventional sexual behaviours, including BDSM) described collaborative consent practices rooted in sex positivity, agency, and mutual pleasure, viewing verbal negotiation as integral and enjoyable rather than awkward or intimidating. Data collection paused in early 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but reflection on prior interviews resurfaced the case of "Simona," a 21-year-old "White, Straight, Cisgender Woman" who reported exclusively conventional sexual practices.

Simona expressed strong commitment to consent education, describing efforts to "teach" her boyfriend about consent and his assumptions of implied permission within monogamy. She was unique among non-kink participants for insisting on explicit verbal agreement—adhering more rigidly to institutional consent policies than any other participant. Notably, she was also the only GBSV PeerEd in the study:

> There is a frustrating irony in [participant's] situation. She demonstrated sincere belief in her institution's sexual consent policies and prevention methods by agreeing to serve as a peer educator tasked with conveying these to her fellow students, yet struggled mightily to do this and gain cooperation with the student she was dating." (Laker & Boas, 2024, p. 120)

Simona's case revealed tensions between institutionalized consent discourse and lived experience. While kink participants framed negotiation around pleasure, Simona's policy-driven approach exposed contradictions between prevention rhetoric and relational practice. Her experience raised broader questions: How do GBSV PeerEds enter, onboard, understand, and navigate their roles, reconcile institutional aims, and manage the emotional costs of their work? This exploratory study begins to address those questions, laying groundwork for future inquiry into the pedagogy and politics of GBSV peer education.

METHODS

Grounded in constructivist epistemology (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), this study sought depth of understanding through participant engagement, "well-suited for discovery about campus life… [which] can render vicarious experience impossible through statistical analysis" (Manning, 1999, p. 12). Institutional review board approval authorized recruitment of GBSV PeerEds in Canada and the United States—contexts with similar GBSV rates and peer education practices. Although not designed for comparison, both contexts exhibit similar GBSV incidence rates and peer education practices; the United States, however, offered a larger pool of degree-granting post-secondary institutions and potential participants (5,916 vs. 223; Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, n.d.; National Center for Education Statistics, 2022). Despite policy variations, constructions of gender and sexuality—and their relations to GBSV—manifest similarly in "everyday social practice" (Renold, 2005) across borders.

With no central registry for peer programs, online and social media searches using terms like *peer education*, *peer advocate*, and *sexual assault prevention university* identified relevant programs and contacts. Recruitment materials invited PeerEds via email, social media, and student affairs listservs. Participants signed electronic consent forms via DocuSign. Eleven PeerEds from 10 institutions participated (Canada: n = 6; United States: n = 5); participants were not compensated. Table 1 lists pseudonyms, region, demographics, generalized majors, whether they are paid for their work, and divisional reporting lines.

Table 1
Participant Pool

Alias	Age	Major*	Gender	Sexuality	Race/ ethnicity	Religion/ spiritual id	Paid?	Division supervising program
				Canadian Participants				
Hannah	21	Social Sciences	Woman	Queer	White/ Ashkenazi Jew	Jewish	Y	DEI
Charlotte	21	Social Sciences	Female	Bisexual	Caucasian	Spiritual	Y	DEI
Emma	19	Social Sciences	Female	Bisexual	White European	None	Y	SAS
Kaleisha	23	Business	Female	Heterosexual	Biracial (Black/ Caucasian)	Agnostic	Y	SAS
Chloe	26	Health	Cis-woman	Queer	White	Jewish	N	SAS
Kaia	22	Interdisc.	Woman	Bisexual	Biracial (Asian/ Caucasian)	N/A	Y	SAS
				U.S. Participants				
Faith	22	Health	Female	Heterosexual	Multiracial (Latinx, Pacific Islander, European)	Spiritual	Y	SAS
Isabel	21	Health	Woman	Bisexual	Latinx	None	Y	SAS
Harjit	19	Social Sciences	Male	Asexual	Asian Indian	Atheist	N	SAS
Meredith	20	Health	Female	Straight	White	Non-Denom Christian	N	SAS
Brianna	20	Social Sciences	Non-Binary	Bisexual	Chicano	N/A	Y	SAS

Notes. Major listed by general faculty to protect participant confidentiality. Identity verbiage sourced from participants. Reporting division context: SAS = Student Affairs & Services; DEI = Diversity, Equity, Inclusion.

A sixth U.S. participant withdrew, but data saturation—when "additional data do not lead to new emergent themes" (Given, 2016, p. 135)—was achieved. The principal investigator conducted one-hour semi-structured Zoom interviews, "conversations with a purpose" (Burgess, 1984, p. 102), treating dialogue and interaction as data. Materials included recordings, transcripts, and field notes documenting non-verbal cues and reflections. For transparency, anonymized transcripts were later tested in Adobe Acrobat AI Assistant, a closed system preventing data export or model training, ensuring confidentiality. Outputs were descriptive rather than analytical, serving as aids to human interpretation.

