



Declarations *of* Truth

Dedication

To the powerful, brave, courageous and mighty survivors we had a chance to speak with during this initiative. To the ones that opened their hearts and allowed us to peek inside. To the ones that challenged us, to push our work forward. To all of you, we hope that you find justice one day. Whether you find it in a room full of survivors, or a late-night walk amongst the trees. We want each of you to know, we see you. We are with you. You are our comrades and we will forever remember each one of you. These are living pages, that your declarations dance on, whether you want to leave them with us or harness them to take to battle; we are here in solidarity. We hope this document, that you all helped to build, will be a catalyst for change, so that every survivor can find their own justice.

To the ones we lost, *we're doing this for you.*

Made thanks to ...

Department for Women and Gender Equality
WomenatthecentrE Board of Directors
Women's Sexual Assault Care Centre of Renfrew County

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About the Report

This Executive Summary is intended to provide you with a concise overview of the report 'Declarations of Truth: Documenting Insights from Survivors of Sexual Abuse', developed by the Women's Centre for Social Justice - aka WomenatthecentrE. In this summary, we will discuss how why and how we embarked on this ambitious project, but to also summarise some of the important demographic data of the survivors and system personnel we encountered, briefly explain our findings and conclusions, as well as bring forth our recommendations for next steps. We've styled this document to provide a human context to the report, through photographic images that represent the diversity of women who experience gender-based sexual violence.

[*Read the Full Report*](#)

As we worked to create an alternative model of justice for survivors of gender-based sexual violence (GBSV), we would often come across the iconic image of Lady Justice, standing tall. Her blindfold was to signify that justice should be impartial in the way it treats everyone who comes before it. Her balanced scales were to measure the strength of the case being brought. Her sword was to convey how justice must be swift.

As we reflected on our findings, we found that the response of the criminal legal system to GBSV provided none of these for so many survivors. We therefore created a new version of Lady Justice as seen on the cover page. Her blindfold is removed, so the law may see the injustices and obstacles survivors face while letting survivors see the possibilities before them. Her sword is now a megaphone, to amplify her voice and declarations of her truth. The scales are still reflective of the need for balance in administering justice, but also speaks to the rights of survivors to receive fair treatment in the process.

Introduction

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Introduction



In 2016, WomenatthecentrE was tasked to explore and find an alternative model of justice for sexual violence survivors. Survivors of sexual violence have long stated that the current criminal legal system has failed them in ways that often exacerbate the trauma they experience from the assault. As an organisation whose members have extensive experience and expertise gained by having personally navigated it as complainants, we have also engaged in systems' monitoring through our various CourtWatch activities. Based on those experiences, we have been able to see first-hand how the current criminal legal system is not in fact a site where those who are the victims of the crime can go to find justice. Our own experiences have shown us how survivors of sexual assaults are discounted, not believed and often made to feel as though they are the ones on trial, leading to other survivors' understandable reluctance to report to the police. Trying to find an alternative model of justice for survivors therefore entails an exploration of why the main option is not working the way citizens expect it to.

**We view justice as
embodying three
fundamental
principles:**

1. Of perpetrator accountability, remorse and change in attitude and behaviour, having recognised the harm caused by their actions;
2. Of the victim/ survivors feeling heard, believed and validated
3. Of societal acknowledgement of the role it plays in navigating and negotiating the above

We have engaged in key primary research activities aimed at eliciting data to support us in identifying elements that could be incorporated into this alternative model. There were five components:

- **Interviews**

Survivors who reported the assault to police.

- **Focus Groups**

Survivors who did not report the assault to police.

- **Courtwatch**

Monitoring sexual assault trials in the City of Toronto.

- **Canadian Legal Information Institute**

Reviewing and auditing past trial judgements.

- **Media Scanning**

Tracking social discourse on sexual violence in media.



WomenatthecentrE approached this initiative with the intention of providing a 360-degree review of the legal system’s responses to sexual violence, to help firmly ground our work. Having engaged in Specialised Domestic Violence CourtWatch monitoring for years, we understood the importance of bringing those insights from the courtroom. We therefore applied our experience and utilised it in this model, to peek into the prosecution of sexual assault cases, as a way to illuminate one of the core issues of this initiative – why the current system is failing survivors.

In an effort to find an alternative model of justice which could address these principles in ways that were clothed in compassion and kindness, and would lead to healing and real social change, we engaged in a number of research activities to gain greater insight and identify legal and social approaches to holding perpetrators accountable, changing their behaviours, while providing better supports to survivors.

Operating with limited resources, we knew that each activity on its own would yield a small sample size, but planned on combining all the data gathered to form a kaleidoscope of information, with each piece acting like a part of a jigsaw puzzle and helping us to accurately paint a complete picture of the social landscape.

