



Global Voices Information Sheet

Sexual assault support services at Canadian universities



Carleton University students rally to ask for a campus sexual assault centre.
(Photo: Carleton Coalition for a Sexual Assault Centre)

Background Info

- On September 1, 2007, a female student was sexually assaulted and badly beaten while working alone overnight in a laboratory at Carleton University in Ottawa.
- As a result of the attack, Leslie Claire and Julie Lalonde, two Carleton students who were experienced in sexual assault support, spoke to other students and studied the safety measures and support services available at their school to deal with such incidents.
- Claire and Lalonde formed a group to ask Carleton administration for space to establish a sexual assault center to provide counselling and education about sexual assault.
- Four years later, on November 14, 2011, students at Carleton held a rally to once again ask administration to establish a sexual assault center.
- Currently, Lalonde and other students run a volunteer telephone support line using their own mobile phones. Their help line receives calls for support every day.
- According to Julie Lalonde, university and college campuses and residences are the second-most common locations for sexual assaults, after homes.
- A Canadian study in 1996 found that 25 per cent of all female university and college students had been physically and/or sexually assaulted by a male date or boyfriend.
- The University of Alberta Sexual Assault Centre reports that 90-95 per cent of survivors who come to them for help have been sexually assaulted by someone they know.
- A 2002 report by the Ontario Women's Directorate stated that 80 per cent of women who are sexually assaulted do not report to police or authorities for fear of humiliation or being treated badly by the legal system.

Key terms

- **Sexual Assault** — Canadian law defines sexual assault as any form of sexual contact with another person without that other person's consent.

Global Voices Secondary Educator Resources

Note to Educators:

The following activities are designed to stimulate a current events discussion. Generative in nature, these questions can be a launching point for additional assignments or research projects. Teachers are encouraged to adapt these activities to meet the contextual needs of their classroom.

In some cases, reading the article with students may be appropriate, coupled with reviewing the information sheet to further explore the concepts and contexts being discussed. From here, teachers can select from the questions provided below. Activities are structured to introduce students to the issues, then allow them to explore and apply their learnings. Extension and conclusion activities are included to challenge students and finally, encourage them to reflect on the issues at hand.

Since these activities are designed as discussions rather than formal lessons, assessment strategies are not included.

Themes and Course Connections

- Themes: abuse, personal space, sexual assault, protection, right and wrong.
- Course Connections: The Arts, Canadian and World Studies, English, Health and Physical Education, Social Sciences and Humanities.

Materials

- Chart paper or blackboard
- Computers and internet
- Global Voices column

Specific Expectations and Learning Goals

Students will:

- Develop and express responses to issues and problems.
- Reassess their responses to issues on the basis of new information.
- Participate in active group work and class discussions.
- Communicate effectively in written and spoken language or other forms of expression.
- Demonstrate the ability to think critically.
- Develop, express, and defend a position on an issue and explain how to put the ideas into action.

Reading Comprehension

1. Reading Comprehension: Global Voices Column (estimated time: 15 minutes)
 - a. Pre reading steps:
 - i. Introduce the topic and encourage students to discuss what they already know about the topic, making predictions around what the column is about.
 - b. Reading steps:
 - i. Read: students must read the text independently, highlighting important points throughout the column.
 - ii. Ask: students must ask themselves what the story is about, recording five questions they are unsure of after reading the column.

- iii. Paraphrase: students must write point form notes in their own words around what the column is about.
- c. Post reading discussion:
 - i. What are the main points of the column?
 - ii. What emotions did this column evoke in you?
 - iii. What problem is identified in the column?
 - iv. What questions do you have about the column?

Knowledge and Understanding

1. Discussing the Global Voices Column (estimated time: 10 minutes)
 - a. Ask students the following suggested questions about the column, encourage them to use evidence from the Global Voices column to support their answers:
 - i. What is the message in this column?
 - ii. What perspectives are presented in this column? Which ones are left out?
 - iii. What problem is presented in this column?
 - iv. What events are discussed in this column?
 - v. What is sexual assault? Why is it wrong?
 - vi. How can sexual assault be prevented?
 - vii. Where can a sexual assault occur?
 - viii. Who can commit a sexual assault?
 - ix. If you were to witness or suspect such an occurrence, what should you do?

Thinking

1. Personal Space (estimated time: 60 minutes)
 - a. As a class, brainstorm various types of abuse (e.g.: neglect, physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse). Write these answers on the board.
 - b. Define each type of abuse as a class.
 - c. After creating these definitions, ask students to describe what each type of abuse might look like, citing any recent examples from the media.
 - d. Ask students to select one type of abuse and ask them to select and choose one of the following ways to depict this type of abuse.
 - i. Poetry
 - ii. Painting
 - iii. Drawing
 - iv. Collage
 - v. Short story
 - vi. Graphic design
 - vii. Song
 - e. When students have completed their creative piece, ask them to explain the meaning to the class. Encourage an active discussion around how each piece makes them feel.
 - f. Display completed work around the classroom.

Communication

1. Dispelling Myths (estimated time: 30 minutes)
 - a. Divide the class into six groups and assign each group one of the following myths about sexual assaults:
 - i. Only attractive young women are sexually assaulted.
 - ii. Sexual assault only occurs in dark, isolated places.
 - iii. It's only sexual assault if someone has physical injuries or was threatened with a weapon.
 - iv. If sexual assault is not reported to the police right away, nothing can be done.

- v. Once a person starts to engage in a sexual activity, he or she cannot change his or her mind.
- vi. When sexual assault occurs, it is usually committed by a stranger.
- b. Ask each group to perform research and find evidence that will help them break their myth. Encourage students to use resources around the classroom such as books and the internet, to help them do so.
- c. When they have completed their research, ask each group to present their myth and their findings to the class.

Application

1. Student Support Club (estimated time: continuous project)
 - a. As mentioned in the Global Voices column, the students of Carlton University feel it is important for students to have a place (e.g. a social group) in the school where they can go and receive support.
 - b. Ask students to describe the benefits such a group would bring to their school. List these answers on the board.
 - c. Following this discussion, divide the class into small groups and ask students to discuss what they would like this social group to look like in their school.
 - d. Amid these discussions, ask students to address the various ways this group would provide students with support. This can include specific roles and titles people running this group would have, and any specific functions of the group.
 - e. When the students have finished their small discussions, open it up to the class.
 - f. Using their combined ideas, create an outline around how this club would look in their school and the services it would provide.
 - g. When this outline is complete, ask the class to create a proposal for their club that will be presented to the school principle for approval.

Additional Resources

In addition to the above lesson plans, you may want to share some additional resources with your students. Listed below are some links to useful online resources:

Free The Children – www.freethechildren.com

We Day Teach - <http://www.weday.com/teach>

Kids Help Phone - <http://www.kidshelpphone.ca/teens/home/splash.aspx>