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## **Standing Committee on the Status of Women**

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**EVIDENCE**

**Monday, October 31, 2016**

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**Chair**

**Ms. Marilyn Gladu**



## Standing Committee on the Status of Women

Monday, October 31, 2016

• (1530)

[English]

**The Chair (Ms. Marilyn Gladu (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC)):** I call the meeting to order.

We're very pleased today to have with us Harvey Bate, who is the co-chair of the board of directors of the New Leaf Program, and Cathy Grant, who is a director.

We were supposed to have a representative from Babely Shades, but unfortunately, due to illness, they won't be appearing.

This is our first panel for the day, so we'll start as usual with 10 minutes of comments from Cathy and Harvey and then we'll go to our questions.

Harvey, you may begin.

**Mr. Harvey Bate (Co-Chair of the Board of Directors, New Leaf Program):** We came in from Nova Scotia this morning. We represent an organization called New Leaf Opportunity for Men. Cathy and I are going to take turns talking about the organization, about what we do, and some of our challenges in doing that.

Cathy will start with our philosophy and a few things like that.

**Ms. Cathy Grant (Director, New Leaf Program):** As far as we know, New Leaf is the longest-running men's intervention program in Canada. We opened the doors in April 1987. What was really interesting is Bob Whitman, who developed and ran the program until his retirement a year and a half ago, did it in talks with the community. He recognized there was a huge gap. The women's shelter was seeing all these different women, which is what they were looking to do, but the same names of the men who were abusing them kept coming up. They realized somebody needs to be working with the men or there's only ever going to be a steady stream of victims. Bob felt that's what he wanted to do.

He was really surprised when he was very often told that the men wouldn't come, the men wouldn't talk about their relationships, and men wouldn't change. That didn't sit well with him, because he believed in men very much. He believed that men would come, they would talk, and they would change, because ultimately men wanted to have healthy, safe relationships, but they didn't know how.

It took him four years of operating this program as a volunteer, in church basements, before he finally got core funding, before he proved, really, that men would come. If you build it, you will see them come.

Since those early beginnings, we have evolved into this really amazing program. I'll read our mission statement first:

To provide an opportunity for men to take responsibility for their abusive behaviour and to effect social change so that the underlying power imbalances no longer exist. To provide support, and to mentor males to ensure real and long term change in their attitudes and behaviours towards females and perception of themselves.

All of this is based on the feminist philosophy that women have the right to determine their own lives and to live in abuse-free relationships. Those are the basic fundamentals the program was built on.

We do all of our work in group work. We sit in a circle because we see domestic violence as a social issue. We're a very grassroots program that really supports and helps men learn how to talk to other men about relationships and about parenting in a good way.

We find that as long as you give them this safe place to really talk, they will. We have two open groups a week. The men are required to come to at least one, and it doesn't matter which one. Because we operate in this way, we have no waiting lists. A guy could call us today and be in the group tonight, once we interview him, because we recognize that it's disrespectful to delay someone who is calling in crisis.

By the time the men usually call our program, some pretty unpleasant things have been happening. They're often in crisis. They're afraid and they have nowhere else to go, so we take them in right away. We will do some suicide counselling, some crisis intervention or advocacy when necessary, but mostly we get them right into the group, talking with other men who have gone through very much the same thing and have mostly been in that same state when first coming in.

It's been a really powerful program, and because of our open group a guy coming in for the first time will be sitting in a room with somebody who's been there for weeks, months, and even years. We have no end point; we remain a safe space for anybody. Once they've been in our program, all they have to do is call us and show up and talk about their stuff. We have one client who has been part of the program for longer than I have, and I've been with the program for seventeen and a half years.

We work really hard to have the men take responsibility for their actions. We say you're not 100% responsible for everything that's wrong in the relationship. You take responsibility for the role that you are playing; take 100% responsibility for that.

We work with them over the long term. We try to keep them for six months to a year, because change is a process and takes time. Forty per cent of our referrals come from the child welfare department and 40% from correctional services. A lot of our clients bring in their sons, and they'll bring in their brothers, their co-workers, and their friends, so more and more self-referrals are happening. We do a lot of partner referrals, women's information sessions, case conferences, high-risk coordination meetings, and high-risk file management.

When Bob first started this program, the average age of the men attending our program was 45. The majority of our clients now are under 30, with most being under 25. In many ways that's very exciting, in that we're getting them young, before they do years of damage to their families and themselves. In a lot of ways, we see that as hopeful.

• (1535)

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** That's a good segue into what I want to talk about. Because we're trying to effect social change, we try to be preventative. Unfortunately, we don't always have the time to do that.

One of the programs that we've just started is a pilot project called "Changing Male Conversations". It's funded by the United Way of Pictou County, so it's not part of our regular funding. It was designed to engage young men in discussions around specific topics that are necessary for a young man to develop positive relationships and attitudes about women. It seeks to deal with issues on a more social level, particularly now, when technology and social media create unlimited access to information but also to images and attitudes about women that are very disturbing.

We discussed this with community service providers, we gathered research, and we designed a program for a group of young men over a period of time. We saw some community collaboration.

We also went into the schools and started talking to the young men in a social setting, and we built in an evaluation process. Our focus was primarily on positive engagement with the young men in providing information and inviting them into conversations and discussions about what typically would be considered male locker-room talk or "boys will be boys" kinds of topics. We started engaging them. We picked grade 7s and grade 11s to work with over a period of a year.

For instance, some of the topics would cover what consent is, what sexual assault is, what sexual violence is, what respect looks like in a healthy relationship, how an addiction to pornography occurs, what the effects of the addiction are, what the effects of intergenerational violence are, why there is so much male violence in society, what a male can do if he doesn't want to be violent, and how a male can respond to violent situations. Those aren't all the topics that are covered, but they're a good majority of them.

The feedback from the kids has been really phenomenal so far, and the grade 7s blew us out of the water with their openness about the conversations. We're still in the middle of that project.

I see that my one minute is up, so let me say that in terms of some of our main stumbling blocks, funding obviously has been one. We are provincially funded for two staff; however, in order to get the job

done, we have to divide that into three part-time staff in order to have the extra body to at least cover the groups and to get some of the other work done.

A current problem we have, particularly with the justice system, is that crown attorneys, legal aid lawyers, judges, justices, and correctional services workers quite often will make plea bargains for men that assault women. For instance, they'll say that if the men attend, say, six sessions of the New Leaf program, they'll stay the sentence. Unfortunately for us, that undermines what we do. We believe that change needs to be longer-term, so that undermines the ability we have to work with the men and create meaningful change.

The other thing is that we don't have time to do more projects like the Changing Male Conversations project. Those preventative ones are really important to us if we're going to make a change in this, so it's about funding and time.

The other thing I wanted to add is that we now have a website. It's [www.newleafpictoucounty.ca](http://www.newleafpictoucounty.ca). We put the "pictoucounty" in because I think there's the NewLeaf airline now, and we were getting too many hits from people wanting to fly somewhere.

**Voices:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** Anyway, I think that's my time.

• (1540)

**The Chair:** Yes, your time is up. Thank you very much.

We'll start our first round of questioning with Mr. Fraser for seven minutes.

**Mr. Sean Fraser (Central Nova, Lib.):** Excellent.

Thank you so much, Ms. Grant and Mr. Bate, for being here today. Coming from Pictou County, I know the good work you guys do at home. I'm so thrilled that you could be here to share your experience and expertise with this group as we embark on this study to prevent violence against young women and girls.

I'll start on the Changing Male Conversations program, because it's not something that was part of your core mandate. One of the things that's come up in some of the prior testimony and some of the questions we've asked previously is that oftentimes programs designed to impact or influence a culture change among young men aren't necessarily getting the right young guys in the room; that is, maybe on a university campus, the people who come out to watch a video or a presentation about preventing violence are the ones who are not likely to be violent themselves.

Is there any tailoring that you've done with that program to reach at-risk communities?

**Ms. Cathy Grant:** Maybe we both can answer.

We have access to the schools because we've been going into the schools in conjunction with Tearmann for 14 years. It was funded by the Law Foundation. We did presentations on domestic violence. It was not so much dating violence and sexual harassment and those types of things. In this way we already had access to the schools and to the kids, and we were all familiar faces, so in terms of it making sense for us to start with the schools and the young guys—

**Mr. Sean Fraser:** Do you do the whole grade when you do grade 7s and grade 11s? Is it universal in its application?

**Ms. Cathy Grant:** We chose two schools because, realistically, with such a small staff, that was all we could handle, but we did all the grade 7s. Initially, we were going to do the grade 11s, but they were hesitant. We ended up doing the grade 9s, because they were more open to spending a certain period of time of their week in it every week. We went in for eight or 10 weeks, I think, for just that group. We're going back again this year to do some evaluations and some follow-up.