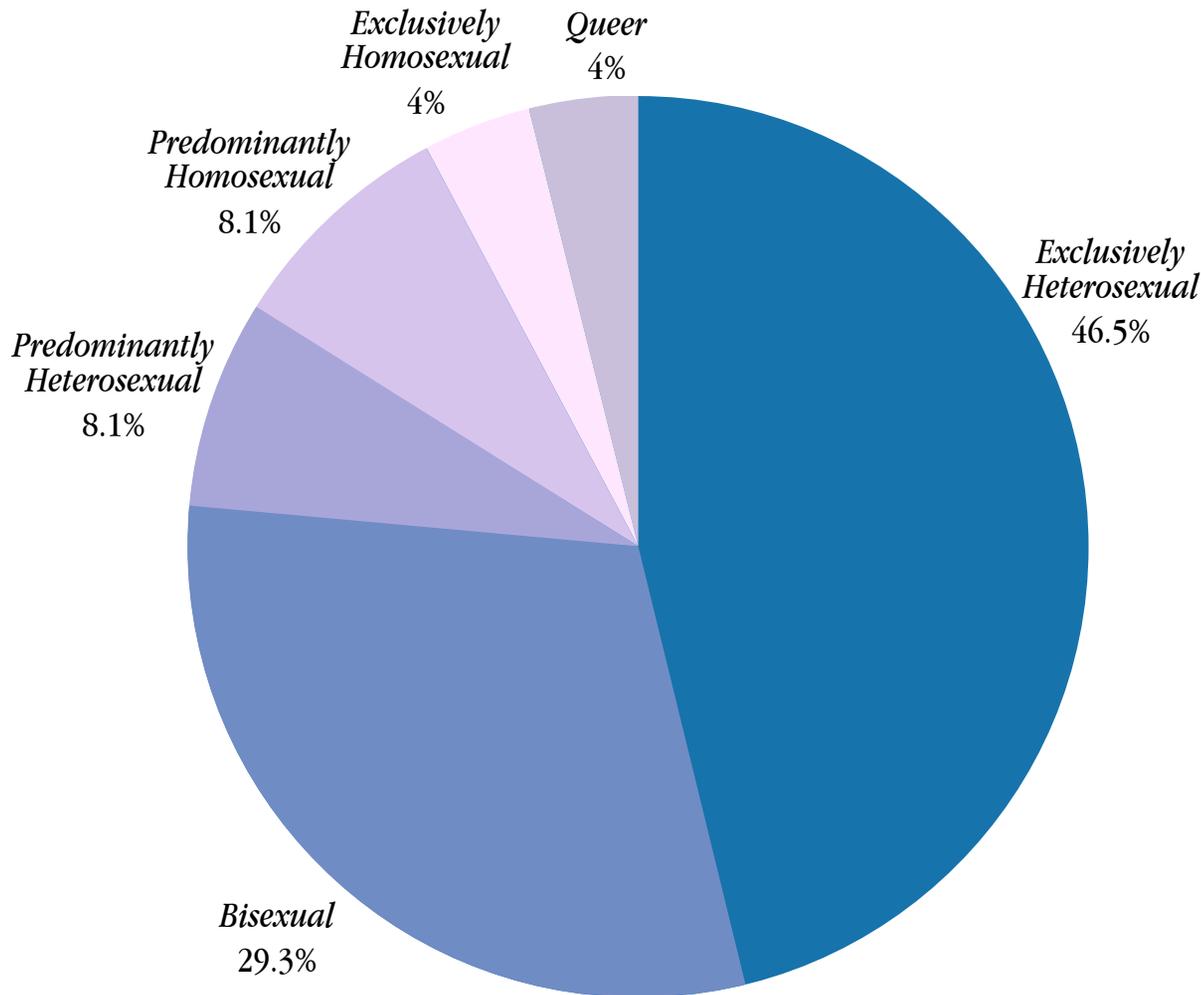
Interviews & Demographics



In January, 2018, WomenatthecentrE received ethics approval from the Community Research Ethics Office in Waterloo, Ontario. We hoped to interview between eight to ten women in two communities, Toronto and Renfrew County, who had reported the sexual assault and had gone through the legal system. Our focus was on identifying and supporting communities of women survivors who have largely remained invisible to the system, especially Black, Indigenous, trans and women living with disabilities.

This helped us better understand our participants.

