

**Respect Project: Community Conversations about Sexual Assault**  
**Online Community Survey Findings**

In July 2014, the PEI Rape and Sexual Assault Centre received funding from Status of Women Canada to carry out a project designed to increase their ability to prevent/respond to sexual violence against women and girls on PEI. To help guide the project work, an online survey was conducted with female and male community members over the age of 16 years to collect information on the following:

- Awareness of the types of services and supports available to women and girls on PEI who have been victims of sexual assault
- Experience of females with sexual assault and how it was dealt with
- The types of services and supports that should be in place to support female victims of sexual assault
- Barriers/challenges that make it difficult for female victims of sexual assault to access support
- The best ways to protect women and girls and prevent sexual assault

The survey link was posted on the PEI Rape and Sexual Assault Centre website, and word-of-mouth, email invitations, CBC radio interview and social media (i.e. Facebook, newsletters, Twitter, etc.) were used to promote the project and encourage community members to complete it. The survey was anonymous and voluntary.

Altogether, 592 people started the survey and 471 completed it to the extent that their input was usable. Of the 471 respondents who completed the survey, 92% (433/471) identified as female, 7% (34/471) male and <1% (2/471) gender neutral. Information on <1% (2/471) was not available. Seventy-two percent (340/471) of respondents reside in Queens County, with only 18% (83/471) residing in Prince County and 10% (48/471) in Kings County. The majority of respondents were between the ages of 26 and 55 years (Table 1).

**Table 1: Age of Respondents in Years**

Category (n=471)	Percentage	Count
Under 18	1%	4
19-25	12%	59
26-35	32%	152

36-45	21%	101
46-55	18%	83
56-65	12%	56
66 or older	3%	15
Prefer Not To Say	<1%	1

Overall, 64% (282/471) of respondents stated that they are aware of supports and services available to women on PEI who experienced sexual assault. The following table shows the types of services/supports they are aware of, with the PEI Rape and Sexual Assault Centre being the most commonly identified.

**Table 2: Services and Supports Available to Women**

<b>Category (n=282)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Count</b>
PEI Rape and Sexual Assault Centre	82%	230
Police	70%	197
Family Doctor	60%	170
Canadian Mental Health Association	58%	164
Victim Services	58%	163
Private counselor	56%	159
Catholic Family Services	52%	147
Psychologist	51%	143
Family Services PEI	47%	132
Family Violence Prevention Services	46%	130
Community Mental Health	42%	118
School counselor	38%	106
Addiction Services	34%	97
Faith/Clergy	27%	75
Aboriginal Service Providers	21%	60
Hotline support service	20%	57
Group therapist	12%	35
Anderson House	21%	6
Women's Network PEI	1%	2

Other services and supports noted by one respondent each were SAGE, the emergency room at hospitals, Student Services at UPEI, the UPEI Women’s Centre, Chief Mary Bernard Memorial Women’s Shelter, SANE, and the Employee Assistance Program.

In addition, 42% (184/471) of respondents noted that they are aware of supports and services available to girls on PEI who experienced sexual assault. Table 3 outlines the services/supports they are aware of, with the PEI Rape and Sexual Assault Centre and school counselors being the most commonly identified.

**Table 3: Services and Supports Available to Girls**

Category (n=184)	Percentage	Count
PEI Rape and Sexual Assault Centre	70%	130
School counselor	69%	129
Police	63%	118
Family doctor	62%	115
Victim Services	54%	101
Psychologist	50%	92
Family Services PEI	49%	91
Private counselor	47%	85
Catholic Family Services	46%	85
Family Violence Prevention Services	38%	71
Canadian Mental Health Association	36%	67
Community Mental Health	36%	67
Faith/Clergy	24%	44
Hotline support service	22%	41
Aboriginal Service Providers	21%	39
Addiction Services	21%	39
Group therapist	13%	25

Other services and supports noted by one respondent each were the emergency room at hospitals, Child and Family Services, Girls Circle and Anderson House.

Overall, only 11% (53/471) of respondents think women who experienced sexual assault have access to adequate services and supports; 38% (179/471) think there are not enough services and supports available and 44% (208/471) are unsure. In the case of girls who experienced

sexual assault, only 8% (38/471) think they have access to adequate services and supports. The other 44% (210/471) think they do not and 41% (193/471) are unsure. In both cases, 7% (34/471) of respondents did not answer these questions.