In terms of more at-risk communities, this was all we could do in this pilot project, and—

**Mr. Sean Fraser:** You mentioned the follow-up evaluations that you plan on doing. How are you assessing the outcomes of a program like this?

**Ms. Cathy Grant:** I think our priority right now is evaluating the young guys: “Has this been helpful? You took this last year. You've had an entire summer to think about these types of things, your attitudes toward women, about making healthy choices for yourself. Did it make a difference, even over this summer?”

What was interesting is that the girls ended up doing, simultaneously, programs for just them while we were working with just the boys. The boys were so impacted by it that the girls kept coming in trying to figure out what was going on. They actually said to Ron and Don, “You need to do a session with us too.”

**Mr. Sean Fraser:** What is it that you think creates the buy-in among young men? I ask because I find it's hard to get young guys excited about this topic. Is there something about your program that really creates that sort of culture of buy-in?

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** I think it's in part the skill of the presentation.

New Leaf has been working at engaging men for almost 30 years, so it's really the style of how to engage people. When you get that going and you get young men energized and talking about it, the subject matter can be almost anything. You can get them engaged, but it's a skill that's not being widely used in a group setting. As a matter of fact, more and more services have fewer and fewer groups at that level.

**Mr. Sean Fraser:** I'll change gears to go to your core programming, just because I have a limited amount of time.

You've noted that your participants are getting younger and younger. Do you think that extending access to New Leaf is actually a good tool to prevent violence against women generally? Do you think by catching them at 25, you're going to prevent people engaging in sort of a lifetime of an abusive pattern of behaviour?

**Ms. Cathy Grant:** I know that 14-year old boys will say, “I can't change now. I've been this way all my life”, and it's funny, and when 30-year-olds say it in the group, the 50-year-olds laugh at them, and

when the 50-year-olds say it in the group, the 70-year-olds laugh at them, because it's funny, no matter what.

When the men who get it, especially the older men who are trying to regain the relationship with their children whom they violated in different ways their whole lifetime together, see those young guys come through the door, one of the first things they say is, “I'm so happy you're here now, because if I had come when I was your age, my life would have been happy, my kids and I would have a relationship, and I would probably still be with their mother.”

• (1545)

**Mr. Sean Fraser:** Wrapping up, I'll give you a chance to give us your best recommendations.

Just so you know how this process unfolds, after everything we've heard, our group is going to get together and come up with recommendations for the government to implement or not. If we could make recommendations to the government to best support the work you're doing to reduce or prevent violence against women and girls, or to support abusive men in changing their behaviour, what would those recommendations be?

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** I think it's not enough just to sentence or punish the men. To get real change you have to work with that group of men.

There are not a lot of men's intervention programs in this country. There are a whole lot more services for victims. You can keep helping the victims, but it won't stop the men from doing what they're doing, so there need to be more services for the men. If that means having a mandated service, so be it.

As we said, one of our difficulties is that it has to be meaningful change. You can't throw six anger-management sessions at a man who's been abusive for 20 years and expect him to stop the behaviour, right?

In this business my job is in child welfare, but recidivism in domestic violence is a given. If it happens once, you know it's happened once, twice, three times, four times, or five times. If we're going to make a change, it has to be real change. If I were to recommend something, that would be one thing I would recommend.

**Mr. Sean Fraser:** Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** Excellent.

Now I'll go to my colleague Ms. Vecchio for seven minutes.

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio (Elgin—Middlesex—London, CPC):** Thank you very much. I really appreciate your coming in today.

We have something called Changing Ways in London, Ontario. It has done some unique programming with some of the students, some of the young boys who have found themselves in trouble over inappropriate things being done with young girls.

What are some of the key factors? A lot of times, people will say that the children grew up in a violent home and that violence is all they know, so it is recurring.

Do you find that to be absolutely the case? What are some of the triggers? What are some of the things that you feel are creating this violence? Is it because of the way they were brought up in a situation where violence was a norm in their own home? Are there any triggers you see that we should all be aware of as young mothers and spouses so that we can educate women as well?

**Ms. Cathy Grant:** We're all socialized and saturated by music videos. I think part of why we're seeing so many young guys is that this is the generation that has grown up with that saturation of video games and Internet access. I don't know where young people would be able to get meaningful information and opportunities to talk about it.

On top of that is male entitlement. When Bob tried to start this program, people said, "Men won't do it," because what we've been told about men is that they're not supposed to do this kind of thing.

I think we need to go back to the socialization that teaches that when I get angry and I yell and I behave out of control, people do what I want them to do. There's also the immediate sense of "Oh, goodness; that was unexpected. I think I'll try it again the next time I want you to do something." I don't think there is one particular reason; there are many.

• (1550)

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** From a slightly different perspective, which I gained from my career, we now know that exposure to domestic violence really has a huge impact on children. It's almost to the point where it's likened to fetal alcohol syndrome. They know it's affecting the serotonin levels in the brain. The serotonin levels are basically burning brain cells because of the constant fight-or-flight response in the children.

They can't control that or turn it off. Those kids tend to grow up to be more violent if they have already been socialized in a violent community. You can see how this thing just keeps expanding.

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio:** That's horrific.

Sean mentioned looking at some indicators and potential measurements. After people have moved on from your program, what would you say is the success rate? Do you find that many people come back and say that they need to be grounded once again? Do you get a lot of people returning who recognize what a great product you have but who found themselves once again in a situation, so they're coming back for some more resources? Do you see that very often? Is there a way of measuring that?

**Ms. Cathy Grant:** We don't have the staff to keep track. We're very much understaffed.

We're grateful when clients say, "I know something's wrong" or "I'm having a really rough time and I know I feel better when I go to your program", and they come back. We see that as success. We measure success as the relationship ending safely. We measure success when his partner feels that he's playing a meaningful role in the family now.

There are so many different ways of measuring success that we don't feel we have the right to really name that, since we're not the ones directly impacted by his choices.

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** I have the advantage of being a user of the New Leaf service in my normal day-to-day job in child welfare. We know that the program offers meaningful change to our families. When we get men who engage in that service, they typically don't come back. If they don't engage in the service, it's on their mind or whatever, and it's likely that they may come back, or they opt out and get another service.

However, men who engage in New Leaf for a six-month period typically are there because they want to be there. They typically get it, and things start to change for them. That's not to say they won't run into trouble, but that's one of the reasons I became part of New Leaf: because I saw the success it was having and I wanted to support it.

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio:** Absolutely.

What are some of the best modes of education that you use in communicating with men who in the past were involved in violence against women?

**Ms. Cathy Grant:** We sit in a circle and we just talk to them. It's not rocket science. It's relationship stuff, parenting stuff, not rocket science. It's just about being real with them and challenging them. The other men in the group, because there's such a mix of experience and buy-in into the program, will do it with each other. Sometimes our best groups are when we sit back and watch these men do it with each other. It's beautiful.

We do some flip charts for those who are visual. We do some talks. When we talk about parenting, I have specific handouts for them to take home. We don't have a lot of written material on the main program, again because of staffing issues. It has always been an issue.

Given the workload with the pro-arrest policies and all the different laws that have changed, and the high-risk cases and case conferencing, each case is more complex and a lot more work. The staff stays the same, but our numbers keep growing. Our focus is on working with the men, and the young men as much as possible.

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio:** Awesome.

Harvey, do you have anything to add to that?

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** I think they hold them accountable, more so than maybe some of the other programs, on a more personal level.

The group actually gets down and says, "Hey man, you can't skip out on this; you gotta..." New Leaf is really good at liaising with other service providers. There were some parts you didn't hear about in the presentation because we didn't have time to talk about them, but they're constantly having meetings with child welfare—

**The Chair:** I'm sorry; that's your time.

Now we'll go to Ms. Malcolmson for seven minutes.

**Ms. Sheila Malcolmson (Nanaimo—Ladysmith, NDP):** Thank you, Chair.

I'll invite the witness to finish his sentence, and then I'll get into my questions.

• (1555)

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** Thank you. There's more than one way to skin a cat.

Yes, they liaise with probation services and make sure the men are following what they're supposed to do. They liaise with child welfare. They keep us informed. They give us real-time information about the men, and we'll step up and not be afraid to challenge them about the things that are going on in their lives. I think that's one of the things that makes them successful.

**Ms. Sheila Malcolmson:** The program that you're describing at New Leaf on the east coast of the country sounds very similar to a program that is on the west coast, where I'm elected, in Nanaimo, British Columbia. It's a town of 100,000 people.

The Haven Society, just in the last year or so, has identified that in the first 24 hours after a woman leaves a violent relationship, the male partner—it's almost always the man that's being left—is particularly amenable to intervention, changing his ways, and finding a way to reconcile. Because women so often will return to a violent relationship, the Haven staff are very committed to making it as safe for the woman as they can. This is maybe a conversation from a year ago, so they might have moved on from some of these practices.