Sexuality Status

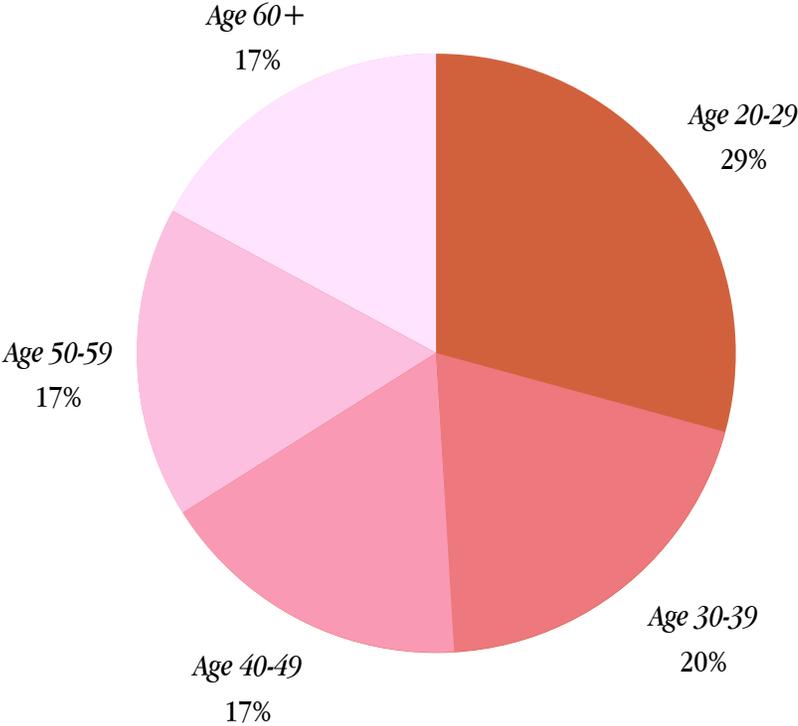


46%

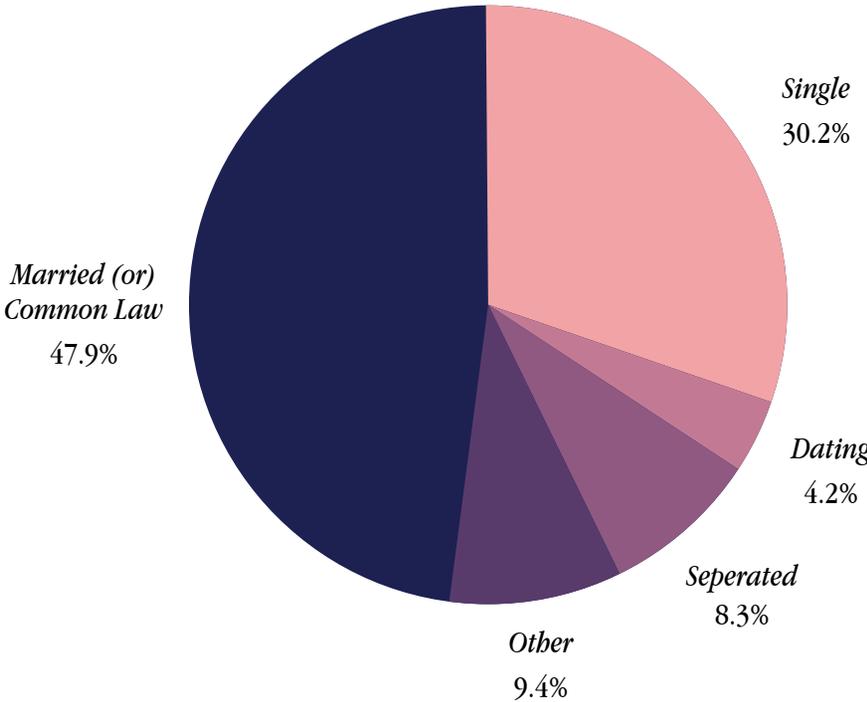
Have a disability

Including mental health, post concussion syndrome, depression, PTSD, OCD, ADD, learning disability, physical injuries from family violence, chronic illness

