



Sexual Violence and Social Media

Building a Framework for Prevention

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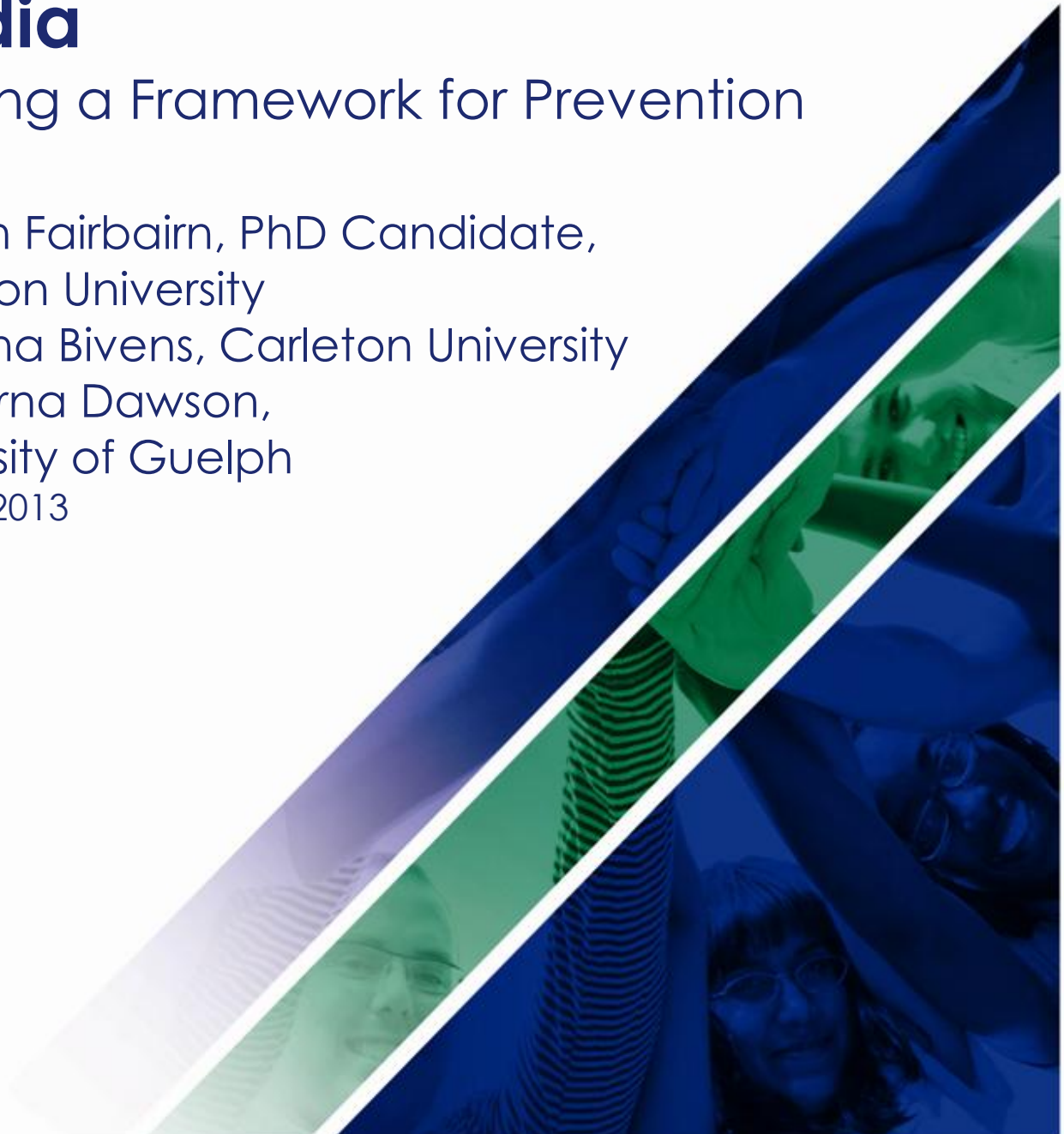


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Executive Summary

Introduction

Sexual Violence and Social Media: Building a Framework for Prevention explores the relationship between sexual violence and social media with a focus on youth. This Ottawa-based project includes five parts:

1. A review of literature on sexual violence, social media, and youth;
2. A survey of Ontario stakeholders;
3. interviews with Ottawa-based participants;
4. A scan of social media sites; and
5. A summary of a community forum and breakout group discussions of preliminary research findings.

The research aims to investigate the relationship between sexual violence and social media among youth. It also offers recommendations to help stimulate discussions about prevention programming and evaluation in Ottawa.

Key Concepts and Literature Review

In this report, sexual violence is defined as “any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person’s sexuality using coercion” (Sexual Violence Research Initiative, 2013). This violence can be perpetrated by any person regardless of their relationship to the survivors/victims, and in any setting (Sexual Violence Research Initiative, 2013). Although people of all ages and genders experience sexual violence, young women experience higher rates of sexual violence and young men are most often the perpetrators (Johnson & MacKay, 2011). Sexual violence involving social media goes beyond physical violence and includes emotional, psychological, and verbal abuse.

Social media refers to “the wide range of Internet-based and mobile services that allow users to participate in online exchanges, contribute user-created content, or join online communities” (Dewing, 2012, pg. 1). This report focuses mainly on social networking sites such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. This decision was guided by research in this area and recent high-profile cases.

Youth are defined as individuals between 12 and 24. Many youth use social media regularly; however, some do not (Cohen & Shade, 2008). According to Ipsos Reid (2012), the majority of Canadian teenagers now own or have regular access to a computer (83%) and mobile phone (67%). They spend an average of three hours online each day. The majority visits sites such as YouTube (79%)

and online social networks (69%). They communicate most often by texting (54%) or through online social networks (48%) (Ipsos Reid, 2012).

The literature review examines overlapping research areas, such as cyberbullying and cyberharassment, intimate partner violence and online dating violence, cyberstalking, sexting, child exploitation, and sex trafficking. In this report, we use the terms 'victim' and 'survivor'. In some cases, the use of both terms is necessary to drive home the point that survivors of sexual violence may be further victimized by sexual bullying and harassment. Not all go on to survive this abuse.

Recent Canadian cases such as the suicides of 17-year-old Rehtaeh Parsons and 15-year-old Amanda Todd¹ remind us of the enormous consequences of sexual violence and the harm and re-victimization that occur when social media is used for abuse and harassment.

Research into sexual violence and social media tells us that:

- We know little about the sexual nature of online abuse and harassment.
- A majority of sexual violence associated with social media goes unreported.
- Abusive relationship patterns may be facilitated or maintained through social media.
- While we have only preliminary information about victimization, young women and girls appear to experience higher rates of sexual violence associated with social media.

Existing research also identifies the following priorities for prevention of sexual violence associated with social media:

- We need to understand what is unique about social media while recognizing that it does not cause sexual violence.
- We must support and build media literacy among children, teenagers and their parents.
- We need to encourage youth and parents to define and develop healthy relationships in social media contexts.

¹ <http://metronews.ca/news/london/630617/rehtaeh-parsons-amanda-todd-deaths-share-shocking-similarities/>
<http://amandatoddlegacy.org/>
http://www.thestar.com/opinion/editorials/2013/04/28/rehtaeh_parsons_and_other_bullied_teens_deserve_durable_legacy_editorial.html

- We should draw from programs that educate and engage bystanders to prevent sexual violence.
- We need to develop youth-driven programming that recognizes the different ways in which young people use and experience social media.

Survey

From February to March 2013, the research team collected 187 survey responses from Ontario-based community organizations, educators, violence prevention advocates, and frontline workers.

Awareness

A majority of respondents are aware of sexual violence associated with social media in their community:

- 79% were aware of social media being used to control, harass, or stalk a current or former intimate partner.
- 76% were aware of posting or sharing intimate photos or text messages without consent.
- 65% were aware of posting or sharing sexually harassing or violent texts or images.
- 52% were aware of social media being used for the sexual exploitation of minors.
- 10% were not aware of violence, abuse, or harassment in their community related to social media.

Identification and measurement

While responses highlight that sexual violence related to social media is linked to broader issues of violence and harassment in society, several unique themes also emerged. These include: location tracking and online harassment, unauthorized dissemination of sexual images and texts, bullying or harassment of sexual assault survivors, and the use of deception and anonymity.

Although awareness of violence and abuse associated with social media appears generally high, organizations and individuals surveyed are not keeping track of this abuse specifically. Much of what is known is therefore known informally or anecdotally. We also know very little about the different ways in which sexual violence associated with social media is experienced, not only based on a person's gender and age, but also according to ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental health, disability, social class, immigration status, and/or homelessness.

On the topic of cyberbullying and sexual violence, the survey found that:

- It is important to recognize the sexually violent nature of much cyberbullying.
- Social media does not cause bullying and sexual violence, but extends its reach and impacts the form that it takes.
- It is important to recognize that there is a high level of harm associated with cyberbullying and sexual violence.
- It is important to talk about intimidation, consent, power, and control in the context of cyberbullying.

Prevention

In Ontario, many sexual violence prevention campaigns are engaging in social media. Some of these address sexual violence associated with social media (e.g. Draw The Line). Overall, there is limited evidence-based work on sexual violence. There does not appear to be any formally-evaluated prevention initiatives addressing sexual violence and social media. Approximately one-third (35%) of respondents say a lack of funding and resources are key challenges to offering programming in this area. Other needs and challenges include:

- Rapidly changing media environments and the need for technology training and support for staff and volunteers;
- Lack of data and/or evaluation;
- Need for collaboration and parental engagement; and,
- Challenges getting the message out to a wider audience.

Some respondents also identified problems with some of the current safety strategies and prevention messaging surrounding social media and sexual violence.

Measurement and evaluation in social media and sexual violence prevention programming is an important and emerging area.

Interviews

The research team conducted nine follow-up interviews with Ottawa stakeholders from March to May 2013. The interviews gave participants an opportunity to elaborate on their survey responses. The research team also gathered further input on how to approach the prevention of sexual violence for Ottawa youth.

The interviews pointed to the following key directions:

- We must foster awareness of sexual violence related to social media among youth and communities more broadly.
- We need to address the challenges related to online anonymity and cruelty.
- We must stimulate discussion about consent and explore the tensions between self-protection and victim-blaming.
- We must engage parents and bystanders.
- We need to prioritize training and resource development to explore sexual violence and social media.

Social Media Scan

When sexual violence prevention efforts incorporate public education within social media spaces, they can potentially reach a broader and more diverse audience. Most campaigns focus on raising awareness by spreading information, offering resources, or debunking myths with the goal of encouraging larger conversations about sexual violence and changing behaviours over time. The results of this social media scan (Appendices A and B) offer different types of prevention or awareness-raising efforts by a variety of organizations and individuals engaged in sexual violence work, with a focus on Ontario-based programs.

Community Forum on Sexual Violence, Social Media, and Youth

On Tuesday, May 28th, 2013 over 130 community members gathered at City Hall in Ottawa, Ontario for a community forum on sexual violence, social media, and youth. The purpose of this event was to present preliminary research findings to community stakeholders and to obtain feedback and further direction on developing a framework for prevention of sexual violence in the context of social media. Participants included parents, teachers and school board officials, youth mentors, anti-violence advocates, social workers, psychologists, nurses and health care practitioners, shelter workers, police and criminal justice officials, and researchers.

Participants identified and discussed numerous areas requiring further attention in working to prevent sexual violence related to social media:

- Unique challenges posed by social media (e.g. anonymity, rapidly emerging sites);
- Intersections of sexual violence related to social media with other factors (e.g. racism, substance use, mental health);
- Problems associated with the use of the term bullying/cyberbullying;

- Awareness of shaming (particularly 'slut shaming' of girls and young women);
- Talking about coercion and consent;
- The need for research and evaluation;
- The importance of youth-driven initiatives;
- Learning from and connecting with existing campaigns, organizations, and resources;
- The role of parents;
- The role of schools;
- Social norms around violence and abuse;
- Healthy relationships and sex education;
- Critical media skills and bystander intervention; and
- The role of social media as a prevention tool.

Research findings and the feedback from this community consultation have been integrated to present the following twelve recommendations for approaching prevention of sexual violence related to social media.

Recommendations

Defining and understanding sexual violence related to social media:

1. **Build a research and evaluation base surrounding sexual violence and social media.** Take care to define and differentiate sexual violence from concepts such as cyberbullying and sexting. Identify outcome measures related to sexual violence and social media and develop program evaluation strategies.
2. **Explore how social media and sexual violence intersect with other issues.** (e.g. mental health, racism, alcohol use).
3. **Identify unique challenges in preventing sexual violence related to social media.** Avoid becoming wrapped up in specific technological features or details. Think about social media as a tool that facilitates or is associated with sexual violence rather than a direct cause.
4. **Avoid victim-blaming and shaming** surrounding youth and sexuality/sexual exploration. Consider online safety advice a tip for protection, not a road to prevention.

Preventing sexual violence involving social media:

5. **Focus on ground-up approaches that engage youth in all aspects of prevention programming.** In doing so, recognize that youth are not a homogenous group and that their experiences with both sexual violence and social media are affected by many factors, including but not limited to gender identity, experiences of racism and colonization, sexual orientation, ability, family situation, and peer groups.
6. **Promote healthy relationships and sex education.** Encourage youth and parents to define and develop healthy relationships generally as well as in social media contexts. Emphasize conversations about consent, coercion, intimidation, boundaries, and respect.
7. **Learn from and connect with existing campaigns, organizations, and resources, including bystander intervention programs.** Foster knowledge-sharing and collaboration among those working to prevent technology-related harassment and abuse and sexual violence prevention.
8. **Challenge social norms promoting violence and abuse.** Focus beyond the individual and challenge social norms promoting violence and abuse. Why do homophobic bullying, victim-blaming, and sexual shaming occur both in and outside of social media? How can we work to end these practices?
9. **Engage parents.** Encourage parents, guardians, and mentors to have conversations with youth about issues related to sexual violence and social media and provide them with accessible, multilingual, and community-based information, supports, and resources. Remember that not all youth have parents and that, like youth, parents are not a homogenous group.
10. **Partner with schools.** Identify ways to integrate sexual violence prevention into curriculum activities and to engage youth leaders and community role models, while remembering that not all youth can be reached through school systems.
11. **Pursue critical media skills and bystander intervention.** Support and build youth and parental digital media literacy and encourage critical media consumption. Engage youth as teachers of social media as part of developing critical media skills. Provide opportunities and resources to educators and front-line workers for social media training and programming.

12. **Look to social media as a prevention tool.** Move beyond repurposing of offline strategies online to provide interactive, multi-site programming when possible, drawing on and employing youth perspective and expertise.

Introduction

This report is the product of an Ottawa-based research project that explores the relationship between sexual violence and social media with a focus on youth. It begins with a review of existing literature surrounding sexual violence and social media and then presents the results of a survey of Ontario community organizations, service providers, and educators as well as follow-up interviews conducted in Ottawa. Within these sections, we highlight four key themes: challenges in defining sexual violence associated with social media; the lack of data and program evaluations in this area; the relationship between online and offline contexts as they relate to sexual violence; and the need for a framework for prevention. The final sections of this report summarizes current sexual violence prevention efforts related to social media in Ontario, discusses issues related to evaluation, and presents a summary of community feedback from a forum held at Ottawa City Hall in May 2013. The objective of this project is to offer an overview of the connections between sexual violence and social media among youth and to begin to build a prevention framework for program development and evaluation in Ottawa. The report concludes by offering several recommendations for developing prevention programming that targets sexual violence associated with social media.

This research project received ethics approval from the Carleton University Research Ethics Board (Project no. 13-0910).

Key Concepts

Sexual violence

This report defines sexual violence as rape, attempted rape, sexual threat, sexual exploitation, any form of unwanted sexual touching, unwanted sexual remarks and other forms of sexual harassment (adapted from Johnson & Mackay, pg. 10). In the context of sexual violence and social media, it is particularly important to think about sexual violence on a continuum that involves emotional, psychological, and verbal violence as well as physical violence.

Social media

Social media is a widely used term that can encompass many platforms. In this report, we use social media to refer to “the wide range of Internet-based and mobile services that allow users to participate in online exchanges, contribute user-created content, or join online communities” (Dewing, 2012, pg.1). The following chart is based on the information presented in Social Media: An Introduction (Dewing, 2012) and presents a breakdown of several categories of

social media. This report focuses primarily on social network sites, media-sharing sites, and status-update services, guided by the literature in this area as well as recent cases that have drawn attention to Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter in particular.

Type of social media	Description	Popular examples in Canada
Social network sites	Allow individuals to create a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system and connect with other users with whom they share a connection.	Facebook, LinkedIn
Media-sharing sites	Allow users to post videos or photographs that others can share, comment, or 'like'.	YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest
Status-update services	Also known as microblogging services, allow users to share short updates (e.g. tweets) and to see updates of others.	Twitter
Blogs	An online journal often centered around core area(s) of interest where pages are usually displayed in reverse chronological order.	WordPress, Tumblr, Blogger
Social bookmarking	Allow users to organize and share links to websites.	reddit, Digg
Virtual world content	Offer game-like virtual environments in which users interact, often creating avatars (a virtual representation of the user) to interact with others.	Second Life
Wikis	A collective website where all participants are able to modify any page or create new pages.	Wikipedia

Youth

In this study, youth is defined as individuals 12-24 years of age. Other age-related terms that we use include children (12 and under); teenagers or adolescents (13-18); minors (under 18 years of age); and young women/young men/young adults (generally speaking 18-24 years of age).

Review of the Literature

This review summarizes recent English-language literature surrounding sexual violence with a focus on social media and youth. The purpose of this review is to identify and define key terms and concepts in this area and summarize relevant research, with a focus on answering two questions. First, what does the literature say about the frequency and nature of sexual violence and social media? Second, what does the literature say about prevention of sexual violence related to social media?

