Community Demographic & Experiences Survey Report





About this report

February 2023

In 2018, SACE formalized internal committees dedicated to improving community connections, access, and inclusive services for populations we knew were both disproportionately impacted by sexual violence, and underserved by existing SACE programming. We worked on some of the bigger barriers to accessing services, and on tailored resources and programming informed by consistent feedback we had gotten from community over the years.

We pretty quickly realized that we needed more — and better — data on the experiences and needs of people from diverse backgrounds so that we could truly assess the changes we needed to make. Just before the pandemic hit, we started work on a comprehensive community survey, the first of its kind for SACE. We also started an ambitious five-year project to advance our evaluations framework, beyond what funders ask of us and centred on our values and program mandates.

In the fall of 2020 we released our first-ever Community Demographic and Experiences Survey. Over the past two and a half years we have been sifting through the treasure trove of feedback we received from the community. We have supplemented it with some more community-specific surveys and consultations. We have reviewed key findings as we met on major initiatives like our evaluations project, and the many adaptations we worked through as the pandemic dragged on.

As we are coming up on three years since its release, we would now like to share the findings of the first community survey with all of you: our past and present clients, staff, volunteers, community partners, funders, online followers, and other community stakeholders. At the end of this report you will find a section dedicated to sharing the updates we have made since 2020 that relate to the feedback we received.

As an agency we are made up of many individuals, all passionate about the issue of sexual violence and the many social injustices that interconnect and contribute to it, and all invested in the work of listening, learning, and being accountable. The work we do is never easy, and sometimes we wrestle with conflicting needs, unseen roadblocks, or our own limitations. If the time since we first started planning this survey has taught us anything though, it is that we need to get more comfortable with being imperfect or in progress, and more comfortable with being transparent.

About this report

As our agency has been grappling with constant growth and a constantly evolving field, the issue of sexual violence has been moving in from the margins. There has been a huge cultural shift, made up of so many small individual shifts, that is erasing that stigma that for so long kept this issue largely hidden. SACE is metaphorically — and soon literally — <u>moving to the centre</u>. And we want to be conscious in that centring, of who we are pulling in with us; who we in-turn are centring, and how we are being accountable.

Through this report and the ones that follow, our goal is twofold:

- 1. To grow connections, listen, be accountable for change and do our best to support our community how they want to be supported, and through this process strengthen community and trust
- 2. To practice and hopefully become an example of transformative justice culture, the kind of culture we are talking about when we talk about addressing the root causes of sexual violence; embracing imperfection, inviting feedback on our work and decisions, and being more open as we ask questions, learn, grapple with change, and work to keep doing better

Our time and resources are always too limited, and we know that SACE will never be able to be all things to everyone. Perfection is also not something that we are looking for here. What we do hope to accomplish is a new channel for our community to tell us what you think and how you have been impacted, clear accountability for action through these reports, and most importantly, more connection with the people and communities we serve. It is only together through all our small actions that we can build the community culture we want.

We thank you for your time and hearts as we do this work together.

The SACE team



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Survey Methods

Respondents completed surveys online, and 83.5% had heard of SACE before completing the survey. While accessible language was prioritized, the survey was only offered in English. Major respondent groups were identified as 100+ respondents, minor groups 20-99 respondents, with 20 respondents as our minimum sample size to assess group-specific trends. Newcomers, or new immigrants living in Canada for under 10 years, were underrepresented as a group (2 respondents, >1%). This points to a need for greater consultation with this group to assess needs.





Major respondent groups

Minor respondent groups



Survey Methods

Respondents were invited to share all the identities and experiences they hold; all totals reflect the full number of people who shared at least one identity or experience falling under a given category. Writein answers have been added to the answers and totals. This may be considered a flaw in the data as only those respondents who considered and wrote in an unlisted response are accounted for; there may be respondents who would have selected these responses had they been provided. For this reason, write-in answers may be considered potentially under-represented in the numbers, and have been listed in the footnotes of their relevant survey questions.