When asked if they are aware of any efforts taking place on PEI to help protect women from sexual assault, 10% (45/471) noted that they are. Some of the efforts noted include the following:

- Education, programming and advocacy by such organizations as Women's Network PEI, the PEI Rape and Sexual Assault Centre, Anderson House, East Prince Women's Information Centre, the Premiers Action Committee, the Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Family Violence Prevention Services, etc. (12 comments)
- The Purple Ribbon Campaign (7 comments)
- Incorporating bullying, violence and abuse into school curriculum (2 comments)
- UPEI campus renovation to improve lighting (2 comments)
- Take Back the Night campaign (1 comment)
- Articles, newsletters, and social media by Becka Viau advocating for women's rights in regards to sexual assault (1 comment)
- Beyond Jian, Community Conversations and Projects (1 comment)
- Lighting on the Confederation Trail (1 comment)
- Bystander intervention through UPEI (1 comment)

In addition, 8% (40/471) of respondents noted that they are aware of efforts taking place to help protect girls. These include the following:

- School curriculum on bullying, violence, abuse and healthy relationships (11 comments)
- Education, programming and advocacy by such organizations as Women's Network PEI, the PEI Rape and Sexual Assault Centre, Anderson House, East Prince Women's Information Centre, the Premiers Action Committee, the Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Family Violence Prevention Services, etc. (11 comments)
- Girls Circles (5 comments)
- Boys Councils (4 comments)
- Police supporting schools (2 comments)
- Websites on bullying and violence prevention (2 comments)
- The Purple Ribbon Campaign (2 comments)

Of the 433 female respondents who completed the survey, 68% (294/433) indicated that they experienced sexual assault, and of that 68%, 65% (192/294) noted that they told someone about their experience. The most commonly told individuals were a friend or family member.

Police, private counselors and family doctors were the most common service providers told. See Table 4 for details.

**Table 4: Individuals Told About Sexual Assault Experience**

<b>Category</b> <b>N=192</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>
Friend	77%	147
Family member	57%	109
Police	15%	28
Private counselor	12%	23
Family doctor	10%	20
Psychologist	9%	17
PEI Rape and Sexual Assault Centre	9%	17
Victim Services	9%	17
Specialist Physician (psychiatrist)	8%	15
School counselor	8%	15
Catholic Family Services	4%	8
Faith/Clergy	4%	8
Community Mental Health	3%	4
Canadian Mental Health Association	2%	4
Family Services PEI	2%	4
School teacher	2%	3
Employer	2%	3
Employee Assistance Program	1%	2
Addiction Services	1%	2
Hotline support service	1%	2
Group therapist	1%	2
Family Violence Prevention Services	1%	1
Emergency Room doctor	1%	1
Media/Public	1%	2
Babysitter	1%	1
Aboriginal Service Providers	0%	0

Sadly, 32% (93/294) of female respondents that experienced sexual assault did not share their experience with anyone; the other 1% (3/294) preferred not to say if they did or not. When asked why they didn't tell anyone about their experience, the most common reasons were feelings of embarrassment (62% - 58/93) and shame (58% - 58/93). See Table 5 for a complete list of reasons why respondents did not tell anyone about their experience.

**Table 5: Reasons for not Telling Anyone about their Sexual Assault Experience**

<b>Category N=93</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>
Feelings of embarrassment	62%	58
Feelings of shame	58%	54
Fear	50%	47
Fear of being blamed	41%	38
Not sure if the assault was serious enough to report	37%	35
Stigma	33%	31
Didn't think anyone would believe me	30%	28
Not sure if what happened to me was sexual assault	29%	27
Didn't feel I needed professional help	27%	25
Power imbalance between me and the offender	18%	17
Lack of opportunities to do so	15%	14
Mistrust of the justice system	15%	14
I was a child when it happened	5%	5
Family member was involved	3%	3
Didn't know who to tell	2%	2
Fear of repercussions if told anyone	2%	2

Of the 294 respondents who experienced sexual assault, only 21% (63/294) sought out professional services or support to help deal with their experience. The most commonly sought

out services, as shown in Table 6, were a psychologist, a private counselor and the PEI Rape and Sexual Assault Centre.

**Table 6: Types of Services/Supports Sought Out**

<b>Category N=63</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>
Psychologist	32%	20
Private counselor	27%	17
PEI Rape and Sexual Assault Centre	25%	16
Police	22%	14
Victim Services	21%	13
School counselor	16%	10
Catholic Family Services	11%	7
Family doctor	11%	7
Faith/Clergy	10%	6
Canadian Mental Health Association	8%	5
Community Mental Health	7%	5
Employee Assistance Program	3%	2
Group therapist	3%	2
Family Violence Prevention Services	3%	2
Hotline support service	3%	2
Family Services PEI	2%	1
Aboriginal Service Providers	2%	1
Addiction Services	2%	1
Psychiatrist	2%	1
Clinic Doctor	2%	1

As outlined in Table 7, the most common types of services/supports these victims received were general counseling, emotional support and mental health counseling.