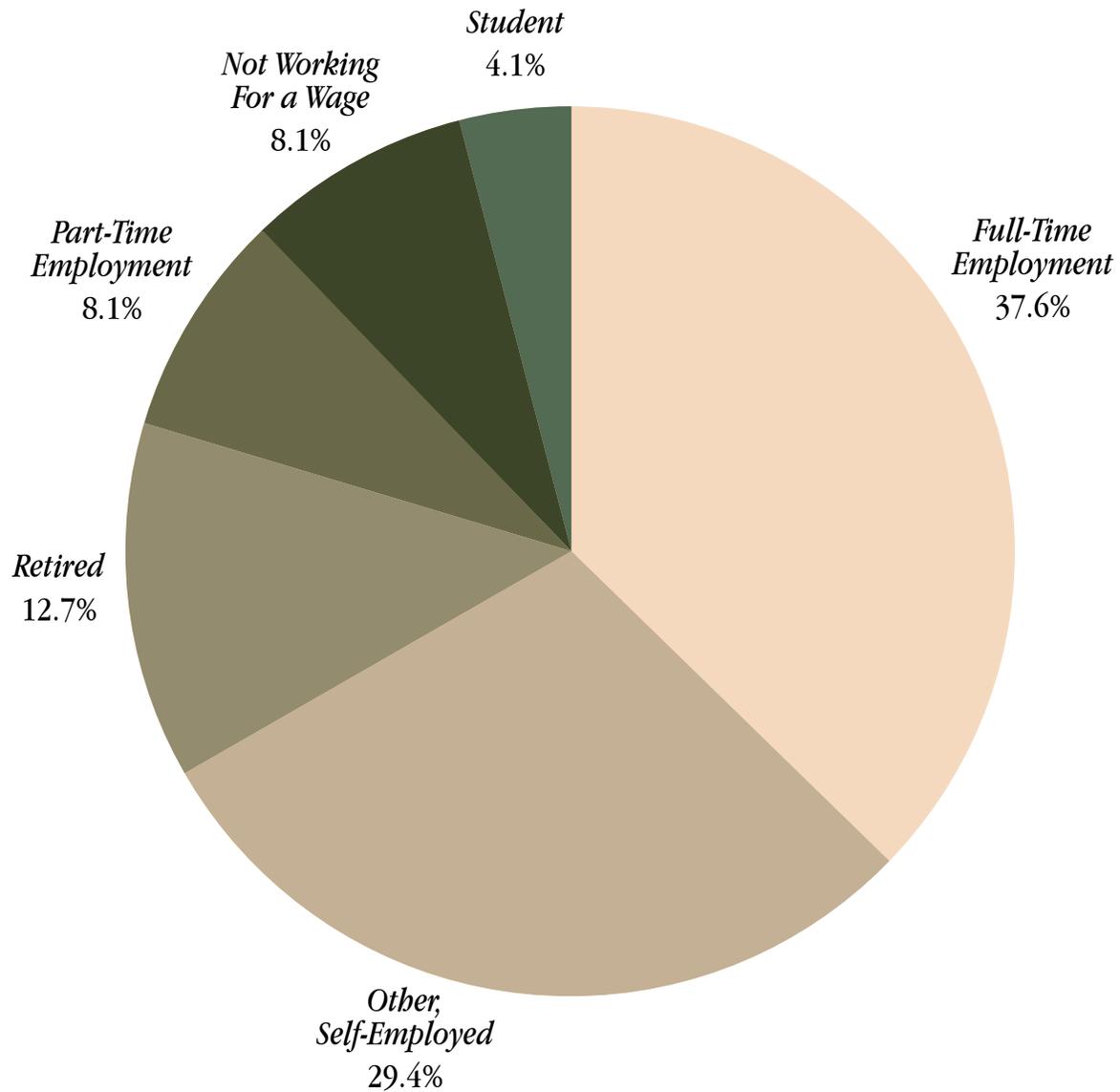
Median Age



Relationship Status



Employment Status

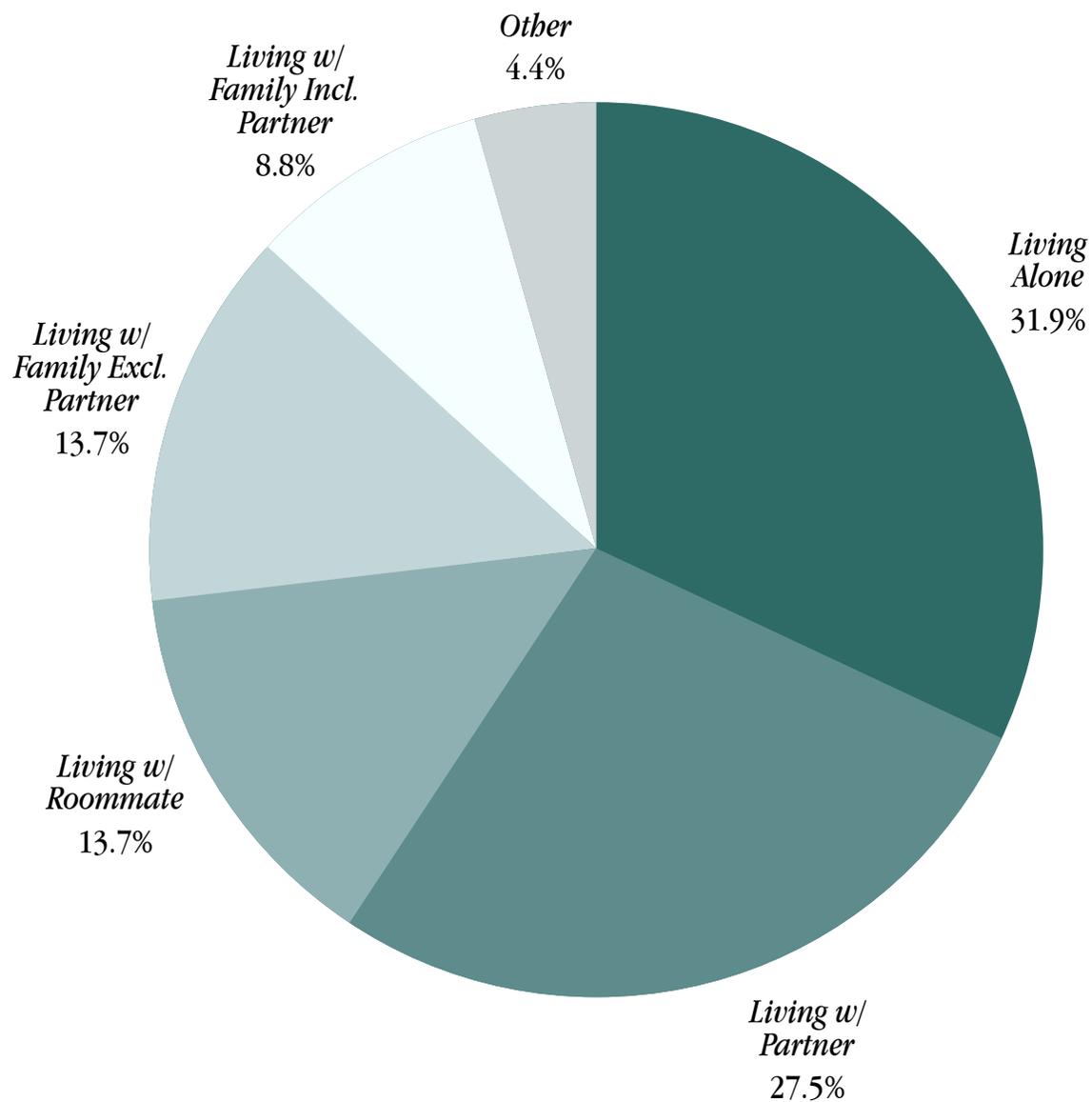


29%

Received Social Assistance

Including individuals who both have in the past and those individuals who are currently supported by social assistance income