Relation to SACE

Community member interested in the issue	
Professional working in areas connected to the work SACE does	
Current or past client	
Current or past volunteer (including board and event volunteers)	
Relative or support person of a current or past client/ survivor	
I have no relation to SACE or the issue	
Current or past staff member	
I'd rather not say	
Survivor who hasn't accessed SACE services/ on the waitlist	
Accessed other SACE services, including education and the support line, but never a client	



Respondents were asked to share their specific age so that we could group the data in different ways. Some funders ask us to provide stats on specific ranges of ages, but we also wanted to be able to break things out into even ranges for clear visualization.



Gender

Wherever someone might hold more than one identity or have more than one applicable answer, we invited respondents to identify them all. We also asked respondents to add any additional answers we did not include.



Sexual or Romantic Orientation



Group Identification

Wherever someone might hold more than one identity or have more than one applicable answer, we invited respondents to identify them all. We also asked respondents to add any additional answers we didn't include.



Indigenous Community Connections



Experiences with SACE Programs

- I felt unsupported/ unhappy with this program
- I felt slightly unsupported/ unhappy with this program
- I felt adequately supported/ happy with this program
- I felt supported/ happy with this program
- I felt very supported/ happy with this program



Positive Experiences

What did you like about the service(s) or program(s) you accessed?

Answers consolidated to highlight those responses given by more than one respondent, without compromising the sentiment or substantive feedback shared. Responses without substantive content (such as N/A, "nothing", or "it was good") omitted.

GeneralCE Programs

Clinical Programs Friendly/kind/polite/open/supportive/inclusive Knowledgeable/highly trained/skilled/well-informed I liked my counsellor(s) I had an amazing/great/kind counsellor Professional Brought up ideas I hadn't thought of before/ I learned something new Understanding/patient/I didn't feel rushed Validating I felt safe/comfort/compassion Helpful Having someone to talk to/support/knowing I'm not alone was great Easy/flexible/accomodating/accessible I/my child felt heard/understood/seen/valued/listened to Very informative/educational Supportive/welcoming/comfortable environment I like the support I received/ it helped with my trauma/healing/growth I like the new coping techniques/grounding skills I've learned Counselling focused on healing from the impacts of sexual violence 5 0 10 15

Areas for Improvement

What did you think needed improvement?

Answers consolidated to highlight those responses given by more than one respondent, without compromising the sentiment or substantive feedback shared. Responses without substantive content (such as N/A, "nothing", or "it was good") omitted.

5-9 Responses

- The wait time was too long
- The wait list
- More on how to support folks with intersectional identities (Black, queer, Indigenous, PWD, youth who can't get parental cooperation or consent)
- More sessions

4 Responses

- More follow-up (ie for missed sessions, suddenly stopping sessions, check-in post-support)
- More accessible location
- More awareness of services and how to access them, including advertisement
- I didn't feel connected to the person I was assigned to/ wish I could see who would be the best fit for me (experience level, background/identity)

3 Responses

- More funding
- More / varying time slots
- More groups / classes / programs (including more offerings for men)
- Connection to long term supports once individual sessions are up
- More sessions, supports, and social workers/advocates for people with complex needs or long term sexual trauma (including youth without parental support)
- Less scripted/ more tailored to my needs (suggestions didn't feel helpful)

2 Responses

- More structured ending to support
- Walking through the doors the first time/ the stigma of going to a place called the sexual assault centre
- More capacity / access to services (ability to serve more people)
- More training and feedback for staff / volunteers
- Staff seemed overworked or distracted
- More digital supports (chat app, online education)

Unique Responses

- More locations
- It's disheartening to finally have the courage to reach out for help and be denied that help for so long
- Handouts or digital resources to reinforce or remind clients of the subjects covered
- I just miss the ability to gather in person
- More Indigenous healing practices
- Length of appointment
- Providing support or a debrief after the session if someone was triggered by the presentation
- More diversity and representation
- More demonstration that SACE is committed to understanding oppression and being an advocate for anti-racism
- I think there are others that have had it worse than I, so I don't want to waste the limited resources on myself
- The rooms need to be sound proofed
- More counsellors

Is there a service or program that you feel would have better supported you or someone you have supported, that SACE doesn't currently provide?