I would be interested to know if this sounds familiar to you or if you have ideas here. When they create an exit plan for the woman and they have her and her children come to shelter, she'll leave a little card behind, when they figure out a way for her to do that safely. It will say, "I can be reached through this intermediary at this phone number. Please contact me through this person within the next 24 hours. I would like to talk with you about why I left. I'd like to explain, and I'd like to find a way to make things safe for us and our children."

That brings the men in to what used to be a women's shelter. I mean not into it literally, but into the process. Although all the women's shelters across the whole country are so stretched, if they can find a bit of capacity to cultivate safe and respectful relationships with the men, that has the hope of ultimately reducing the workload over time.

The program is called "Men Choose Respect". The men, as you're describing, have to voluntarily want to be part of it, but they have a particular incentive. They'll maybe be able to keep their family together, or at least they'll know they've tried.

I am curious to hear your reflections on that and whether that sounds parallel to some of the programs you've heard about.

I know that on our side, the big crunch is core funding. I'm hearing you say the same, that staffing is your biggest barrier. If you can describe it, what are the constraints on going all the way to that kind of holistic program that we think would help all families in the end?

**Ms. Cathy Grant:** To address that staffing piece, that's not our only problem. Our funding hasn't increased in 29 years. The budget they give us has been the same for all those years.

On the other piece, I know our program, and that's what I can speak to with the most knowledge. We're not about keeping families together. If that happens, excellent, but sometimes too much harm

has been done. If men come in thinking we are responsible for helping him get his family back, then that's a whole other layer of issues that we then have to deal with him on. It's his opportunity to sit back and recognize that his behaviours have been choices. I think that's a big difference with our program. It's not about keeping families together. It's about stepping back and holding yourself accountable and then moving forward in a good way from there.

We work closely with the women's shelter. We do women's information sessions with them. We discuss things about his attendance and whether or not he has participated in the program. We recognize that she's often facing some very difficult decisions. The more accurate information she has, the safer the decisions she can make.

Our program focuses around safety. That's our bottom line. Once that's addressed and people are in their services and moving forward, then we support whatever choices they make after that in terms of what's going on with the family.

• (1600)

**Ms. Sheila Malcolmson:** I appreciate the clarification.

I really did misspeak. The intention of the program I'm describing is not family unification; it is family safety, however that looks.

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** New Leaf can also be, but it doesn't have to be, a voluntary organization. Some of the men are mandated through child welfare and/or through probation. One of the things that New Leaf is particularly good at is dealing with men who are resistant. We don't have to have a man come in to the program who doesn't want to be there. We can work with that man and still effect good change over time. We just need the time to do it.

**Ms. Sheila Malcolmson:** You said probation or...? What was the second one?

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** Child welfare.

**Ms. Sheila Malcolmson:** Child welfare.

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** They're basically saying, "If you don't go..."

**Ms. Sheila Malcolmson:** If you had increased core funding, what might that look like? How much more impact would you be able to have?

**Ms. Cathy Grant:** We would be able to do a lot more of the work with youth.

The Law Foundation funded us to do that work, and that funding ended. We see it as the only preventative work we do, and so we keep trying to find ways to do some measure of it.

I developed and implemented a parenting program a number of years ago, when we had some funding. There are a lot of amazing parenting programs out there, but this one was based on the premise that harm has been done in this family. The other programs are making the assumption that home is safe.

The men had to work through their issues of minimizing and denying and a lot of the issues with their partners because we would accept them into the parenting program so they could be focused on their kids. They would show up an hour early. The group was two hours long, and I would be kicking them out an hour after the group ended, saying I had to go home to my kids.

Many of them wept on the last night, and I told them I hadn't gone anywhere. They could still show up for group and ask me questions. It was so impactful for them because now they could participate in discussions with the mother of their children, whether they were together or not, and know what they were talking about. We would contact her and offer her the same information as in the handouts and stuff, so he couldn't use this information to sabotage her or to undermine her, because that's always an issue. These relationships have been unhealthy and—

**The Chair:** I'm sorry. That's your time.

We have to go to Ms. Vandenbeld for seven minutes.

**Ms. Anita Vandenbeld (Ottawa West—Nepean, Lib.):** If you wanted to continue on that thought, please do.

**Ms. Cathy Grant:** Okay. The last time we received funding for that was 2002. I still have all the information I developed and I still seize the opportunity whenever I can in groups to talk about kids and child development and those types of things, but it's very difficult with an open group of guys coming and going to do anything consistently.

There are a number of different areas that New Leaf could expand and grow.

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** Our hope was to take the Changing Male Conversations program to a manual. With that change, it could be delivered in every school, though obviously not by New Leaf. However, if we had some more funding, we could at least take it to the place where it can be.

About six months ago, one of our long-time staff, Ron Kelly—*not* the one Cathy mentioned—was retiring. He was reducing his hours. Occasionally we'll get calls from schools to do one-on-one work with young men as a preventative measure. He said he was going to have to reduce that, so he cut it back to 25 young men, and that was on the side.

We've reduced that, but we're still doing some of that. We've got five or six or seven young men who are particularly having problems with anger and dealing with young women in the schools. We work with them one-on-one because nobody else can or will.

We could do a lot more work if we had more funding and more staff.

**Ms. Anita Vandenbeld:** What are your sources of funding?

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** The CMC is funded by a grant from the United Way in Pictou County. We had to put in a proposal. It's two-year funding. It's finite. It's going to end.

We have two permanent staff and a small budget for office supplies and rent that comes from the provincial government. That's been the same since we got it.

We used to have donations. There used to be a law group—what was that called, the money from the law? The lawyers' money?

• (1605)

**Ms. Cathy Grant:** That was the Law Foundation.

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** Yes, the Law Foundation used to donate a big chunk of money to us every year to get some work done, but that's dried up as well. The only source of real funding is the province.

**Ms. Anita Vandenbeld:** Thank you very much for that.

I did want to open by thanking you for the work you do, because so many of the people who have come to speak to us in this study are talking about the strategies on how women and girls can protect themselves and, in some cases, closing space: "Don't go online. Don't do this; it's risky." The idea that rather than teaching girls and women how to avoid harm and instead teaching men how not to cause the harm, I think, is a very good approach.

I'm very interested in something you said about when the men are coming to you, they're in crisis, and you do suicide prevention.

Can you elaborate on that? It's not typically what we think of. We're thinking more about the men who are mandated to come who might be more resistant, and that maybe goes to your initial comment about the men not coming. Are those who are coming to you in crisis self-referred? What exactly is your intervention in that case?

**Ms. Cathy Grant:** The men who come in crisis come from everywhere. Maybe they have just been arrested and released from jail, or maybe they have just come out of court and their name is splashed all over the radio. They're not allowed to go home. They can't get their tools. They can't see their kids. They're in crisis.

When a relationship ends for any reason, or when there's a nasty, ugly incident, whether physical or not, we get really good at hurting each other with our words and all of those other things. They come in ashamed, horrified, embarrassed, angry, confused, hurt, and feeling like they've lost everything.

For every person who comes in that door, we're ready to spend however much time they need in the interview just listening to them, talking it through, and checking out their resources. Unfortunately, our mental health floor has been shut down, so they don't have that resource anymore. We would often take the men right from the interview to the third floor where they could get the immediate help that they needed in that area.

I think a lot of it is just a matter of realizing that someone will listen to them so that they don't have to keep defending themselves. It's that someone has finally heard them.



They can call us. We will do one-on-one for any one of our clients who is in crisis. They see and hear early on that we genuinely care, and they recognize that the men in the group know it too. Any guy who walks through our doors matters to us, and that comes across in so many different ways. For a lot of us, that's all we need. Sometimes I'll even say, "I'll believe in you until you're strong enough to believe in yourself", and that goes a long way when they see that you mean it.

**Ms. Anita Vandenberg:** You mentioned that six sessions, for example, mandated by a court isn't really enough for transformative change. How long does the average person come to you? You mentioned one who was there for 17 years or more, but what is the average time that the men are staying?

**Ms. Cathy Grant:** We ask for a minimum of six months. The average is probably 12 to 18 months for guys continuing to come after an agency has said they don't have to do that anymore.

**Ms. Anita Vandenberg:** There's a mandated portion, typically—

**Ms. Cathy Grant:** Often, yes.

**Ms. Anita Vandenberg:** —and then they're staying longer. There's obviously a benefit to them in what you're doing, which they perceive.

**Ms. Cathy Grant:** Sometimes the benefit is that they see they can give back. They can help those guys who are first coming in. They can say, "I was just where you are eight months ago, and I'm so happy for you that you found this place." That really does a lot.