**Table 7: Types of Supports/Treatment Received**

<b>Category N=63</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>
General counseling	65%	41
Emotional support	48%	30
Mental health counseling	30%	19
Medical treatment	14%	9
Specialized therapy - i.e. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Trauma Therapy, etc.	13%	8
Help navigating the justice system	13%	8
Group therapy	11%	7
Psychologist services	10%	6
Psychiatric care	8%	5
None	3%	2
Phone counseling	2%	1

Overall, 43% (27/63) of respondents felt the services/supports they received were helpful and 44% (28/63) felt they were sort of helpful. The other 13% (8/63) did not feel they were helpful. When asked about ways to improve the services/supports they received, the following suggestions were put forth:

- Increase awareness of the types of services available and how to navigate them (3 comments)
- Put more focus on the long-term emotional and mental issues that occur as a result of sexual assault and how to manage them (3 comments)
- Have service providers believe victims and understand that victims seldom lie about sexual assault (3 comments)
- Train police to better support sexual assault victims (3 comments)
- Provide more counselors through the PEI Rape and Sexual Assault Centre (2 comments)
- Train counselors so they can better support victims of sexual assault (2 comments)
- Reduce wait times to access services (1 comment)
- Make it easier to access services (1 comment)
- Provide more follow up care (1 comment)
- Provide more services for adult survivors of childhood sexual assault (1 comment)

When asked if there are any other types of services/supports they would like to have access to on PEI outside of those they accessed, 57 out of 63 respondents noted the following:

**Table 8: Other Services and Supports Suggested to Support Victims of Sexual Assault**

<b>Category N=57</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>
Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner at the hospital	61%	35
Peer support group	60%	34
Specialized therapy - i.e. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Trauma Therapy, etc.	54%	31
Emotional support	49%	28
Help navigating the justice system	49%	28
Mental health counseling	47%	27
Group therapy	46%	26
Psychologist services	44%	25
General counseling	42%	24
Psychiatric care	39%	22
Medical treatment	30%	17
Residential treatment programs	26%	15
Reading or print materials	25%	14
Mental health support group	2%	1
Professionals that specialize in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder	2%	1

Of the 433 female respondents who completed the survey, 28% (122/433) noted that they never experienced sexual assault and 4% (17/433) preferred not share this information. When asked who they would contact/approach if they were to experience sexual assault, Table 9 shows that the vast majority would go to either a friend or family member.

**Table 9: Who Female Respondents would Contact/Approach for Support**

<b>Category N=139</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>
Friend	71%	99
Family member	63%	88
Police	55%	77
PEI Rape and Sexual Assault Centre	47%	66
Family Doctor	40%	56
Victim Services	27%	37
Private counselor	22%	31
Employee Assistance Program	14%	19
Specialist physician (psychiatrist)	12%	17
Psychologist	11%	15
Catholic Family Services	9%	13
Faith/Clergy	6%	9
Family Services PEI	5%	7
Hotline support service	5%	7
Family Violence Prevention Services	5%	7
Community Mental Health	4%	6
No one	4%	5
Canadian Mental Health Association	3%	4
Aboriginal Service Providers	1%	2
Hospital	1%	2
Women's Shelter	1%	2
School counselor	1%	1
Group therapist	1%	1

The 139 female survey respondents who indicated that they never experienced sexual assault, the 34 male respondents, and the two respondents who noted they were gender neutral were asked who they would encourage a female family member/friend/colleague to contact for support if they experienced sexual assault. Table 10 shows that the most common responses were police, the PEI Rape and Sexual Assault Centre and family doctor.

**Table 10: Who You Would Encourage a Female Family Member/Friend/Colleague to Approach for Support**

<b>Category N=175</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>
Police	74%	130
PEI Rape and Sexual Assault Centre	73%	128
Family Doctor	50%	88
Victim Services	40%	70
Family member	29%	51
Private counselor	28%	50
Friend	26%	46
Psychologist	23%	40
Employee Assistance Program	15%	27
Hotline support service	15%	26
Family Violence Prevention Services	14%	25
Specialist physician (psychiatrist)	14%	24
Family Services PEI	14%	24
Catholic Family Services	13%	23
Community Mental Health	11%	20
Canadian Mental Health Association	11%	19
Faith/Clergy	9%	16
School counselor	8%	15
Group therapist	4%	8
Addiction Services	3%	5
Aboriginal Service Providers	2%	4
Hospital	1%	2
Women's shelter	1%	1
No one	0%	0

Three percent (5/175) of respondents noted that the types of services/supports they would recommend would depend on the person and the circumstances.

In addition, the female survey respondents who indicated that they never experienced sexual assault, the male respondents, and the respondents who noted that they were gender neutral were asked why they think victims of sexual assault do not report or tell anyone about their experience. As shown in Table 11, the most common reasons they suspect are fear, feelings of shame and fear of being blamed.

**Table 11: Reasons why Victims of Sexual Assault do not Tell Anyone about their Experience or Seek Support**

<b>Category N=175</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>
Fear	86%	150
Feelings of shame	84%	147
Fear of being blamed	81%	142
Feelings of embarrassment	81%	141
Stigma	76%	133
Don't think anyone will believe them	71%	124
Power imbalances between offender and victim	69%	121
Not sure the assault was serious enough to report	69%	121
Mistrust of the justice system	68%	119
Not sure if what happened to them is sexual assault	62%	108
Don't feel they need professional help	36%	63
Lack of opportunities to do so	24%	42
Not worth the trauma of telling anyone because sexual assault isn't taken seriously in our society	3%	5
Don't know who to tell	2%	4
Fear of not being believed	2%	3
Small province/community where everyone knows everyone else	2%	3
Long wait times for professional help/services	1%	2

All survey respondents, excluding those who indicated that they were victims of sexual assault and who received services and supports to help deal with their experience, were asked what type of services and supports they feel should be available to women and girls who experience sexual assault (408/471). Seven of the 408 respondents did not answer this question, so the findings outlined in Table 12 are based on the 401 who did.