The literature review includes academic, peer-reviewed journals and research reports from governmental and non-governmental organizations. In order to focus on the most recent research relevant to social media we largely restricted our searches to literature published between 2007 and 2013. Academic studies were retrieved primarily through the Scholars Portal database and Google Scholar. To collect articles, keyword searches were conducted using combinations of terms including: sexual violence, sexual assault; intimate partner violence; domestic violence; violence against women; social media; social networking sites; Facebook; prevention; evaluation; trafficking; digital abuse; world wide web; Internet; Web 2.0; Ontario; and Canada. The bibliography of each article collected was reviewed to seek out additionally relevant articles. Our initial intention was to focus on journals from sociology, law, criminology, women's & gender studies, and communications/media studies. However, due to a scarcity of research on sexual violence and social media specifically, we broadened this search to include psychology, health, education, and information and computer technology publications. Research reports and other publications from the grey literature were collected using the same search terms, as well as by cross-referencing and following leads from the academic literature review, survey and interview data, and social media scan.

Defining Sexual Violence Associated with Social Media

Kee (2005) explains that it is important to define sexual violence as broadly as possible to accommodate types of sexual violence that are identified over time. A new and emerging area of interest is the relationship between sexual violence and social media, and how these new online spaces are influencing individual, community, and societal responses to violence (for a comprehensive look at legal challenges posed by sexual violence and "emerging communication technologies" in Australia, see Bluett-Boyd et al., 2013). Existing research (boyd & Ellison, 2008; Alvarez, 2012) looks at the terms used related to social media, including 'social network/ing sites' and 'online social networks' as well as 'cyberspace' and 'cybertools' that include both text messages and communications through social media. While research to date tends to

encompass the Internet and cell phones more broadly, this research focuses specifically on social media.

Emerging research suggests that sexual violence facilitated by communication technologies needs to be understood along a spectrum of behaviour (Bluett-Boyd et al, 2013). This literature review draws from several differently defined but overlapping topics related to sexual violence associated with social media, including cyberbullying and cyberharassment, intimate partner violence, online stalking, sexting, child exploitation, and sex trafficking. This section of the report briefly profiles the main themes that arise in the academic literature relating to the spectrum of sexual violence that is associated with social media.

Cyber/online bullying and harassment

Cyberbullying is defined as “wilful and repeated harm inflicted through the use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices” (Burgess-Proctor, Hinduja, & Patchin, 2010). The concepts of cyberbullying and cyberharassment are often discussed interchangeably or treated as one (Sengupta & Chaudhuri, 2011). In general, ‘bullying’ is often used when discussing children while ‘harassment’ addresses adult environments (Lindsay & Krysik, 2012). Some researchers have separated these two ideas by explaining that harassment is more likely to involve a level of threat by the bully and feelings of being in danger by the victim (Lindsay & Krysik, 2012), along with an increase in legal consequences (Hindaju & Patchin, 2008). Researchers have also identified a particular lack of gender analysis surrounding cyberbullying (Snell & Englander, 2010).

Sexting

Sexting refers to the use of technology to send or receive sexually explicit messages and photos, or ‘sexts’ (Comartin, Kernsmith, & Kernsmith, 2013). A study conducted by MTV and the Associated Press in 2011 found that one in three 14 to 24 year olds in the U.S. have engaged in some form of sexting. However, it is important to distinguish between sexts that are exchanged consensually and sexts that are exchanged because someone is pressured, coerced, or threatened. ‘Viral sexting’, which refers to the uncontrolled spreading of sexts via cell phones and social networks, often appears to be accompanied by verbal harassment of peers and others (Comartin et al., 2013).

Recording and distribution of sexual assault through social media

Websites self-identifying as “online rape sites” that depict both staged and purportedly real sexual assaults existed prior to social media (Gossett & Byrne, 2002). It was also possible to record consensual sexual encounters in secret and distribute without the victim’s awareness. However, social media allows for an

increase in the speed at which these videos or images can be shared and the size of population they can reach. Although this is often discussed as a privacy infringement issue, emerging research suggests that it should be considered along a continuum of sexual violence (Powell, 2010). We do not know of any studies looking at rates of sexual assaults that are recorded or photographed and shared or circulated through social media. However, recent cases in Canada and the United States, including the suicides of 17-year-old Rehtaeh Parsons and 15-year-old Audrie Pott, both of whom had images circulated of their sexual assaults, have resulted in growing awareness of the pain and suffering experienced by the survivors of sexual assault, and the re-victimization that occurs through having their assaults shared through social media.

Virtual sexual assault

Virtual rape and threat of rape occurs when a targeted person (frequently a woman) is the victim of constant messaging containing threats of sexual assault, either from a single harasser or from a more mob-style attack (Halder & Jaishankar, 2011). Virtual sexual assault can also take place in multi-player video games that specifically involve graphic imagery of one player's character sexually assaulting another (examples provided in one report included Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas, Benki Kuosuko, and Sociolotron) (Maltzahn, 2006).

Cyberstalking and digital dating abuse

In Canada, there is no legal definition for cyberstalking. Instead, all cases are prosecuted as Criminal Harassment under section 264 of the Criminal Code (Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime, 2011). In general, however, cyberstalking is commonly defined as the use of the Internet or other electronic means to harass an individual, a group of individuals, or an organization (Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime, 2011). In practice it can include activities such as: monitoring email communication directly or through spyware or keystroke logging hardware; sending messages intended to threaten, insult, or harass; disrupting online communications by flooding a victim's online accounts with unwanted messages or by sending a virus; using the victim's electronic identity to send false messages to others or to purchase goods and services; using online sites to collect a victim's personal information and whereabouts (Baughman, 2009). Cyberstalking is often discussed as a form of intimate partner violence, when a current or former spouse or partner uses online technologies to threaten, harass, track, or control the victim. Some research has noted that cyberstalking seems likely to increase in prevalence as various technologies (e.g. social networking sites, global positioning systems) become more and more pervasive in day-to-day life (Nobles et al, 2012). Among youth, 'digital dating abuse' is a new term being used to describe similar patterns, where one partner in a romantic relationship uses social media and/or

other technologies (such as cell phones) to control or harass the other (Picard, 2007; Weathers, 2012).

Luring/online exploitation of minors

Early published literature dealing with online abuse focused on the use of social media and other online arenas to sexually solicit and exploit children and adolescents (Stedman, 2007; Duncan, 2008). Terms used in more recent literature include grooming, which refers to the solicitation and meeting of minors for sexual purposes (van der Hof & Koops, 2011), sextortion, or threatening to expose a person who has been lured to show sexually suggestive poses in front of a webcam (Comartin et al., 2013), and unwanted sexual solicitation, when youth are asked to engage in sexual talk or sexual behaviour or to provide personal sexual information against their will (Ybarra & Mitchell, 2008).

Human trafficking

The Department of Justice Canada describes human trafficking as “the recruitment, transportation, and/or harbouring of persons for the purpose of exploitation, typically for sexual exploitation or forced labour.”² Victims of sexual trafficking, often women and girls, are forced to provide services against their will, where they fear for their safety or that of someone known to them if they refuse to provide these services, and frequently suffer multiple forms of abuse on top of these conditions. There is limited research surrounding the role of social media in the sexual trafficking of women and girls for sex facilitated by social media. However, evidence from legal cases in the United States shows that mainstream websites such as Craigslist, Backpage, and MySpace have already been used for trafficking, and suggests that Facebook, Twitter, and other social media sites are susceptible to similar uses (Latonero, 2011). In Ottawa, local organization Persons Against the Crime of Trafficking in Humans (PACT) is working on a safety audit related to trafficking of persons, and initial stakeholder feedback highlights links between social media as a method of contacting and luring victims, but also as something being used to control and blackmail individuals once recruited (Personal Communication, PACT Ottawa, June 2013). The recent case in Ottawa where three young women between the ages of 15 and 17 were charged with human trafficking, abduction, and sexual assault has also stimulated discussion surrounding many issues, including the alleged use of Facebook to lure victims, who were also female youth.³

² <http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/fs-sv/tp/>

³ <http://news.nationalpost.com/2012/06/13/15-year-old-girl-formally-charged-on-18-counts-in-alleged-ottawa-prostitution-ring/>

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/news/Crown+wants+teen+pimps+sentenced+adults+convicted/8216721/story.html>

Documenting Sexual Violence Associated with Social Media

Advocacy organizations have pointed out that the absence of systematized data is a key obstacle in thoroughly and effectively dealing with all manifestations and aspects of technology related to violence against women (Kee, 2005). One challenge in attempting to describe, understand and prevent this sexual violence associated with social media is the variance of target research groups and audience. Some research is aimed at policy makers or legislators (e.g. Bailey & Hannah, 2011; Powell, 2010) while others focused on parents and educators (e.g. Hinduja & Patchin, 2011). And while youth are the most frequently researched population, the specific demographic varies widely. Much of the research looking at cyberbullying, for example, examines high school as well as university students, and occasionally pre-teens. Research on sexting and luring/online exploitation tend to focus on minors, cyberharassment and digital dating violence more often on older teenagers and university-aged populations, and cyberstalking related to intimate partner violence tends to focus on both young adults and older adults.

In terms of youth, a lack of research is also the result of difficulties associated with access to this population due to parental consent and/or school board regulations, a reluctance to attribute negative characteristics to children, reluctance of victims to reveal they were victimized, difficulties in determining the age of the parties, and other methodological difficulties (Internet Safety Task Force, 2008). Since sexual violence associated with social media is a new area of exploration, there is little evidence-based work relating to the scope and nature of sexual violence and social media, especially in terms of Canadian data. Nonetheless, we can still consider emerging themes from preliminary research to inform our work.

We know little about the sexual nature of digital abuse and harassment

Like other areas of society, social media sites are spaces where abuse and harassment occur. MTV's (2011) digital abuse study "A Thin Line" found that more than half (56%) of youth surveyed said they have experienced abuse through social and digital media. This rate had increased from 50 percent in their 2009 survey. No gender breakdown of this data was provided. The MTV 2011 study also found that 15 percent of youth reported having sent a naked photo or video of themselves and 21 percent had received naked pictures or videos of others. What is relevant here in terms of sexual violence is that the MTV study found that about half of those who had sent a nude photo felt pressured to do so (although the study did not indicate who or where the pressure was felt from). Another U.S. study involving men and women 18 years of age and older found that two-third of those sending sexts had been pressured by another person to do so at least once (Comartin et al., 2013).

Much of the research on cyberbullying and cyberharassment does not focus specifically on the sexual nature of this abuse. Research on cyberbullying rates among junior high students in Canada (Li, 2006; 2007) found that 25 percent of youth surveyed had been cyberbullied, though no data was provided surrounding the sexual nature of this victimization and/or whether it occurred specifically through social media or through other means of electronic communication (email, text messaging). In other research involving 1,368 students at one American and two Canadian universities, one-third of students reported having been cyberharassed (Beran et al, 2012). Although there is still much to be learned, research suggests that being a member of a social networking site is not a strong predictor of online abuse for teenagers (Sengupta & Chaudhuri, 2012). Other research argues that social media sites may be frequently used in peer-to-peer harassment because they are widely used by youth to reinforce pre-existing social relations (Internet Safety Technical Task Force, 2008). The term 'sexual bullying' has surfaced in some research from the field of nursing and public health by those who are concerned with the continuum of violence between bullying, sexual harassment and dating violence (Stein & Mennemeir, 2011).

In terms of sex trafficking, we know very little about the role of social media. In the United States between 2009 and 2011, 27 federal trafficking cases involved the use of social networking sites or online classified advertisements to facilitate trafficking (Latonero, 2011). The following patterns were identified in these cases: (1) online classified sites are used to post advertisements selling sexual services from trafficked individuals, (2) social networking sites are used to recruit victims, (3) investigations may begin with a picture of what appears to be an underage girl in an online classified ad, and (4) a number of victims have been identified as runaways (Latonero, 2011). In four of the cases reviewed, traffickers specifically used social media sites such as MySpace as a recruiting tool (Latonero, 2011).

A majority of sexual violence online appears unreported

Although youth are known to experiment and flirt online and use the Internet as an outlet for sexual thoughts and development, we know very little about how frequently these interactions are unwanted (Internet Safety Task Force, 2008). One study in the U.S. examined The Youth Internet Safety Survey, a nationally representative study of 1501 youth between the ages of 10 and 17 who use the Internet regularly. In the past year, 19 percent reported an unwanted sexual solicitation, 25 percent reported an unwanted exposure to sexual material, and 6 percent had been harassed online (Mitchell, Finkelhor, & Wolak, 2003). Additional early research on youth victimization online suggests that youth encounter a significant amount of offensive episodes online, most of which are unreported (Finkelhor, Mitchell, & Wolak, 2008). More recent research on

technology abuse in teen relationships also suggests that most digital dating violence goes unreported: 78 percent of teens harassed and embarrassed by their partners on social media did not tell their parents about the abuse (Picard, 2007). The most common reason for not telling was that the youth did not view the behaviours as serious enough (Picard, 2007). An important question for future research in this area is the relationship between reporting rates and youth's perceptions of whether they will be taken seriously if they report.

Abusive relationship patterns may also be facilitated or maintained through social media

Emerging research has also explored the relationship between cyberbullying and teen dating violence. In one study based on a random sample of approximately 4,400 youth ages 11 to 18 in the United States, six percent said that their romantic partner posted something publicly online to make fun of, threaten, or embarrass them (Hinduja & Patchin, 2011). A survey of technology and abuse in teen relationships found that 18 percent of 13 to 18 year olds surveyed said that their partner used information posted on a social networking site to harass them or put them down (Picard, 2007). The higher incidence observed in the latter study may be due in part to a broader framing of the survey question. Finally, an exploratory study involving ten young women in an American university found that common elements of 'digitally abusive relationships' were that partners sent repeated texts asking where they are or what they are doing, sent persistent, unwanted calls, texts, or online messages, and checked the woman's cell phone to see who she was talking to or texting (Weathers, 2012).

Despite the parallel growth in both online dating and cyberbullying, there has been limited research about the relationship between Internet-based technology and intimate partner relationships (Alvarez, 2012). Research interviewing women who had left or were attempting to leave abusive relationships found that electronic communications played a significant role in nine out of ten domestic violence situations (Dimond, Fiesler, & Brukman, 2011). In addition to tracking through email, text messaging, and social media, this study also identifies issues with location-based technologies and online data aggregation such as FourSquare, Google Latitude, and Google Buzz. In 2010, the Toronto Police Service reported an increase in the number of sexting-related complaints received, most often relating to situations in which photos privately exchanged between boyfriend and girlfriend were eventually shared with others following relationship breakdowns (Bailey & Hannah, 2011).

While we have only preliminary information about victimization, young women and girls appear to experience higher rates of sexual violence associated with social media

There is little gender analysis within much cyberbullying and cyberharassment research. In Canadian research on junior high school students, Li (2007) found that girls reported slightly higher rates of cyberbullying victimization than boys (approximately 60% versus 52%), though this study explored online activity broadly rather than social media specifically. One American study found no gender differences in victimization but observed that those who spend more time on social networking sites, own an Internet-connected phone, and report having sent sexually-explicit text messages were more likely to have been harassed online (Lindsay & Krysik, 2012). Other research has found that female youth experience higher rates of online sexual harassment (Sengupta & Chaudhuri, 2011; Henson, Reynolds, & Fisher, 2011), and another study found that female youth are more likely to be involved in cyberbullying as both victims and perpetrators (Snell & Englander, 2010).

People of all genders experience sexual violence, and it is important to consider the different contexts that this violence occurs in and how it is captured in research. For example, researchers looking at sexting and harassment argue that social backlash and scorn that surrounds texting is disproportionately directed at girls and young women through language such as 'slut' (Bailey & Hannah, 2011). Additionally, some research on sexting appears to conflate sexting and sexual bullying. For example, one guide on sexting (Hinduja & Patchin, 2011) describes two cases in the U.S. where teenage girls (ages 13 and 18) committed suicide after they were subjected to months of "extensive and unremitting cruelty" including being called "slut" and "whore" after nude photos sent to romantic interests/ex-partners were widely circulated among their peers. Sexual bullying that takes place through social media (and many other places) in the form of 'slut shaming' is disproportionately directed at young women, including two 13 year old alleged victims of a recent statutory rape case in the U.S.⁴ Other research has also argued that interactions using technologies occur in an environment of "pre-established gendered scripts that normalize pressure and coercion" surrounding sexual activity (Bluett-Boyd et al, 2013, p. xi.). It is also important to note that we know little about sexual violence directed at boys and young men related to social media, and the relationship between masculinities, homophobia, and research on cyberbullying and sexual violence is also a vital area of inquiry.

⁴ http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/05/nyregion/generational-divide-in-torrington-conn-over-sex-assault-case.html?smid=tw-share&_r=2&

Researchers in the U.S. have observed that victims of traditional (offline) dating violence are significantly more likely to be victims of electronic forms of dating violence than those who have not experienced offline bullying, and that those who admit to engaging in traditional dating violence also report engaging in electronic forms of dating violence (Hinduja & Patchin, 2011). To build an evidence-focused knowledge base of sexual violence associated with social media we will need to pay attention to the intersections between social media-associated violence and other forms of sexual violence against women and girls, as well as the new and unique characteristics social media presents.

Understanding what is unique about social media while recognizing that it does not 'cause' sexual violence

Initial research and recent news cases highlight the ways in which sexual violence is associated with social media. It is important to remember that social media is not itself the agent or perpetrator of sexual violence, and that the ways in which it is used for sexual violence is developed from and rooted in powerful and longstanding social systems and also related to individual experiences. For example, participants in one of the few studies looking specifically at sexual violence and emerging communications technologies “consistently stated that emerging communications technologies acted as a facilitator of forms of behaviour that predate the existence of technology itself” (Bluett-Boyd et al, 2013, p. x). However, there are aspects of social media that have affected and/or broadened the nature and scope of sexual violence, including changing the speed and volume of images distributed (Bluett-Boyd et al, 2013). To understand the ways in which online and offline experiences are blurred, it is also important to understand the ways in which social media presents unique challenges and creates new dynamics surrounding the relationship between sexual violence and youth, including issues relating to pervasiveness, digital permanence, power and control, and rights violations.