Data and Analysis

Data was comprised of interview transcripts generated by the Zoom video-conferencing client; observation of, and reflection about, participants' non-verbal expressions and inflections; and field and contemporaneous notes taken during and after interviews, respectively. These data were analyzed and coded utilizing inductive reasoning and the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Mason 1996). Patterns and themes were identified (Miles & Huberman, 1994), generating clusters around participants' motivations to pursue this role and work, lived experiences and personal impacts of the role, perceptions of impact on their campuses, and implications for Canadian student affairs and services, as well as future research. Participant nationalities are identified throughout the findings, with either (CA) for Canadians or (U.S.) for United States.

FINDINGS

Motivations to Pursue This Role and Work

Various influences shaped participants' interest in and commitment to pursuing GBSV work. The most common motivation among participants came from personal or friends' experiences of sexual violence. For example, Chloe (CA), 26, a graduate student and the study's eldest participant, cited a sexual assault during her first undergraduate year elsewhere:

> As I slowly began to disclose what had happened…I very quickly began to reflect, through counselling, about the lack of education…being done from a peer-to-peer level; oftentimes, it was very institutionally directed, in the sense that it was like, "Don't do this. This is our policy. There will be bad things that will happen to you if you assault somebody." And I didn't think that that got to the root cause.

She sought to expand restorative work, explaining, "I didn't want anyone to go through anything like that, recognizing…I wasn't going to be the solution, but wanted to play a role in whatever that type of education looked like on campus," later founding a student organization addressing sexism, cis-sexism, consent, toxic masculinity, and anti-racism. Another participant, Charlotte (CA), experienced a sexual assault during her time working at her institution's health centre, which focused on STI prevention and COVID protocols. That experience induced critical introspection that changed her priorities, leading her to join a new GBSV PeerEd program:

> This opportunity allowed me to normalize my own experience and recognize that…it's quite common, and also to support a [new] service that I needed at the time that didn't exist…. It was definitely a personal motive and feeling like it would help my own healing experience, as well as help others…I think that's a lot of the reason why we do what we do…there's a personal story behind it.

Motivated by Critique

Some participants joined out of dissatisfaction with institutional approaches. Chloe's initial personal motivation deepened as she observed policy limitations. Harjit (U.S.) criticized mandatory online sexual misconduct modules, a strat-

egy that is gaining popularity among PSIs and is seen as an efficient way to comply with legal and policy mandates to provide such education to students (Salazar et al., 2014; Willard et al., 2024; Zapp et al., 2018). He recalled peers rushing through the quizzes "with nonsense and sarcasm," concluding, "If this is how we want to prevent it, we need more education and much more rigorous training." A stalking incident during his first year reinforced that conviction. Research echoes Harjit's frustration, finding such online modules often produce low retention and can even discourage reporting (Acquaviva et al., 2022; Htun et al., 2022).

Kaia (CA) attended an alternative high school providing accommodations associated with socio-emotional difficulties she experienced in earlier schooling. She traced her advocacy to a situation there involving several female peers reporting being sexually harassed and/or assaulted by the same male student—himself receiving accommodations associated with an autism diagnosis. That student had been suspended but was later allowed to return after mandated education. Kaia explained, "These girls did not know that they had a shared experience of sexual violence until he returned because they were talking about it in the [social area] and realized they were assaulted by the same guy."

His return to school following his "education" was something that Kaia found infuriating: "It seemed like he was able to get away with that behaviour because of adults dismissing [it] because of his autism." She argued this was insulting to other autistic students "capable of understanding sexual violence" and minimized the harm to the girls. Kaia stepped in, as she recognized "their anger was feeding off of each other [to the point] they were unable to express themselves in an effective way to the school administration, which made them feel like their experience of violence was minimized by the school. While recognizing her principal's difficulty balancing accountability with accommodation, Kaia pressed for survivor protection, resulting in separated schedules.

Although disability and sexual violence education exceeds this article's scope, Kaia's case highlights the need for intersectional research and careful use of peer educators in sexual health education for students with disabilities (James et al., 2022; Melnikova, 2024). At university, Kaia leveraged this experience, running uncontested for a women's student government seat and joining the GBSV advisory committee. When administrators struggled to recruit students, she eagerly volunteered—"I'll do it, I'll do it, I'll do it"—and later served as a research assistant and PeerEd.

Allyship with Survivors

Many participants cited others' experiences of gender-based and sexual violence as catalysts. Faith (U.S.) credited her mother, a probation officer who worked with sex offenders and "raised [her] to be very passionate about that stuff." Inspired by her mother's compassion, Faith joined her university women's centre, where a high school friend disclosed an assault. Motivated to "channel [her] scientific mind," she pursued research rather than direct survivor support. When her university launched a GBSV PeerEd program, she was hired to collect and present data, some later adapted into mandatory online modules.