**Ms. Anita Vandenberg:** Are there particular lessons or practices out of your experience that you would like to present to us, which we could then draw upon?

•(1610)

**Ms. Cathy Grant:** Men need to be held accountable. The probation orders seems to be getting reduced to six months again. That's what it was when I first joined 17 and a half years ago. Some of the guys are coming to the group and saying, "Even the courts know it's all crazy, because they only gave me six months."

**The Chair:** Thank you. That's your time on that question.

We'll go now to Ms. Harder for five minutes.

**Ms. Rachael Harder (Lethbridge, CPC):** Thank you so much to each of you for being here today and for giving us your time. I know that it's very precious.

In particular, I just want to acknowledge the fact that you each do tremendous work. Thank you for the work that you do in order to make Canada better. Particularly when you're talking about employees, the resources that you have available to you, and how you're stewarding those resources, you do very well. I think that's to be commended, so well done.

My first question is for you, Harvey. You're the one who raised it, but you're both welcome to answer my question. What is the impact that pornography and other intimate images or media are having on the views that men, or even young boys, have towards women?

I've been doing a bit of research myself with regard to the impact of pornography. I have been looking at studies in this regard that date back to the 1980s and the 1970s, yet nothing has been done from a governmental standpoint to address these issues. My question has a

few parts to it, and we'll have to move quickly because I don't have a lot of time.

First, what impact are you seeing pornography and intimate images having on young men and boys? Second, what can be done about it?

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** The impact it's having is that it's sending a very bad message to young boys about what a normal relationship is, so they go into teen relationships expecting a whole lot of things that aren't good for them or good for the young women. That happens to varying degrees, and if that happens long enough, you get addiction to porn. Then they can't even have a regular, normal relationship with women because they're not the same as the women on the screen. That's some of the impact.

I think the best work we can do—and it's kind of where we're heading with the Changing Male Conversations program—is to get ahead of it and try to help them to understand that they have to get off this stuff, that they shouldn't look at it, or at least that they should understand what it is they're looking at and understand that it's not real and get them talking about it. That's what CMC is all about, really.

It's more of a societal change. Get young men talking about just being men and being okay without being violent or aggressive. Busting down that stereotype is what CMC is really trying to do.

**Ms. Rachael Harder:** It's to give them choices.

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** Yes. If we had more funding, that could be a topic in school if it had to be. Anyway, that's where we're going with it.

**Ms. Rachael Harder:** I find that interesting.

Let me jump in here for a bit. You used the comment "men be men", so you're basically saying that we're helping them to define manhood, if I'm understanding you correctly. In a day and age when we're not even sure that there's only male and female and we're wanting to redefine genders, how do you teach men to be men? How are you teaching manhood?

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** Well, you don't. Really what you do is you teach healthy relationships, and that's what CMC is really tackling. I think I said, "boys will be boys".

**Ms. Rachael Harder:** It might have been that. Sorry.

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** It's the idea that "boys will be boys" in the locker room. That's an old stereotype example that I was using to talk about socialization issues and how young men or boys are forgiven for talking like that or that it was okay because they're boys. That's no longer acceptable, and we're trying to change that stereotype. We're really teaching relationships, and not really how to be men.

**Ms. Rachael Harder:** That's good. Thank you.

With regard to access to pornography and other intimate images, what would you say with regard to media monitoring or media controls?

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** I think parents have to start limiting what their children are able to see on the Internet. Without those restrictions, they're going to look at stuff. Kids will be kids. Teenagers without structure are headed for trouble. I've been doing child welfare for 28 years, and I can tell you that without any doubt. The structure needs to be there.

Maybe there need to be programs on how better to monitor. I'm not sure about that. We haven't gotten that far into the CMC kind of stuff, but we know they definitely have access to the stuff, and it's coming up in conversations at school every day, so we're trying to tackle it at that level.

• (1615)

**Ms. Rachael Harder:** Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** We'll go to Mr. Fraser for five minutes.

**Mr. Sean Fraser:** It's great that we get a second crack at this. I'll pick up, I think, where we left off during my last round of questioning.

You mentioned that criminal prosecution in and of itself is not a healthy way to deal with this kind of social problem. Have you guys ever been involved with any kind of a restorative justice approach or something outside of the criminal context in which maybe you've partnered to help a victim obtain justice or to help reform an individual within the justice system?

**Ms. Cathy Grant:** We are getting requests from the John Howard Society around the restorative justice type of thing. We haven't met with them yet. I think again it goes back to the accountability and the fact that we're looking to work with these guys for the longer term.

I don't know. I guess in some ways it's like what Harvey was talking about earlier, about giving people choices that they didn't know they had in terms of what they want. We haven't entered into the discussions with the John Howard Society yet. We have a good working relationship with them for working with the young guys. It's a concern to me that the trend is that these guys going in for domestic violence charges are getting funnelled through restorative justice instead of being held accountable.

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** The key piece is that they're funnelled through without doing the work.

**Ms. Cathy Grant:** There are no consultations with us and no consultations with women's shelters. The courts have just started doing it, and my goodness, I don't get that.

**Mr. Sean Fraser:** We had one witness along these lines give testimony that stuck with me, and it was almost a bit counterintuitive

when I heard it for the first time, but repeated things have come up. She was making the point that there should be, from a victim's perspective, different streams of justice, and it should be victim centred. If you choose criminal justice, that's great, good for you, but there's more to it for different people for what they consider to be justice.

She said that when you go through the criminal process, it essentially puts the victim up for a character assassination, and it causes the perpetrator to deny at all costs and never admit to the wrongdoing. It seems to me that you guys have taken completely the opposite approach when it comes to the perpetrator's point of view in saying that all of this is about admitting to yourself that you've done something wrong before you can even hope to achieve change. Is that fair?

**Ms. Cathy Grant:** We work with individuals. We don't take absolute stands on very many things. It feels as though society is trying to rescue people from accountability for their choices. We recognize that when somebody chooses not to take responsibility, that hurts both sides that were involved in the domestic dispute. How do you get past that when you know somebody violated you and they're saying "No, I didn't. Prove it."?

There needs to be some measure of accountability, whether or not they get it through the courts. We don't need them to go through the courts; we need them at some point to say, "I did the wrong thing, and I'm sorry." Important long-term changes come from the simple statement, "I did the wrong thing, and I'm sorry."

**Mr. Sean Fraser:** Going back to your school programs, I think it was Harvey who mentioned that you do have about 25 one-on-ones that you do with school-age—

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** Ron did, yes.

**Mr. Sean Fraser:** Okay.

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** We've reduced it since, but—

**Mr. Sean Fraser:** How did they come to your organization? It seems you highlighted that those were ones who maybe had anger issues or some other reason for being there, other than just being in class that day.

• (1620)

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** Quite often a school guidance counsellor or a school principal would call and say, "Look, I'm really struggling with this particular kid for these particular reasons. Could you guys work with the student?" We would say, on occasion, "Yes, we have the time, and we will."

**Mr. Sean Fraser:** Do you find a difference in your success or the participation with the younger crowd you pull in through referrals from the school than maybe with the older guys who come to you through a court order or maybe even voluntarily at a different age?

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** It's a little harder to track, because it's out of our scope, if you know what I mean. We're doing it because they need it and we see it as part of our work, but it's not our main program. If we never see them again, then maybe we've done a good job. If they haven't ended up back in our program as an older man, then maybe we've gotten where we needed to go with them, but that's not an absolute.

Certainly there have been many young men who have benefited from some individual work that Ron, Bob, Don, or I have done.

**Mr. Sean Fraser:** I'm about to run out of time. Is there any longitudinal research that studies the rate of success with your participants over a long period of time?

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** Not that I know of.

**The Chair:** Good. That was a very short answer. I love that one. We have time for another five-minute session.

We'll go to Ms. Vecchio and Ms. Harder, who are going to share their time.

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio:** Just quickly, last week I saw a screening of *Over 18*. It's based on pornography and things that have happened. Has either of you had the opportunity to see that documentary? I'll tell you a little bit about it, and then I'm going to throw it over to Rachel.

It's called *Over 18*, and a Toronto company did it. They went around and interviewed people from the pornography industry, especially from the United States, and the biggest issue was in Montreal, where we have the highest rate of pornography. It seemed unbelievable.

I would recommend that you and anyone else on this issue see it. If you want a real shocker, then it's quite a documentary to watch.

I'm going to pass it over to Rachael now.

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** There's one called *Pornland* that's similar.

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio:** *Pornland*, yes. Some of those things are just unbelievable. What's happening to some of our eight-year-old and 10-year-old children who are watching it is unbelievable.

**Ms. Rachael Harder:** One of the things that you mention, and please correct me if I'm wrong, was with regard to this in-school program, Changing Male Conversations. I believe one of the things you cover is why there is so much male violence. Am I understanding that correctly?