Residency Status

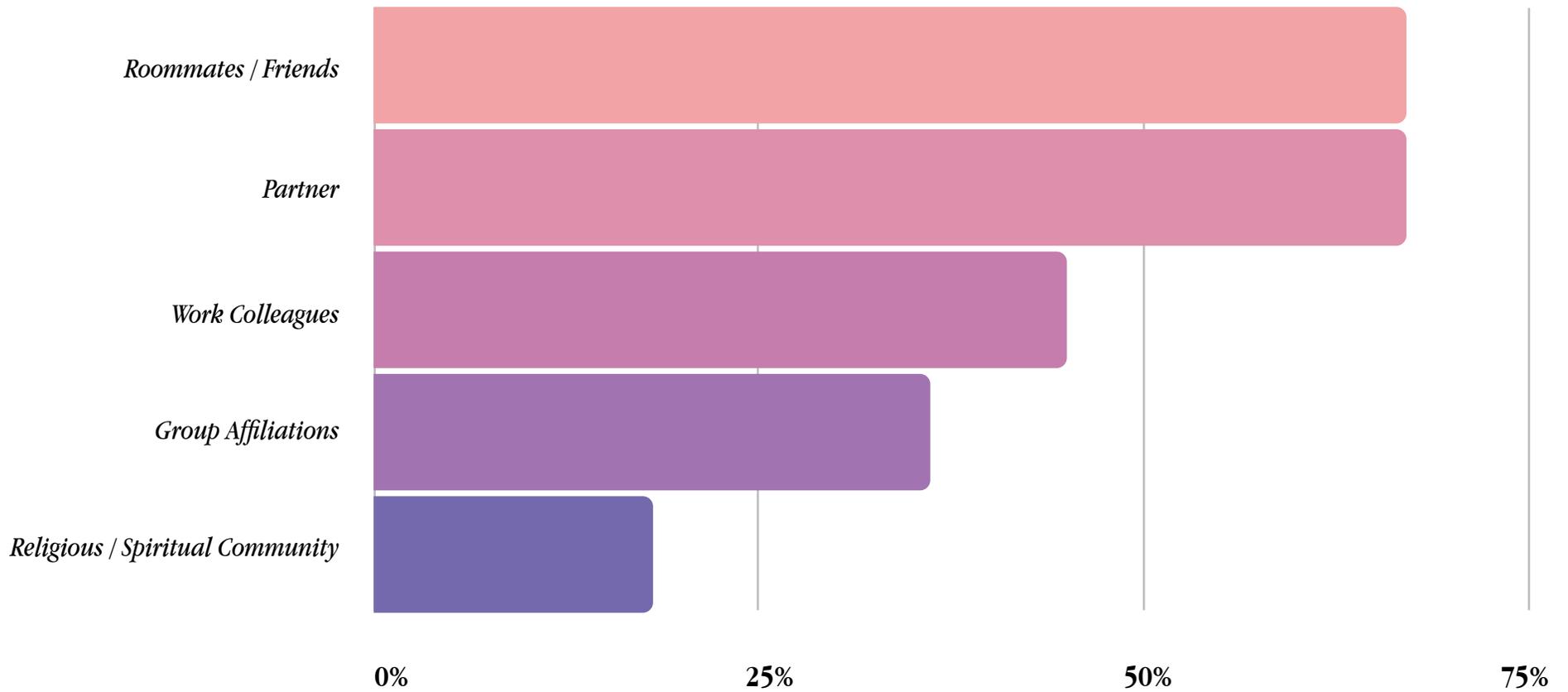


79%

Accessed Community Based Supports

Including individuals who both have in the past and those individuals who are currently supported by social assistance income

Social Supports



CourtWatch



With a group of trained students, interns and members of the WomenatthecentrE, we attended sexual assault trials in Toronto to help us critically analyse the administration of justice in the prosecution of these types of offences. It was important to experience first-hand the processes that have been put in place, to observe the conduct of justice personnel, as well as the treatment meted out to complainants and accused persons. We were even able to monitor a few non-sexual assault trials and the dynamics at play there was an important opportunity to draw comparisons.

CourtWatchers documented, among other things, demographic information where possible and noted the use of rape myths and stereotyping of complainants, most often by judges and Defense counsel. They also observed the ways in which power and privilege are used as tools to control, and how this all plays out to determine who gets heard and whose voices are totally absent from the process. We used an anti-oppression lens to dissect the power imbalances that exists in these courtrooms, providing a critical analysis of how gender, race, age, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, ability, class and citizenship status are addressed. This process also allowed for themes to emerge. In total, we were able to critically observe 13 sexual assault trials, located both at Old City Hall and Superior Court in Toronto.



“ I just want women to feel like they count, and that they’re not cattle and they’re not numbers, that *they’re human beings*, they’re worthy and they’re valued. That’s what I want, women that have gone through that to know, and to feel when they go into that system. ”

We started our CourtWatch observations by partnering with the Victim Witness Assistance Program (VWAP) team at Old City Hall. They provided our Project Coordinator with a copy of the docket several months in advance, which allowed us to assign CourtWatches according to their availability. A significant challenge that remained difficult to overcome was that of the institutional chaos which ensues due to something as major as trials being traversed, or as minor as a change of courtroom. Trials would be traversed on the day it was set to commence, with no notice being provided. It resulted in great inconvenience and frustration on the part of our CourtWatchers, many of whom travelled long distances to the courthouse, only to be told that the case was not going to be proceeding. However, as inconvenient as it was for them, they were more concerned and angered at the impact on the survivors who showed up, expecting the process to play out, only to have to go home and prepare all over again.

There were also instances where justice players, the accused or the complainant did not show up, or if they were in attendance, were unprepared for trial, at which point, they would seek a new court date. Then the back-and-forth of coordinating calendars would begin, often leading to next appearances being months away. Some days, there had been changes and we would not have been notified.

These problems grew into large issues, as we were seeing less trials than we originally hoped. Although our CourtWatchers expressed deep frustration at the chaos, they all felt tremendous empathy for the survivors in these cases whose lives are put on hold pending trial outcome.

At the same time, we connected with the VWAP at Superior Court in Toronto, and were able to partner with them. Collaborating with VWAP was a great way for us to gain access to more sexual assault cases. However, we did experience additional obstacles with the administration of justice in Superior court. Our contact person changed three times in a very short period, resulting in drastically different levels of approachability and information-sharing. VWAP also kindly offered to reach out to complainants to elicit their consent for us to attend the trial, something that we, as a survivor-based organisation, appreciated, completely applaud and support their intention of putting control back into the survivors' hands. It did however further limit the amount of trials we were privy to and again added some delay, as we waited for consent.