**Table 12: Types of Services and Supports that should be Available**

<b>Category N=401</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>
Emotional support	89%	357
Police officers specially trained to investigate sexual assault	85%	341
Mental health counseling	80%	321
Medical treatment	80%	321
Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner at the hospital	80%	321
Female only clinic	78%	313
Help navigating the justice system	77%	309
General counseling	75%	301
Specialized therapy - i.e. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Trauma Therapy, etc.	69%	277
Peer support group	66%	265
Psychologist services	60%	241
Group therapy	59%	240
Reading or print materials	54%	216
Psychiatric care	49%	196
Residential treatment programs	39%	156
Confidential helpline	1%	4
Specialized retreats	<1%	1
Better triage support in hospitals	<1%	1
Access to a specialized lawyer who can help navigate the system	<1%	1
Access to more rape crisis counselors	<1%	1

All survey respondents were asked about potential barriers/challenges that might make it difficult for sexual assault victims to access services and supports on PEI. Overall, 469 of the 471 respondents answered this question. The most common responses, as noted in Table 13, are embarrassment/shame/fear/stigma, lack of awareness of what services and supports are available, and feelings they will not be believed or taken seriously.

**Table 13: Barriers/Challenges to Accessing Services and Supports**

<b>Category N=469</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>
Embarrassment/shame/fear/stigma	88%	414
Lack of awareness of what services and supports are available	83%	389
Feeling they will not be believed or taken seriously	74%	347
Mistrust of the justice system	63%	294
Fear of reporting to police	62%	293
Confidentiality issues	61%	286
Distance/lack of transportation	56%	261
Long wait times	52%	244
No services available in the region	44%	208
Gender of the service provider	39%	184
Cost of treatment	37%	172
Confidentiality issues/fear of members of the community finding out	1%	5
Not sure if what was experienced was sexual assault/lack of understanding of what happened	1%	4
Don't feel deserve services or support	<1%	2
Fear of being blamed	<1%	1

In addition, all survey respondents were asked what needs to be in place to help increase awareness of sexual assault against women and girls and to help prevent it. Altogether, 470 respondents completed the question specifically for women – see Table 14 for findings.

**Table 14: Ways to Increase Awareness of Sexual Assault against Women and to Help Project Them**

<b>Category N=470</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>
Public awareness campaigns about sexual assault myths and realities	86%	402
Public awareness campaigns about the meaning and laws about consent	83%	389
Training for police about victim realities, responses and misconceptions	83%	388
Education for front-line workers about the realities of a victim's experiences and popular misconceptions	80%	377
Campaigns aimed specifically at men and boys around healthy masculinity	79%	371
Public awareness campaigns that help bystanders to respond to remarks that perpetuate sexual assault myths	73%	342
Better education in schools	1%	4
Public education on what bystanders can do to help if they witness a sexual assault	<1%	3
Public education on where to go for help if sexually assaulted	<1%	2
Public campaigns to encourage victims to seek help	<1%	1

As for the question specific to girls, 469 respondents completed it. Table 15 shows an overview of the findings.

**Table 15: Ways to Increase Awareness of Sexual Assault against Girls and to Help Project Them**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Count</b>
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<b>N=469</b>		
School curriculum about healthy relationships for both boys and girls	92%	430
Public awareness campaigns about healthy relationships for both boys and girls	89%	419
School curriculum that addresses healthy sexuality for both boys and girls	87%	408
School curriculum about the meaning and laws about consent	85%	399
Public awareness campaigns about the meaning and laws about consent	81%	378
Public awareness campaigns that address healthy sexuality for both boys and girls	80%	375
Resources for parents about family sexuality and consent	80%	375
Training for teachers, school staff and other youth service providers on sexual assault	1%	3
Resources for girls and boys about sexuality and consent	1%	3
Anonymous online resources/helpline support	1%	3
Media watch campaigns that address eroticized violence	<1%	2
Public campaigns to encourage victims to report incidents and seek help	<1%	2
Public education on what bystanders can do to help if they witness a sexual assault	<1%	1

At the end of the survey, respondents were provided with an opportunity to share any additional thoughts. Below is a complete list of the thoughts they shared.

- As a high school counsellor I must say that male hockey teams seem to be the worst source of sexual assault so mandatory training in hockey on respect and consent is another good idea.
- My sexual assault happened when I was a child, many years ago. I am not sure what it is like today when someone reports the crime. My parents took it seriously and called the police and the person was charged and convicted. I got justice. I did not go for help right away. It was only in my teen years and early twenties that I realized I was having

issues with boundaries as a result of the sexual assault at the age of 9. I got help then at the Catholic Family Services Bureau.