Social media is pervasive in that it has been widely adopted into daily communications, particularly by youth. According to the Ipsos Reid (2012), the majority of Canadian teenagers now own or share ownership of a computer (83%), gaming console (75%), and mobile phone (67%). This same group spends an average of three hours online each day, and the majority visits sites such as YouTube (79%) and online social networks (69%). The two most frequent daily communication tools for teenagers are texting (54%) and online social networks (48%) (Ipsos Reid, 2012). In addition to being used by many people, social media platforms are increasingly designed to easily communicate with one another. For example, YouTube videos can be shared on Facebook and status updates on Facebook automatically sent out through Twitter. Therefore, abusive words or images sent through one site can easily and rapidly be transmitted through multiple sites. Web-based traffic attracts attention: when a stream of people

views, forwards or shares material widely, the growing number of hits or views increases the likelihood that more and more people will access the material. A key aspect of social networking sites such as Facebook is that they make existing social relationships visible (boyd & Ellison, 2007). A 2012 Youth Violence Prevention Summit report from New Brunswick noted that youth who have experienced harmful relationships report greater intensity and trauma associated with always being connected, though no specific examples were discussed in this report.

Digital permanence describes the way that social media alters “the scale and persistence of possible publicity” (boyd, 2007, pg. 22). Material posted and circulated through social media becomes part of a person's online identity and record. In social media, ‘one-to-one’ digital communications run the risk of being easily converted into one-to-many communications that can be made available to unknown and unintended recipients, including classmates, teachers, and even unknown sexual predators (particularly where they are posted to pornography sites) (Bailey & Hannah, 2011). Policy and legal arenas are struggling to catch up and determine how to address sexual violence in the context of the creation of digital records that are easily distributed and long lasting in digital memory (Bailey & Hannah, 2011).

Power and control dynamics carry over into the realm of social media, and current or former partners can harass their partners when they are separated and try and turn friends and family against them (Dimond, Fiesler, & Bruckman, 2011). Threats to release intimate photos or texts, or for LGBTQ individuals, to “out” them to their family and community, can be maintained over long periods of time and large distances. “Revenge porn” websites, which allow users to post naked or humiliating photos of ex-partners along with personal information, disproportionately target young women.⁵ This abuse is compounded by the fact that in many cases, victims are forced to pay to have their photos removed from site.⁶ Groups and individuals who are marginalized in the broader physical society appear to experience similar bullying and harassment online; the pervasiveness and permanence of this abuse, however, can exacerbate the power and control exerted by abusers, and can make it more invasive and difficult to escape. Emerging literature also highlights the ways in which sexual violence associated with social media and other forms of technology-related violence violate specific rights of victims. These rights include: the rights to freedom of expression and self-representation; the rights to bodily integrity, self-determination and security; and the right to association and public participation (Fascendini & Fialoyá, 2011). The right to privacy also intersects with all of these

⁵ “Battling revenge porn with legal action”, The Current, CBC Radio (February 6, 2013).

⁶ Ibid.

rights, and is an important component in their fulfillment (Fascendini & Fialoyá, 2011).

Preventing Sexual Violence Associated with Social Media

There are several different ways to understand prevention. We find it helpful to use three categories to think about preventing sexual violence associated with social media. In brief, *primary prevention* focuses on the prevention of sexual violence before it takes place, *secondary prevention* focuses on the immediate effects of sexual violence and preventing further harm, and *tertiary prevention* focuses on the long-term effects of sexual violence (PreventConnect, 2013). Although it is important to develop prevention efforts that take all levels into account, our focus here is on primary prevention initiatives. Banyard, Eckstein, and Moynihan (2010, p. 111) explain that, while many important lessons have been learned in sexual violence prevention research, “the field is still in the early stages of developing and fully researching effective models, particularly for the primary prevention of this problem in communities.” Primary prevention can be directed at both ‘universal audiences’ (everyone potentially at risk to perpetrate sexual violence or to be victimized) and ‘selected audiences’ (those in the population at increased risk for perpetration or victimization)⁷ and often targets core risk factors such as gender inequity and social norms (Loots, Dartnall, & Jewkes, 2011). There are also many different levels involved in prevention, including the strengthening of individual knowledge and skills, promotion of community education of providers, fostering of coalitions and networks, changing organizational practices, and influencing policy and legislation (PreventConnect, 2013).

Based on research to date, there are no evaluated prevention programs that focus specifically on sexual violence associated with social media. In general, evidence-based sexual violence prevention programs are limited (Violence Prevention Summit Report, 2012), although there have been several promising initiatives for sexual violence prevention identified⁸ as well as emerging initiatives that use social media to target sexual violence more broadly. The results of the social media scan, survey, and interviews will engage in more detail about existing initiatives and possibilities for adaptation and collaboration. We can, however, draw some general prevention recommendations from the research conducted on sexual violence and social media to date. These are organized around four themes: supporting and building both youth and parental media literacy; helping youth to define and develop healthy relationships; drawing from social norms marketing and bystander intervention programming; and

⁷ www.atsa.com/sexual-violence-prevention-fact-sheet

⁸ For a list of sexual violence prevention programs demonstrating positive outcomes, see *Building Prevention: Sexual Violence, Youth, and Drinking* (Johnson & MacKay, 2011).

youth-driven programming. The next section will briefly describe the themes emerging from the literature, and then return to further develop recommendations in a later section.

Supporting and building youth and parental media literacy

Fostering social media awareness and literacy is an example of primary prevention. Researchers propose that prevention should focus on making children and adolescents more resilient in dealing with online risks rather than installing pervasive security and control measures (Comartin, Kernsmith, & Kernsmith, 2013). In this regard, some research specifically calls for the introduction of media literacy and e-safety teaching into the national curriculum (Mitchell, Finkelhor, & Wolak, 2012). Earlier research on cyberbullying also argues that prevention efforts will have a greater impact if they focus on psychosocial problems of youth instead of specific online sites, and include funding for online youth outreach programs, school anti-bullying programs, and online mental health services (Ybarra & Mitchell, 2008). This stems from research suggesting that youth most at risk for online abuse may include those with a diverse range of problems, including rule-breaking behaviour and depression (Wolak, Finkelhor, & Mitchell, 2008).

Parents, like youth, have varying comfort levels with and understandings of social media. While parents may be generally cautious about letting their children use social networking sites, research suggests they lack knowledge about the importance of privacy settings and are unaware of the openness of many of the chat facilities (Clark, 2009). Other studies have noted that available blocking programs and privacy control designs are mostly based on visions of “family” security; that is, for adults to protect their children from strangers or adult content online (Dimon, Fiesler, & Bruckman, 2011). The effectiveness of these controls in preventing sexual violence in the context of social media is likely to be limited by a lack of parental awareness of privacy settings. More importantly, because the majority of sexual violence associated with social media is perpetrated by someone known to the individual (MTV 2011; Picard, 2007), blocking programs and privacy controls are less likely to be effective prevention mechanisms for sexual violence.

Encouraging youth and parents to define and develop healthy relationships in social media contexts

Promoting healthy relationships, rather than simply discouraging abuse, is another primary prevention strategy. It can also be considered a secondary prevention strategy in the context of intimate partner violence, as youth that are experiencing dating violence offline are more likely to experience digital dating violence as well (Hinduja & Patchin, 2011). Current research has emphasized that prevention efforts should recognize that online victimization is not primarily

stranger-danger, and that awareness and education programs will need to accommodate the spectrum of sexual behaviour displayed online by both adolescents and adults (Mitchell, Finkelhor, & Wolak, 2012). Safety messages will need to address specific issues surrounding unwanted sexual messages and approaches from friends, friends of friends, strangers, and adults, and should focus on empowering adolescents to make informed decisions about risk and healthy relationships (Mitchell, Finkelhor, & Wolak, 2012). In this regard, parents and educators should also be encouraged to learn about healthy relationships and warning signs of abuse and communicate with their children. In research conducted by the Family Violence Prevention Fund in 2009, 58 percent of parents could not correctly identify all of the warning signs of abuse. Furthermore, the same survey found that 74 percent of sons and 66 percent of daughters said they have not had a conversation about dating abuse with a parent in the past year. These conversations need to happen around sexual violence broadly, as well as in the context of social media. Research has found that cyberharassment is not always taken seriously, with advice to victims being simply to change their settings or to go offline (Salter & Bryden, 2009). Given the pervasiveness of social media and the extent to which it plays a role in communications and relationships, this is not likely to be sufficient for sexual violence prevention.

Drawing from bystander intervention and social norms marketing programming

The most detailed and potentially relevant aspects of sexual violence prevention literature for current questions of social media and youth surround bystander intervention and social norms marketing. *Active bystander behaviours* are defined as behaviours in which a person intervenes in a situation that can lead to sexual violence (reactive bystander behaviours) or takes an action that promotes social norms that do not accept violence (proactive bystander behaviours) (Cook-Craig, 2012, pg. 5). Bystander intervention has showed positive potential for reducing sexual violence (Banyard, Moynihan, & Plante, 2007). *Social norms marketing* describes the use of traditional marketing strategies, including mass media and face-to-face campaigns, to change or shape social attitudes and beliefs of a community by encouraging positive norms and/or discouraging certain attitudes and behaviour (Levy Paluck & Ball, 2010). A growing number of social marketing campaigns utilize bystander intervention approaches (Tabachnick, 2009). The 2011 MTV digital abuse study found that a majority of young people said they would step in if they saw cruel online behaviour, a significant increase from numbers reported in the 2009 MTV study. This may suggest that there are openings for bystander intervention actions in social media. However, another study looking at cyber-bystanders found that people were less likely to intervene in online spaces perceived as being highly monitored and under high surveillance (Palasinski, 2012) suggesting

further research is needed on the conditions under which people are likely to act to prevent online abuse.

Youth-driven programming

A key point coming out of sexual violence prevention research is that both the message and the messenger are critical: what youth hear, as well as who they hear it from, matters (Haskell, 2011). Effective primary prevention efforts need youth to be active participants since youth are the most experienced in the ins and outs of electronic relationships, and certain dimensions of their experience are unknown to most adults (Youth Violence Prevention Summit Report, 2012). For example, the New Brunswick 2012 Youth Violence Prevention Summit youth reported that Facebook is just the tip of the iceberg, and that sites such as '4chan' and 'Chat Roulette' are also relevant to programming. Other researchers have argued that efforts at educating teenagers about healthy relationship patterns are more likely to be successful if they operate from the ground-up as opposed to programs where adults are prescribing "appropriate" youth behaviour (King-Ries, 2010; Canadian Women's Association). Peer education programs utilizing social media in a variety of ways are growing in popularity, and several of these are presented in the social media scan. In the next sections, we discuss findings from a survey and follow-up interviews.

Survey

Method and Description of Sample

A survey of Ontario community organizations, educators, violence prevention advocates, and front-line workers was conducted from February to March 2013. The goal of the survey was threefold: (1) to collect information about sexual violence associated with social media, (2) to identify any existing prevention strategies, and (3) to gather recommendations to aid the further development of prevention programming. Existing programs identified were then integrated into a broader social media scan, which is laid out in Appendices A and B.

The survey was developed online through the site SurveyMonkey. An invitation letter and link to the survey was sent via email to a list of Ontario-based youth serving agencies, organizations, community centres and educators, sexual assault resource and advocacy centres and coalitions, front-line service providers, sexual violence and intimate partner violence prevention and advocacy organizations and coalitions, Aboriginal community and resource centres, and university and college campus representatives (e.g. equity services, health and counseling services). Individuals were encouraged to forward the information to community networks with the aim of increasing the survey's reach and to allow individuals to identify relevant local partners and

contacts. The survey consisted of 13 questions: 7 open-ended (written response) and 6 close-ended (pre-set responses or ranked lists). Of the 211 respondents who entered the initial survey link, 200 were eligible (located in Ontario) and 187 went on to participate in the survey. Of the 187 respondents, 116 were categorized as completed responses and 71 as partial responses, the latter indicating that they exited the survey link at some point prior to the final question. Data from both completed and partial responses were analysed.

Approximately one-quarter of survey respondents were from Ottawa as anticipated; the remaining three-quarters were from other areas of Ontario. The approximate breakdown of survey respondents by sector was as follows:

Type of organization	Portion of total respondents
Community resource/recreation centre	21%
Shelter/family and child services	19%
Sexual assault support service	14%
Educational institution/school board	12%
Violence prevention coalition/network	11%
Community health centre	7%
Criminal justice program	6%
Aboriginal centre	5%
No affiliation/other	5%

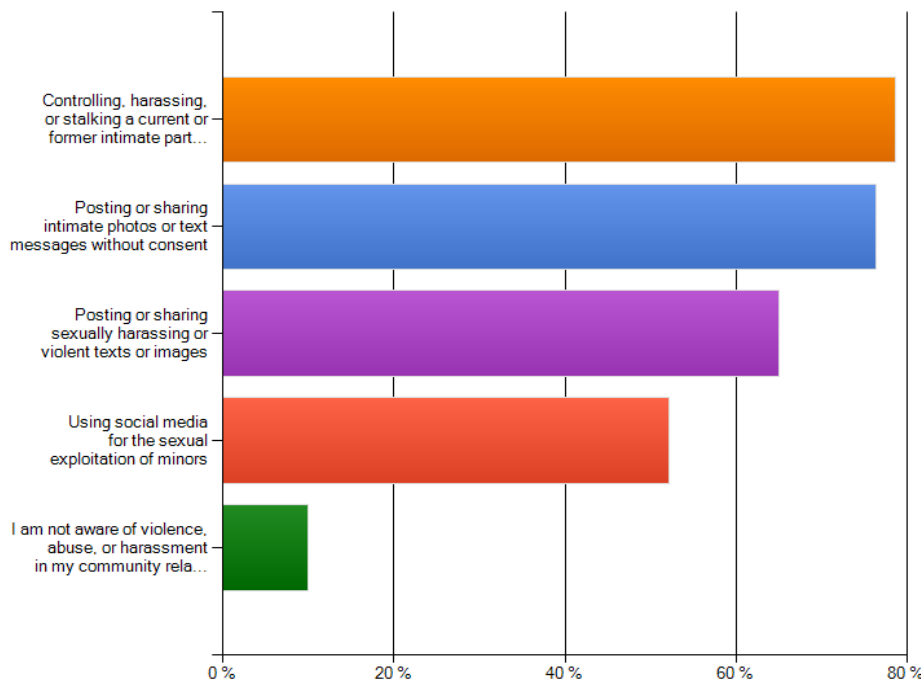
It should be noted that many respondents fit into multiple categories (for example, a community health centre may also provide sexual assault support services) so this represents an approximate breakdown only. In the survey, approximately 25% of respondents directly noted that they work with children, adolescents/teens, and/or youth. Many other respondents did not directly refer to youth, but indicated indirect youth-serving roles (for example, working with parents, university students, and/or noting that they have seen bullying and/or cyberbullying occurring among those they serve).

Identifying & Measuring Sexual Violence Associated with Social Media

Survey responses indicate that a majority of respondents are aware of sexual violence associated with social media in their community. Respondents did not generally identify specific types of social media, with the exception of Facebook: approximately 40% of responses specifically mentioned Facebook as a place where abuse and harassment takes place. However, individual respondents also raised additional online locations (e.g. Craigslist, online dating sites) as relevant to the perpetration of sexual violence associated with social media, and cell phones and text messaging were also often referenced alongside social media.

Table 1 shows the following breakdown of awareness of sexual violence related to social media:

- 79% of respondents were aware of social media being used to control, harass, or stalk a current or former intimate partner (including dating partner) using social media;
- 76% were aware of individuals posting or sharing intimate photos or text messages without consent;
- 65% were aware of individuals posting or sharing sexually harassing or violence texts or images;
- 52% were aware of social media being used for the sexual exploitation of minors;
- 10% were not aware of violence, abuse, or harassment in their community related to social media.



Related to **controlling, harassing or stalking a current or former intimate partner**, respondents whose clients were adult women more frequently reported that social media is a tool that can be and is used to continue to track and control a woman (and frequently her children) after she has left her abusive partner. For example, one respondent explained that

Clients have had programs installed on their computers, so that their abusers can see any communications they may have, including learning their passwords...Abusers have posted slanderous things about their former partner on their own Facebook pages, or have distributed nude images of their former partners.

Other responses highlighted the various intersecting forms of abuse that agencies are seeing:

We have seen clients being controlled or harassed by current or former intimate partners through Facebook. Specifically, verbal harassment through name-calling or constantly posting on the clients posts...We have seen abusers locate victims through dating websites, sexually abuse them, then take their profile offline and post a new one.

Some respondents noted that photos or comments posted to social media (including children's Facebook sites) were being used to track a woman's location. This was seen as particularly common among younger clients.

While some respondents commented that controlling, harassing, and humiliating a current partner using social media is recognized in their community as a means of bullying, others felt that some youth might be experiencing abusive relationships yet not necessarily view it as such:

Young girls do not necessarily view obsessive partners as abusive – despite the escalation. This also applies to less overt photos that get shared and sent widely.

Posting or sharing photos or other messages without consent came up frequently in respondents answers. For example, one respondent wrote that,

Clients have had sexual photos taken and posted (without consent or knowledge) which led to a police investigation. Many of our clients report an ex-partner accessing their site.

The combination of having an ex-partner access the victim's social networking site and also having access to intimate photos makes it very difficult to trace the origin of the initial message back to the perpetrator. In addition to sexual photos of the victim, some respondents noted that young women often receive unwanted sexually explicit imagery from men, such as "cock shots" sent after communicating through online dating sites. Another respondent gave an example of a young man sending a young woman a photo of a penis that he had found online in an attempt to have her send him nude photos.