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** Yes.

**Ms. Rachael Harder:** Can you outline what you would cover in that course? Why is there so much male violence?

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** You would talk about violence in sport. You would get the young men talking about schoolyard fights. You would get the young men talking about all the different scenarios. For instance, you get them engaged in what they see as violence in society. Then they start talking about it among themselves, and they start drawing conclusions. There's UFC, there are fights in hockey and so on, then they start to put it together for themselves that there are so many messages out there saying it's okay to be violent.

That's kind of what the whole program is about. It's engaging the young men in understanding how society is giving them all kinds of messages, and then showing them that they have a choice and that they don't have to be that way.

Then the next topic of conversation is, "What if you don't want to be violent? What if you don't want to be a fighter in sports? What if you don't want to pound guys into the ground like UFC does? What is it you can do?" Then we start talking about alternatives. Hopefully, they start talking to one another, and then it spreads.

**Ms. Rachael Harder:** That's great. Would there ever be a time when you would bring, say, the men and their spouses or partners or their children—whoever it was they were violent against—into a room together?

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** Not at New Leaf, no. We don't.

**Ms. Rachael Harder:** There's no program along those lines.

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** There are places and times to do that. Maybe it could be in child welfare and stuff like that, but not really in New Leaf.

**Ms. Rachael Harder:** Okay. In your estimation, what would you say is the number one thing that motivates men to turn to you to ask for help?

**Ms. Cathy Grant:** It's the the children.

**Ms. Rachael Harder:** Expand on that.

**Ms. Cathy Grant:** Generally speaking, they recognize that they're doing wrong by their kids. They're struggling with that. Even if it's the two-year-old who looked at them in fearfulness the night of the incident, or whenever he and mommy are hollering at each other again, or whatever, they are starting to realize this is not what they want for their kids.

We've all been kids, so they can identify with that and feel empathy right away. Often through working through some of that, we can help him to feel empathy for his partner. I find children are probably the number one motivator for men to come to our program and really try to get it.

•(1625)

**Ms. Rachael Harder:** That's good.

**Mr. Harvey Bate:** We said many of these men are under 25, but they are fathers. A lot of them are fathers.

**Ms. Rachael Harder:** Yes, okay. Thank you.

**The Chair:** I want to say thank you so much. What a great addition this is to the study we've been doing. This a new angle, new information for us about how to start to educate men and come at this in a different way. Thank you so much for your testimony.

We are going to suspend now so that we can change the panel, but thank you very much for being with us today.

•(1625)

(Pause)

•(1625)

[Translation]

**The Chair:** We are resuming the meeting.

We are hearing from the representatives of two organizations. First, I want to welcome Liette Roussel and Jenny Pinet from the Collectivité ingénieuse de la péninsule acadienne.

We are also hearing from Sandrine Ricci and Manon Bergeron from the Université du Québec à Montréal.

I also want to welcome you.

You each have 10 minutes for your presentation. We will begin with Ms. Roussel.

**Ms. Liette Roussel (Manager Consultant, Collectivité ingénieuse de la Péninsule acadienne):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

The theme addressed by the Collectivité ingénieuse de la péninsule acadienne is the exploration of issues faced by young women and the way to build a more consistent application of effective strategies in universities and colleges to avoid violence against young women on campus. That includes the notion of rape culture and definitions and perceptions of consent.

We will begin with observations and comments on our region, northeastern New Brunswick. A little over 50% of its population of nearly 50,000 people consists of women. We have two campuses—a university campus and a college campus.

In 2011 in New Brunswick, 539 sexual assaults were reported to the police. We know that, on average, 90% of victims choose not to report an assault. So the 539 sexual assaults could easily mean 5,000 assaults in reality.

Let's talk about studies and research projects in the region. Only a few studies have been carried out on violence against women in the region. Those initiatives focused primarily on defining the issue and on identifying existing services. Most of these projects were conducted 10 to 15 years ago, so an update is clearly needed.

Social media are the preferred means of communication for young people today. Therefore, they are also the bait of choice for sex offenders. Social media must be treated as vehicles for risk and vehicles for proactively fighting against violence.

Services are available for female victims of sexual violence on the Acadian peninsula. Their cases are handled in the general scope of family and domestic violence.

According to a regional study, a significant number of youth exchange sex for services. We should determine what the relationship between that phenomenon and the use of social media is, and what impact social media have on assaults.

According to organizations that work with female victims of violence in the region, young women are a unique group of victims because they are in the early stages of adulthood and are living their first life experiences outside the family unit. So an effective and efficient strategy should be developed for that group of individuals. The same goes for young men who are at a high risk of being abusers.

There seems to be a discrepancy between the opinions of first responders and those of people interviewed on campuses with regard to the level of satisfaction with the availability of initiatives to combat violence against women.

When it comes to observations and comments on our two campuses, the extent of violence against women on the two campuses seems to be unknown. That lack of awareness is attributed to failure to report. Observations and comments on violence against women seemed to focus on silence and failure to report. The opinion seems to be that silence and failure to report are disquieting signs in the fight against violence.

Regarding awareness-raising, both campuses are adopting measures as part of information sessions on issues such as policy and regulations on sexual harassment and gender-based harassment. That is taking place on both campuses.

However, there is a surprising difference in the frequency of policy revision, which seems to happen more often on the college campus, where it is done annually. On the university campus, policy has apparently not been revised in several years, and that shows a clear lack of pooling of efforts when it comes to making strategies consistent across the campuses.

Regarding statistics on sexual violence cases, university officials represent their institution in initiatives related to violence against women. For example, awareness walks are organized.

• (1630)

However, the data received by campus administration regarding acts of violence on the ground are not shared with those representatives. So a data release protocol should be established.

There is no cooperation or collaboration between the two campuses with respect to violence against women.

The campus stakeholders that were interviewed do not know of any clear and concise strategies on the part of governments to address violence against young women, particularly as regards the notion of “rape culture” and definitions and perceptions of “consent”. Coordination is needed in that regard.

How can we define rape culture and the notion of consent? The notion of rape culture is not addressed on the campuses. The perception of consent is currently the focus of a Université de Moncton study, and the campus in our region is participating. However, the college campus is not participating in that research.

Here is a list of our recommendations:

First, the federal government should implement a mechanism to coordinate measures to address violence against women, to ensure greater uniformity and to share the strategies proposed by various provincial and regional authorities, and university and college communities should play an integral role.

Second, the federal government should implement a mechanism to urge the provinces to coordinate regional actions to address women's feeling of guilt and the fact that they are “involuntarily protecting” their abusers from consequences by not reporting assaults.

Third, the federal government should urge social media platforms to become partners in its efforts to address violence against women.

Thank you.

• (1635)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

We give the floor to Ms. Ricci and Ms. Bergeron.

You also have 10 minutes.

**Dr. Manon Bergeron (Professor, Université du Québec à Montréal, Senior Researcher, Enquête ESSIMU, As an Individual):** Thank you.

We want to begin by thanking the committee for inviting us to this meeting to discuss our work and our thoughts following ESSIMU, a study titled “Sexualité, sécurité et interactions en milieu universitaire”—a survey on sexuality, security and interactions in a university setting. The study specifically focused on developing a clear picture of sexual violence in a university setting in Quebec. Today's presentation is an opportunity for us to tell you about the key findings, and the recommendations stemming from this work.

ESSIMU is a recent survey of 9,284 individuals who were studying or working in Quebec universities. Twelve researchers and six universities participated in the study with our community partner, the Regroupement québécois des CALACS. I will share a few of the findings.

Sexual violence in a university setting directly affects a large number of individuals working or studying in Quebec universities. According to our study and the participants, one in three individuals has experienced sexual violence within the university community, since they entered university, and one individual in four has experienced sexual violence over the past year. So acts of sexual violence are still taking place and they are recent.

When it comes to strategies, support services must be accessible and confidential for anyone who wants to use them.

There is another piece of information. According to our research, the typical victim is a female student and the sexual abuser is another student. The study also highlights a number of situations where the victim is a female student, and the abuser is a teacher. This reality must not be overlooked, either, in all these reflections.

The findings indicate that specific groups are also more likely to experience sexual violence in a university setting. More women than men experience sexual violence. Other notable groups are gender minorities and sexual minorities, international students and people with a disability. So we have to meet the needs of those groups and provide support tailored to their reality.

Our study made it possible to see in what context various sexual violence situations have been occurring. First, the vast majority of the situations occurred off the university campus, during social or celebratory events. Second, some of the situations took place during academic activities—so during courses and research internships. It is important to take into account that reality across the various strategies that have been developed. There is a lot of talk about integration activities, or initiations. Of course, sexual assaults may occur during those events, but that is not the case in the majority of situations. Therefore, the strategies must cover all the situations where violence may occur.