- Social media, with the age group 12-16 it's seems to be acceptable.
- I'm happy to see this issue is being addressed. Great survey!
- Good to see PEI survey
- The criminal justice system needs more education to ensure girls are protected once they come forward.
- I told the police what happened to me, but they made the process so daunting I did not press charges against the man who assaulted me.
- I think I've carried shame since it happened to me, at age 13...like somehow it was my fault. I know in my mind it wasn't, but I've always felt "bad" or not as good as other girls, because of what happened to me. I think young girls need "empowerment" courses, and self-esteem courses!! My daughter is now older than I was when it happened to me, and she's such a sweet, innocent person, I can't imagine anyone ever hurting her the way I was hurt. It makes me sad to think about what happened, I was just a child.
- Thank you for doing this.
- PEI is a very small island and many people do want confidentiality. People on PEI having various opinions most negative opinions stem from the lack of knowledge on these topics. In order to support individuals who have went through sexual assault the general public needs to be educated rather than just being able to take sides on who they know best.
- So many teachers, professionals, politicians, etc. still don't have any clue how this world works. I heard Senator Campbell say he didn't understand why the female MPs would be afraid to come forward because, after all, they were equals to the male MPs that harassed them. Seriously!?!?!? People don't understand the big picture. More feminist education needs to happen (even if we don't call it that to make it more palatable sometimes). It makes me sad to say that but it's true.
- Gender inequality is endemic and it's going to need to be addressed at absolutely every age, in every institution, and every corner of our lives if it's every going to change. Our govt. should be a leading force for good and give a strong clear voice to this issue in support of equality, in education, prevention and healing.
- Thank you for your work.
- My attack was spousal rape. I didn't report it because I was afraid it wouldn't be considered rape.
- I think there needs to be more awareness about resources that are available. I did not even know that the PEI Rape and Sexual Assault Center existed until last year (in my third year of university) because of a class I took. I'm also a big advocate for more

knowledge about consent. From my own experience, I don't believe PEI's sex education programs in schools was very comprehensive and did not give an adequate definition of consent.

- The biggest problem is that men are the biggest threat to women and they tend to be in positions of authority. We need equality, kindness, and fairness to be the core values of our society.
- When you are a child molested by a family member it is very difficult to get/ask for help, especially when your parents prefer to forget that anything ever happened. There should be people to follow up with that child, besides the parents. Otherwise we are just forgotten.
- Women already receive so much more help than men in these circumstances. The focus needs to be in prevention and appropriate action for EVERYONE that experiences sexual assault.
- Losing battle
- Conversations with boys and young men really need some attention.
- There is such a huge inequity between resources and awareness between males and females. Males, even in this survey, are but a mere add on – sad.
- I am not sure how frequently this applies however my experience with sexual assault occurred while with a group of friends. I had way too much to drink and found myself in a bad situation. I said no quite clearly once I realized what was happening. Awareness for girls and women to have a plan of support when out...for a long time I believed I was at fault for having too much to drink. My friends were not aware I was not able to care for my own best interests.
- There are services, however, access is difficult. There are significant wait times for both mental health and addictions and they do not work with one another. If resources were more readily available, easier to access, then people would not continue to suffer and further harm themselves.
- Should be taught about reporting sexual assault that has taken place, right away, and not to be ashamed.
- I think there is a misconception that sexual assault only including penetration and people are not clear on the fact that unwanted sexual touching of any kind is assault. That should be a clear message for both older and younger age groups. If it is unwanted, it is assault.
- It is embarrassing to admit to being a victim of sexual assault.
- Very important work you're doing! Keep it up.
- As a young girl, maybe 10, it is so long ago I forget exactly, three boys pinned me down in an old abandon building where as kids we would sometimes hide when we played tag team. I was trying to hide and not be found in the tag team game. Three boys on our

block knew where I was, and pinned me to the floor. One guy said, "take off her pants", I had a dress on, and I started screaming with all my might. I kicked, screamed and twisted wildly on that old wooden smelly floor where drunks used to go to drink, and they were pulled up my dress and I screamed like hell. My wrists were killing me they were grabbing them so tight. After a bit, not sure how long, my best friend heard me screaming and came running and when she realized what was happening, she screamed and ran and got my father. They came running and yelling. The three boys took off. I dam near got raped. I didn't know back then what it was till a few years later but my father took me into the house and sat me down. He and I were very, very close. He asked me over and over again if they touched me and I kept shaking my head, No. He sensed something and kept at me about did they do anything to me. He asked me to lift my dress so he could see. There wasn't anything to see because they didn't get the panties off because I kicked and screamed so long and loud. He knew when he touched my legs front and back checking me out that I was mauled and he wanted to know who tried to hurt me. I told him we were just playing tag team chase but they found me and wouldn't let me go. He left the house, he knew who we always played with, two blocks of kids, and he left the house. He came back some time later and told us all that the boys wouldn't bother me again. I really don't know what he did, nor to whom he talked, but they never bothered me again. You grow up touch when you are a kid on King Street back in the 50's and 60's, but I wasn't raped. It was close. Knowing what I know now, it was very close, the intent was there. I felt I was one luck girl with a loud scream and a fight in me. When we had our daughter and as she approached the same age as at my experience. There wasn't a day went by, I would look her in the eye and ask if everything today was OK. She was always told that no matter what someone did to her, I would help her through it. Lucky again. She is strong willed too. TWO of the boys have since died at an early age and I just couldn't bring myself to attend the wake nor the funeral. One of the dead guys led the life of a criminal and was caught. The other one showed up at my work one day as a cleaner in our building. I kept my distance and one day he stood beside my desk and said hello. I said "get away from me" and he left. I was very careful that year (10 yrs. or so ago) not to be caught alone in the bathroom or in the elevator or stairwell.