Returning to the theme of how youth view abuse, another respondent commented that:

When we do presentations in high schools, it is quite alarming how many teen girls get harassed via text message and Facebook. They often don't see it as a form of violence.

The way in which social media can be used as a tool for verbal, emotional, and psychological violence was frequently brought up by respondents, many of whom commented that it magnified or extended the effects of bullying or abusive relationships. For example, one respondent noted that they had seen threats to share intimate photos or messages being used to prevent a woman or youth from breaking up with her partner. Others brought up distribution of sexual photos in the context of legal issues. For example, one front line service provider responded that:

Increasingly we're getting a lot of calls regarding teens sending explicit pictures of themselves to one another and then these pictures become distributed amongst [other] teens, which is in effect distribution of child pornography.

Another theme emerging from the survey data was that in some cases survivors of sexual assault are re-victimized through social media through frequent messaging by their abuser and/or bullying and harassment of peers who are aware of the assault. One respondent recounted a story of an individual who disclosed their sexual assault to a peer only to have that person turn around and post it on Facebook. Another respondent who works in a sexual assault support capacity with females between 13 and 18 years of age explained that

All of those [forms of sexual violence associated with social media]...are challenges my clients face daily.

Another agency noted that they were aware of video **recordings and/or images of sexual assaults being disseminated** using social media among youth in schools, and that those teens who had been sexually assaulted also experienced bullying or harassment by the perpetrator's friends, and sometimes their own friends as well. One respondent commented that

The violence that is experienced via social media is usually in regards to shaming, blaming or stalking the survivor.

An additional theme identified is **using social media to exploit or deceive** youth to produce and send sexual images. For example, one respondent stated that:

There appears to be ongoing issues with sexual exploitation of minors via digital images...in the form of luring from someone who pretends to be something or someone they're not in order to gain trust and access sexual photos of the victim.

This was related to the idea that anonymity is a unique aspect of social media that adds new dimensions to abuse. As one respondent reflected:

It is very easy for the perpetrator to hide under fake profiles and remain anonymous in some cases. They use their anonymity combined with computer skills to exercise control over their victims.

Pretending to be a different person by getting a hold of someone else's phone and sending messages/posting to Facebook was also mentioned as a way to perpetrate abuse.

In general, although these themes of location tracking, dissemination of images/texts, re-victimization of sexual assault victims online, and anonymity were identified as unique aspects of sexual and intimate partner violence associated with social media, responses frequently acknowledged that these issues are woven into broader issues of violence and harassment among youth and the general population. As one respondent explained:

Our youth program is new...however every single youth that has been referred to us except for one has been the victim of sexual violence, exploitation, dating violence and/or cyberbullying – not because we set the parameters that way, simply because it is so prevalent and such a huge need with that population.

Another response stated that

In our community along with any other communities violence, abuse, and harassment are always occurring. Physical violence often happens among individuals of all ages, [as well as] physical, sexual, and verbal abuse and harassment. Working with children and youth it is apparent that social media reflects some children and youth's behaviour and influences them.

Other respondents felt that social media may be exacerbating certain forms of sexual violence:

Sexual violence, physical violence, shaming, and verbal abuse are what we deal with daily. Social media is increasing the abuse through vivid images of assault, slut shaming and groups that are created to spread hate.

The frequency and scope of sexual violence associated with social media is a relatively new conversation, and what we know empirically about this relationship is limited. In this context, it is important to ask questions about the roots of violence (we know sexual violence existed before social media) as well as how mass media representations and social media may foster, enable, or condone violence.

To develop a prevention framework, it is important to also consider issues of measurement and data collection, definitions of success, and areas of challenge associated with prevention. Survey responses suggest that awareness of violence and abuse associated with social media is high but respondents are not keeping track of this abuse specifically, and therefore much information is typically known informally or anecdotally. Survey respondents spoke to the difficulty in identifying rates or quantifying sexual violence associated with social media. For example, one respondent commented that

It is difficult to place a "number" per say on how often this happens because it is usually tied in with a host of other experiences that women share.

Many survey respondents indicated that they hear personal accounts of sexual bullying and violence on a regular basis. As one respondent explained that

Although I have no stats I believe that this would be happening daily in the community...we do not collect statistics related to this area and so this response is based on general feedback received informally at public education events.

Other respondents used language such as "occurs often", "anecdotally we know that", and "on a daily basis" to describe their awareness of sexual violence associated with social media occurring in their community. A few discussed the under reported nature of this abuse:

[I believe] violence, abuse, and harassment are under reported for various reasons: feeling shame, misunderstood, not believed, as well as catching someone under a fake name is much harder than the guy next door!...The effect of bullying and harassment online should be assessed [with]

longitudinal studies and years from now we may come to understand the impact they have had on victim's lives.

It is relatively easy to set up a fake profile on a social media site. The challenges of anonymity and identity presented by social media can also be seen in prosecuting harassment online. As one respondent explained,

Police may tell the victim that they cannot press charges, because there is not sufficient evidence that the abuser was the person who actually wrote the post- someone else could have used the abuser's Facebook account.

"I think that sexual violence would be on a continuum of cyberbullying. For example, slut shaming via social media can be considered sexual harassment."

An additional part of the challenge is that unless this violence is identified by the person experiencing it, it may go unreported:

It isn't possible to determine the exact frequency with which social media contributes to sexual violence as it is up to the women we work with to share this type of information, if they wish to do so (and some do not). Anecdotally, though, social media is more likely to be associated with the sexual violence experienced by young women. Obviously this observation is not absolute and is based only on our agency's experiences.

In addition to reporting rates, survey responses also suggest that we know very little about the ways in which sexual violence associated with social media is experienced differently, not only based on a person's gender identity and age, but also when considering race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental health, disability, social class, immigration status, and/or family situation and peer group, for example. There is no "one way" that youth use and experience social media. Some respondents observed that social media exacerbates already existing marginalization, even when the intention of the action may be argued to be in a youth's best interest. Furthermore, online safety advice given to those seen as likely to be victimized is seen as frequently problematic. For example, as one respondent explained:

The emphasis is almost always on how folks need to protect against our own abuse, instead of teaching/telling folks not to abuse and to check their privilege.

Therefore, it is important to think critically about who is being told to 'protect themselves' online, and to consider the multiple and intersecting ways that different people experience higher levels of violence both within and separately from social media.

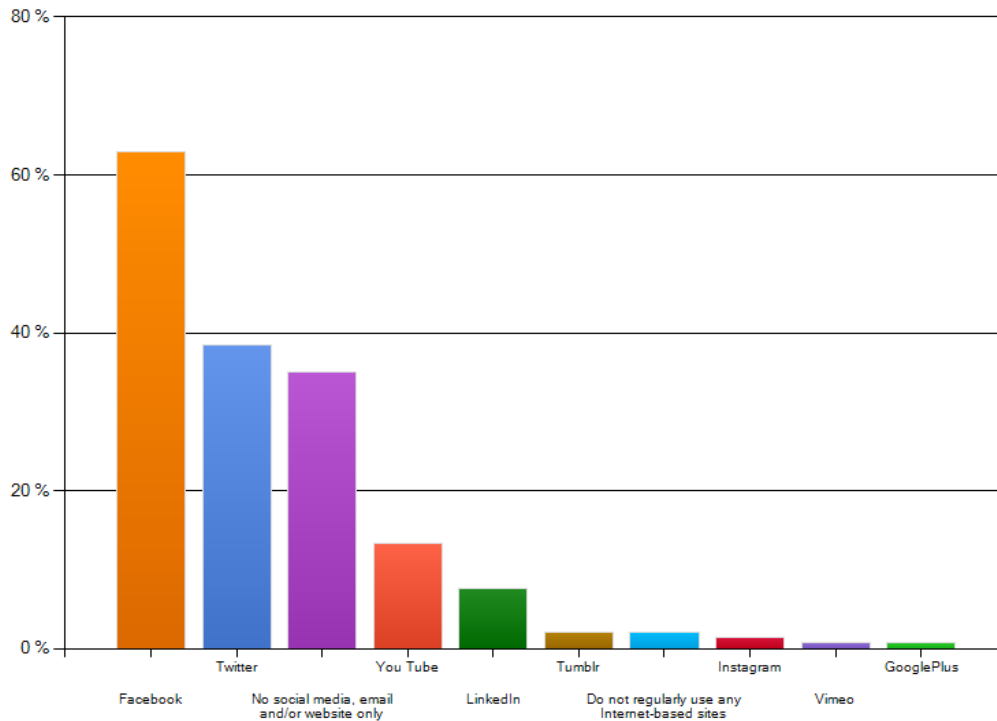
One particular relationship that this survey focused on was that between cyberbullying and sexual violence. Participants generally viewed cyberbullying and sexual violence as strongly related. Key themes that emerged here included:

- The sexually violent nature of much cyberbullying is not frequently recognized.
- Social media does not cause bullying and sexual violence but rather impacts the form that it takes.
- It is important to recognize that there is a high level of harm associated with cyberbullying and sexual violence.
- It is important to talk about intimidation, consent, power, and control in the context of cyberbullying.

One respondent commented that "cyberbullying is misnamed: this is abuse". Anonymity, immediate gratification, and lack of control or monitoring of social media were all mentioned as factors that enable both sexual violence and cyberbullying. As one respondent explained, "It allows it to be more out there and also more hidden, for the attacker." However, another respondent explained that cyberbullying is actually often witnessed by many, and that "there are far more bystanders in the social media world." Many commented that cyberbullying is yet another form of intimate partner violence, but one that allows for an "all-encompassing" type of control.

Preventing Sexual Violence Using Social Media

Survey data also highlight the many ways that social media is used broadly in violence prevention efforts. Table 2 shows the rates of use of social media sites among organizations surveyed.



Facebook is by far the most widely used, with 63 percent of respondents reporting that their organization or program had an account or profile on Facebook. Twitter was the second most widely used at 38 percent. Additionally, 35 percent of respondents reported no social media presence, although a handful of respondents noted that they were part of a larger network that had an online presence (e.g. provincial network of sexual assault and domestic violence treatment centres).

Survey respondents were asked about their knowledge of existing campaigns or programming surrounding the prevention of sexual violence online. A majority of programs and initiatives listed were violence prevention, cyberbullying, and/or sexual violence prevention more generally. Many are largely repurposing offline prevention strategies online, while several newer initiatives focus more specifically on sexual violence facilitated by social media. The specific programs that emerged from this data were incorporated into a broader scan of social media and sexual violence prevention which will be discussed later in this report. An additional objective of the survey, however, was to collect feedback on program successes and challenges in order to being to build a framework for measuring prevention of sexual violence associated with social media.

Defining and evaluating prevention success

Survey responses and our social media scan indicate that many primary prevention programs using social media aim to reduce sexual violence through increased public education and awareness of issues related to sexual violence. Because of the difficulty in isolating and evaluating changes in sexual violence itself, it is generally seen as more feasible to capture changes in public attitudes surrounding sexual violence. Although respondents were not aware of any formally evaluated prevention initiatives surrounding sexual violence and social media, respondents identified several general indicators that they could draw upon to determine program success, including:

- Increased awareness of violence, abuse, and harassment associated with social media among the community (teachers, parents, and students specifically);
- Increase in collaboration and relationship-building stemming from prevention efforts;
- Community support for programs, such as invitations to give repeated presentations and increased requests for presentations;
- Positive feedback from high school groups and teachers;
- Extensions/expansions of program funding

Comments from respondents spoke both to these successes as well as to the need to further develop outcome measures:

We have not had any measured success in terms of quantitative data. However, we have had positive feedback from clients and community members (teachers) about the importance of resources and education about the connection between sexual violence and social media.

Lack of funding and organizational resources was cited by 35% of respondents as the key challenge faced when offering programming in this area. As one respondent explained,

Being resource-challenged as a small organization limits the scope of the work and impact we could have.

Another respondent noted that,

It's difficult to get funding to do prevention work on this specifically, so we always try to incorporate it into our existing projects.

Approximately 75% of respondents specifically mentioned that prevention efforts surrounding sexual violence and social media should focus on youth in some capacity. However, while many mentioned teens, others emphasized the need for prevention programming at an earlier age, i.e. among children and pre-teens (ages 7-13) while a handful also stressed the need for a focus on parents. Several respondents argued that prevention initiatives should not focus solely on school programming since this may exclude youth outside of the education system who experience increased marginalization.

Although the majority acknowledged that youth were an important focus for prevention efforts, some were also cautious about focusing exclusively on youth since social media is used so widely by various demographics and sexual violence is also experienced widely. Importantly, it was also emphasized that youth experience social media differently: for example, LGBTQ individuals, Indigenous people, racialized groups, young mothers, people with disabilities, and homeless youth can all have different experiences surrounding sexual violence and social media, and should be active participants in creating and implementing prevention programming.

Other identified needs and challenges in this area included:

1. Rapidly changing media environments and the need for technology training and support for staff and volunteers;
2. Lack of data and/or evaluation;
3. Need for collaboration with and engagement of parents; and
4. Challenges with getting the message out to a wider audience.

Some respondents also identified problems with some of the current safety strategies/advice and prevention messaging surrounding social media and sexual violence. For example, one respondent explained that:

It's important to create spaces for people to have conversations about sexual violence over social media/digitally, and to see it framed AS sexual violence. Unfortunately, much popular rhetoric on this topic targets women, young women and potential victims, and advises them to avoid or stop using social media; or to avoid using it for flirting, sexual conversations, etc. In [our] perspective, women and young women are using social media and will continue to use social media, including in their dating/intimate partner relationships. It is too simplistic to ask them not to use it. It is also victim-blaming to identify the activities of the targeted person as problematic. We support identifying sexual violence and harassing activities as problematic, and targeting those instead.

The quote highlights the importance of focusing prevention efforts on those who perpetrate sexual harassment and violence using social media, rather than those who are victimized. These ideas will re-surface in the recommendations, including the need to build prevention efforts beyond individual behaviours as well as the need for collaboration among parties working within an anti-cyberbullying framework and those working in the sexual violence prevention arena.

Interviews

The survey asked respondents located in Ottawa if they would be interested in participating in a follow up interview. Twelve participants indicated interest and all were contacted for follow up interviews. From these, nine key informant interviews were scheduled and conducted from March to May 2013. Eight interview participants identified as women and one as a man; all were over 18; and their occupations included front-line service providers, educators, recreational leaders, police, and/or advocacy/NGO organizations. Interviews ranged from approximately 30 to 60 minutes.

The purpose of the interviews was to provide participants with an opportunity to elaborate on survey responses and to get further input on how to approach prevention of sexual violence for youth in Ottawa. A key interview focus was identifying new or unique aspects of sexual violence prevention in the realm of social media. Key themes emerging from interview data included: fostering awareness of sexual violence related to social media, anonymity and cruelty, consent and tensions between self-protection and victim-blaming, engaging parents and bystanders, and training and resources.

Fostering Awareness of Sexual Violence Related to Social Media

Participants frequently identified a need for broader social awareness surrounding sexual violence associated with social media. Specifically, participants noted that it is important that the general population is aware that sexual violence can occur digitally, that women should be aware of how abusive partners can use what they post on social media to track them, and that youth in particular should be encouraged to report and/or seek support if they are experiencing sexual violence online. The first point relates to how we define sexual violence. Here, participants explained that in addition to looking at how to stop digital assault, we also need to talk about what assault is. As one responded commented,

There is more awareness about it now...but still that common belief that you can't assault over the Internet.

Two participants also felt that further understanding is needed about the relationship between luring, sex trafficking, and social media. In addition, one woman explained that although social media as a tool can be extremely valuable to survivors of violence in the long term, there are inherent risks in the short term following separation, and that young women are not always aware of how much of what they post on sites such as Facebook is visible to their abuser and can be used to track them. Finally, two other participants felt that more effort is needed to encourage youth to talk about sexual violence related to social media. Specifically, one person commented that

[It is important to] get the idea out there that it's not cool...and [to] let people know that if you are a victim, or you have experienced some kind of abuse or violence, that it's really important to tell someone...because if it's not being talked about, then we don't know what's going on.

One issue that several participants spoke to was the extent to which youth are aware of criminal charges or other consequences of sending and sharing intimate photos. For example, one participant explained that,

That's part of the education process that we're trying to get through...whatever you put on the social media site no longer belongs to you...It's a hard message to get across.

While many youth may consensually take and share intimate photos, one participant explained that they often see these photos being used abusively after the relationship ends:

We're seeing a lot of intimidation when it comes to the photos...[youth] break up, and then the intimidation starts.

Another felt that prevention efforts will need to help youth understand that,

It is ok to [report abuse]...even in this medium, it is abuse. It is sexual harassment...all those pieces for the young women to know that it's not something to be dismissed, and it's not something to say, 'oh it's ok, it will go away'...the education piece of what it is, what it actually is, that it is abuse.

In this regard, several respondents commented that it is important to communicate 'with' youth, rather than 'at' them, and that peer mentoring and one-on-one communications would be important to combine with broader or more mass messaging/campaigns. In general, responses touched on the idea that part of preventing sexual violence associated with social media should

involve having conversations about how sexual violence can be perpetrated digitally, as well as promoting social norms conveying that sexual bullying and cruelty is unacceptable.

A final point around building knowledge of sexual violence and social media emerged relating to challenges in capturing data about sexual violence related to social media. For example, as one participant explained:

When I say a daily basis I'm not exaggerating...that they will get several calls to deal with anywhere from threats, to intimidation, sexual connotations [related to] particular social media sites...I can't give an exact number, but it is daily.

There were no specific mechanisms identified by participants for tracking sexual violence related to social media. Participants noted there are a variety of ways that social media can be involved in sexual violence (e.g. threats, photos sharing, tracking or monitoring) so it is not always clear or possible to document what role social media plays. However, a representative from the police noted that they were looking at developing a data collection code specifically for social media in their incident reports.

