

YOUR GUIDE TO RESPONDING WHEN SOMEONE SHARES AN EXPERIENCE OF SEXUALIZED VIOLENCE

Sexualized violence is an umbrella term that can include but is not limited to: creating and/or sharing images without consent, stalking or voyeurism (watching others engaged in sexual activities or naked), intimate partner violence, and online harassment of a sexual nature. Please refer to the Sexualized Violence Policy for complete definitions.



RESPONDING

When someone shares an experience of sexualized violence

What you can say

“Thank you for sharing your experience with me. You are not alone. I believe you.”

- It’s OK to express concern.
- Explain any limits to your confidentiality (ex: RAs, athletics, security).

“Are you safe right now? Do you have any immediate needs I can support you with?”

- See back page for immediate concerns.

“Would you like to talk about some of the supports and resources available on campus and in the community?”

- Offer choice and respect their decisions about which supports feel right.

“Would you like to talk about some of the reporting options available?”

- Offering choice and respecting their decisions about which reporting options feel right.
- A Disclosure to the Sexualized Violence Advisor allows for specialized advice, access to accommodations, reporting options, and support navigation.
- A Disclosure or Report to the Sexualized Violence Advisor does not initiate a report to police, unless obligated by law.

Every act of sexualized violence has an impact and there’s no “right” reaction.

What not to say

“Why were you there?”

“What were you wearing?”

“Why didn’t you leave?”

“Why were you drinking?”

WHY NOT:

- Victim blaming
- The responsibility of sexualized violence lies with the perpetrator

“You should report this so it doesn’t happen to anyone else.”

“You should get a forensic examination for evidence.”

“You should report to police.”

WHY NOT:

- Coercive
- Restoring choice is an important part of the healing journey

“It could have been worse.”

“Take it off your mind.”

“Boys will be boys.”

WHY NOT:

- Minimizing experience

Are you in danger?

Did the assault occur within 7 days?

Do you need medical attention?

Are you unsafe on campus?

If you answered ‘yes’ to any of the above, you may contact one of these first-response services:

Dal Security | 902.494.4109 (Halifax) | 902.893.4190 (Truro)

Off-campus emergency services | 911

SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner) | 902.425.0122



REFERRING

See back cover for a full list of supports and resources on campus and in the community

Support resources

If the individual is interested in on-campus support:

You can refer the individual to Human Rights and Equity Services where our **Sexualized Violence Advisor** can offer confidential support, crisis intervention, possible accommodations and reporting options, referrals to other services as needed, and ongoing support.

If the individual is interested in community support:

You can refer the individual to **Avalon Sexual Assault Centre** 902.422.4240 or the **Colchester Sexual Assault Centre** 902.897.4366.

After-hours support

The Dalhousie Student Union **Sexual Assault and Harassment Phonenumber** is an anonymous, confidential, peer to peer, active listening and referral service that operates 7 days a week from 12 pm to 12 am at 902.425.1066.

Dalhousie Employee & Family Assistance Program (for employees): 1.800.387.4765 or www.workhealthlife.com

If they say *no* to a referral

"I respect your decision. I hope you will keep these options in mind. My door is always open."

- Respect their decision
- Don't force the issue or trick them into going
- Try and leave the door open for later consideration

Don't forget to

Point out that support is available and seeking support is a sign of strength and courage, not a weakness. Offer to follow up with the individual, but don't insist on knowing what they have done.

"Would you like someone to reach out to you?"

- I can help connect you.

Intersectionality:

It's important to use an intersectional lens when responding to disclosures. Intersectionality recognizes the integrative nature of social identities and social oppressions, including various forms of violence. An intersectional approach to Sexualized Violence considers the fact that the impact of Sexualized Violence can overlap and interact with experiences of sexism, homophobia, transphobia, racism, classism, ableism and other forms of oppression.

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REPORTING

Reporting is always the choice of the individual
sharing experiences of sexualized violence

READ DALHOUSIE'S SEXUALIZED VIOLENCE POLICY

dal.ca/hres

Important distinctions

Disclosure refers to the sharing of information by a Member of the University Community or Visitor with the Sexualized Violence Advisor about an experience of sexualized violence that individual has had. (See sections F2.14, F2.15, and F2.16 of the Sexualized Violence Policy.)

Report refers to a written statement of allegations submitted to the Sexualized Violence Advisor, or other Member of University Community as designated under section F2.14, F2.15, and F2.16 of the Sexualized Violence Policy, by a Complainant about an experience of Sexualized Violence that individual has had.