For others, advocacy also provided community or employment. Hannah (CA) said, "It's been really present in my friends' lives and something I deeply care about, but to be honest, I joined because I wasn't really involved in anything at [university]." Emma (CA), stressed by school and service work, attended a presentation on men's roles in preventing violence. The message that prevention is "everyone's responsibility" resonated; she joined the PeerEd program and later became a social service worker supporting survivors of human trafficking.

LIVING THE ROLE AND DOING THE WORK

Participants' connections to GBSV varied, but most had direct experience or prior activism. Kaleisha (CA), who had worked in a dean's office and as an orientation leader, described herself

as "a big proponent of making sure everybody's happy in whatever they're choosing to engage in." Her enthusiasm at events earned her a PeerEd role; colleagues dubbed her "the mom of the group." She supported students through candid, sex-positive dialogue:

> I have a plethora of different resources I give out…I'd rather everybody be safe, so I have all the condoms. I've developed the moniker of "the anal expert" because I've taught people how to do it safely and [produced a video] about how to engage in anal play safely so they've kind of taken me on as the "I'll ask her questions because she knows a lot" [person].

Asked about her nickname, she referenced being,

> a huge ally [who] asked a lot of questions to my gay friends over the years…and just gained a bunch of like, tips and tricks from them and their experiences…I'm a "fun fact" kind of person, so when I find something interesting, it just sticks.

While Kaleisha's moniker could be seen to reify problematic stereotypes assuming gay men's notional expertise and inclination toward anal sex (Underwood, 2012), her positionality as a bisexual, biracial (Black/Caucasian) woman and candid style seem to enable her social credibility among several student communities.

Participants described common prevention efforts—condom distribution, tabling, film screenings, and Take Back the Night events, a tradition since the 1980s "to protest rape and reclaim the streets" (Rise Up!, n.d.). Emma (CA) recounted a Halloween-themed "consensual face painting" event where students practised asking permission before painting each other's faces, drawing 180 attendees. Social media tools like Instagram and TikTok extended engagement, while pandemic-era restrictions pushed outreach online, affecting recruitment and training. Faith (U.S.), hired during lockdown, completed training virtually and delivered only two presentations that year.

Meredith (U.S.) cited her father's abuse of her mother as defining her survivor identity. "My mom pulled my sister and me out of it…became a single mom [and a] really resilient story." Her mother became a women's shelter board member and its eventual president as a way to "give back" during Meredith's adolescence; eventually, Meredith also began volunteering there. She didn't disclose their plight to her friends, believing they wouldn't understand, but she and her sister started a related club at their high school. The pandemic initially paused Meredith's involvement at university, but she volunteered to help organize events and later joined the program formally when it relaunched. Promoted to lead PeerEd in her second year, she trained new recruits and helped design flexible presentation templates for quick response to requests. Her many workshops made her a sought-after campus resource, including contributions to her academic fraternity's risk management training.

Across participants, personal experience, identity, and activism intertwined—revealing how PeerEds embody the living pedagogy of consent, advocacy, and care.

PERSONAL IMPACTS OF SERVICE AS GBSV PEEREDS

General research on peer educators affirms the personal benefits of service (Dennett & Azar, 2011; Ebreo et al., 2002), though it remains limited with regard to GBVS PeerEds specifically. Charlotte (CA) described her role as "normalizing" after her assault, saying it "helped stabilize [me in] my own situation and [to] be able to have a high degree of functioning." Research involvement made her feel like "less of a statistic" and validated that "my story matters as much as anyone else's." Chloe (CA) echoed this sense of reclamation: she was "taking back power that had been taken from me," transforming a once-unsafe campus into a site of agency.

Kaia (CA) called her activism "empowering and draining at the same time…because I go to a smaller institution…you can really see the impact…your voice is heard more." Yet she grew frustrated by institutional inertia, echoing Ahmed's (2021) critique of "damage limitation":

> Things are slow [and] bureaucratic, like you see that note, it's like, yeah, this is important. Yeah, thank you for doing this work. Wow, I really admire you doing this work. But then it's just like, they put on Sexual Violence Awareness Month, they show up for the event. They're like, "I did my part." Yay, we cured sexual violence. And then they go back to not thinking about it for another year, you know?

Faith (U.S.), whose mother's profession and a friend's assault shaped her path, said the PeerEd role "sparked a flame under my ass," deepening her resolve. She casually referenced her own "violent sexual assault" the previous year and frustration at not knowing evidence preservation protocols she later learned as a PeerEd that "may undermine successful prosecution." Faith explained the casual manner of her disclosure was due to not being "a believer in sugarcoating things" and the resilience instilled in her by her probation officer mother.

Charlotte (CA), who shifted from health education to GBSV work after her own assault, reflected:

> You can't help but think about yourself when creating content for others and considering...how your situation could have been different if you had access to that information at the time...not to blame myself or anything, but...taking better care of myself once it did happen to me, and more about emotional support.