Anonymity and Cruelty

Some participants commented that social media, while not a cause of violence and bullying, perhaps enabled a more exaggerated or extreme form of cruelty due to the potentially anonymous nature of some communications. As one respondent explained,

The amount of people that can...sit behind closed doors and do it on their computer...[We] still look for perpetrators outside, and lurking in the dark alleys, and still don't really think those trolls could be that perpetrator.

Related to this, three participants felt that conflicts among youth often played out through social media instead of face-to-face, and that in doing so often became magnified, exacerbated, or glamorized. This idea was not always directly linked to sexual violence perpetrated by men or boys towards women or girls, but was actually more often brought up in relation to girls' abuse and harassment of other girls (calling them 'slut' or 'whore' or posting videos of physical fights, for example). One participant reflected,

Women buy into the same myths that men do around violence and sexual assault and those types of things...I think it can be used as a way to distance themselves from the situation...[for example], 'I'm going to pile on the attack and then it's not going to happen to me.'

Anonymity may not necessarily mean someone is unidentifiable; participants' responses suggested that the absence of face-to-face contact seemed to provide a certain cover or sense of anonymity that may help to 'ramp up' abuse, even when a contact could be identified through a username, for example.

Another participant noted that social media can act as a means for people "who like to control other people", and that blocking or security mechanisms may not be readily used by youth in this capacity:

There's methods out there, blocking people from your site, but when it comes to youth a lot of them don't use those features, whether they forget to, or they don't care to, or just let it go....they just don't.

In addition to further understanding how different people use various aspects of social media, the blurry lines of online and offline and the shifting nature of communications and electronic relationships, including conflict and abuse, were recurring themes that participants viewed as important to thinking about sexual violence in the context of social media.

Consent and Tensions between Self-Protection and Victim-Blaming

While most participants felt that youth, and girls and young women in particular, should be made aware of and provided with information about online safety, digital permanence, and making responsible choices surrounding what they share online, they simultaneously acknowledged that this was not an ideal situation or effective long-term solution. For example, one participant explained,

[It is] the difference between 'hey young women, this is how you can protect yourselves', as opposed to putting the onus on everybody in the online community to take responsibility for what they're doing.

Another respondent commented that,

It would be great for every agency to have information that we could post for what women could do to keep themselves safe...of course I think there also needs to be....something like the "Don't Be That Guy" campaign, but around expanding it to this topic, to social media, you know especially aimed at younger audiences.

Participants spoke frequently about the importance of youth education, digital media literacy and awareness of the permanent or far-reaching nature of a great deal of social media content. However, several argued that the “problem” was not the sharing of sexually-explicit material, but whether or not this sharing was consensual. For example, one participant explained that,

Somebody consenting to exchanging photos, or sexting, with somebody- there's nothing wrong with that. The issue then becomes if that other person chooses to share it without the consent of the person who's been photographed. I don't like the fact that we're demonizing young people for sexting...let's talk about where the responsibility lies for this type of thing. It's kind of like the same as we get with victim-blaming and sexual assault- it all somehow comes back to what the woman did or did not do...It's just it's happening now in cyberspace.

Two participants spoke directly to the need for young women to be able to draw their own boundaries and define consent related to social media. For example,

Informed consent would definitely be a key piece. Giving young women in particular, I think, the language or the skills to help them figure out in their own minds what are they comfortable doing, that they don't have to give in if there's pressure to do this all the time, helping them establish some boundaries...and that consent does apply to social media.

Another participant also explained that she was aware of pressure surrounding young women and sending sexual photos:

A lot of young women are being pushed to accept a lot of things, as in 'come on, it's ok, everybody does it...why are you being such a prude?' So the lines that the young woman might have made for herself are being blurred, and she's going beyond it, not because of a conscious decision she's making, but by being pushed by pressure, by peer pressure...everybody saying 'yeah, it's not a problem, just send it out'...not wanting to be the one who says anything.

Additionally, one participant commented that the availability of social media and digital communications means that taking and sharing photos is perhaps “even more tempting and more easily done” and that, because of this, consent is a prominent issue. Having conversations about consent and fostering community awareness of sexual violence associated with social media were frequently discussed in the context of education. To this end, some participants

felt that parents had an important role to play, while other responses focused on broader community responsibilities and the engagement of bystanders.

Education and Engaging Parents and Bystanders

Participants felt generally that education was a key component and should be youth-focused to as young as five or six years old. The specific formats recommended varied; for example, three participants specifically discussed the importance of peer mentors or role models, and several other participants spoke to a youth-driven video, workshops and presentations, public service announcements and/or school-based programming.

Parents were also identified as a key player in prevention in terms of being aware of their children's' online activities, supporting them in developing healthy relationships, and also in modeling their own positive role behaviour. Two participants expressed that social media could be a bit daunting for parents, who might have a hard time knowing where to begin if they are not active social media users. Another explained that they often see parents having a very difficult time setting boundaries when it comes to social media use:

"Targeting the bystanders, the people who are the ones who got the message and just forward it on, for example, instead of stopping and thinking about what are the implications of doing this, can I take a stand here...I think we have to engage people in those discussions in a meaningful way."

We've had instances where the parents have played hardball and they've taken away [social media] from the child and the kid has gone ballistic, because you've taken away their ability to interact with their group...That's their world. That's how they talk with all of their friends at once from sitting in their own room...and when you take that away, you've taken their world away.

Beyond the focus of parental supervision, engagement, and helping youth to set boundaries surrounding social media use, other participants spoke about the importance of engaging the broader community in prevention, including online communities and those who might not see themselves as supporting or facilitating abuse. One participant felt that community empowerment messaging about what people can do to identify and stop sexual violence has been successful, and should be thought about in social media contexts. She further explained,

People have a responsibility to stop in and say, this isn't cool...I think bystander approach [can involve] saying 'this isn't ok' on Facebook, or tweeting it.

Social media is unique in that it can often be accessed by many by definition; therefore sexual violence occurring in these spaces is likely to be publicly viewable. Peers and online community members may be well-placed and can be encouraged to speak up or report abuse or harassment occurring in social media if the tools to do so are provided.

Media literacy, online literacy, and anti-homophobia education were all mentioned as important areas of youth and parental engagement. Additionally, sexualization and misogyny surrounding women in broader media and society in general was brought up by three participants as a challenge related to prevention and education surrounding sexual violence and social media. For example, one person explained that prevention in this area would need to engage with,

The idea of rape culture and women as objects...it's still the same fundamental messaging in a lot of ways, it's just being applied to a new medium, and we're not so good at [preventing sexual violence] in any medium.

One participant also commented that any programming would need to be highly engaging to compete in a busy media environment with so many different initiatives. Several participants also commented on the potential (and current practice) of social media to be engaged in prevention, and that some victims/survivors had already had success reaching out for support or raising awareness through these channels.

Need for Training and Resource Development

In addition to education for parents and bystanders, several participants felt that the development of training and resources for sexual violence prevention involving social media is important. Funding and resources was mentioned by several participants as a challenge to develop training and programming. In this regard, respondents acknowledged that collaboration among organizations would be an important consideration. For example,

We would love to be looking at prevention...not just prevention on how to protect yourself...[but] working with other organizations and trying to hit the nail on the target.

Another participant explained that prevention efforts would need to be multi-faceted, stating that:

We can only do so much, and one of our sayings that we have is that we can't be everything to everybody all the time...to say that there is one panacea that's going to deal with this issue - I don't think there is.

Training and resources appear particularly important given that service providers are facing new challenges related to responding to sexual violence and social media. For example,

If there's a concern around safety, around physical safety...we would know that we can bring in [the authorities, counseling]. But it feels...it feels huge. And how do you support someone who has had a photo taken of them that is now all over the world, and the web, and you can't take it back, and it's like a whole new dimension to it...it's layered, and re-traumatizing all the time...It's really complex...and we're not necessarily well prepared to deal with it.

In addition to providing education and support services surrounding sexual violence associated with social media, many youth-focused programs are now beginning to offer information and resources via social media. Interactive websites, games, Facebook campaigns, and mobile apps are just a few of the many ways that various social media are being taken up as sites of sexual violence prevention. An overview of these initiatives is presented in Appendices A and B. The next section of this report summarizes some key themes from these social media and sexual violence prevention initiatives.

Social Media Scan

In exploring how social media is currently being used for sexual violence prevention, we are looking for ways to integrate and build on what we know from the literature, survey, and interviews to develop recommendations for prevention programming surrounding sexual violence and social media.

"Social media is also used to deliver information on the risks of crime, current media stories about criminal incidents, and promote prevention campaigns."

As social media becomes increasingly prominent in our social lives, new avenues through which anti-violence efforts can reach youth populations open up. Examples might include the development of mobile applications to provide

information and resources surrounding sexual violence, or 'Tweetups' (a Twitter meet up) to discuss a certain issue. Many prevention strategies that have been established offline have also moved online. An increasing number of organizations and initiatives have a presence on Facebook and Twitter where they offer information about their organization and often share articles about sexual violence and women's rights and post prevention materials (posters, images, memes, etc.) and other related resources aimed at youth. Social networks populate within these platforms in new ways, encompassing a wide range of contacts – not *just* friends or *just* relatives or *just* co-workers but often a mixture of individuals from a variety of social circles, all collapsed into one space (boyd & Marwick, 2011). When sexual violence prevention efforts incorporate their public education efforts within social media spaces, they can potentially reach a more diverse range of audiences. For example, offline efforts often take place within very specific spaces such as high schools.

"It's important to create spaces for people to have conversations about sexual violence over social media, and to see it framed AS sexual violence"

Overall, the majority of campaigns are focused primarily on raising awareness by spreading information, offering resources or debunking myths with the hope that larger conversations about sexual violence will occur and behaviors will change over time. Through these sites they seek to raise awareness and build an online community of supporters. They may also invite supporters to interact by pledging to work

within their communities to end sexual violence (and perhaps even post a 'badge' or image to their own social media profile to indicate their personal commitment to this goal). When supporters share an organization's material through social media sites or interact with the organization's social media profile by commenting, 'liking,' 're-tweeting,' etc., the supporters' wider network can then also be exposed to the messaging. Closely related is the prevention strategy that involves directly engaging in dialogue around issues related to sexual violence, which holds a lot of potential in the realm of social media. An example of this is the Draw the Line campaign that invites dialogue around particular scenarios where sexual violence may be occurring or about to occur and seeks to promote conversations about how one might intervene as a bystander.

Program Evaluation

Evaluation can focus on different aspects of programs, as presented in the text box [refer to page 45]. Of the various types of evaluations, only impact evaluations can capture long term-behavioural change (Johnson & MacKay, 2011). Developing an understanding of 'what works' in sexual violence

prevention is challenging and time consuming in any media. The speed at which social media has developed and been taken up presents increased challenges to many traditional research and evaluation methods, but also new opportunities. Thinking about how to measure and evaluate success in social media and sexual violence prevention programming is an important emerging area. Many primary prevention programs using social media aim to reduce sexual violence through increased public education and awareness of issues related to sexual violence. Because of the difficulty in isolating and evaluating changes in sexual violence itself, it is generally seen as more feasible to capture changes in public attitudes surrounding sexual violence. For example, Johnson & MacKay (2011, pg. 16) explain that evaluations will frequently measure factors thought to be precursors or correlates to sexual violence such as rape supportive attitudes, beliefs about gender stereotypes, attitudes towards gender equality, knowledge of rape-related information, and behavioural intentions to commit sexual violence.

There are far too many anti-violence organizations and campaigns seeking to end sexual violence that incorporate social media in their preventative strategizing to highlight all of their efforts in this report. The results of this social media scan offer an assortment of different types of prevention or awareness-raising efforts by a variety of organizations and individuals engaging in the work of ending sexual violence, with a focus on Ontario-based programs. More in-depth descriptions of several programs are also provided in an appendix to this report (Appendices A and B). Before discussing the ways in which evaluation of social media campaigns can integrate and build on traditional sexual violence prevention, we consider a case study of MTV's 2009-2011 "A Thin Line" + *(Dis)Connected* campaign. While this campaign does not specifically identify the issues it is targeting as sexual violence, and instead uses a broader framework of digital abuse, it provides a unique and high-profile example of prevention efforts employing multiple social media aspects for both campaign implementation and evaluation.

Formative evaluation
Conducted in the early stages of program development to provide initial feedback

Process evaluation
Looks at program materials and activities to see if the program has been implemented as planned

Outcome evaluation
Studies the immediate/ short-term products or results of a program

Impact evaluation
Attempts to identify long-term impacts as well as unintended results of program

Source: Building Prevention: Sexual Violence, Youth and Drinking (2011)

MTV's Dis(Connected) & A Thin Line

A THIN LINE campaign was MTV's three-year communications strategy designed to confront digital abuse issues affecting U.S. youth (Harmony Institute, 2012). The focal point of this campaign was the 2011 premier of the MTV original movie (DIS)CONNECTED, a fictional film featuring four main characters and their experiences with digital abuse, sexting, and exploitation, online harassment, and suicide. Following the film screening was The After Show, a televised audience discussion supported by guest panelists Dan Savage of the It Gets Better Project (www.itgetsbetter.org) and Vinny Guadagnino of MTV's reality show Jersey Shore. (DIS)CONNECTED reached nearly five million total viewers across its two airings, with 388,000 views of The After Show. The site's "Over the Line?" feature received more than 6,500 submissions depicting real occurrences. Multiple research methods involving teenagers and young adults were used to assess the campaign, including focus group discussions, online analytics, social media analysis, and a viewer survey. Social media analytics conducted for this evaluation included more than 13,000 relevant Twitter posts as well as exported data from A THIN LINE and (DIS)CONNECTED Facebook pages (e.g. number of users, "likes", comments, page views). The evaluation conducted by the Harmony Institute (2012) found that (DIS)CONNECTED had six core areas of success:

- Effectively modeled attitudes that often lead to digital abuse;
- Reached viewers using skillful storytelling and a strong emotional appeal;
- Changed the likelihood of viewers to commit actions that lead to digital abuse;
- Increased the likelihood of viewers to engage in measures that mitigate or prevent digital abuse;
- Promoted personal responsibility and support for victims
- Particularly relevant to sexual violence and social media from this campaign is that 66% of viewers reported that after seeing the movie they felt that spreading sexually revealing images of someone online in order to embarrass them is a more serious activity than they had previously thought.

However, these evaluation findings raise several important points surrounding defining and measuring success related to social media campaigns, and particularly in the context of sexual violence prevention. First, this evaluation is conducted as an 'entertainment evaluation' and its findings are focused on "viewer comprehension, attitude, and response to the intersecting storylines of its four main characters" (Harmony Institute, 2012, pg. 2). As such, it is only able to capture viewers' reports of whether they are more or less likely to perpetrate, support, or prevent digital abuse, rather than their behaviours. Additionally, we do not know the extent to which these attitudes would hold up over time.

Finally, we would need to consider how the target audience of prevention efforts and the target audience of this campaign match up. For example, the demographic information on survey participants reveals that 86 percent of viewers were over the age of 18, which is on average older than the target group identified in our survey and interview data.

Although this campaign is much larger in scope and resources than the majority of existing social media campaigns surrounding sexual violence and digital abuse, it is a good example of the possibilities offered by social media for interactive prevention initiatives that are implemented and evaluated through multiple platforms.



The THINK poster campaign

Community Consultation

On May 28, 2013, over 130 community members gathered at City Hall in Ottawa, Ontario for a community forum on sexual violence, social media, and youth. The event was hosted by Crime Prevention Ottawa and coordinated in partnership with the Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women. The purpose of this event was to present preliminary research findings to community stakeholders and to obtain feedback and further direction on developing a framework for the prevention of sexual violence in the context of social media. Participants included parents, teachers and school board officials, youth mentors, anti-violence advocates, social workers, psychologists, nurses and health care practitioners, shelter workers, police and criminal justice officials, and researchers.

The event consisted of several components:

- Opening remarks by Mayor Jim Watson, City Councillor Shad Qadri, and Stefanie Lomatski, Executive Director, Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women.

- A screening of a ten-minute clip from the 2011 ABC Family Original Cyberbullying to provide context for the connections among issues related to cyberbullying and sexual violence.
- A 30-minute presentation by Jordan Fairbairn, lead researcher and PhD Candidate, Carleton University, explaining the research and summarizing findings to date. This was followed by a 20-minute question-and-answer session with forum participants.
- Five breakout sessions to discuss reactions and responses to research findings and to provide input on further direction and strategies for prevention.
- Ongoing participation and discussion via Twitter throughout the event, using the following hashtags: #svsmy, #CPO, #OCTEVAW.⁹

The event invitation and research presentations (English and French) can be found in Appendices E through G. The remainder of this report will discuss the purpose and organization of the breakout sessions and summarize the feedback provided by participants and directions for prevention planning.

Breakout Sessions

A one-hour breakout session followed the research presentation and question and answer period. There were four English breakout groups and one bilingual group. Volunteer facilitators recruited by the Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women guided the discussions around three broad questions: 1) what were participants' reactions to the research? 2) Do the findings reflect participants' experiences with youth? And 3) what do participants see as our next steps?

Volunteers took notes throughout the discussion, and participants were also provided with note cards on which they could write additional feedback and/or expand on their ideas if they wished. At the end of the session, the five breakout groups came back together to provide a summary of their discussion. Group notes and individual note cards were provided to the researchers following the event. These were read with the following objectives:

- **Responses to the research:** What were people's reactions to the research? What resonated with community members?

⁹ A hashtag is used to mark and organize key words or topics in a Twitter posting (Tweet). (<https://support.twitter.com/articles/49309-what-are-hashtags-symbols>)

- **Directions for prevention:** What gaps or issues with the research did community members see as being important to consider in moving forward? What community direction was provided for program and resource development in this area? What were some concrete 'next steps' that arose out of these consultations?