CanLII



Due to these logistical challenges with the CourtWatch component of our work, we started to look for other sources of information that would allow us to track the legal system's responses to sexual assaults, and turned to the Canadian Legal Information Institute (CanLII). We were able to audit 37 CanLII decisions, from cases heard in rural and urban communities across the province of Ontario. Cases were randomly selected based on a search of www.canlii.org, restricting the searches to: Ontario – Superior Court of Justice. In the 'Document Text' field, CourtWatchers were required to search 'sexual assault', and then had the discretion to audit any of the cases that were displayed, provided that the decision was rendered between 2013 and 2018. This online resource, while an invaluable and informative source of information on reasons for judgement, was also quite limiting in the scope of information we are able to extrapolate from the reasons for judgement contained therein. For example, we were not always able to glean certain information that was available by being in the courtroom, such as age of the parties, or their race.



“What would justice look like for something that affects me every single day and that changed me at the core? Karma. And just trying to forgive myself, for that whole situation. I know it’s not my fault, but forgive (him) for what he has done, because he has no idea he did something wrong, absolutely nothing. But maybe if he could realise ‘Wow, maybe I did do something wrong. Maybe when she did say no, she actually meant no. Maybe those tears weren’t nice tears.’ For his own daughter, for his new girlfriend who he already has a child with. *I hope that he learns what an asshole he is for what he did, and that he never does it again.*”

Altogether, we were able to critically observe and analytically audit 50 distinct criminal system-based interventions, and it has been a thoroughly frustrating, upsetting, unsettling, yet humbling and inspiring experience. We are grateful to have had the opportunity to bear witness to the declarations of truth and to see the strength that these survivors hold as they navigate what many view as an inherently flawed system, a system that does not offer them justice or hold perpetrators accountable. We witnessed how this system is coopted as a site to revictimise and re-traumatise those who are courageous enough to come forward. As an organisation of, by and for survivors, we openly state that we believe these survivors, and we stand with them, in solidarity.

We also want to acknowledge the few exemplary justice players who tirelessly called out rape myths and stereotypes, refusing to stand by while complainants were berated and badgered on and off the stand. By the same token, we completely denounce the outrageous and disappointing ways the legal system itself and many within it, continue to treat survivors of sexual violence, the overwhelming majority of whom we know from previous research and from our current work, are women. The ingrained misogyny that we witnessed during this research initiative was quite shocking, easily explaining why so many victims of this heinous crime refuse to report.

It is for these reasons that we remain committed to finding alternative models of justice and accountability for survivors of sexual violence, where justice is in fact equitable and where survivors of gendered sexual violence find safety and respect, and are able to move on with a sense that justice, however they define it, has been served.

Final Conclusion: CourtWatch & CanLII

- We were able to critically monitor and analytically audit 50 sexual assault cases
- We came to the overarching conclusion that the current justice model does not in fact impart justice to most of the victims of sexual violence who come seeking it
- The institutional dysfunction, administrative chaos and systemic barriers combined to make for a very frustrating experience (and that was just on the part of our CourtWatchers)
- We heard from survivors what the direct impacts of sexual assault and the reporting process are, and the high toll it takes on them
- We also discovered that the system is itself entrenched in patriarchy and misogyny, and witnessed first-hand how much of a liability it actually is for survivors
- For almost all the survivors who discussed the notion of a just outcome, it was heavily equated to that of accountability, yet the system continues to fail to hold perpetrators accountable, neither does it listen, so as to understand what accountability means to survivors
- We understand that a criminal legal system is needed in certain circumstances, for example, where there are violent offenders, who continue to pose safety concerns to the victim/ survivor, or to society at large
- Evidence that an alternative model is urgently needed. Society will benefit from it. Perpetrators will learn and grow from it. Survivors deserve it and are demanding it.

Media Scan

We are living in an era in which sexual violence, sexual assault and sexual harassment are at the forefront of almost every conversation. These discussions are taking place in newsrooms, on morning television shows, in film and television, at workplaces, at dinner tables, on social media and over cocktails. We realised that there were very authentic, honest conversations happening all around us at the same time as we were navigating and working through this initiative. We recognised that there was a wealth of knowledge in what survivors were saying and the stories the media was highlighting to continue the dialogue. We knew this had to be a part of the initiative. We also realised that we would never get an opportunity to speak with so many women as we could reach through the online #metoo movement. Therefore, we embraced these different types of media, on different platforms, to fully understand how the discussion surrounding sexual violence was changing.

To be able to pull all of this information together, we worked together as a team, sending each other news stories, or recommending television shows addressing this issue. Our student interns, members and the research team then critically watched, listened to or read the selected items before we reconvened to dissect what we had seen. We used the same 5 Cs Of Sexual Violence framework to categorise our findings.

Various hashtags were monitored on Twitter, including:

#YESALLWOMEN

“Because every single woman I know has a story about a man feeling entitled to access to her body. Every. Single. One. #YesAllWomen.”

#METOO

“... from the beginning was to address both the dearth in resources for survivors of sexual violence and to build a community of advocates, driven by survivors, who will be at the forefront of creating solutions to interrupt sexual violence in their communities.”

Our media scan revealed the following:

A heavy bias towards portrayals of cisgender women as rape victims, since there were few examples of trans or gender non-conforming people’s experiences of sexual violence being shown in the mainstream media.

“I tried to fit into the role of “perfect victim” to protect the legal process and to get this man held to account. I felt that by modifying my life and behaviour to fit this “perfect” image of a victim, I lost the little agency I did have in the process to begin with.”

Many women had experienced multiple incidents of sexual violence.

“Know what makes me angry? That my first thought about this (#metoo) movement was “but isn’t that all of us” and my second thought was, “which time?”

Living in the aftermath is brave.

“If you aren’t okay w posting #MeToo know this: 1. I believe you. 2. You don’t have to speak up to be brave. Living in the after is brave.