- A great deal of education has to be done around awareness and education for prevention. We really are failing a lot of girls and women and boys and men as there is more sexual abuse than there ever was. We also have to have places for people to recover and make the laws show how we will punish if these type of offences take place
- Huge issue is people not coming forward because the perpetrator is a priest. It is hard for anyone to allege offences by a doctor, teacher, counsellor, police officer but especially a priest.

- Sad how the judicial system lets offenders off with little or no penalty. Stiffer penalties may be a small deterrent but are needed. Tax evasion gets you years in prison, while sexually harming often very brutally harming children- they will get weekends in jail. This makes me ill.
- Thank you for doing this work.
- There is an evident lack of resources for male victims of sexual assault. This survey confirm the lack of willingness to admit to the lacks regarding this very important issue. Boys get sexually assaulted and do not get help.
- A need for better communication to victims who are going through the court process. calls to family or victim of crime to explain what will happen in court...i.e. so if they (Crown) knows the file will be postponed let victims know so they don't take days off of work etc...only to see paper shuffling for a minute and then a further date for proceeding.
- Thank you for the opportunity.
- This is a systemic problem.
- Thanks for asking.
- So glad that this is being address. Good luck with your research.
- A huge part is the awareness of services, and the awareness of what is sexual assault and what YOU can do about it.
- Public awareness and discourse on healthy relationships is paramount to prevention.
- Girls are not treated with the kind of care that encourages disclosure- then the justice system fails them. Penalties are not stiff enough.
- Is it just me, or does everyone get turned down when asking for police help?
- Inequality causes abuse.
- I wish there had been a button, and different questions to follow that button, for women who were sexually abused in the past, and sought help much later in life - that is a different circumstance. Also, there did not seem to be a different category for incest and the different problems that arise from that type of abuse.
- Education and support for those affected by sexual assault should be the priorities.
- This is a great initiative. Thank you for your support of those who have experienced sexual assault.
- I really would like to see education and awareness on: 1.Teaching boys not to rape. 2. Clear messages about consent.
- More awareness is needed about the supports and resources which exist so that they be accessed.
- I have had the unfortunate experience of being the parent of a daughter who was sexually assaulted then victimized again by the justice system. The obvious lack of empathy was a disgrace, as a professional I was angered and mortified and have a much

better appreciation of why women and girls do not report...the aftermath of trying to access services was more damaging than the assault on many levels. I regret encouraging her to report but I am proud of the strength she found to make decisions for herself and to guide her future. Girls and boys need to be taught at a young age the meaning of "no" and the fact that sexual assault is real and it happens every day however it does not have to define a life.

- I feel this is an area that more needs to be done to prevent and then more support is needed to help. Public awareness that this is a huge issue and the victim is the one that is not believed if they do come forward.
- Reporting sexual abuse is a personal decision. In working with persons who have been sexually assaulted the process of court can re-victimize people.
- More educational programs on this in high school.
- Best of luck eliminating this issue from our culture.
- I think there is a lot of misinformation that could be helped by proliferating (a) unbiased statistics, (b) a few different stories of sexual assault and the consequences, (c) what consent laws actually mean. Beyond information sharing, I think services for victims and programs for young men are equally important.
- Sexual assault is of course a crime; it is also the result of radical inequality of women and men. Without a profound transformation of social, cultural, and personal attitudes and beliefs it will be impossible to eradicate sexual assault, irrespective of any number of educational and training programs. But they are a very good place to start.
- We need a full time worker or workers in West Prince, someone that went through the same thing and has survived, embraced the past and is moving forward.
- I've known of cases of sexual assault in the past, and upon asking people in my community, no one knew where to send the person if she decided to do something. Very frustrating, so it would be good that everyone knew where to go.
- I'm hopeful that with the work you've been doing, and the spotlight that's been placed on sexual assault the last little while that things could improve. I think the biggest obstacle is the awareness factor. I think that because most sexual assaults happen with people who are trusted, it makes it very hard for victims and perpetrators to label. I think this is where the trouble lies. We were all raised to think of rapists as a stranger jumping out of a bush, not our buddy. It makes it so much more complex to deal with after the fact. Part of the trouble is that the perpetrators don't know that what they've done is wrong. This is a result of society reinforcing (therefore educating) people that sexual assault is normal and expected.
- If the stigma was taken down a few notches then maybe people wouldn't feel so terrible. It needs to be talked about more so it loses its power. Why let someone who harmed you walk and continue living normally. Leaving others to be prey. It's infuriates

me that some women won't take those guys down since they have the ability to. Yes they got hurt but you can take the rest of his life from them. More strict laws would be beautiful.