Sexual violence in a university setting has a number of consequences. We will not list them all. I think the committee, thanks to its work, has fully grasped the extent of the consequences of sexual violence. In addition, more specifically in a university setting, consequences have to do with young women's academic path. Students interrupt their education owing to situations experienced in a university setting. So some consequences are very specific to universities.

Our study is not only about victims who are directly affected. One person in five has been confided in by someone at the university who

experienced sexual violence. Moreover, one individual in seven said to have witnessed some sort of sexual violence within the university community.

● (1640)

We believe that those people have an active role to play in preventing, raising awareness and fighting against sexual violence. The strategies to be implemented must also include them.

Before I yield the floor to my colleague, I will finish by saying that the study unfortunately shows that there is still prejudice. I am talking about prejudice against the victims, mainly, so prejudice that makes victims feel guilty and responsible and, conversely, frees abusers of responsibility for their actions. Strategies must also take into account that prejudice, which is basically hurting the victims.

**Ms. Sandrine Ricci (Researcher, Université du Québec à Montréal, Coresearcher Enquête ESSIMU, As an Individual):**

The findings of our research led us to realize that many victims remain silent, and that is not very surprising. In fact, 85% of those who participated in our online survey said that they never reported the event to their university authorities. That realization, that reality, should be a concern for us. It brings us to ask questions, especially about the sense of mistrust victims of sexual violence in a university setting have toward institutions.

That is why a strategy must focus on the importance of developing legal mechanisms that would force post-secondary institutions to fight against sexual violence in a university setting. Those mechanisms, laws or regulations should really highlight academic institutions' responsibility. In these conditions, those institutions would probably receive more complaints.

Rape culture is also the culture of silence. Quite often, those rare individuals who report their abusers' actions are not kept informed of the nature of penalties imposed on the harassers or abusers. In those circumstances, institutions invoke confidentiality, the need to respect privacy, and so on. However, all that is problematic in many ways.

First, it is problematic in terms of impunity, especially since research shows that abusers are very often repeat offenders. A very concrete problem also arises, as victims can come across their abusers on campus or through their university activities. In fact, sexual violence committed in a university setting is unique, as the victim and the abuser share the same premises. The issue regarding penalties and confidentiality must be a concern for universities, but it must also affect Canadian legislation, in some respects.

I would also like to highlight the need to apply a logic of transparency. When a violent event is reported and dealt with, it seems important to communicate the complaint findings. That is in line with the logic of fighting against impunity. Encouraging reporting and publicly communicating the complaint findings—including the alleged actions and the penalty—would among other things let the victim know that the violent and unjust situation they were subject to was recognized and taken into account by the institution, even the state. It would also reassure the entire university community that every effort would be made to truly eradicate this problem. Finally, probably as a preventive measure, based on that logic of transparency and not the culture of silence, it would have a worthwhile deterrent effect.

As for the issue of under-reporting, university authorities should inform the student body, through all sorts of awareness-raising and training activities, of all the potential ways to report an event. Those would not be only official or legal mechanisms, but also all kinds of other methods that would help take their experience into account and recognize it as an unacceptable problem.

•(1645)

Awareness-raising activities could focus on a variety of other elements, but I guess another issue we could discuss during question period is rape culture.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We will begin the question period. Mr. Serré, you have seven minutes.

**Mr. Marc Serré (Nickel Belt, Lib.):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I want to thank the four witnesses for their presentations and the work they are doing on a daily basis.

My first question is for Ms. Roussel and Ms. Pinet. You talked about some projects, one of which was funded in 2012. Was that project implemented across Canada in other academic institutions? Were the findings of that project communicated to other post-secondary institutions across Canada?

**Ms. Liette Roussel:** The Université de Moncton participated in the project. I'm sorry I cannot tell you more about it, as we are both new to the Collectivité ingénieuse. However, I know that the project has not been disseminated across Canada.

**Mr. Marc Serré:** We have heard a number of witnesses talk about their projects. However, no consideration—and this is actually one of your recommendations—seems to be given to how the federal government could coordinate those projects across Canada. It appears that much of the work is being done separately on campuses, in the provinces, and that practices are not shared.

Ms. Roussel, you talked about social media earlier. Do you have any examples to share or recommendations to make when it comes to Facebook and Twitter? We are talking about the major problem social media will cause, but also about the way social media technology could be used to resolve problems and find solutions.

**Ms. Liette Roussel:** Broadcasters would commit to disseminating messages on the fight against violence. For example, in the dissemination of certain communications or certain research, a message of awareness-raising with regard to the fight against

violence could appear on the screen. Broadcasters would be responsible for disseminating such messages.

**Mr. Marc Serré:** Ms. Ricci, from the Université du Québec, do you have any examples of how social media could be used?

**Ms. Sandrine Ricci:** When it comes to social media, I believe that many communications experts have looked into this issue.

People are always saying that it is impossible to regulate and control content, and we are seeing that there is some tolerance toward sexist or violent content directed at women.

As for the argument that it's impossible to regulate and control content, we see that some content is extremely well regulated, such as in the cases of nudity or political activities related to interest groups or more radical activists. We see that there really is a way to regulate this kind of content and remove it. Perhaps that could also be considered in light of this reality.

•(1650)

**Mr. Marc Serré:** Thank you.

Now I will turn to Ms. Roussel and Ms. Pinet, before coming back to the Université du Québec à Montréal representatives. You spoke at length about victims, and clearly, we have a lot of work to do in that regard. A year ago, we heard from witnesses who talked about outreach services for boys and young men. Could you describe for us the connection you provide and the services you offer to young boys, or young men, in an effort to improve the situation? Are there examples you can give us?

**Ms. Liette Roussel:** Here, in New Brunswick, nothing seems to have been done. No activities aimed specifically at young boys have been identified. To my knowledge, there haven't been any.

**Mr. Marc Serré:** At the Université du Québec à Montréal, do you have any strategies or examples of activities for boys or young men at the post-secondary level, anything you can share with the members of the committee?

**Dr. Manon Bergeron:** In this case, we are talking about the college and university setting. I think, however, we need to keep in mind the importance of introducing education about sexuality and the development of equal relationships as early as elementary school. That may fall outside the committee's current mandate, but I think we need to bear in mind the importance of starting early and exposing students to sexual education that revolves around the core value of equality. That is the first thing I will say.

The second thing is that, given the results of the study, there is no doubt that everyone has to be involved in the solution. Strategies must target multiple levels. That means strategies geared directly towards victims, as well as strategies geared towards the whole community. That includes men and women, and an outreach process.

We know that unique approaches exist in that regard, such as those involving bystanders. We will also be exploring the extent to which these programs, in place in the rest of Canada and in the United States, lead to successful outcomes or constitute promising practices. We are now at the stage of examining what is being done elsewhere. It is clear that solutions involve both men and women.

**The Chair:** Great.

Ms. Harder, you have the floor for seven minutes.

[English]

**Ms. Rachael Harder:** Thank you very much.

Thank you to the witnesses for being with us today. We certainly appreciate you taking the time to add your expertise to the table.

My first question is for Madam Roussel.

One of the things that you brought up was the exchange of sex for services. Can you explain that a little bit more? One of the things that I'm particularly interested in is how these young women are targeted or found in terms of offering sex for service. Are they being pursued, or are they just putting the offer out there? What does that look like? Can you explain this epidemic to me a little bit?

[Translation]

**Ms. Liette Roussel:** The information came to us through a nurse who works with victims of family and domestic violence. She did a study in schools that showed that young students were exchanging sex for services. That was just one of the observations.

We haven't taken an in-depth look at the issue. No other developments on that specific subject have come to my attention. There was no other information on the subject. She did nevertheless tell us that a study had been done in relation to those issues and that, according to the findings, sex in exchange for services was commonplace among young people. It was a practice. It was simply identified as a current practice.

• (1655)

[English]

**Ms. Rachael Harder:** Thank you.

My next question is for Sandrine.

What are the main factors that are involved in shaping the beliefs and views that men or young men hold towards women?

[Translation]

**Ms. Sandrine Ricci:** Madam Chair, how much time do I have to answer the question?

[English]

**Ms. Rachael Harder:** You have about two minutes.

[Translation]

**Ms. Sandrine Ricci:** I'll try to keep it brief. What is at work in society are what we call gender relations—a different term could be used. The sexual violence on university campuses is also a function of that dynamic. It refers to an ideology that is somewhat similar to the rape culture. It is really made up of division-based, hierarchical relations, in other words, unequal relationships between women and men. That also includes those who belong to gender minorities. In short, that kind of socialization exists.