“But I have more nightmares about the court process than I do about the actual incident and it just doesn’t make sense. I was so caught off guard when I was in court. I just wanted to cry, wanted to scream, I wanted to yell. I didn’t know what was going on. All I remember is the Crown Attorney saying ‘*Don’t show any emotion,*’ so I just tried, just tried to keep it cool. I wanted to lose it. But I didn’t. I guess it helped me in the long run but mentally it didn’t.”



Survival becomes an intrinsic part of the survivor's DNA, both in the moment of the rape and in her life after.

“What women are doing in these situations is negotiating. They're trading sex for life”

Women will often come forward and report to protect other women.

“When I saw his name in the rape crisis centre I worked at and knew there was another woman who had endured his violence as well, I was forced to re-evaluate my own decision to not report him. I felt deeply ashamed of what had happened to me and felt a sense of guilt that because I had not gone forward, I had somehow contributed to his ability to continue assaulting women.”

The importance of having opportunities to use your voice to bring about change, articulated by the organisation Voices In Action using #ProVoice

“Your voice is active, alive and necessary for positive change and can be a catalyst for freedom, for many” and “Speaking out transforms victims into survivors.”

This has been a critical aspect of our research, seeing survivors utilising social media to share their opinions on the legal system and on sexual violence, without any filters or censorship. We have therefore committed to bringing the actual words used by survivors, and have quoted them fully. The important role media plays in shaping reality and social norms for all of us can sometimes get overlooked, especially by older generations. The media is a heavy influencer that curates content and feeds younger generation's views of the world. If we want the problematic rhetoric around sexual violence and victim-blaming to end, media, and social media especially, is the place where that conversation needs to shift. When it changes there, the rest of the world will quickly follow.

Developing an Alternative Justice Model

The task of finding an alternative model of justice for survivors of sexual violence cannot be accomplished without thorough consultation. Engaging with survivors who reported and those who did not, our CourtWatch monitoring, CanLII auditing and social media scans were all essential pieces of the puzzle we needed to bring together, if we were to understand what the current state of play was. But those activities were not enough for us to paint a full picture of why the system was failing, or what we could do differently to address those failings. We therefore had to go out into the community, to understand what others were doing, and see whether there were viable options that could bring about the justice, accountability and healing outcomes survivors were seeking.



“I don’t know which process he would have to take. In the end, I want him to know *what he did was wrong.*”

We met with individuals working in the criminal legal system, including members of the Toronto Police Sex Crimes and Domestic Violence Units. We also connected with agencies implementing Restorative Justice programmes, such as the Community Justice Initiative in Kitchener, Ontario, and Re-Humanize. We also had an engaging conversation with Mia Mingus, one of the leading proponents of the Transformative Justice model, to get first-hand information about strategic steps to take in the development of a Transformative Justice mechanism. Our last community engagement was with the team at York University Centre for Sexual Violence Response & Education, who shared with us some of the complexities faced by survivors navigating education institutions.

This offered two possible alternatives for us to consider – Restorative and Transformative Justice. Both of these models proved to have merits, but in the end, Transformative Justice resonated more with us. Being rooted in the principle of community and aggressor accountability, it also recognised the problematic role played by the state, which in and of itself was responsible for perpetrating ongoing racist, misogynistic violence. Black and Indigenous communities were disproportionately targeted as either ‘non-victims’, i.e. did not have their reports of sexual violence taken on and prosecuted, or as ‘primary perpetrators’, i.e. were more likely to have reports against them being investigated and brought before the courts.

Restorative Justice models have been practised by Indigenous communities globally and is effective because those communities have strong kinship ties, share a common history, common belief systems, a common language and world-view that weaves an intricate web and sense of belonging among its members. We observed the increase in the numbers of non-Indigenous individuals and organisations engaging in Restorative Justice practices, and were concerned about the cultural appropriation of Indigenous knowledge by settler communities, who may be operating without an appreciation of how problematic that was, and how it can become an exercise in ‘white-washing’.

“Transformative is about finding and working in the alternatives that exist outside of the system ... The same can be said for Restorative Justice, as both operate from a strength-based paradigm, where you build up the parties, re-invest in the community, all the while co-creating real options for safety, justice and healing.”

The Transformative Justice model developed as a grassroots movement by Black women, Black trans women and disability activists, to operate outside of the criminal legal system, because their communities were often the victims of state-sanctioned, as well as inter-personal violence. Therefore, the idea of going to that system expecting justice was antithetical to the systems’ own ideas of who deserved justice.

Transformative Justice had more components matching the elements survivors had shared with us that they were looking for, including the flexibility to choose whether or not to meet with the aggressor. Those components were of equal parts accountability and justice, hence the decision to call our framework Transformative Accountability & Justice (TAJ). This was the foundation to our framework for this alternative model, including incorporating what we view as foundational principles of compassion and kindness for both survivors and aggressors, removal of shame for both parties, the composition of the teams who will be supporting the survivor and the aggressor, and a commitment to healing the harm and transforming lives.

Engaging the community is an essential part of this work. Community is complicit in these acts of gender-based sexual violence, by turning away when harm has been done, so community accountability has to be integrated into the process of justice and healing. It's not about shaming and blaming; I'm getting over that. For me, as a survivor, it's about the collective accepting responsibility, and showing up to do better, to be better for each other. WomenatthecentrE's engagement with community members has shown us how effective and impactful these collaborations and engagements with like-minded individuals and organisations can be. That's the only way.