Trauma Dumping

While peer support can foster resilience and recovery (Amedu et al., 2025), it may also bring secondary trauma, guilt, and boundary challenges (Tripp-Stuck, 2020). Consistent with research showing students disclose to peers more often than professionals, participants described the emotional labour of these encounters. Kaia said, "When people find out what my role is, they say, 'Oh my God, I need to tell you what happened to me.' Sometimes I was in a place to receive it, sometimes not." She preferred general narratives over graphic detail. Chloe (CA) similarly noted that peers would "come up and just trauma dump...we were all quite young and often in public places." She attributed this to limited staff and safe disclosure spaces, adding that her team discussed boundaries deliberately: "We were very clear at defining boundaries...this is not something we can sustainably do, nor do we have the skillsets to do it."

Chloe was also caught off guard by being sexualized by male peers while distributing condoms or promoting consent, some calling her "slut" or "whore." To her, such incidents showed that "consent culture on campus doesn't exist," despite their "sex-positive, consent-focused, and validating" approach. Yet despite emotional strain, all participants emphasized the work's benefits—skill building, professional growth, healing, and community.

GBSV PEERED PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR CAMPUS IMPACT

Although more research is needed on GBSV PeerEd programs' scope and effectiveness—including defining the latter (i.e., what constitutes success) and its implications for the former—a clear institutional advantage is inexpensive labour and expanded reach (Williams, 2011). Brianna (U.S.) explained that, before PeerEds, one health specialist delivered up to eight workshops per week: "That was horrific. I can't imagine the stress she was under." The PeerEd team, she said, was "a huge relief." She also observed tangible behaviour changes: "Fraternity brothers at their parties being distractors—'Hey, are you okay? Let's get out of here.' You normally wouldn't see that in such a hypermasculine setting." Her example also underscores challenges in recruiting men to GBSV prevention, often due to gender norms, discomfort discussing assault, and assumptions that women wouldn't engage with men on these issues (Ray et al., 2024). Tillapaugh (2023) found similar tensions among 12 male PeerEds striving to influence peers without reinforcing the same masculine norms linked to violence.

Chloe (CA), whose own assault motivated her activism, founded a PeerEd program through student government after seeing little administrative capacity. "If one employee is tasked with this work and already overwhelmed," she said, "it's clearly not a university priority." She valued student autonomy, believing peers could design more relevant strategies without bureaucratic delay. Yet Kaia (CA) warned that such independence can obscure institutional neglect:

> One thing that I have definitely noticed across the board when doing any type of sexual violence advocacy work, [is that] no one disagrees with its importance, but no one meaningfully prioritizes it, and it's full of survivors who overwork themselves and don't have the support they need.

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THIS STUDY

This exploratory study provides humanizing insights about post-secondary students involved in efforts to prevent and/or respond to GBSV. Such a focus is an arguably critical alternative to policy-based and technical analysis and discussion of GBSV that easily and often obscures the realities facing both students and staff involved with implementing such mandates in practice. Ideally, this study and its findings will animate more student-centred and trauma-informed approaches to GBSV prevention and response within and beyond higher education.

Implications for Canadian Student Affairs and Services, and Future Research

Participants' accounts of selection, onboarding, and supervision were largely routine—yet this ordinariness is revealing. Given the emotional intensity of GBSV work and prevalence of trauma histories among PeerEds, the absence of trauma-informed recruitment or supervision practices is concerning. None mentioned screening or reflection to assess risks related to survivor status, secondary trauma, or burnout.

That PeerEds are predominantly women, racialized students, and/or gender or sexual minorities—groups already disproportionately affected by sexual violence (Lipson et al., 2018; Pellicane & Ciesla, 2023)—raises questions about the structural coercion of emotional labour. Future research should examine how PeerEds use personal experience versus formal training, particularly given the gap between institutional consent logics and students' lived realities. As Foucault (1980) observed, marginalized knowledge can be "insurgent"—the perspectives of the subjugated hold transformative potential to disrupt dominance. Such knowledge may help cultivate more agentic sexual and consent cultures. Institutions must, however, confront their reliance on marginalized students' compassion—often rooted in trauma (Douglas et al., 2019)—as the foundation of GBSV efforts.

Further studies should explore how PeerEds gain or lose credibility with key student populations, especially those tied to rape-supportive attitudes and perpetration, such as men in athletic or fraternal groups (Laker & Boas, 2024; Martin et al., 2020; Palmer et al., 2021). Understanding their influence within these subcultures—especially their ability to foster critical dialogue within them—could inform strategies for broader norm change.

Similar scrutiny should extend to administrators, who are seldom GBSV experts (Vladutiu et al., 2011). Research has implicated some as enablers through intimidation of victims, protection of perpetrators—particularly faculty and athletes—and reluctance to act (Todorova, 2018). Such findings question the legitimacy of institutional oversight in survivor-or peer-led programs. Future work should examine whether these dynamics reappear within PeerEd structures, where survivors may be simultaneously celebrated and exploited.