A moment ago, my colleague mentioned the importance of educating children as early as possible on the development of equal relationships. That means educating them not just on sexuality, but also on equality, in particular. It's important to view the other person as another version of one's self. That involves encouraging boys to

view women as equals, as other versions of themselves, and not to base their entire vision of the world on gender.

I think that's really critical. Having worked on various issues related to sexual violence in different settings, we see that it always comes down to that. The problem always revolves around equality, around gender relations or the relations between the sexes.

There is the issue, then, of attitude-based socialization. It's important to find a way to prevent the exploitation of that inequality. In addition to that is everything attached to this notion of a rape culture, a hot topic and headline maker. That, too, strikes me as interesting.

[English]

**Ms. Rachael Harder:** Thank you.

I have to ask the question because you're talking a lot about needing to communicate that men and women are equal. I would certainly agree with you on that, but one of the things that I am giving a lot of attention to right now is the impact of pornography and the fact that most pornography nowadays is produced in an incredibly violent manner. More than ever, it shows the man dominating the woman and it is making violence against women erotic. It is eroticizing it.

I'm interested in hearing your feedback in terms of that observation and the studies that have been done.

[Translation]

**Ms. Sandrine Ricci:** The issue of pornography certainly falls outside the scope of our participation here today, which focuses on violence in universities. Nevertheless, since the broader scope is the issue of gender equality, we cannot, of course, neglect to comment on sexual exploitation and pornography. Ideological divisions exist around how pornography is viewed. In and of itself, does it constitute violence or not?

I believe you highlighted the problem in terms of representation. There is also a problem tied to the fact that the majority of pornography is becoming increasingly violent. It continues to revolve around masculine sexuality, in other words, a certain dimension associated with virility and performance.

None of that does anything to bring about equal relations or relations where socialization is not based on the division between two categories of humans, men and women. It does not open the door to a range of self-fulfillment possibilities. Consider the tangible impact on self-esteem, for instance. If a female's sexual education comes from watching pornography, which depicts women in a certain way, it will certainly impact us at all levels of society, whether as friends, parents, or otherwise.

Therefore, yes, the problem is tied to sexual violence, in my view.

• (1700)

**The Chair:** Great.

[English]

Ms. Malcolmson, you have seven minutes.

**Ms. Sheila Malcolmson:** Thank you so much to all four witnesses for your work. It's good to hear the research that you're doing, and it's a hope to have more support for further research, because we need to learn.

To any of the four witnesses, perhaps you can talk more about your picture for a federal coordinating mechanism to make sure we have the framework to learn from each other and to bring some common understanding of the issue and also common understanding of responses available across the country.

I'm hoping to hear a few more words on that federal coordinating mechanism. I think it was a recommendation of the first witness panel.

[Translation]

**Ms. Liette Roussel:** Yes, it's one of our recommendations.

We primarily questioned university stakeholders who were critical of the situation and the huge lack of leadership in terms of bringing together all the responses and concerns in relation to violence against young women. They cited the need for a champion, calling on the federal government to demonstrate leadership that would extend all the way to the regions.

[English]

**Ms. Sheila Malcolmson:** This fits also into the call for education, starting very early with children in grade school, to teach them about relationships, gender equality, and what constitutes violence.

Do you have recommendations for the federal government side on how we could influence the imperative of having that sexual violence prevention early on in education?

[Translation]

**Dr. Manon Bergeron:** The Quebec government is currently putting in place a sex education pilot project. It sets out mandatory learning that will be deployed to all elementary and high schools beginning in 2017-18. It's not a program in and of itself, but a message first and foremost.

Leadership has to come from the federal government and must extend to every region of the country.

Quebec's program really targets a number of levels: interpersonal relations, sexual violence, and equal relations. It's quite a comprehensive program based on the psychosocial and sexual development of children and adolescents.

I think it's a quality program, and I think the federal government could support the implementation of a similar program all over the country.

[English]

**Ms. Sheila Malcolmson:** Finally, can you describe further for our committee the experience of disabled women in sexual violence, particularly within the university and college setting? We haven't heard very much about that yet, and we know how prevalent it is and how high our responsibility is to prevent it.

• (1705)

[Translation]

**Ms. Liette Roussel:** As far as the Acadian Peninsula is concerned, unfortunately, neither the college nor the university representatives were able to say whether campus victims were women with disabilities.

That information wasn't communicated to them.

I'll let the Université du Montréal à Québec representatives answer.

**Ms. Sandrine Ricci:** Thank you.

We actually asked those who answered our questionnaire whether they had a disability. It gave us some idea of who the respondents were.

Living with a disability, be it physical or mental, makes individuals more vulnerable, and a number of studies corroborate that. It's an issue that requires serious attention.

It is quite clear that students with disabilities are vulnerable de facto. They project a certain vulnerability that predators can take advantage of. Some individuals try to play on the fact that these women have fewer networks, are less mobile, or have a harder time getting the results they hope for or should receive under the system, for instance.

In our report, we will take a closer look at the research results tied to this problem.

[English]

**Ms. Sheila Malcolmson:** Have you provided your written report to this committee, and if not, are you able to, because we need to dig into that issue more?

[Translation]

**Dr. Manon Bergeron:** The report will be available in December 2016, at which point, we can provide it to anyone who might be interested, including the committee members. That said, I don't know what stage the work will be at come December. I would also point out that other documents will also be coming out over the next year. As part of our study, respondents had the opportunity to write an account of what happened to them, so we have more than 1,700 personal accounts of people's experiences. Other findings the committee may consider helpful will therefore be available in 2017.

[English]

**Ms. Sheila Malcolmson:** Thank you so much.

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Ms. Nassif, you have seven minutes as well.

**Mrs. Eva Nassif (Vimy, Lib.):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would like to thank the four witnesses for presenting their research to us.

I am the only member from Quebec here. I represent the riding of Vimy, in Laval, which is home to Collège Montmorency, a Université de Montréal campus, and a Université du Québec à Montréal campus.



Ms. Ricci, can you describe the work of the Réseau québécois en études féministes in sharing research on sexual assault in Canada, and how such research has been used to prevent or respond to sexual assault in communities and on university and college campuses?

**Ms. Sandrine Ricci:** I'd first like to clarify that the Réseau québécois en études féministes, which I am the coordinator of, is a network of researchers. The network provided financial support for our research project, the ESSIMU study. I was the co-researcher, and Manon Bergeron was the senior researcher on the study. I am here today as a researcher on the ESSIMU study, not so much as a representative of the Réseau québécois en études féministes or its activities. Like the Service aux collectivités de l'UQAM and the Regroupement québécois des CALACS, the network is somewhat of a partner.

Do you need to reformulate your question in light of that clarification?

• (1710)

**Mrs. Eva Nassif:** I actually have another question.

One witness told the committee that more research was needed on the subject of sexual assault in Canada.

Do you agree?

If so, how can such research be funded, publicized, and shared?

That question is for you, Ms. Ricci.

**Ms. Sandrine Ricci:** We think it's imperative that research on sexual violence continue. I have noticed that the research being done on sexual violence is mainly empirical, in other words, focusing on intervention, victim assistance, victim accounts, and so forth.

The fact of the matter is that hardly any research examines the subject from a theoretical standpoint, in order to better understand or identify what's at play. For instance, very little research has been done on the much-discussed issue of rape culture. I believe that's an area worthy of study. I sound as though I am speaking for my own bailiwick.

Perhaps Ms. Bergeron would care to add something about the research.

**Dr. Manon Bergeron:** Yes. I think it's crucial to encourage the evaluation of programs and practices in place around the country and to share information on those that are the most promising. Up to now, universities have been working in silos, but I think it's time to share good programs with one another.

I think program evaluation would be one way for the federal government to support intervention. It involves putting programs in place, but, above all, evaluating them in order to identify what they are doing well.

**Ms. Sandrine Ricci:** I just want to add, if I may, how incredibly important it is to raise awareness around this issue. Doing that means educating people, all the stakeholders, from decision-makers to the public, about the terminology.

That's another aspect that's often challenging. Sometimes we are criticized for using definitions of sexual violence that are too broad and inclusive of too many behaviours. It is therefore necessary to do research to get the stakeholders to truly understand that sexual

assaults are not just physical attacks. They include harassment, comments that are sexist or have sexual undertones, pressure such as blackmail or manipulation in exchange for sex, and other acts that fall on the continuum of violence. It's important to shine a light on the problematic nature of these types of behaviours, which are downplayed in society. I think research to that end is necessary.

**Mrs. Eva Nassif:** Very good. My next question is for Ms. Bergeron.

What services are required following a sexual assault, both immediately and in the long term? Can you describe the availability and accessibility of those services across Canada?

**Dr. Manon Bergeron:** Yes. I can talk about the situation as it relates to Quebec, specifically. Our colleagues can describe what goes on in their region.