Advocacy and Systems Navigation

- Hospital accompaniment
- More community advocacy
- More intentionally racial-justice work
- Advocacy for post secondary students who experienced sexual violence/assault. Currently, most university policies don't protect the victim and only have power to do something if the assault happened on campus, even if the student was assaulted by another student.
- More immigrant support
- More support around sexual harassment, including transphobic sexual harassment, work VISA/employer sexual harassment related to immigration status

Education

- Having consults with other organizations' counselors to train them
- Online library of learning to assist and support survivors
- Tools to overcome triggers and flashbacks
- Handouts or digital resources for use after sessions
- More information around sexual harassment, including transphobic sexual harassment, work VISA/employer sexual harassment related to immigration status

Awareness/ Marketing

- Do not know how supportive/accessible masculine victims would find programs here. It's hard to access supports when even the survey is pink, let alone the gendering of being associated with sexual violence.
- Do I count as a man or a woman in these demographics? Or are you deciding that based off of sex? I would like more clarify for masc enby survivors.
- Potentially having supports specifically marketed to masculine and those of us who don't fit a demographic easily would be better advertised?

Criminal Justice System Supports

- Victims of crime
- Advocacy directly to the crown prosecutors officer.
- A pro bono lawyer on staff to help with getting it into court if it was initially rejected.
- Could SACE conduct referrals for independent legal advice for survivors instead of E Fry?
- RCMP third party reporting (not just Edmonton police)

Is there a service or program that you feel would have better supported you or someone you have supported, that SACE doesn't currently provide?

Counselling Services/ Modalities

- More animal involved therapy!
- I think more somatic experiencing would have been very beneficial
- Movement therapy and stuff to do at home
- A counsellor that focuses on supporting queer and trans folks
- Smudging and sweat ceremonies
- I think something for BIPOC only would be great
- Online groups/counselling
- Counselling and crisis support for folks in community, where they don't have to go to the office.

Long-Term Supports

- Long-term support program for those that experienced deep childhood long-term trauma in their early development.
- Longer term individual therapy.
- Bridging program to community therapist support

Health and Mental Health Services/ Program

- People with mental health issues
- Persons with disabilities

Men and Boys

- Abuse of young boys. In the system.
- Male survivors of sexual abuse

Sexual Exploitation

- Group for sexually exploited teens
- Group for kids of sexually exploited mothers

Support for Families, Caregivers, and Supporters

- Project Care
- Group counseling for family of survivors
- Support for families of sexual assault.
- Individual support person counselling

Communities of Support

- Online chat group or blog site where survivors can learn from and support one another, with guidance from SACE (like Fort Refuge, or Out of the Storm)
- HEALING CIRCLE...A SAFE PLACE TO HOLD SPACE FOR ONE ANOTHER.

Support for Addressing Abusive Behaviours

- Something for persons with history of sexual assault still causing issues
- Offender programs

Domestic Violence

• Programs that support women who have experienced sexual violence and domestic violence.

Is there an education session you would find valuable, and want to attend?



Are there things that you feel would be helpful to your counselling experience, or being able to access counselling?



Write-in Responses (1 each)

- Better physical accessibility outside/ for transit to space
- Someone who speaks my first language
- Holistic healing, trilotherapy, living from heart center, carmen bragga.
- More implicit racial justice work
- More intentional ways to de-centre whiteness without tokenizing BIPoC staff, volunteers, or community
- Web based options to learn and message counsellor in between sessions as it surfaces (but deal with in next session)
- Trained in trans issues
- Knowing services will have an intersectional feminist lens
- Flexibility in session limits
- Decreased wait times

Experiences of Sexual Violence

Please share number of experiences of sexual abuse/assault



Experiences of Sexual Violence

Would you identify an experience of sexual violence you have had as being related to any of the below?



Write-in Responses

- Alcohol or Drugs (4)
- Sexism / Toxic Masculinity / Culture that normalized or normalizes sexual violence (4)
- Organized Religion (2)

- Family Dysfunction (2)
- Foster Care System (1)
- Health Status (1)

Experiences of Sexual Violence

I have accessed or would access SACE because I believed I could talk about these things as a part of my counselling or healing process.