Gender-based sexual violence initiatives often occupy marginal institutional positions, typically housed within student life or wellness portfolios. Participant accounts of tight budgets, overextended staff, and student-led stopgaps reinforce this structural neglect. Investigating how organizational design, funding, and reporting lines affect program legitimacy and longevity is a key policy issue.

Additional research should also address the experiences of professional staff who supervise and collaborate with PeerEds. What assumptions shape their recruitment and mentoring practices? How do institutional priorities and funding constrain ethical and supportive environments? Likewise, exploring fellow students' perceptions could clarify whether peer-led GBSV education is viewed as credible, performative, or contested.

Finally, comparative policy studies could evaluate how governments, families, and the public perceive peer-led prevention: Are these programs seen as genuine interventions, or symbolic gestures toward accountability? Such insights could strengthen advocacy for stable funding, standardized training, and recognition of PeerEds as central to campus safety and equity.

In short, much remains to be learned about the institutionalization of GBSV PeerEd programs—their burdens, contradictions, and transformative potential. The participants' courage and candor reveal that progress demands more than compliance or resources. It requires institutions willing to confront their complicity, reimagine care, and invest in the students who already embody that commitment.

REFERENCES

Acquaviva, B., Hayes, B., & Clevenger, S. L. (2022). College students' and alumnus' knowledge and perceptions of a mandatory online sexual assault training. *Journal of Criminal Justice Education*, *34*(2), 269–288. https://doi.org/10.1080/10511253.2022.2132268

Ahmed, S. (2021). *Complaint!* Duke University Press.

Allen, C., Ridgeway, R., & Swan, S. (2015). College students' beliefs regarding help seeking for male and female sexual assault survivors: Even less support for male survivors. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, *24*(1), 102–115. https://doi.org/10.1080/10926771.2015.982237

Amedu, A., Dwarika, V., & Aigbodion, V. (2025). Addressing students' traumatic experiences and impact of social supports: A scoping review. *European Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, *9*(1), 100512. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejtd.2025.100512

An Act to Prevent and Fight Sexual Violence in Higher Education Institutions, P-22.1, SQ 2017, c 32. https://www.publicationsduquebec.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/Fichiers_client/lois_et_reglements/LoisAnnuelles/en/2017/2017C32A.PDF

Armstrong, E. A., Hamilton, L., & Sweeney, B. (2006). Sexual assault on campus: A multilevel, integrative approach to party rape. *Social Problems*, *53*(4), 483–499. https://doi.org/10.1525/sp.2006.53.4.483

Benton, A., Santana, A., Vinklarek, A., Lewis, C., Sorenson, J., & Hernandez, A. (2020). Peer-led sexual health education: Multiple perspectives on benefits for peer health educators. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, *37*, 487–496. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-020-00661-9

Blayney, J., Scalco, M., Radomski, R. S., Colder, C., & Read, J. (2023). Peer influence and sexual aggression risk among college students. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, *38*(3–4), 1674–1698. https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605221123456

Bull, A. L. (2023). Speaking out about gender-based violence and harassment in higher education. In J. Conner, R. Raaper, L. Gauthier, & C. Guzmán Valenzuela (Eds.), *The Bloomsbury international handbook of student voice in higher education* (pp. 115–126). Bloomsbury Publishing.

Burczycka, M. (2020). *Students' experience of unwanted sexualized behaviours and sexual assault at postsecondary schools in Canadian provinces, 2019*. Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2020001/article/00005-eng.htm

Burgess, R. G. (1984). *In the field: An introduction to field research*. Unwin Hyman.

Canadian Psychological Association. (2010). *Policy statement on violence against women.* https://cpa.ca/cpasite/UserFiles/Documents/CPA%20Policy%20Statement%20on%20Violence%20Against%20Women%20_Final%20-%20June%2019%202010_(1).pdf

Coulter, R., & Rankin, S. (2020). College sexual assault and campus climate for sexual- and gender-minority undergraduate students. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, *35*(5–6), 1351–1366. https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260517696870

Council of Ministers of Education, Canada. (n.d.). *Some facts about Canada's population.* https://www.cmec.ca/299/education-in-canada-an-overview/index.html

DeFazio, C., Moyers-Kinsella, S., Claydon, E., Hand, M., Lilly, C., Zullig, K., & Davidov, D. (2024). A scoping review of bystander-based sexual violence prevention training for college students in fraternities and sororities. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *21*(6), 797. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph21060797

Dennett, C., & Azar, J. (2011). Peer educators in a theoretical context: Emerging adults. *New Directions for Student Services*, *2011*(133), 7–16. https://doi.org/10.1002/ss.380

Douglas, L., Jackson, D., Woods, C., & Usher, K. (2019). Rewriting stories of trauma through peer-to-peer mentoring for and by at-risk young people. *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, *28*(3), 744–756. https://doi.org/10.1111/inm.12579