The remainder of this report summarizes the findings related to these questions and presents recommendations stemming from the research project as a whole.

Responses to the research

Forum participants expressed a great deal of support for the research. Their comments indicated that they felt that the relationship among sexual violence, social media and youth is an important but not well-understood area. Participants acknowledged the preliminary nature of the research and one group expressed that they were pleasantly surprised to see the depth of research conducted to date. The absence of youth voices was noted and identified as a key priority moving forward with research and programming.

Several comments affirmed that youth service providers are encountering many challenges related to harassment and abuse with social media. Other participants noted that they had family members who had experienced abuse via social media. One person commented that while they were aware of family members experiencing harassment through social media, they had not thought of it as violence before this event.

Front line staff and criminal justice personnel are seeing an emerging relationship between social media and sexual violence. In one case, a participant spoke directly to the connection between sexual assault and social media in their work:

Many of the adolescent victims I see have cyber-bullying in some form as part of their assault. Many of them have actually been videotaped being sexually assaulted and then it is distributed around. The impact of the cyber-bullying is often more detrimental as it continues on once the sexual assault is over. They are continually victimized.

Questions raised following the research presentation highlighted the need to further unpack the research findings from the survey surrounding awareness of sexual violence and social media, and what we know and do not know in this context. For example, have service providers become aware of sexual violence in the context of social media through interactions with their clients specifically, or from hearing about these incidents from co-workers or others in their community? How prevalent and frequent are these forms of abuse among the

youth they work with? While the findings from this preliminary survey provided an important initial step, it is clear that there is significant community interest in knowing more about these issues.

Defining and framing the issue(s)

The forum identified a clear need to have further conversations and to deepen understandings of sexual violence, social media, and youth. Participant feedback identified a desire to “spotlight”, “draw attention to”, “define”, and “understand” the connections among sexual violence, social media, and youth, suggesting that more nuanced understanding of these issues is required.

In this regard, participants identified several key topics that should be further explored in framing the issues around sexual violence and social media (listed here and discussed further below):

- Intersections of sexual violence related to social media with other issues (e.g. mental health, alcohol consumption);
- The use of the term bullying/cyberbullying;
- Shaming;
- Coercion and consent.

Participants at the community event represented diverse sectors and work with youth in a variety of capacities. Stemming from this, their experience suggests that sexual violence related to social media needs to be considered in the context of overlapping and intersecting issues, such as mental health and stigmatization, alcohol consumption, criminalization of women and people of colour, high rates of violence against Aboriginal women and girls, and sexual exploitation and abuse of children and youth more broadly. Participants noted that sexual violence related to social media does not only affect youth and young women, but that many adult women, boys and men, and transgender people have unique and traumatizing experiences of sexual violence that intersect with social media.

Participant discussions of cyberbullying brought up several tensions and areas of further attention related to defining and framing sexual violence in the context of social media. Preliminary research findings presented at the forum demonstrated that, while there is much written about cyberbullying in literature and programming resources to date, there is little that focuses on cyberbullying as sexual violence (for example, bullying survivors of sexual assault, slut-shaming, and homophobic bullying online). Feedback from participants expanded on this idea by questioning the use of the term bullying and/or cyberbullying at all in these discussions, explaining that these are “sanitized” and “depoliticized” terms

that gloss over the sexist, racist, homophobic and/or transphobic nature of much online cruelty.

For many parents and educators, the use of the term 'bullying' in the context of social media seems to be a useful starting point for conversations about sexual violence occurring through social media, since it is a term that many are familiar with and have heard in relation to recent high profile cases. However, the use of the term "bullying" is problematic in conversations about sexual violence. A challenge highlighted by the discussions at the community event is that "bullying", as a label, is not as effective as fostering awareness of the ways that various groups experience greater discrimination, harassment, and violence based on their gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and/or many other experiences and characteristics. Moving forward then, it is important to **thoughtfully unpack the use of the term bullying in conversations about sexual violence.**

A second theme identified around defining and framing sexual violence and social media relates to shaming, which participants discussed through notions of victim shaming, shaming of the perpetrator, and slut shaming. When we talk about sexual violence and social media, participants noted that it is important to talk more about how victims are blamed and shamed for their abuse. While this occurs outside of social media as well, participants felt that social media adds a new layer of harassment, for example, youth who have experienced sexual violence are often the target of further abuse from their abuser, and/or their abuser's friends. One example that several participants referred to in relation to this was the 2012 Steubenville sexual assault, where a young woman (after having been recorded being repeatedly sexually assaulted by several young men while unconscious) was the victim of extensive harassment and abuse from people in her community who believed she was 'ruining the lives' of the young men who were charged and later convicted with sexually assaulting her.¹⁰

An additional point brought up in discussions of shaming was that some teachers, mentors, and front line workers have seen cases where 'the bully becomes the bullied'. This might be where the person perpetrating harassment is discovered and then their peers "pile on" and the individual becomes the target of harassment. Another participant suggested that those who may experience significant lack of power in one setting (e.g. at home) might seek out hero status when they "destroy" someone through social media, for example. These discussions highlighted that it is important to remember that the lines between those who are violent and those who experience violence are not

¹⁰ <http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/news/steubenville-rape-case>

always clear or unchanging. Some participants felt that youth, to varying degrees, may find themselves in situations where they fear that if they do not join in, they themselves will become the target of abuse.

Participants noted that while people of all genders experience harassment and abuse online, the effects and experiences vary greatly. Girls and young women were seen as more likely to be sexually harassed through the posting of photos. One example provided was the frequent shaming of young girls and women for 'selfies' (i.e. photos taken of oneself and shared online), often in the form of derogatory name-calling such as 'slut' or 'whore'. Many participants noted that efforts to stop sexual harassment should increase efforts to focus on those who are perpetrating abuse by forwarding photos or participating in sexist name calling, as two examples. Other participants felt that youth experience significant pressure to take and send photos that are viewed as sexual and felt that conversations about youth sexuality, emotional intelligence, and self-esteem were important areas to focus on. As further conversations about youth sexuality, sexual exploitation, and sexual violence take place, it is important to **consider the ways that blame and shame are used to perpetrate, explain, or justify sexual harassment in social media.**

Discussions of *consent* and *coercion* were final themes identified as important related to defining and framing sexual violence and social media. As one participant noted, "we don't talk much about sexual violence/relationships/power in the context of social media". In the context of sexting and consent, several participants indicated that it is important to have conversations that educate and empower youth to set boundaries and make informed decisions. Participants noted that social media can help to facilitate conversations around consent and coercion. For example, many Twitter comments highlighted, in particular, the social media poster from Thatsnotcool.com featured in the research presentation with a text that read "When you pressure me for nude pics, I throw up in my mouth a little".



When talking about sexual violence and social media, one participant also pointed out that it is important to let people define their experience: they may not define what happened to them as bullying, for example, and it is important to be aware that, like all people, youth will interpret their experiences in many different ways. Overall, the responses to the research findings underscored the need for more research and attention to defining and addressing the complex intersections of sexual violence and social media. As one participant noted, "the lack of understanding is frustrating". Yet there are several efforts underway to build a knowledge-base in this area, as several participants commented that they or someone they work with are engaged in research pertaining to one or more aspects of sexual violence, social media, and youth, which are included in the social media scan in Appendices A and B.

Focus areas for prevention

In addition to getting community feedback on the research to date, the forum's second objective was to identify key areas for prevention programming and to put forward recommendations and strategies for further action. The breakout discussions covered a wide range of topics and Key topics discussed in the breakout groups included: the need for research, unique challenges in preventing sexual violence related to social media; the need for youth-driven initiatives; learn from and connect with existing campaigns, organizations, and resources; the role of parents; the role of schools; changing social norms promoting violence and abuse; healthy relationships and sex education; critical media skills and bystander intervention; and the role of social media as a prevention tool.

The need for research

Participants noted challenges in moving forward in prevention efforts without a solid research foundation. In particular, the perceived lack of knowledge about youth experiences of sexual violence online, healthy relationships in the context of social media, and where youth get information were seen as challenges that needed to be addressed to create a solid foundation for prevention efforts. The relationship between alcohol consumption, sexual violence, and social media was brought up as a specific concern of participants. Some felt that this was an important part of having conversations about consent as it relates to taking and sharing of images and social media, particularly given the speed at which images can be disseminated.

There is emerging Canadian research on youth and social media (e.g. MediaSmarts), youth and sexting (e.g. Karaian, 2012), as well as emerging international work on sexual violence and emerging communications technologies (Bluett-Boyd et al., 2013) that are helpful starting points for understanding the complexity of intersecting issues. There are also many

questions to be explored about program effectiveness in this area. What do we know about sexual violence prevention efforts that can help to inform this work in the context of social media? How can we define and track sexual violence in this context? How will we determine successful programming in preventing sexual violence related to social media?

Unique challenges posed by social media

In approaching prevention of sexual violence related to social media, participants also cautioned against becoming overly focused on the details of particular technologies or social media platforms since new apps and new sites are emerging every day. For example, one participant noted that much of the current discussion is focused on Facebook, which can be described as “just the tip of the iceberg” given the more recently popular sites such as Ask.fm,¹¹ or Snapchat,¹² as examples. Another participant described how trying to prevent abuse and harassment related to technology can feel like a game of “whack-a-mole” where trying to anticipate and react to sexual violence in the context of the next technological trend to “pop up” is overwhelming and not productive as a long term strategy.

Therefore, in this constantly shifting social media landscape, participants stressed that it is important to identify unique or more salient elements of sexual violence occurring through social media and consider the specific challenges presented such as the frequent anonymity of interactions, the permanency and ease of distribution of images, and the ability to monitor one’s location through posts, tagging and geo-tracking information, as just a few examples. In this context, it is also important to talk to a wide representation of youth about the characteristics and effects of sexual violence occurring through social media.

The importance of youth-driven initiatives

A central message from the community event is that youth must be active creators and participants in prevention efforts. Related to research and data collection, participants spoke to the need to get a more nuanced picture of youth experiences as a starting point. One participant stated that we should “ask what they think and the discussion can stem from that.” Another Tweet from the event read that “Youth are smart! Let them help define what bullying is”. Others raised the point that we should not only be talking to youth about

¹¹ Ask.fm is an anonymous question and answer site launched in 2010 and has been described as being “increasingly used as a means to communicate abusive, bullying, and sexualized content.” <http://www.webwise.ie/AskfmGuide.shtml>

¹² Snapchat is “a messaging app that makes photos disappear moments after being sent”. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/shortcuts/2013/jun/26/snapchat-self-destructing-message-app-phenomenon>

their negative experiences, but also about positive experiences with respect to social media. And, if talking about negative experiences of sexual violence, harassment, and abuse through social media, to also ask questions about how they got through the experience, what helped or assisted them?

However, some participants expressed concerns about generational divides and identified challenges that needed to be overcome when attempting to engage youth. For example, one participant felt that there would be challenges getting through to youth that felt “invincible”; those who feel that sexual violence would not happen to them or, further, challenges in coming up against belief systems where “girls feel they need to sexualize themselves or be noticed by boys or to gain popularity”. Others stressed that the development stage of youth in relation to their capacity to understand root causes needs to be taken into consideration.

In terms of specific youth-driven programming, participants brought forward ideas including a youth-led Blog with educational information about sexual violence and social media; a collection of short essays written by teens and young adults who have experienced sexual violence related to social media; and engaging youth leaders to facilitate workshops or other programs with their peers, “because youth listen to youth”. Related to engaging youth leaders, however, one participant also raised the point that youth leaders may represent some groups of youth well, but may not be representative of particular groups of youth that need additional supports. This discussion surrounding youth-created and youth-driven initiatives speaks to a need to further unpack the category of ‘youth’, recognizing that there is great diversity in an age range of 12-24, as well as by various communities in Ottawa and elsewhere.

Learning from and connecting with existing campaigns, organizations, and resources

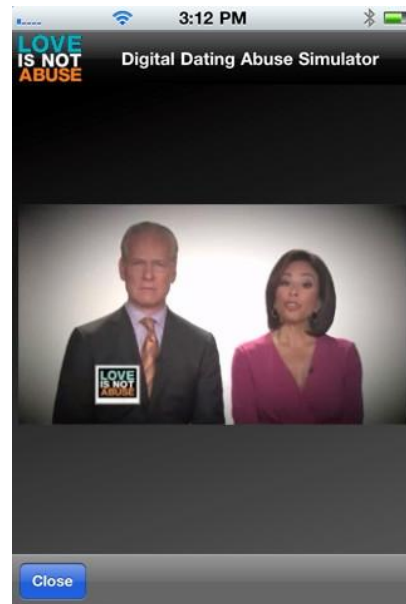
Through Twitter, follow-up communications, and breakout group discussions at the community forum, it is apparent that there are many voices of knowledge and initiatives planned or underway both locally and nationally related to sexual violence, social media, and youth. Additionally, programs or initiatives not directly related to sexual violence and social media may still provide valuable insights and models that future research and programming can draw from. Some examples brought up by forum participants include the online resource *Stepping Stones: A Resource on Youth Development*¹³, a mobile app currently in development as part of the Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women’s *Preventing Violence Against Women on Campuses Project*, community police

¹³ http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/topics/youthopportunities/steppingstones/youth_policy.aspx

presentations in schools, and efforts of grassroots and community groups and organizations to explore intersections of social media and sexual violence.

The role of parents

Many who attended the community forum are themselves parents or interact with parents on a regular basis. Participants felt that many parents feel overwhelmed since “parents want to fix everything” yet many feel that they lack the knowledge to do so when it comes to safety settings in social media, technological platforms, and various terminology or “lingo” related to social media. Parents were described as frequently “scared out of their mind” to talk about sex and social media. Because of this, parents often resort to a more surveillance type of role which participants felt may undermine communication and trust with their children. Instead, open lines of parent and youth communication need to be promoted. Given the apprehension identified by participants, it may be beneficial to look at developing resources and tools that help parents start these conversations in the context of social media and also support their children who have experienced sexual violence generally.



The Love is Not Abuse campaign helps parents understand the types of technological abuse many youth endure in relationships.

In the context of conversations about these issues with children, participants explained that it was possible and would be beneficial for parents to talk about healthy relationships from a young age, prior to having conversations about sex. How to treat others, respect for personal boundaries, and asking permission before taking or sharing a photo were brought up as examples of topics that should be broached with children at a young age. Looking at one's own behaviour as parents as a starting point of conversation was also identified as important. For example, participants talked about how parents frequently share photos of their children through social media, and that children and youth do not have a say in this practice. The suggestion was made that parents should be talking to their children about this and be aware of the double-standard at play when critiquing youth for sharing photos of themselves widely online when many have experienced this since birth as the norm.

The majority of feedback surrounding parental engagement was directed towards parents of early adolescents and teens and less directly at young adults or youth who may not live with their parents. In conversations about the role of parents, participants stressed that it is important to not assume that all youth have parental relationships. While there was a great deal of feedback that encouraged parental engagement and awareness of healthy relationships online, some participants also cautioned that this was not in itself a solution. As one participant noted, "parental modeling only works if you have model parents." In much the same way that prevention efforts need to be aware of the diversity of youth identity and experiences, it needs to be acknowledged that parents are not a homogenous group and will come to the table with various circumstances and abilities to engage. For example, parents may themselves be survivors, or perpetrators, of violence or abuse, including technology-related abuse, or may themselves be both 'youth' and 'parents'.

The role of schools

A number of forum participants noted that schools provide an important role and opportunity to establish or facilitate sexual violence prevention initiatives focused on social media. School board representatives present expressed a desire to collaborate on strategies to address sexual violence and social media. Participants felt that youth, if given the opportunity, would have a great deal to contribute to workshops and discussions about sexual violence and social media. It was suggested that the recently added introduction to gender studies course in high schools could be used as an opportunity to have further conversations about consent and social media, about sexual violence, and about critical media skills. For example, one participant provided an example of a way where both parents and schools could be engaged:

"Wouldn't it be cool to have a critical thinking/gender studies class in middle or high school and the students are responsible to create a workshop for their parents, where they have to teach them about technology and social media. [Hopefully] this would force students to think critically about social media as well as educating parents."

In pursuing initiatives within the school system, participants stressed several additional aspects to consider. First, it is important to know the specific school environment and the various influences or dynamics at play within the student body (e.g. key leaders, cliques and peer groups, social media use patterns), and to consider how this will affect ability and receptiveness to various programs. Second, it is crucial to remember that not all youth attend school on a regular basis, and that school-based initiatives will need to go hand in hand with extra efforts to reach out and collaborate with those who work with youth outside the school system. Finally, there will be challenges related to adding

material to an already-full school curriculum that will require reprioritization and organizing in a way that makes room for programming around sexual violence and social media.

Social norms around violence and abuse

This event highlighted the importance of discussing and defining sexual violence, and in drawing links with conversations around cyberbullying while not using 'sexual violence' and 'cyberbullying' interchangeably. However, many participants felt that there were strong links between harassment and abuse perpetrated through social media and violence in society generally. One example brought forward by participants is the proliferation of attack ads in political campaigns, which many saw as high profile examples of bullying that normalize cruelty and harassment occurring through various types of media and popular culture. Some parents felt that seeing this encourages youth to think, "If you do it, why wouldn't we?"

While many solutions regarding individual efforts were put forward (e.g. modeling behaviour, open lines of communication), participants felt that a framework to prevent sexual violence associated with social media also has to take place at a broader societal level. As one participant explained, we need to "address issues completely...it's easy to say "don't do this" and "don't do that", but base problems need to be addressed. Asking questions such as "where is slut-shaming coming from?" and "what are youth learning from us?" were identified as important in taking action to not simply change individual behaviour in relation to social media, but in having conversations about ending sexual violence in all spaces.