It requires major investments. Here, in Quebec, we have the Regroupement québécois des CALACS, an organization that brings together some 40 sexual assault help centres, or CALACS. Some of those centres, however, have long waiting lists. It can take up to a year or a year and a half for someone to access support. What we, at the university, do when female students come to us seeking support services is refer them to the CALACS, which have 40 years of expertise behind them, after all. It's necessary, then, to rely on these organizations, whose experience has been built up over many years. We refer those students to the CALACS, where they wind up on waiting lists up to a year long. Therefore, from an accessibility standpoint, efforts and investments are certainly needed to ensure victims receive timely support. That is a priority accessibility-wise.

I appreciate your question because it gives me an opportunity to reiterate where the major needs lie. Demand has gone up in recent years, but funding has not necessarily kept pace.

When someone has been sexually assaulted on a university campus, what they need most is to feel that the focus is on them. Much of the emphasis is placed on discussing the victim's legal options, helping her file a complaint, and guiding her through the process. Yes, it's important to make it safe for her to file a complaint, if that is indeed what she wants to do, but I think what she needs most is to feel supported, believed, and looked after quickly.

• (1715)

**The Chair:** I'm sorry, but your time is up.

[English]

We're going now to Ms. Vecchio for seven minutes.

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio:** I only have five.

**The Chair:** It's five minutes. Sorry, you're right.

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio:** Thank you very much to both sets of groups for coming out today.

I'd like to start off with group one. You noted there were three things that you felt the federal government should work on to coordinate measurements, but one thing you noted was about coordinating regional outreach to help women who protect their abusers. What were some of those key reasons that women would protect their abusers?

I assume there's going to be a difference between people who are mothers, who have children, versus people who are in the academic environment. Can you share a little information on that for me?

[Translation]

**Ms. Liette Roussel:** Yes, thank you.

In universities, it seems to be much more common for assaults to go unmentioned and unreported. At the regional level, we hear a lot more about domestic and family violence. The stakeholders are much more active. On university and college campuses, however, the mentality seems to be that, even though an assault occurred, it doesn't go any further. Assaults are never reported, or almost never. As I said, they go unmentioned.

My Quebec counterparts were talking earlier about the need for support in the regions, and this ties into that. A number of years ago, an initial response support system was put in place, a community support mechanism for women by women, and we saw that it worked very well. I think we need a similar system in universities and colleges.

[English]

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio:** Carrying on, Rachael brought this up—sex for services. The reason I want to go on to this little aside is that we talk about hypersexuality, but we also talk about women being able to be sexualized and feeling that they are allowed to be that, and that there shouldn't be any barriers for that, yet we see that sex for services is a negative.

This might sound crazy of me, but where is the difference between hypersexuality and empowerment versus when it becomes a sexual assault or a miscue? When does it cross that line between what a person is choosing to do and what it has now created?

Do you know what I'm saying? I look at this as probably being a mental state, where a person at one time is doing something and is thinking that they're empowering themselves through their sexuality. When does it turn into being a negative for a woman?

[Translation]

**Ms. Liette Roussel:** The issue is very delicate.

[English]

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio:** Does anyone know what I mean? It's in here.

[Translation]

**Ms. Liette Roussel:** The issue is still delicate. Even in cases of hypersexualization, there's no justification for a person becoming a victim.

I have trouble making a link with violence, because even though girls are hypersexualized, boys are hypersexualized as well.

I have trouble determining when it becomes negative. The issue is still a matter of culture or education and of knowing what is appropriate and what is not. Maybe we should start with reviewing our way of educating both girls and boys on how to express their sexuality.

• (1720)

[English]

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio:** I appreciate that. It's just that I think that one of the things that we find difficult is when it becomes empowering yourself as a sexual being and then losing that empowerment and becoming the person in whom men may see as someone they have the right to violate. I think that's part of the question that I have. It is a very difficult question.

Maybe you could tell me exactly what these services are that you're referring to that women would provide, and in order to get what? Just be a bit more open.

[Translation]

**Ms. Liette Roussel:** Is the question still for me?

**Mrs. Karen Vecchio:** Yes, the question is for you.

**Ms. Liette Roussel:** I was referring to a service involving women supporting other women. It wasn't an official service.

The victim is not always ready, especially right after the act of violence, to use a public service. She prefers a much more intimate and personal type of support. She also prefers a community and volunteer support network. That's what I meant by women supporting other women.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Ms. Damoff, you now have five minutes for the last questions.

[English]

**Ms. Pam Damoff (Oakville North—Burlington, Lib.):** Thank you. I'm going to try to share my time with Ms. Ludwig.

I'm going to focus on the ladies doing the research in Montreal. You mentioned that there were two types that you had seen, one from another student and one from a professor. What's the prevalence of each? I hope that's clear.

[Translation]

**Dr. Manon Bergeron:** Yes, that's completely clear.

The most frequently reported situation is when female students are the victims of male students at the university. That type of case is the most frequent and the most represented in studies. Another frequently reported situation is when the victim is a student and the attacker is a professor.

We will find the numbers, if you want. They will be in the report. But in terms of frequency, if the victim is a student and if she has—

[English]

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** Excuse me. Okay. We'll wait for the report, then. Okay.

Do you find that there are needs for some kind of consistency the federal government could provide in terms of encouraging universities and colleges to have sexual assault programs and services? It seems to very much be a broad range from campus to campus.

Is there a role that you could see the federal government playing in that?

[Translation]

**Dr. Manon Bergeron:** Yes, completely. We think it's an excellent idea for the federal government to take a leadership role in that regard, because the universities operate in silos. Best practices are in place in anglophone universities, in western Canada, that should absolutely be shared. I'm not exactly sure which structure should be adopted. However, the structure must include not only the presidents, the people in charge of the universities and the professors, but everyone, especially the students.

[English]

**Ms. Pam Damoff:** I'm going to turn my time over to Karen.

**Ms. Karen Ludwig (New Brunswick Southwest, Lib.):** Thank you.

Thank you all for your presentations.

My questions, with my short amount of time, are actually to the collective for the Acadian peninsula.

Ms. Roussel and Ms. Pinet, for 14 years I actually taught business at the New Brunswick Community College, and after that I went on to teach for the University of New Brunswick.

With regard to the province of New Brunswick, we often hear about the divide within the province linguistically. Are you familiar with, or are you aware of, any differences in services provided in the francophone versus anglophone communities in the area of sexual assault for community college campuses?

• (1725)

[Translation]

**Ms. Liette Roussel:** Not to my knowledge. As far as I know, the services are similar.

[English]

**Ms. Karen Ludwig:** Thank you.

I know when I was with the college, when I first started there in 1996, it was part I of government, and it's probably in the last seven years that it became part IV of government, so it's a bit more of an extension, a bit more of an arm's length from government. Hopefully, that will also offer some more opportunities, and certainly it offers opportunities to apply for research funding.

We've heard from other witnesses that in the first eight weeks of post-secondary education, there is a high incidence of sexual assault. Can you tell me the services that are available on your campuses to help deal with it, both with males and with females?

That's for anyone.

[Translation]

**Ms. Sandrine Ricci:** I may be able to answer at least part of the question.

Regarding the financial support issue, there's the matter of political will and the reputation of the institutions. If there aren't any numbers, there isn't any problem. If there isn't any problem, there's no risk that, for example, registrations or the recruitment of professors will be affected. That's part of the issue. The other part is that, as a result of our current economic situation, the decision-makers in the universities keep telling us that they don't have the means.

For example, three years ago, we and UQAM's senior staff considered creating an off-campus CALACS. The centre would have been funded, or at least supported, by the university. That way, the victims could have received a proper service, as mentioned by my colleague earlier. The service would not have been located on campus because a structure on campus generates a sense of distrust. Immediately, the financial issue was raised. Therefore, funding is a big concern. It's difficult to tell universities that they must do this and that and that they must set up a proper response office, lead awareness campaigns, work on prevention, implement policies and find the necessary money in budgets that are already extremely tight. I think there's certainly a way for them to reorganize certain things, but—

**The Chair:** Excuse me, but the time is up.

I want to thank all the witnesses who spoke today. It was magnificent and very interesting.

[English]

For the committee, I just want to let you know that because of the Olympians and Paralympians coming, we will cancel Wednesday's session, although we will have a subcommittee meeting in the last hour of that session. You have an opportunity still to get in your motions to the clerk on what we want to study in the next session so she can have them translated, or to bring them when that meeting gets scheduled.

I want to remind you that this Thursday is Hope in High Heels, so we will meet at the centennial flame at noon. Bring your staff and fellow MPs and walk in solidarity for an end to violence against women. In case there's a question, Ms. Nassif and I will not be walking in high heels, but we will be sharing lots of hope and solidarity with you.

Thank you again to all.

[Translation]

Have a good day.

The meeting is adjourned.





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