Dworkin, E. (2020). Risk for mental disorders associated with sexual assault: A meta-analysis. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, *21*(5), 1011–1028. https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838018813198

Ebreo, A., Feist-Price, S., Siewe, Y., & Zimmerman, R. (2002). Effects of peer education on the peer educators in a school-based HIV prevention program: Where should peer education research go from here? *Health Education & Behavior*, *29*(4), 411–423. https://doi.org/10.1177/109019810202900402

Evans, J., Burroughs, M., & Knowlden, A. (2019). Examining the efficacy of bystander sexual violence interventions for first-year college students: A systematic review. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, *48*, 72–82. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2019.08.016

Fedina, L., Bender, A., Royer, M., Ashwell, L., Tolman, R., & Herrenkohl, T. (2024). Three-month prevalence of unwanted sexual contact victimization in a national sample of college students: Differences by race, gender identity, and sexual identity. *BMC Public Health*, *24*(1), 572. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-024-18018-7

Fields, J., & Copp, M. (2015). Striving for empathy: Affinities, alliances, and peer sexuality educators. *Sex Education*, *15*(2), 188–203. https://doi.org/10.1080/14681811.2014.992065

Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings*. Pantheon.

Gartner, R., Ballard, A., & Smith, E. (2025). "There's no safety in these systems": Centering trans and gender-diverse students' campus climate experiences to prevent sexual violence. *Journal of Diversity in Higher Education*, *18*(4), 382–392. https://doi.org/10.1037/dhe0000512

Giesbrecht, L. (2021, October 7). USask sexual violence rally draws dozens as students voice desire for safety. *Laronge Now.* https://larongenow.com/2021/10/07/usask-sexual-violence-rally-draws-dozens-as-students-voice-desire-for-safety/

Given, L. (2016). *100 questions (and answers) about qualitative research*. SAGE.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory*. Aldine.

Government of Canada. (2021, November 4). *Understanding consent. https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/services/benefits-military/conflict-misconduct/sexual-misconduct/training-educational-materials/understanding-consent.html*

Government of Ontario. (2015). *It's never okay: An action plan to stop sexual violence and harassment.* http://docs.files.ontario.ca/documents/4136/mi-2003-svhap-report-en-for-tagging-final-2-up-s.pdf

Hardesty, M., Young, S., McKinnon, A., Merriwether, A., Mattson, R., & Massy, S. (2022). Indiscrete: How typical college student sexual behavior troubles affirmative consent's demand for clear communication. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, *19*, 1114–1129. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13178-021-00611-9

Harrigan, M., Woodford, M., Godderis, R., & Wilson, C. (2020). Understanding students' intentions to intervene to prevent sexual violence. In D. Crocker, J. Minaker, & A. Nelund (Eds.), *Violence interrupted: Confronting sexual violence on university campuses* (pp. 164–187). McGill-Queen's University Press.

Hochschild, A. (1994). The commercial spirit of intimate life and the abduction of feminism: Signs from women's advice books. *Theory, Culture & Society*, *11*(2), 1–24. https://doi.org/10.1177/026327694011002001

Htun, M., Jensenius, F., Dominguez, M., Tinkler, J., & Contreras, C. (2022). Effects of mandatory sexual misconduct training on university campuses. *Socius: Sociological Research for a Dynamic World*, *8*. https://doi.org/10.1177/23780231221124574

James, M., Porter, J., Kattel, S., Prokopiv, V., & Hopwood, P. (2022). Peer educators in the facilitation of sexuality and respectful relationship education for people with an intellectual disability: A scoping review. *Sexuality and Disability*, *40*, 487–502. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11195-022-09740-4

Kettrey, H., & Marx, R. (2021). Effects of bystander sexual assault prevention programs on promoting intervention skills and combatting the bystander effect: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, *17*, 343–367. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11292-020-09417-y

Laker, J., & Boas, E. (2024). *Advancing sexual consent and agential practices in higher education: Toward a new community of practice*. Routledge.

LeBel, J., & Bogdan, S. (2021, September 17). *Western University students protest culture of misogyny*. Global News. https://globalnews.ca/news/8198717/western-university-students-protest-culture-misogyny/

Lincoln, Y., & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. SAGE.

Lipson, S., Kern, A., Eisenberg, D., & Breland-Noble, A. (2018). Mental health disparities among college students of color. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, *63*(3), 348–356. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2018.04.014

Manning, K. (1999). *Exploring campus life: In search of community*. SAGE.

Marques, O., Couture-Carron, A., Frederick, T., & Scott, H. (2020). The role of trust in student perceptions of university sexual assault policies and services. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, *50*(2), 39–53. https://doi.org/10.47678/cjhe.v50i2.188687

Martin, S., Fisher, B., Stoner, M., Rizo, C., & Wojcik, M. (2020). Sexual assault of college students: Victimization and perpetration prevalence involving cisgender men, cisgender women and gender minorities. *Journal of American College Health*, *70*(2), 404–410. https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2020.1751644

Mason, J. (1996). *Qualitative researching*. SAGE.