Write-in Responses (1 each)

- Being a past employee/ connected to SACE
- Holistic healing

- Family dysfunction
- Health status/ illness

Experiences as Supporters

Respondents were asked to share about their experiences of providing support to people who have experienced sexual violence. While "support" was intentionally left broad to encompass any and all supportive actions, professional and personal, active and passive (such as just listening), some respondents split these out or indicated confusion about what counted as support. Some also tallied numbers for the indirect impact of their work.

Have you ever supported someone through an experience of sexual assault/abuse?



Experiences as Supporters

What did that support look like?

188
 152
136
101
73
 8
 6
 6
 4
 3
 3
 2
 2
 1

Experiences as Supporters

Totals reflect the sum of all experiences shared by each respondent. The category "a lot/ unknown/ many" encompasses all respondents who gave non-specific totals but indicated that the number was high, generally due to the nature of their paid or volunteer work, though some also indicated a high number of experiences in their personal lives.

How many times have you supported someone who had experienced sexual assault/abuse?



For the purposes of assessing responses with an eye to queer and trans representation in our survey data, we included the responses of anyone who identified with at least one gender or sexual or romantic orientation under the 2SLGBTQ+ umbrella, including anyone who identified as questioning, aromantic/agender, and anyone who identified as both straight and something other than straight. While 63 individuals identified as being a part of the 2SLGBTQ+ community, 111 individuals identified holding a gender and/ or sexual orientation other than cisgender and straight.



For the purposes of assessing the specific needs and experiences of people from communities that experience disproportionate levels of sexual violence and/or disproportionate barriers to accessing support services, we assessed the responses of only those individuals who self-identified as a member of this community, regardless of their responses about their sexual or romantic orientation(s). We also looked specifically at community members who identified as trans, nonbinary, Two Spirit, agender, or as having multiple genders.

Recurrence

We asked respondents to share the number of times they had experienced sexual abuse/ assault, if they had experienced this and were comfortable sharing. For this reason, our survey is not an accurate reflection of the prevalence of sexual abuse/ assault. What we assessed was the number of occurrences for those individuals who shared about their experience. Our general population responded with:



We found that 2SLGBTQ+ and Racialized folks experienced similar rates of recurrence (5% or less difference from the average of all respondents), there were significant differences among the other minor respondent groups:

- Men responded with "recurring (8+) experiences" 31% more than the average
- Trans and Gender Nonconforming folks responded with "multiple events (2-7)" 28% more than the average
- Indigenous folks responded with "recurring (8+) experiences" 15% more than the average
- Older Adults (55+) responded with "recurring (8+) experiences" 15% more than the average
- People with DisAbilities responded with "recurring (8+) experiences" 12% more than the average

To assess any community-specific trends, we pulled the top five responses for minor respondent groups.

People With DisAbilities

Would you identify an experience of sexual violence you have had as being related to any of the below?

1.Family violence (44%)
 2.Intimate partner violence (34%)
 3.Gender identity (31%)
 3.Age (31%)
 3.Addictions (31%)

Are there things that you feel would be helpful to your counselling experience?

1.Knowing I will be believed and supported in my identified needs (53%)
2.Better location/services available more centrally (44%)
3.Web-based service options (34%)
4.A counsellor with a similar background/identity to mine (31%)
5.Supplies/options for smudge/ prayer (25%)
5.Sensory space (25%) I have accessed or would access SACE because I believed I could talk about these things as a part of my counselling or healing process

Sexual orientation (34%)
 Mental health (34%)
 Gender identity (31%)
 Family violence (31%)
 Age (28%)

Number of Experiences: People with DisAbilities



To assess any community-specific trends, we pulled the top five responses for minor respondent groups.

Trans/ Gender Nonconforming Folks

Would you identify an experience of sexual violence you have had as being related to any of the below?

Age (38%)
 Gender identity (34%)
 Mental health (31%)
 Intimate partner violence (28%)
 Family violence (25%)
 Sexual orientation (25%)

Are there things that you feel would be helpful to your counselling experience?