A Report must include: the names of both the Complainant and the Respondent(s); a detailed description of the behaviour that forms the basis of the Report; and an indication of the redress sought.

Individuals can choose to report to only the university or only the police or both or neither (refer to the inserts for what these processes may look like)

You are obligated by law to report experiences of sexualized violence if:

- The individual is under the age of 16
- The individual is under the age of 19 and the abuse is from a parent or legal guardian
- The incident involves visually explicit images of a child under 18

Duty of Managers, Supervisors and Leaders:

Notwithstanding that reporting is the choice of the individual, Dalhousie is requiring that all Dalhousie managers, supervisors and leaders who receive a disclosure of a serious sexualized violence consult with the Sexualized Violence Advisor in the Office of Human Rights and Equity Services directly following receipt of such a disclosure. (See the Directive from Frank Harvey, Provost and Vice-President Academic and Gitta Kulczycki, Vice-President Finance and Administration which is attached to this document.) The purpose of this consultation is to protect the safety of faculty, staff and students on campus; to ensure the victims of sexualized violence obtain the supports they need, and to ensure that Dalhousie has information to prevent a repeat of the violence.

Where a Member of the University Community witnesses or has reasonable concerns about an act of Sexualized Violence, such Member may submit an anonymous written allegation to the Sexualized Violence Advisor. Whether or not an anonymous allegation can proceed in the absence of an identified Complainant will be determined by the Advisor, in consultation with Senior Administrator, as defined in section D.6.

Confidentiality:

Disclosures and Reports of Sexualized Violence will be kept confidential to the greatest extent possible, within the limitations described in the Sexualized Violence Policy section F1 (P.8)

HUMAN RIGHTS & EQUITY SERVICES (HRES) works with all members of the Dalhousie community and the wider community to foster a culture of respect, inclusivity, and community safety. The HRES team works in the areas of human rights, discrimination, sexualized violence, harassment prevention, conflict management, as well as training and education.

The Sexualized Violence Advisor is trained to help individuals who have experienced Sexualized Violence, and offers confidential support, crisis intervention, liaises with medical/legal/police services as needed, coordinates safety plans with Security Services, refer Complainants to counselling and ongoing support, advises Complainants on possible accommodations and processes outlined in the Sexualized Violence Policy, and provides other consultation and case management services (including incident logging).

CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Supports within the Dalhousie University Community:

Dalhousie Employee & Family Assistance Program

(for employees)

1-800-387-4765

www.workhealthlife.com

Dalhousie Student Advocacy Service

dsu.ca/dsas

Dalhousie Student Health & Wellness Centre

(for students – includes Counselling Services)

dal.ca/livewell

Dalhousie Student Union Health Plan Office

dsu.ca/healthplan

Dalhousie Student Union Survivor Support Centre

dsu.ca/survivorsupport

Human Rights & Equity Services

dal.ca/hres

Ombudsperson (independent and impartial support)

dal.ca/ombudsperson

Security Services

dal.ca/security

South House Sexual and Gender Resource Centre

southhousehalifax.org

FACULTY, STAFF & STUDENTS CAN:

Receive support after someone shares an experience of sexualized violence with you:

902.494.6672

Understand your responsibilities under the Policy:

Contact the Sexualized Violence Advisor at 902.494.2704 or hres@dal.ca

Request a presentation about services and supports at:

dal.ca/hres

Visit us for a walk-in appointment:

Room 410, Macdonald Building | 6300 Coburg Road (4th Floor)

Book an appointment:

902.494.6672

Visit us online:

dal.ca/hres    [@dalhres](https://twitter.com/dalhres)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES IN THE BROADER COMMUNITY

Avalon Sexual Assault Centre

avaloncentre.ca

Avalon SANE Response Line

902.425.0122

Colchester Sexual Assault Centre

colchestersac.ca

Mental Health Mobile Crisis Unit

902.429.8167

Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre

902.420.1576 ext: 256

Nova Scotia Legal Advice for Sexual Assault Survivors Program

211 or bit.ly/2L6tgI9

Sexual Violence Prevention and Supports

Nova Scotia Department of Community Service

breakthesilencens.ca

Healing Narratives (Free counselling for men who have experienced sexual assault)

www.newstartcounselling.ca/other-programs

Halifax Regional Police

902.490.5020

Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Colchester County detachment – Bible Hill

902.893.6820

Town of Truro Police

902.895.5351