Mason-Jones, A., Freeman, M., Lorenc, T., Rawal, T., Bassi, S., & Arora, M. (2023). Can peer-based interventions improve adolescent sexual and reproductive health outcomes? An overview of reviews. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, *73*(6), 975–982. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2023.05.035

Mathieu, E., & Poisson, J. (2014, November 20). Canadian post-secondary schools failing sex assault victims. *Toronto Star.* https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/canadian-post-secondary-schools-failing-sex-assault-victims/article_963d6d86-7781-54d9-bb18-82714131f8ca.html

Melnikova, A. (2024). Sexual education for individuals with special needs: Understanding and overcoming current obstacles. *Journal of Innovation in Polytechnic Education*, *6*(1), 40–54. https://doi.org/10.69520/jipe.v6i.195

Mennicke, A., Coates, C. A., Jules, B., & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, J. (2022). Who do they tell? College students' formal and informal disclosure of sexual violence, sexual harassment, stalking, and dating violence by gender, sexual identity, and race. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, *37*(21–22), NP20092–NP20119. https://doi.org/10.1177/08862605211050107

Merry, S. E. (2009). *Gender violence: A cultural perspective*. Wiley-Blackwell. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444306656

Messner, M. A. (2000). Barbie girls versus sea monsters: Children constructing gender. *Gender & Society*, *14*(6), 765–784. https://doi.org/10.1177/089124300014006004

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). SAGE.

Molstad, T., Weinhardt, J., & Jones, R. (2021). Sexual assault as a contributor to academic outcomes in university: A systematic review. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, *24*(1), 218–230. https://doi.org/10.1177/15248380211030247

National Center for Education Statistics. (2022). *Table 105.50. Number of educational institutions, by level and control of institution: 2010–11 through 2020–21 [Data table].* U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d22/tables/dt22_105.50.asp

Palmer, J., McMahon, S., & Fissel, E. (2021). Correlates of incoming male college students' proclivity to perpetrate sexual assault. *Violence Against Women*, *27*(3–4), 507–528. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801220905663

Pellicane, M., & Ciesla, J. (2023). Temporal trends in rates of depression, anxiety, and suicidality among cisgender sexual minority and heterosexual college students. *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity*, *10*(4), 560–574. https://doi.org/10.1037/sgd0000563

Penney, D. (2018, February 10). *Who gets to define "peer support?"* Mad in America. https://madinamerica.com/2018/02/who-gets-to-define-peer-support/

Ray, A., Walsh, S., Hendon, W., Butler, M., Meschke, L., & McNeely, C. (2024). Barriers to recruitment and retention of undergraduate men as college sexual assault prevention peer educators. *Journal of American College Health*, *72*(4), 1200–1207. https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2022.2071618.

Renold, E. (2005). *Girls, boys, and junior sexualities: Exploring children's gender and sexual relations in the primary school*. Routledge.

Rise Up! (n.d.). *Take back the night march.* https://web.archive.org/web/20240920144538/https://riseupfeministarchive.ca/web/20240920144538/https://riseupfeministarchive.ca/announcement/take-back-the-night-march/

Rosamond, B. (n.d.). Hegemony. In *Encyclopedia britannica.* Retrieved July 17, 2023, from https://www.britannica.com/topic/hegemony

Salazar, L., Vivolo-Kantor, A., Hardin, J., & Berkowitz, A. (2014). A web-based sexual violence bystander intervention for male college students: Randomized controlled trial. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, *16*(9), e203. https://doi.org/10.2196/jmir.3426

Schipani-McLaughlin, A., Gilmore, A., Salazar, L., Potter, S., Stapleton, J., & Orchowski, L. (2024). Advancing a comprehensive multilevel approach to sexual violence prevention using existing efficacious programs. *Journal of Forensic Nursing*, *20*(1), 20–29. https://doi.org/10.1097/jfn.0000000000000457

Scott, J., Matt, G., Wrocklage, K., Crnich, C., Jordan, J., Southwick, S., Krystal, J., & Schweinsburg, B. (2015). A quantitative meta-analysis of neurocognitive functioning in posttraumatic stress disorder. *Psychological Bulletin*, *141*(1), 105–140. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0038039

Senn, C., Eliasziw, M., Barata, P., Thurston, W., Newby-Clark, I., Radtke, H., Hobden, K., & SARE Study Team. (2014). Sexual violence in the lives of first-year university women in Canada: No improvements in the 21st century. *BMC Women's Health*, *14*, 135. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12905-014-0135-4

Serrano-Rodríguez, E., Luque-Ribelles, V., & Hervías-Parejo, V. (2025). Psychosocial consequences of sexual assault on women: A scoping review. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, *54*(1), 231–258. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-024-03013-1

Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy Act, SBC 2016, c 23. https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/16023_01

Simon, A. (2022, August 30). *Student leaders issue national action plan against sexual violence on campus*. Global News. https://globalnews.ca/news/9095062/post-secondary-action-plan-sexual-violence/

Smith, C., & Freyd, J. (2013). Dangerous safe havens: Institutional betrayal exacerbates sexual trauma. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, *26*(1), 119–124. https://doi.org/10.1002/jts.21778

Southgate, E., & Aggleton, P. (2017). Peer education: From enduring problematics to pedagogical potential. *Health Education Journal*, *76*(1), 3–14. https://doi.org/10.1177/0017896916641459

Stermac, L., Cripps, J., Amiri, T., & Badali, V. (2020). Sexual violence and women's education: Examining academic performance and persistence. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, *50*(1), 28–39. https://doi.org/10.47678/cjhe.v50i1.188601

Tillapaugh, D. (2023). Individual and systemic impacts of hegemonic masculinity on college men sexual violence peer educators. *Journal of College Student Development*, *64*(2), 123–139. https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/csd.2023.0013

Todorova, M. (2018). Studying sexual and gendered violence prevention in higher education. *Canadian Woman Studies*, *32*(2), 6–19.

Tremblay, P., Harris, R., Berman, H., MacQuarrie, B., Hutchinson, G., Smith, M., Braley, S., Jelley, J., & Dearlove, K. (2008). Negative social experiences of university and college students. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, *38*(3), 57–75. https://journals.sfu.ca/cjhe/index.php/cjhe/article/view/502/547

Tripp-Stuck, C. (2020). *The impact of severe mental health on peers in supporting roles: A look at secondary trauma and college students* (Publication No. 1010) [Doctoral dissertation, University of Northern Iowa]. Dissertations and Theses @ UNI. https://scholarworks.uni.edu/etd/1010

Turner, G., & Shepherd, J. (1999). A method in search of a theory: Peer education and health promotion. *Health Education Research*, *14*(2), 235–247. https://doi.org/10.1093/her/14.2.235

Ullman, S., O'Callaghan, E., Shepp, V., & Harris, C. (2020). Reasons for and experiences of sexual assault nondisclosure in a diverse community sample. *Journal of Family Violence*, *35*(8), 839–851. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-020-00141-9

Underwood, S. (2012). *Gay men and anal eroticism*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203057216

Virginia Sexual & Domestic Violence Action Alliance. (2022). *Transforming relationships: A violence prevention toolkit for peer educators.* https://vsdvalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Transforming-Relationships_A-Violence-Prevention-Toolkit-for-Peer-Educators_VSDVAA-2022.pdf

Vladutiu, C., Martin, S., & Macy, R. (2011). College- or university-based sexual assault prevention programs: A review of program outcomes, characteristics, and recommendations. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, *12*(2), 67–86. https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838010390708

Voth Schrag, R., Wood, L., Hairston, D., & Jones, C. (2022). Academic safety planning: Intervening to improve the educational outcomes of collegiate survivors of interpersonal violence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, *37*(9–10), NP7880–NP7906. https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260520967162

Wawrzynski, M. (2018, April 5). *How can peer educators help address mental health on campuses?* New Educator. https://edwp.educ.msu.edu/new-educator/2018/faculty-viewpoint-the-power-of-peer-educators/

White, S., Park, Y., Israel, T., & Cordero, E. (2009). Longitudinal evaluation of peer health education on a college campus: Impact on health behaviors. *Journal of American College Health*, *57*(5), 497–506. https://doi-org.libaccess.sjlibrary.org/10.3200/JACH.57.5.497-506

Willard, J., Mennicke, A., & Coker, A. (2024). Lessons learned in developing online violence prevention trainings. *Journal of Family Violence.* https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-024-00722-y

Williams, L. (2011). The ongoing and emerging place of peer education. *New Directions for Student Services*, *133*, 1–6.

Wong, J. S., Bouchard, J., & Lee, C. (2023). The effectiveness of college dating violence prevention programs: A meta-analysis. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, *24*(2), 684–701. https://doi.org/10.1177/15248380211036058

Wong, T., Pharr, J., Bungum, T., Coughenour, C., & Lough, N. (2019). Effects of peer sexual health education on college campuses: A systematic review. *Health Promotion Practice*, *20*(5), 652–666. https://doi.org/10.1177/1524839918794632

Women and Gender Equality Canada. (2025, September 24). *The federal gender-based violence strategy: Progress report*. https://www.canada.ca/en/women-gender-equality/gender-based-violence/gender-based-violence-strategy.html

Zapp, D., Buelow, R., Soutiea, L., Berkowitz, A., & DeJong, W. (2018). Exploring the potential campus-level impact of online universal sexual assault prevention education. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, *36*(5–6), NP2324–NP2345. https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260518762449