- More Government funding on all levels.
- Very important issue that continues to haunt our society. I hope we can move ourselves out of this place where women and girls are being marginalized in this way.
- The environment is now ripe for a change in attitude about sexual conduct and behavior. Knowledge is power. Give kids the tools they need to deal with situations appropriately
- When I was young it was taboo to talk about anything sexual. When I was raped by a neighbor at the age of 8 years old he told me if I was to tell anyone about it that my dad would hunt him down and kill him and then my dad would go to jail for the rest of his life... sick right? But I believed him and never told... the funny thing is he was probably right, my dad would have hurt him bad if not kill him and I guess I knew that.
- I am a family doctor in Montague. I would gladly help out in other ways if you need it. Just email me [Nicole.fancy@dal.ca](mailto:Nicole.fancy@dal.ca)
- Sexual assaults are just not male female oriented...Genders are assaulting each other, sexually...And that also has to be spoken to...and stopped.
- This survey brought to my attention to how little I know about the services available on PEI. So thank you, this has made me realize how much more I need to get involved and educate myself
- Don't forget to allow girls and women the opportunity to deal with assaults directly - some assaults can be confronted safely and can be very empowering.
- Young girls and boys should be considered a priority as well as training for service providers and gender consideration
- I think we especially need to remember to educate men and boys about respecting women and girls. It's all fine to teach girls and women about safety, but if the male is just going to disregard it, what good is it?
- The justice system is focused on conviction and not on the needs of the victim. Victim Services tries to provide support but victims usually go in to the process with unrealistic expectations and end up re-victimized.
- Rape and sexual assault is a man's problem, not a woman's problem - sadly women bear the burden and men walk away unpunished.
- PEI is probably close to 1970s level of gender equality.
- Thank you.
- Thanks for everything that you do for women and girls!
- When I was sexually assaulted at school, it was terrifying and I felt alone. I told friends and they said to tell the guidance counsellor, which I did. He called my mom and offered

no support. I told him what happened and he said 'you need to tell the police' then he told me to leave his office. My mom drove me to wherever it is you go to talk to the police about that kind of thing. They basically said that I was able to stop it before anything 'really bad happened' (basically I was able to stop myself from getting raped but they completely ignored everything else that he had done). I was told that I shouldn't try to charge him because it would haunt him forever and he was just a teen who had made a mistake (at this point they hadn't even talked to him). I feel like I was pushed aside and no one really listened to what I needed. They were more concerned about how terrible it would be for him to go through being charged with sexual assault.

- Victims should be treated as victims with respect. And not treated like the criminal. Many sexual assault victims are treated like they are trash and they are the guilty ones
- I strongly agree that we need to educate boys as well as girls.
- I belong to the majority of victims who knew their perpetrator and who considered them to be a friend. I felt stupid for not recognizing what was happening before it happened or being able to stop it and I thought it was my fault. I had no idea who I could talk to, and ultimately decided it wasn't worth pursuing because there was a good chance if I sought help I would know the person I was talking to, or they would know me because everyone knows everyone on PEI. I spoke to a doctor about it when I was living off-island for school several months after the incident and her response was, "well, that's not good." She offered no resources or help and made me feel stupid for even mentioning it. Educating the public, programs in schools and providing those in positions of power/healing with the appropriate tools to help victims is essential, and on PEI being able to provide anonymous services is important. The trick is having anonymous services that have a presence enough that victims know where to go or who to talk to when they need help.
- I really hope there will be a support group for survivors up and running ASAP. If there are AA support groups and NA meetings we should get with the times and have survivor meetings/groups! Something that helped me the most was knowing I'm not alone and hearing other peoples stories.
- So happy that this will become a practice in PEI. We definitely need it, especially our youth and post-secondary students.
- There needs to be greater awareness of these issues in rural areas, as well as funding for victim support and mental health.
- I truly believe that involving young men is a huge step in helping in the prevention of sexual assault on women, and I also believe hearing the personal experiences of survivors of sexual abuse and childhood sexual abuse will help victims who are suffering in silence.