1.Knowing I will be believed and supported in my identified needs (56%)
2.Knowing someone from my community had a good experience there (47%)
3.Better location/services available more centrally (34%)
4.A counsellor with a similar background/identity to mine (31%)
5.Web-based service options (31%)

have accessed or would access SACE because I believed I could talk about these things as a part of my counselling or healing process

Mental health (56%)
 Gender identity (53%)
 Sexual orientation (41%)
 Family violence (28%)
 Intimate partner violence (25%)
 Intergenerational violence (25%)

Number of Experiences: Trans/ Gender Nonconforming Respondents



To assess any community-specific trends, we pulled the top five responses for minor respondent groups.

2SLGBTQ+ Folks

Would you identify an experience of sexual violence you have had as being related to any of the below?

Age (27%)
 Intimate partner violence (25%)
 Gender identity (22%)
 Mental health (22%)
 Sexual orientation (17%)

Are there things that you feel would be helpful to your counselling experience?

1.Knowing I will be believed and supported in my identified needs (35%)
2.Better location/services available more centrally (32%)
3.Knowing someone from my community had a good experience there (32%)
4.Web-based service options (25%)
5.A counsellor with a similar background/identity to mine (22%)

I have accessed or would access SACE because I believed I could talk about these things as a part of my counselling or healing process

Sexual orientation (38%)
 Mental health (37%)
 Gender identity (29%)
 Intimate partner violence (21%)
 Age (14%)

Number of Experiences: 2SLGBTQ+ Respondents



To assess any community-specific trends, we pulled the top five responses for minor respondent groups.

Indigenous Folks

Would you identify an experience of sexual violence you have had as being related to any of the below?

Age (26%)
 Intimate partner violence (19%)
 Family violence (19%)
 Race or racism (17%)
 Mental health (17%)

Are there things that you feel would be helpful to your counselling experience?

1.Better location/services available more centrally (33%)
2.Supplies/options for smudge/prayer (26%)
3.Spiritual space (21%)
4.Knowing I will be believed and supported in my identified needs (21%)
5.A counsellor with a similar background/identity to mine (19%)

I have accessed or would access SACE because I believed I could talk about these things as a part of my counselling or healing process

1.Mental health (26%)
 2.Race or racism (17%)
 2.Addictions (17%)
 2.Intimate partner violence (17%)
 5.Poverty (14%)
 5.Age (14%)

Number of Experiences: Indigenous Respondents



To assess any community-specific trends, we pulled the top five responses for minor respondent groups.

Racialized Folks

Would you identify an experience of sexual violence you have had as being related to any of the below?

Age (73%)
 Intimate partner violence (54%)
 Family violence (46%)
 Mental health (39%)
 Gender identity (24%)

Are there things that you feel would be helpful to your counselling experience?

1.Knowing I will be believed and supported in my identified needs (75%)
2.Better location/services available more centrally (70%)
3.A counsellor with a similar background/identity to mine (60%)
4.Web-based service options (58%)
5.Knowing someone from my community had a good experience there (53%)

I have accessed or would access SACE because I believed I could talk about these things as a part of my counselling or healing process

Mental health (69%)
 Age (40%)
 Family violence (39%)
 Intimate partner violence (38%)
 Sexual orientation (36%)

Number of Experiences: Racialized Respondents



To assess any community-specific trends, we pulled the top five responses for minor respondent groups.

Men

Would you identify an experience of sexual violence you have had as being related to any of the below?

1.Age (24%)
2.Addictions (14%)
3.Poverty (10%)
4.Mental health (10%)
4.Family violence (10%)
4.Intergenerational violence (10%)

Are there things that you feel would be helpful to your counselling experience?

1.Web-based service options (19%)
1.Spiritual space (19%)
1.Knowing I will be believed and supported in my identified needs (19%)
4.A counsellor with a similar background/identity to mine (14%)
5.Transit tickets (14%)

I have accessed or would access SACE because I believed I could talk about these things as a part of my counselling or healing process

1.Mental health (29%)
 2.Age (24%)
 3.Addictions (19%)
 4.Poverty (14%)
 5.Race or racism (10%)
 5.Family violence (10%)





To assess any community-specific trends, we pulled the top five responses for minor respondent groups.