"For me, what I wanted, hoped for, and I knew was a pipe dream, and you know you can have all you hoped you'd want, was I wanted accountability on his part and this recognition of wrong doing, some kind of apology and then a learning. You know, in my opinion a full apology is only given when the person actually recognised what they've done and takes steps to change that. So, I was hoping there would be an accountability, recognition of wrong doing, and this would, he wouldn't do this to someone else. You know, I've come to understand that is completely out of my control; that's not something I can control. And also, is not something that, it was never my thought process that reporting would get me that. It really was - how can I help future potential victims, or prevent future victims?"

What do survivors want from the model themselves?

- Return control / agency to the survivor
- To not place the burden for ending harm / sexual violence on survivors
- Access to resources and supports that change with the survivors needs
- An inclusive, informed and non-judgemental environment to report violence and discuss harm
- Provided information on financial compensation for victims of crime, and information & support on how to access it, especially for survivors living in rural communities
- Informed, kind and compassionate Peer Support
- Built on a foundation of dignity and respect for survivors
- Liaising with system actors who are trained on the social context of gender-based sexual violence and its intersections
- Meaningful consequences for the perpetrator
- Validation/ acknowledgement from perpetrator and community
- Choice to meet with the perpetrator, or not, is hers alone
- Peer Systems Navigators and supports
- Comprehensive counselling, including peer-based counsellors
- Hybrid of voluntary-mandatory for perpetrator engagement

What do survivors need from *the perpetrator* in an alternative model?

- Recognise and understand the harm they have done, even if it was not intentional
- Responsibility for it and acknowledge that harm's impact on individuals and the community
- Appropriate restitution to the individual and community
- Develop solid skills and change attitudes and behaviours towards women
- Learn about the larger systems of structural violence and oppression that perpetuate violence against women
- Learn about the social context of sexual violence, consent, privilege, patriarchy, gender socialization, rape culture and whatever other issues that need to be unpacked
- Examination of past behaviours, to understand how manipulation, power and control played a role in the violence they committed; acknowledge and be accountable to that history
- Commitment to working to keep the community safe in the present and future
- Discuss and model consent behaviour for future interactions
- Ensures there is procedural fairness
- Access to resources that change with the perpetrator needs
- Comprehensive counselling, including peer-based counsellors

The Centre



Working with one of our volunteers, Christiana MacGregor (M.Arch. candidate), we created a virtual simulation of the Transformative Accountability & Justice Centre, incorporating staff offices, meeting rooms, a calming courtyard and session rooms where the survivors would meet with members of their Survivor Support Team (SST), and aggressors meet (on separate days) with members of their Accountability & Support Team (AST).

The space also has rooms (Resting Rooms) where a survivor can seek refuge, have the evidence documented, stay for a few hours, catch her breath and have access to the wrap-around supports provided by the staff and peer support resources available.

[Click to Virtually Explore the Centre](#)

“This isolation and distrust of men, distrust of people because of the situation of that rape, *it just kind of gave me more isolation*, more disfunction in my relationships, more fear of intimacy and yeah, just like a long sentence of nothingness in relationships.”



In Conclusion

Based on everything we heard from survivors, the lessons learned from monitoring sexual assault trials, auditing decisions on CanLII, scanning numerous media platforms and engaging in community consultations, we were able to identify some key components to help us develop a comprehensive framework for an alternative model of justice. At the start of this initiative, we had no way of knowing precisely where the research would lead us. We were standing on fairly solid grounds in terms of our confidence in what we would hear from survivors, because after all, they are us and we are them. However, what was disclosed was still pretty devastating. Learning that the same kinds of rape myths, system's bullying and societal silencing was still prevalent made us even more determined to find solutions that would make a meaningful difference in the lives of not just survivors, but of aggressors.

We summarized our recommendations to ten points ...

1 Listen to survivors and believe them

Survivors are the experts. We have been through it, and understand the violence, the process and system, as well as the socio-political dynamics at work to maintain it.

2 Language matters

'Declarations', not 'Stories': The word 'stories' implies that women are making things up, like fairytales and works of fiction. 'Declaration' speaks to acts of resistance and revolution, so we should embrace it.

3 Facilitate healing

Survivors require a process where aggressors, the community culture, and power dynamics are transformed by addressing the impacts of violence and facilitate ongoing healing, both reactive and proactive, for the person harmed and the person who did the harm.

4 Amplify the humanity of individuals

Identify ways to make the system more humane in its treatment of even the most violent offenders.

5 Don't tinker

It won't fix anything. Also, recognise that we cannot currently disband the whole criminal legal system from the inside, out either. The system isn't broken; it was made that way by those with the power, so stop looking for it to fix itself.



6 Be safer and do better

For those survivors who will still want to utilise the current criminal legal system.

7 Be safer and do better

For Black, Indigenous, Trans, Queer, Mad and Disabled communities who deserve justice.

8 Recognize small acts of courage

Respect survivors, as sometimes, that's all that's needed to start a revolutionary movement that galvanises the whole world.

9 Participatory research is needed

Especially to investigate any correlation between gender-based sexual violence and gynecological illnesses.

10 Support us to implement this model

Help us in establishing a 3 to 5-year programme, to pilot the alternative model in two communities.



“Many survivors, a number of them went through the court system and what I heard was, that they were more victimised in a court’s unjust system than the actual abuse, because they expected something different. These were [people] who had power and were professionals and who should have believed them and what the Defense was allowed to do to them was just unbelievable. And we want to work in a place where we give women all the options, ‘cause what we want to do is give the control back, ‘cause perpetrators have a lot of control. So, our role is to give control back whatever way we can and once we have all the information, absolutely if you are ready to go forward in the justice system, absolutely.

Whatever you need to be there.

But I just saw so many times where it caused so much more damage.”