Healthy relationships and sex education

Participants felt that preventing sexual violence related to social media would need to involve conversations about healthy relationships more broadly, as well as a focus and extension of sex education. A key point that was stressed here is that these initiatives must begin early and these conversations must be underway with children well before adolescence, as developmentally appropriate.

Important questions identified here included:

- Considering what sex education looks like with the inclusion of social media,
- Thinking about sexual harassment as "not just one extreme but on a continuum";
- Developing and respecting boundaries, and defining healthy sexual relationships in the context of social media.

- Promoting respect, consideration, and kindness throughout all relationships and in all spaces.

Different views were presented on the extent to which youth should be taught about what was healthy in terms of sex and intimate relationships and some felt that youth should be encouraged to define their own boundaries. There are various tensions present surrounding youth and sexual experimentation that are important to acknowledge in pursuing prevention of sexual violence and promotion of healthy relationships generally. Some participants felt that youth, particularly younger adolescents, have difficulty determining healthy sexual behaviour in a social environment that many people view as extremely sexualized and frequently exploitive of youth sexuality. In developing prevention efforts around sexual violence and social media, it is important then to consider the ways in which mass media representation may be condoning or glorifying sexual violence in various forms, and towards particular groups, while recognizing that the sexual exploration and the development of healthy sexuality are part of youth development. In this context, participants expressed concern with “the documentation of experimentation”. Here, some participants suggested that the participation in sexting or sharing of sexual images occurs in an environment where self-esteem and sexual expression online is strongly linked, and participants felt that youth are not often aware of the potential for negative consequences. Integrating this feedback with earlier discussions of blaming and shaming and challenging social norms, however, it will be important to focus not simply on changing behaviours (e.g. non-consensual sharing of intimate images), but on changing the consequences (e.g. double standards for sexual expression for young men and young women). In this context, it is also particularly important to connect critical media skills with conversations around healthy relationships and sex education.

Critical media literacy and bystander intervention

Participants felt that there should be emphasis on developing critical media skills for people of all ages, with a focus on starting at a young age. Mass media, including television, movies, music videos, were identified as problematic for normalizing behaviour that is exploitive and degrading. Several participants expressed the need for role models for children and youth, both in terms of role models who could speak out against sexual violence, and who were perceived as successful without being seen as “sexual icons”.

As an extension of role models and critical media skills, several participants commented that bystander intervention models should be pursued in social media spaces, for example by encouraging people to speak up when they see sexual harassment occurring online or to not forward images without someone's permission. In terms of broader media literacy, sexual violence prevention work

and ongoing social media campaigns have highlighted and critiqued media representation that condones or promotes sexual assault or gender-based violence in various forms, and many of the campaigns and organizations (some of whose work is included in the social media scan) provide valuable tools to foster critical media skills in the context of social media.

Social media and prevention

Participants emphasized the importance of looking to social media as a site of prevention, given the extensive opportunities it presents for youth engagement and innovative programming. Many broader sexual violence prevention campaigns (e.g. Draw The Line, That's Not Cool) have been pursuing social media strategies to date and were identified by participants as examples of how social media can be used as a prevention tool. Relating back to engaging youth, one participant commented that they “would love to see initiatives on youth educating adults” surrounding social media. Another participant emphasized the importance of integrating social media into school curriculum as a tool and as an opportunity for “teachable moments for intervention.”

There were several additional points raised by participants that were not discussed extensively at the community forum, but will likely need to be considered further moving forward. For example, a lack of funding for many programs and organizations also presents continual challenges, and the extent and nature of social media sites’ responsibility to prevent sexual violence from occurring is also an area of debate. Finally, calls for the legal system to introduce new laws in focusing on “cyberbullying and the non-consensual distribution of intimate images”¹⁴ must be informed and guided by the vast body of expertise surrounding sexual violence and as well as those invested in social media.

Conclusion and Recommendations

A review of recent research and data collected for this project suggests that sexual violence associated with social media is an emerging area where prevention efforts are needed. Recent Canadian cases such as the suicides of Amanda Todd and Rehteah Parsons highlight the seriousness of issues surrounding sexual violence and the ways in which bullying and sexual violence intersect with social media. It is also important to remember that there are many voices and numerous stories absent from mainstream media as well as current research, and that sexual violence in general is greatly underreported.

¹⁴ <http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/other-autre/cndii-cdncii/index.html>

This report has explored sexual violence related to social media as an emerging area of research and prevention. In addition to a literature review, surveys with Ontario stakeholders and interviews with Ottawa service providers, this report incorporates feedback gathered from a community forum hosted by Crime Prevention Ottawa in May 2013. The objective of this report is to offer an overview of the connections between sexual violence and social media among youth in order to stimulate discussions about the definition and measurement of sexual violence associated with social media and to build a prevention framework for program development and evaluation in Ottawa.

To these ends, we present the following twelve broad recommendations for moving forward on preventing sexual violence related to social media:

Defining and Understanding Sexual Violence Related to Social Media

1. **Build a research and evaluation base surrounding sexual violence and social media.** Take care to define and differentiate sexual violence from concepts such as cyberbullying and sexting. Identify outcome measures related to sexual violence and social media and develop program evaluation strategies.
2. **Explore how social media and sexual violence intersect with other issues.** (e.g. mental health, racism, alcohol use).
3. **Identify unique challenges in preventing sexual violence related to social media.** Avoid becoming wrapped up in specific technological features or details. Think about social media as a tool that facilitates or is associated with sexual violence rather than a direct cause.
4. **Avoid victim-blaming and shaming** surrounding youth and sexuality/sexual exploration. Consider online safety advice a tip for protection, not a road to prevention.

Preventing sexual violence involving social media

5. **Focus on ground-up approaches that engage youth in all aspects of prevention programming.** In doing so, recognize that youth are not a homogenous group and that their experiences with both sexual violence and social media are affected by many factors, including but not limited to gender identity, experiences of racism and colonization, sexual orientation, ability, family situation, and peer groups.
6. **Promote healthy relationships and sex education.** Encourage youth and parents to define and develop healthy relationships generally as well as in

social media contexts. Emphasize conversations about consent, coercion, intimidation, boundaries, and respect.

7. **Learn from and connect with existing campaigns, organizations, and resources, including bystander intervention programs.** Foster knowledge-sharing and collaboration among those working to prevent technology-related harassment and abuse and sexual violence prevention.
8. **Challenge social norms promoting violence and abuse.** Focus beyond the individual and challenge social norms promoting violence and abuse. Why do homophobic bullying, victim-blaming, and sexual shaming occur both in and outside of social media? How can we work to end these practices?
9. **Engage parents.** Encourage parents, guardians, and mentors to have conversations with youth about issues related to sexual violence and social media and provide them with accessible, multilingual, and community-based information, supports, and resources. Remember that not all youth have parents and that, like youth, parents are not a homogenous group.
10. **Partner with schools.** Identify ways to integrate sexual violence prevention into curriculum activities and to engage youth leaders and community role models, while remembering that not all youth can be reached through school systems.
11. **Pursue critical media skills and bystander intervention.** Support and build youth and parental digital media literacy and encourage critical media consumption. Engage youth as teachers of social media as part of developing critical media skills. Provide opportunities and resources to educators and front-line workers for social media training and programming.
12. **Look to social media as a prevention tool.** Move beyond repurposing of offline strategies online to provide interactive, multi-site programming when possible, drawing on and employing youth perspective and expertise.

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Appendix A: Scan of Programs with a Focus on Sexual Violence Related to Social Media

Media Type(s)	Program/Campaign	Founder(s)	Objective(s)	Resource(s) included	Component(s) specific to sexual violence associated with social media	Evaluation
Mobile app	LINA (Love is Not Abuse) https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/lina/id443740581?mt=8	Liz Claiborne Inc. Location: U.S.	Application simulates for parents the abuse that many teens endure in their dating relationships. Application users receive text messages, emails and phone calls from a 'boyfriend' or 'girlfriend' that are supposed to mimic actual communications abused teens receive.	This is a mobile app for iPad, iPhone and iPod touch. Users can access the Love is Not Abuse curriculum, designed to teach teens about abuse.	Videos on topics related to digitally abusive relationships such as privacy invasion, deleting a partner's friends on social networks and unauthorized access to a partner's social networks.	User reviews in iTunes.

Media Type(s)	Program/Campaign	Founder(s)	Objective(s)	Resource(s) included	Component(s) specific to sexual violence associated with social media	Evaluation
Website and Online chat/text chat platforms	Love is Respect http://www.loveisrespect.org/is-this-abuse/digital-abuse	Break the Cycle and the National Dating Abuse Helpline Location: U.S.	Primary objective is to foster healthy dating attitudes and relationships and provide a safe space online for young people to get information.	Peer advocates, live chats, videos, resources on what abuse is, legal help, other campaigns and forms of support as well as phone numbers for places to go for help.	Discusses digital dating abuse and relationship to sexual violence.	None online.
Twitter, Website	Draw The Line www.draw-the-line.ca	Action ontarienne contre la violence faite aux femmes and the Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres Location: Canada	Aims to engage Ontarians in a dialogue about sexual violence.	Posters, postcards, guidebook.	Campaign includes a poster with the saying "Your friend sends you a naked picture of a girl he knows- Is it a big deal to share it with others?"	None online.

Media Type(s)	Program/Campaign	Founder(s)	Objective(s)	Resource(s) included	Component(s) specific to sexual violence associated with social media	Evaluation
Website	Working to Halt Online Abuse (WHOA) http://www.haltabuse.org	Jayne Hitchcock Location: U.S.	Fight online harassment through education. Encourage online communities to create safe and welcoming environments for all internet users.	The website includes: videos, statistics on cyber victimization, academic articles, interviews, case studies, news articles, free and links to free and low cost legal help.	Site talks about cyber stalking, cyber bullying.	None online.
Film, Website, Twitter, Facebook	(Dis)connected + A Thin Line Campaign http://www.athinline.org/	MTV Location: U.S.	(DIS)CONNECTED was the focal point of its three-year <i>A Thin Line</i> campaign combating digital abuse.	Film and televised discussion; "Over the Line" section of website with individual stories.	The fictional film features four main characters and their experiences with digital abuse, sexting and exploitation, online harassment, and suicide.	Yes, entertainment evaluation measuring audience responses. http://harmony-institute.org/blog/cases/disconnected-an-mtv-original-movie/

Media Type(s)	Program/Campaign	Founder(s)	Objective(s)	Resource(s) included	Component(s) specific to sexual violence associated with social media	Evaluation
Website	Canadian Cyberstalking Victimization Crowdmap Project https://crowdmap.cyberstalking.ca	Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime and Victim Assistance Online Location: Canada	Maps reports of cyberstalking and cyberharassment in Canada.	Housed within Canadian Clearinghouse on Cyberstalking with links to other resources.	News stories and personal accounts can be posted/mapped.	None online.
Website, numerous online resources	Media Smarts http://mediasmarts.ca/	Formerly known as Media Awareness Network. Location: Canada	Canadian organization working for digital and media literacy through work in three main areas: education, public awareness, and research and policy.	Numerous online resources and reports including sections on research and policy and resources for teachers.	Includes a section on online sexual exploitation, is a partner with the eGirls project (http://egirlsproject.ca/), which looks at gender, privacy, and equality in online social networking.	Research currently in progress.

Media Type(s)	Program/Campaign	Founder(s)	Objective(s)	Resource(s) included	Component(s) specific to sexual violence associated with social media	Evaluation
Presentation	Teens & Technology http://www.ottawapolice.ca/Libraries/Publications/Sexting_Presentation_-_Parents_2.sflb.aspx	Ottawa Police	To provide background information and resources for parents of children and teens with cell phones.	Community presentations and PowerPoint Slides.	While focus is primarily on sexting rather than sexual violence, does touch on pressure to send intimate photos and cyberbullying in general.	None online.
Website, Facebook	Take Back The Tech www.takebackthenech.net	Women's Programme of the Association for Progressive Communications Location: International network based in the U.S.	Collaborative campaign to reclaim information and communication technologies (ICT) to end violence against women. Accompanies the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence.	Website offers support, information, and things to do for the 16 Days of Activism against gender based violence, as well as safety tips and personal stories from victims.	Promote awareness of the role that technology including social media plays in the victimization of women.	Awarded an honorary mention in the Digital Communities category of the Prix Ars Electronica International Competition for Cyber Arts.

Media Type(s)	Program/Campaign	Founder(s)	Objective(s)	Resource(s) included	Component(s) specific to sexual violence associated with social media	Evaluation
Website	Netsmartz http://www.netsmartz.org	National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children Location: U.S.	Provides age targeted resources to help teach children 5-17 how to be safer on and offline.	Offers information and support, presentations for teachers, parents and youth, videos, lesson plans and interactive games.	Contains sections on sexting, cyberbullying, social networking, sexual predators, and dangers of web cams.	None online.
Poster campaign	Manitoba Public Service Announcement (PSA)	Manitoba Department of Family Services and Labour Location: Canada	Public education campaign that addresses the use of technologies to perpetrate violence against women.	Posters spread across the area and a phone number on them for a domestic violence information crisis line.	The campaign features a cell phone with abusive texts indicating that they are not messages but rather threats.	None online

Media Type(s)	Program/Campaign	Founder(s)	Objective(s)	Resource(s) included	Component(s) specific to sexual violence associated with social media	Evaluation
Website, Facebook, online game	That's Not Cool http://www.thatnotcool.com/	Futures Without Violence, the Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women, and the Advertising Council. Location: U.S.	Encourages youth to decide "where do you draw your digital line" through videos, interactive games, and an online forum to share their stories and receive advice.	Users can create an avatar and play games on the site, communicate with other youth, seek support and get links for help, talk it out which allows users to post and get immediate advice/tips on their situation. Site also has resources such as cards and posters to share to help raise awareness.	Campaign uses digital examples of controlling, pressuring, and threatening behavior to raise awareness about and prevent teen dating abuse. Includes "call out cards" section that has resources to post and share on social media to raise awareness with specific sections for textual harassment and sexting pressure.	A Y-Pulse GennY Award Finalist, which honours initiatives that use new and innovative techniques to connect with teens, tweens, and college students.

Media Type(s)	Program/Campaign	Founder(s)	Objective(s)	Resource(s) included	Component(s) specific to sexual violence associated with social media	Evaluation
Newsletter Website, Research Centre	Violence Against Women Learning Network http://www.vawlearningnetwork.ca	Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women and Children Location: Canada	To increase the effectiveness and reach of public education and professional training materials developed to address violence against women.	Website contains research and resources surrounding sexual violence as well as technology-related violence against women.	Issue 4 (April 2013) focuses on "Technology-Related Violence Against Women" and provides background of types of technology-related VAW, consequences as well as using technology to support women.	Website includes links to best practices in sexual violence prevention and social norms marketing campaigns.

Appendix B: Sample of Programs Using Social Media to Prevent Sexual Violence

Table A: Ontario Initiatives

Media Type(s)	Program/Campaign	Founder(s)	Objective(s)	Resource(s) included	Evaluation
Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Website, blog	Hollaback! http://www.ihollaback.org/	Emily May, Executive Director (International campaign with chapters in Ottawa and Toronto.)	Users submit stories about street harassment and use maps to pinpoint the location of the harassment.	Mapping of harassment as well as multiple social media resources.	None online.
Online game	RePlay: Finding Zoe/ReJouer: Où est Zoé? http://metrac.org/replay/index.html	Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC) Ontario Government's Women Directorate, and TAKE ACTION Games	Encourages players to deconstruct gender stereotypes while promoting healthy relationships while playing the online game.	Online game in French and English as well as written resources for parents, teachers and youth.	None online.
Digital Game	What It Is http://challengesexualviolence.org	METRAC	To inform users about sexual violence, deconstruct myths and offer ideas about how to support a survivor.	Can play online and on mobile phones.	Yes, on website.

Media Type(s)	Program/Campaign	Founder(s)	Objective(s)	Resource(s) included	Evaluation
Mobile application	Not Your Baby https://itunes.apple.com/ca/app/not-your-baby/id545191859?mt=8	METRAC and TAKE Action Games	Designed to generate ideas on how to respond to situations of sexual harassment. Users share personal stories and suggestions for responses.	Smart phone app.	None online.
Mobile app	YWCA Safety Siren: App on healthy dating http://ywcacanada.ca/en/pages/mall/apps	YWCA Canada	In emergency situation, app sends out a 'siren' with GPS coordinates to an individual that the user has pre-selected.	iPhone, iPod touch, Android or Blackberry	User reviews online.
Website, Facebook, Twitter	PrevNet http://www.prevnet.ca/	Led by Dr. Wendy Craig and Dr. Debra Pepler	Resources and research on bullying prevention.	Umbrella network of 68 leading Canadian research scientists, more than 100 graduate students, and 54 youth-serving organizations.	Publishes evidence-based research.

Media Type(s)	Program/Campaign	Founder(s)	Objective(s)	Resource(s) included	Evaluation
Poster campaign	THINK Campaign http://www.preventingcrime.ca/main.cfm?id=E1698E39-EDF0-F1C9-46ABEDC46837048B	Crime Prevention Council of Waterloo Region	Encourages people THINK before they text, tweet, email or post to Facebook and other social media: T- is it true? H- is it hurtful? I- is it illegal? N- is it necessary? K- is it kind?	Posters, Twitter, bands for communication devices.	None online.
Website and in school campaign	OPP Youth Connected Program: "I've got your back"	OPP and OPP Youth Foundation	Youth driven program to promote safety online; reminds students that there can be criminal charges for sharing explicit photos.	Website with resources for youth, teachers and parents including brochures, videos, posters; presentations in schools.	None online.