Older Adults

Would you identify an experience of sexual violence you have had as being related to any of the below?

1.Age (36%)
2.Family violence (27%)
3.Intimate partner/ dating violence (16%)
4.Intergenerational violence (11%)
5.Race or racism (8%)
5.Poverty (8%)

Are there things that you feel would be helpful to your counselling experience?

1.Knowing I will be believed and supported in my identified needs (28%)
2.Web-based service options (23%)
3.A counsellor with a similar background/identity to mine (20%)
4.Better location/services available more centrally (19%)
5.Transit tickets (14%)

I have accessed or would access SACE because I believed I could talk about these things as a part of my counselling or healing process

Age (17%)
 Mental health (16%)
 Family violence (16%)
 Poverty (8%)
 Intergenerational violence (6%)

Number of Experiences: Older Adults



Advances Since This Survey

Below is a summary of initiatives and advances made by SACE since the survey was conducted in 2020, as of February 2023.

- Being informed by the results of this survey, we made the decision to move our office to a more central location.
 Learn more about how we are <u>Moving</u> to the Centre
- In fall 2021, all SACE staff and management completed a mandatory eight-week in-depth anti-racism and anti-oppression training hosted by consultants from the Centre for Race and Culture
- We now offer the <u>WiseGuyz</u> program for boys and masculine youth, with three full-time facilitators
- Our team introduced online <u>education</u> and <u>psychoeducation</u> opportunities to make our content more accessible to a wider audience
- We now offer virtual individual adult counselling sessions
- When possible, we try to reduce barriers to accessing our services by providing technology for virtual sessions, bus tickets, taxi chits, and childcare subsidies to clients

- Our Learn page online library as been expanded with a number of new resources, including:
 - Colonialism & Sexual Violence
 - Breath & Movement Self-Care
 - <u>Sexual Violence, Men and</u> <u>Masculinity: An Introduction</u>
 - <u>Supporting Older Adults Who Have</u> <u>Experienced Sexual Violence</u>
 - What is Sexual Harassment
 - <u>Sexual Violence Legal Information</u> <u>Series (in collaboration with the</u> <u>Centre for Public Legal Education</u> <u>Alberta and Elizabeth Fry Northern</u> <u>Alberta)</u>
- Our team now provides feedback to Edmonton Police Service on sexual assault cases through the Sexual Violence Advocacy Case File Review
- We created and started distributing Indigenous-focused crisis resource cards
- SACE purchased a supply of gifts and ceremonial protocol to keep on-site for staff and clients for use with Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers

Advances Since This Survey

Below is a summary of initiatives and advances made by SACE since the survey was conducted in 2020, as of February 2023.

- SACE program managers completed <u>The First Nations Priniciples of OCAP®</u> training
- We added the <u>UserWay® Website</u> <u>Accessibility</u> widget to sace.ca to increase its accessibility
- Staff worked through an internallycreated resource on the impact of the Residential School System and its connection to sexual violence
- On the 2022 National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, our team participated in the Indigenous Peoples Experience at Fort Edmonton Park
- We updated <u>our website</u> with more information about accessibility
- We created and distributed 100 selfcare packages to Indigenous community members
- Our <u>Community Resources</u> page has been updated with more options for diverse communities
- We have developed a public education workshop for service providers working with older adults

- We incorporated a module into our volunteer training on the impact of historical trauma and colonialim, and its intersection with sexual violence. This is in addition to a separate antioppression module, and other antiracism learnings throughout the training
- We developed and now regularly deliver two counselling groups tailored to specific communities: <u>refleQT for</u> <u>2SLGBTQ+ Adults</u>, and <u>Wîwîp'son</u> <u>Healing from Sexual Trauma Circle for</u> <u>Indigenous Women</u>
- We created policies for smudging at SACE, and support clients in accessing other traditional Indigenous healing practices
- We applied for a facility dog, and are currently on a waitlist
- We improved the mobile experience for parts of <u>sace.ca</u>
- We created a booklet titled <u>Landed</u> for newcomers to Canada, and distributed it to settlement agencies and non-profit organizations in the community