- The people involved with this project need to be victims themselves so they know firsthand the pain and suffering.
- I survived am living happily.
- Thank you for doing this.
- Men experience sexual assault too, it may not be as large of a statistic, but it does happen more often than we think.
- I think rural isolation is a big challenge, especially for people who don't drive (e.g. kids). This not only poses a barrier to accessing services, but also can trap people in their homes, where they might feel like the only option is to call the police. I wish I had a great suggestion, other than online resources, but sadly I don't. Thanks for doing this important work!
- Glad you are doing this.
- Education is key
- Thank you for asking.
- Rape culture is really pervasive, and any public conversations that can happen help to normalize discussing sexual health and the importance of practicing good consent.
- I think the general conversation about sexual assault (regardless of gender) needs to shift away from focusing on the victims, and put more emphasis on the perpetrator. After all, the one who carries out the assault is the one that should be on the hook, not the victim. The changes need to happen so that we prevent the perpetrator from becoming, well, a perpetrator in the first place! (I hope that makes sense/helps!)
- Would LOVE to see some actual sexual education in school! What passes for that now is silly, absolutely silly. And conversations about consent...I think there are too many people who don't fully understand what consent is, how it is given, how to identify when it is absent, might ruin people's ideas about casual sex, but so be it.
- I wish this information had been around 40 years ago, when I was experiencing the assault.
- Please do not forget that men can be victims too. Surveys like these are the very reason men don't come forward. All we focus is on women being the victim. Take gender out of these and teach don't rape, not don't rape women. As a victim myself, this is offensive when everyone fights for just one gender. Rape is rape. Focus your efforts on having resources for EVERYONE. Not just those with female parts. Shame.
- The current justice system victimizes the victims which begs the question, why would anyone report, especially children.
- Wait times in the mental health sector are completely unacceptable.
- My experience reporting my assault at age 12 by a family friend of 30+ years was a horrifying experience. It was in a small cold room to a male police officer who had zero empathy or comforting skills.

- Quit blaming girls for their attire. Teach respect and inform consistently about how porn is taking on violent and frightening activities and selling it to young men whose expectations of what sex is like is frightening. Assure girls know that no is a good thing and educate on self-esteem. We are going backward. Fifty shades is not a love story
- I would love to see a similar survey in support of men/boys. I know this is a less common sexual assault, but I feel they are very overlooked and have even less resources available to them as well as more shame/embarrassment as far as reporting the assault.
- Not the victims fault.
- I think it's clear by my answers that there is much more we can do here on PEI to support victims of sexual assault. As a high school teacher, I do not even know where to send students if they come to me, other than the obvious choice of school counselor. Often our counselors are overwhelmed with issues and caseloads and students may feel uncomfortable going to someone within the school due to fear of being identified. Early education and discussion of sexual assault, will in my opinion, help to erase the stigma. If the conversations are begun in junior high (because unfortunately assault happens at this age or even earlier) then women will be better equipped to deal with sexual assault or harassment later in life.
- I would like the school sexual education to include consent and the topic of sexual assault.
- We need to shift the focus from teaching women and girls how to protect themselves and how to deal with trauma afterwards. We need to shift from blaming and shaming of girls to blaming and shaming of boys and men. No one wants to say that and actually name the problem. Also, we can never talk about this enough.
- While I am not from PEI, I think that education and support from a young age is key to preventing sexual assault. My experiences were mild but made me extremely angry. I felt that my reactions were not dealt with appropriately and as a result I became an even more reserved person who did not like to be touched and this remains to this day. I think that if boys and girls are taught in a school setting about appropriate behavior, vulnerable children would be safer and better able to speak up and say, "This is wrong". They would also be more likely to seek help and support in a timely manner.
- I carried the guilt and shame throughout my life and it has had a great impact on how I felt about myself and in my relationship with my husband. I was 60 years old and on our 40th anniversary that I told him what had happened. What a relief to finally confide in him. I told my mom when I was about six and she told me not to tell anyone especially my dad as he would take it out on the male. I didn't even know what that meant. And we were from a well-established rural family. I had nightmares and dreams for years of cutting penis off males and throwing them away but they kept growing back even longer and harder and they kept poking me wherever I went. And I never felt I could tell

anyone. I made sure my daughter knew that she could always trust me if anything felt 'wrong' to her. When she was in university I told her what happened but not too many details. I just wanted her to be careful and aware. The male was my first cousin and although I like him and forgive him (he was about 15-16), I feel that I still would like him to know how much it has affected my life. I even allowed myself to be overweight so that men would not whistle at me or make advances. I would rather be called 'fatty' than take the chance to have sexual attention. I went through a number of years of depression as a result of an illness but kept it from my psychiatrist and therapists because I was still so ashamed of it. But that period of depression brought it all back very vividly. Unless you have experienced this you have no idea what effect it has on your self-worth and image.

- Thank you for caring and giving hope that maybe soon things will just be better.
- No woman should have to live her life in fear but unfortunately here on PEI the laws seem to be in favor of the criminals and not the victims. I suffer from depression and most like PTSD and I need help. I am not able to work and am afraid to leave my home. I was a successful businesswoman who traveled all over the world and never in all my travels did I ever feel that I was going to be assaulted or felt fear. I am furious with the system. My assault was in 2011 and I am still waiting for compensation to help pay for medications etc. and to just move forward in my life.
- Thank you for making an effort for change.