Media Type(s)	Program/Campaign	Founder(s)	Objective(s)	Resource(s) included	Evaluation
Website, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube	Native Youth Sexual Health Network http://www.nativeyouthsexualhealth.com	Organization by and for Indigenous youth that works in Canada and the U.S.	Works across sexual and reproductive health, rights, and justice.	New media projects on healthy relationships and violence prevention, media literacy, youth activism and human rights.	None online.
Interactive film and travelling live theatre show; Has presence on Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, and YouTube.	Far From the Heart Links: http://www.farfromtheheart.com/	Joan Chandler and Sheatre	Encourages dialogue around sexual violence and unhealthy teen relationships specifically teenage dating violence, abuse and rape. Audiences can interact by stopping the play and taking the place of an actor on stage as a way of testing an intervention that seeks to prevent sexual violence and/or the culture that promotes it.	The play has also been made into an interactive film with educational resources where individuals and groups can film their own interventions and submit them on YouTube.	No formal evaluation but numerous awards: Best shorts award winner, Accolade competition winner and Nominee for 2012 Yorkton Film Festival.

Table B: Sample of International Programs Using Social Media to Prevent Sexual Violence

Media Type(s)	Program/Campaign	Founder(s)	Objective(s)	Resource(s) included	Evaluation
Website, YouTube, Facebook, game	Half the Sky Movement http://www.halft heskymovement.org/	Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn (co-authors of the book <i>Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide</i>); Frima Studio (Canadian) and Games for Change (designing Facebook game)	Aim is to end the worldwide oppression of women and girls.	Website offers videos and blogs, as well as games embedded in Facebook that engages players to make micro-donations to various NGOs upon completion of each quest.	None online

Media Type(s)	Program/Campaign	Founder(s)	Objective(s)	Resource(s) included	Evaluation
Website, blog, YouTube, Flickr, Facebook	The Line Campaign http://whereisyourline.org/	Nancy Schwartzman	This campaign aims to end sexual violence worldwide with a focus on empowering young leaders. Engaging in critical dialogue is a key part of this work and social media is highlighted as important platforms upon which to start these conversations and open up debate.	Circle of 6 app, video, poster, toolkit, stickers	Winner of the 2011 White House and HHS "Apps Against Abuse" Technology Challenge.
Blog, Tumblr, Twitter, Facebook	Project Unbreakable	Grace Brown	Aim is to break the silence surrounding sexual violence.	Blog contains images of sexual violence survivors holding signs that contain a quote from their assailant or words that reflect their experience.	None online.

Media Type(s)	Program/Campaign	Founder(s)	Objective(s)	Resource(s) included	Evaluation
YouTube	Project Unspoken: You're not just a victim. You're a survivor. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ljTE83k1DD0	Emory University	By encouraging supporters to share this video and take part in future videos, the project aims to spark conversations about sexual violence.	In addition to the video series, there are Website, Tumblr, Facebook pages	None online.
Online game	Say NO – UNiTE http://saynotoviolence.org/join-say-no/online-game-against-violence	UN Women, in partnership with Take Action Games	Encourages players to think about violence and seeks to encourage more positive behaviors offline. The roles of bystander, perpetrator and victim are experienced by the players.	Links to main website with many resources and toolkit.	None online.

Media Type(s)	Program/Campaign	Founder(s)	Objective(s)	Resource(s) included	Evaluation
Website, Facebook, Twitter, Flickr	PreventConnect http://www.preventconnect.org/	National project of the California Coalition Against Sexual Assault with funding from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, done in the United States.	National online project dedicated to the primary prevention of sexual assault and domestic violence.	Offers webinars and online courses about sexual violence prevention, links to social media sites, current projects aimed at primary prevention	Focus is on building the capacity of local, state, territorial, national and tribal agencies to develop, implement and evaluate effective prevention.

Appendix C: Survey

*** Name of place of employment/organization**

*** Is your place of employment/organization located in Ontario, Canada?**

Yes

No

*** I have read and understood the information presented and consent to proceed with the survey.**

Agree

No thanks

1. What types of violence/abuse/harassment do you most frequently respond to and/or work specifically to prevent in your place of employment?

2. Does your place of employment have an account or profile on any of the following social media sites? (Check all that apply)

- Facebook
- Twitter
- You Tube
- MySpace
- Vimeo
- Instagram
- Tumblr
- LinkedIn
- GooglePlus
- No social media, email and/or website only
- Do not regularly use any Internet-based sites

Other (please specify)

3. Are you aware of sexual violence, abuse, or harassment in your community that is related to social media? If so, please check all that apply.

- Posting or sharing intimate photos or text messages without consent
- Controlling, harassing, or stalking a current or former intimate partner using social media
- Posting or sharing sexually harassing or violent texts or images
- Using social media for the sexual exploitation of minors
- I am not aware of violence, abuse, or harassment in my community related to social media

Other (please specify)

4. Please elaborate on the types of violence, abuse, or harassment that you are aware of in your community, including the role that social media plays in this violence, and how often it occurs.

Please avoid specific names and identifying details.

5. How do you view the relationship between cyberbullying and sexual violence/intimate partner violence?

6. What programming or resources, if any, does your place of employment offer aimed at preventing violence, abuse, and harassment online?

- Workshops
- Public education campaigns (posters, public service announcements)
- Online safety guides/website info
- Legal advice
- We do not offer any programming or resources aimed at preventing violence, abuse, or harassment online

Other (please specify)

7. Please provide a brief description of the programs and resources aimed at preventing violence, abuse, and harassment related to social media that your place of employment offers. Please include links to online materials if possible, including program evaluations that have been conducted that you are able to share.

8. What successes, if any, has your place of employment experienced in relation to these prevention programs/resources?

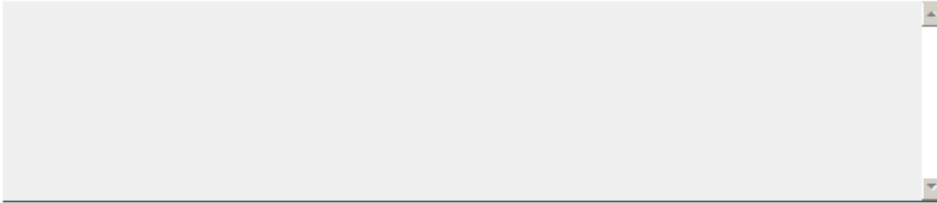
9. What challenges, if any, has your place of employment experienced in relation to these prevention programs/resources?

10. Are you aware of any other organizations or programs that are working to prevent violence, abuse, and harassment associated with social media?

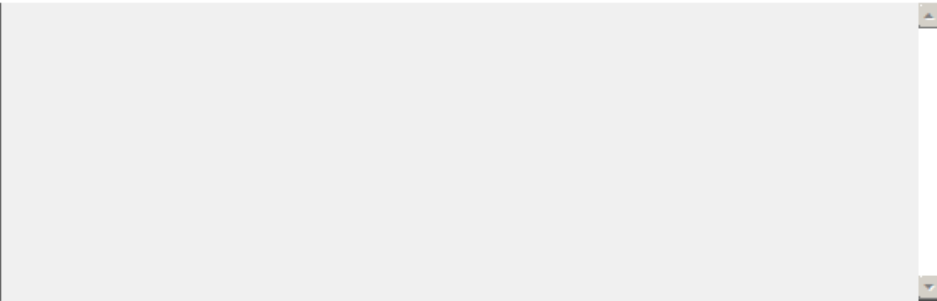
Yes

No

If yes, please list any you can recall.

A large, empty text input field with a light gray background and a vertical scrollbar on the right side, intended for listing organizations or programs.

11. Is there any particular group that you feel prevention efforts in this area should focus on?

A large, empty text input field with a light gray background and a vertical scrollbar on the right side, intended for specifying a particular group.

12. In your view, how important is it to focus prevention efforts on each of the following areas of violence, abuse, and harassment related to social media? (1 = Not important, 4 = Very important).

	1- Not important	2- Somewhat important	3- Very important	4- Extremely important	N/A
Posting or sharing of intimate photos or text messages without consent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Controlling, harassing, or stalking of a current or former intimate partner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Posting or sharing of sexually harassing or violent texts or images	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The use of social media for the sexual exploitation of minors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify)	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; height: 60px; width: 100%;"></div>				

13. In your view, how important are the following prevention efforts surrounding violence, abuse, and harassment related to social media? (1 = Not important, 4 = Very important).

	1- Not important	2- Somewhat important	3- Very important	4- Extremely important	N/A
Media literacy training on what social media is and how it is used	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Online safety information	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public awareness campaigns on how to identify violence, abuse, and harassment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public awareness campaigns on how to respond to violence, abuse, and harassment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Working directly with social media sites to increase safety	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify)					

Appendix D: Interview Guide

1. Can you tell me a bit about your organization and your role?
2. How do you define social media?

Sexual violence and social media

3. From your experience, what are your biggest concerns about sexual violence and social media?
4. Is there anything you would like to elaborate on from the survey in terms of sexual violence, harassment and abuse that you see in your community involving social media?
5. Do you think there is anything unique about sexual violence that occurs in or through social media? Think about this in relation to sexual violence that occurs without technology.

Youth

6. Can you tell me about your work with youth and what types of social media do they use most often and/or figure most prominently in their lives?
7. If you work with youth, can you tell me a bit about how you see their role as both perpetrators and victims of sexual violence using social media?
8. Are you aware of gang-related sexual violence or sexual trafficking among youth occurring using social media?

Resources and prevention programming

9. Is there anything you would like to elaborate on in terms of resources or programs pertaining to sexual violence and social media that you are aware of?
10. Would your organization have the interest and/or capacity to offer resources or programs related to sexual violence associated with social media? Why/why not?
11. What would your top priorities be and/or what would a successful resource/program in this area look like?
12. Is there anything else you would like to talk about today?

Appendix E: Invitation to Community Consultation

** Le texte français suit**

CPO Research Results Launch & Community Consultation: *Sexual Violence, Social Media & Youth*

What is the relationship between sexual violence, social media and youth?

Social media and technology are embedded in the lives of youth, but it is also being used as a tool to harass, control, or stalk. As a community, how are we to support youth and address sexual violence? If you are also asking this question, we encourage you to join us for the launch of Jordan Fairbairn's (PhD. Candidate), Dr. Rena Bivens' and Dr. Myrna Dawson's community based research that explored the intersections of sexual violence, social media and youth, which has been funded by Crime Prevention Ottawa and supported by the Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women. In the launch of this research, they will look at our current understanding of sexual violence and engage the community in identifying prevention tools for our community.

The launch will also ask parents, teachers, mentors, youth and concerned community members to join us to further develop a plan for our community.

Following the presentation of the results, we will be doing a brief community consultation that looks to gain further knowledge about how our community understands, and is responding to, sexual violence, social media and youth. **We want to hear from our community, so that we can take steps to enhance knowledge and take preventative action on this form of violence.**

Presenter: Jordan Fairbairn - Researcher and PhD. Candidate (Carleton University)

When: Tuesday May 28, 2013 from 8:30am to 12:00pm

Where: City Hall, 110 Laurier Avenue West - Andrew Haydon Hall (Council Chambers)

Agenda

Time	Activity
8:30 to 9:00 am	Registration, Coffee & muffins, Networking
9:00 to 9:20 am	Welcome
9: 20 to 9:30 am	Video to introduce the topic
9:30 to 10:15 am	Presentation of the Research Findings
10:15 to 10:30 am	Brief break
10: 30 to 11:30 am	Breakout groups

	Discussion of report findings, recommendations and planning for prevention programming
11:30 to 12:00 pm	Wrap Up

Speakers will be presenting in English with presentation slides in French and English. Questions will be encouraged in both official languages

We will have 4 consultation groups. If you could specify your preference that would be much appreciated.
 (2 English groups, 1 group where we will ask media not to be present, 1 bilingual group)

- _____ English group x 2
- _____ No media group
- _____ Bilingual group
- _____ Doesn't matter

R.S.V.P. to Crime Prevention Ottawa at cpo@ottawa.ca or 613-580-2424 ext. 22454

Please note that space is limited, so we encourage registration. We also encourage you to share this with your networks.

.....

Recherche de PCO : lancement des résultats et consultation auprès de la collectivité :
La violence sexuelle, les médias sociaux et les jeunes

Quelle est la relation entre la violence sexuelle, les médias sociaux et les jeunes? Les médias sociaux et la technologie sont désormais intégrés à la vie des jeunes, mais ces outils peuvent également servir à harceler, contrôler ou traquer. En tant que collectivité, que devons-nous faire pour soutenir nos jeunes et lutter contre la violence sexuelle? Si vous vous posez également cette question, nous vous incitons à vous joindre à nous, à l'occasion du lancement des résultats des travaux de recherche communautaire de Jordan Fairbairn (candidat au doctorat), Rena Bivens, Ph. D., et Myrna Dawson, lesquels visaient à explorer les recoupements entre la violence sexuelle, les médias sociaux et les jeunes; ces travaux ont été financés par Prévention du crime Ottawa et sont appuyés par la Coalition d'Ottawa contre la violence faite aux femmes. Dans le cadre du lancement de leurs résultats, les chercheurs se pencheront sur notre connaissance actuelle de la violence sexuelle et demanderont l'aide de la collectivité pour l'identification d'outils de prévention pertinents en la matière.

Ce lancement sera également une occasion pour demander aux parents, aux enseignants, aux mentors, aux jeunes et aux membres concernés de la collectivité à se joindre à nous pour poursuivre l'élaboration d'un plan pour notre collectivité. À la suite de la présentation des résultats, nous procéderons à une brève consultation auprès de la collectivité, histoire d'approfondir nos connaissances quant à son niveau de compréhension et de réactivité à l'égard de la violence sexuelle, des médias sociaux et des jeunes. **Nous souhaitons que notre collectivité s'exprime à ce sujet, afin que nous puissions prendre des mesures visant à améliorer nos connaissances et agir de manière préventive face à ce type de violence.**

Présentatrice : Jordan Fairbairn, chercheuse et candidate au doctorat (Université Carleton)

Date et heure : le mardi 28 mai 2013, de 8 h 30 à 12 h

Lieu : hôtel de ville, 110, avenue Laurier Ouest, salle Andrew Haydon (salle du Conseil)

Ordre du jour

Heure	Activité
8 h 30 à 9 h 00	Inscription, café et muffins, réseautage
9 h 00 à 9 h 20	Bienvenue
9 h 20 à 9 h 30	Vidéo to introduire le sujet
9 h 30 à 10 h 15	Présentation des résultats
10 h 15 à 10 h 30	Pause
10 h 30 à 11 h 30	Groupes de discussions Discussions des résultats du rapport, des recommandations et de la planification des programmes de prévention
11 h 30 à midi	Mots de la fin

Les présentations seront données en anglais seulement avec des diapositives en anglais et en français. Nous encourageons les participants à poser leurs questions dans les deux langues officielles.

Nous organiserons quatre (4) groupes de consultation. Merci de nous indiquer votre préférence à cet égard (2 groupes en anglais, 1 groupe fermé aux représentants des médias et 1 groupe bilingue).

- _____ Groupe anglais x 2
- _____ Groupe fermé aux représentants des médias No media group
- _____ Groupe bilingue
- _____ N'a pas d'importance


R.S.V.P. à Prévention du crime Ottawa, par courriel à l'adresse pco@ottawa.ca, ou par téléphone, au 613-580-2424, poste 22454.

** Veuillez noter que le nombre de places étant limité, nous vous encourageons à vous inscrire. Nous vous saurions également gré de partager cette information avec vos réseaux. **

Appendix F: Research Launch Presentation Slides (English)

Sexual Violence and Social Media: Building A Framework for Prevention

Jordan Fairbairn, Carleton University
Dr. Rena Bivens, Carleton University
Dr. Myrna Dawson, University of Guelph
In partnership with Crime Prevention Ottawa &
Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women (OCTEVAW)



The slide features a blue and black decorative footer. On the left is the logo for Crime Prevention Ottawa, which includes the text 'CRIME PREVENTION OTTAWA' and 'PRÉVENTION DU CRIME OTTAWA' around a stylized human figure. On the right is the logo for OCTEVAW - COCVFF, which depicts three stylized faces in a row.

Research Aims

- ▶ Explore connections between sexual violence and social media with a focus on youth.
- ▶ Stimulate discussion and planning for a prevention framework for program development and evaluation in Ottawa.

Sexual Violence

Any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the survivors/victims, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work.

Social Media: Our Focus

Type of social media	Description	Popular examples in Canada
Social network sites	Individuals create a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system and connect with other users with whom they share a connection.	Facebook, LinkedIn
Media-sharing sites	Users post videos or photographs that others can share, comment, or 'like'.	YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest
Status-update services	Micro blogging services, allow users to share short updates (e.g. tweets) and to see updates of others.	Twitter

Literature Review

- ▶ Draws from several overlapping areas:
 - Cyber/online bullying and harassment
 - Non-consensual sharing of sexual images
 - Recording and distribution of sexual assault
 - Intimate partner violence and cyberstalking
 - Luring/online exploitation of minors
 - Sex trafficking
 - Virtual sexual assault

What Does the Literature Say?

Sexual violence related to social media:

- ▶ Sexual nature of much abuse and harassment
- ▶ Low reporting rates
- ▶ Abusive relationships
- ▶ Gender analysis needed

What Does the Literature Say? (cont.)

Youth and Prevention:

- ▶ Media literacy
- ▶ Healthy relationships
- ▶ Bystander intervention
- ▶ Youth-driven initiatives

Survey

- ▶ Objectives:
 - Collect information about sexual violence associated with social media;
 - Identify any existing prevention strategies;
 - Gather recommendations to aid further development of prevention programming.
- ▶ Sent to Ontario community organizations, resource providers, front-line workers, and educators in February and March 2013.

Survey Respondents

Type of organization	Portion of total respondents (N=187)
Community resource/recreation centre	21%
Shelter/family and child services	19%
Sexual assault support service	14%
Educational institution/school board	12%
Violence prevention coalition/network	11%
Community health centre	7%
Criminal justice program	6%
Aboriginal centre	5%
No affiliation/other	5%

Survey Findings

- ▶ 79% aware of social media use to control, harass, or stalk a current or former intimate partner.

"Clients have had programs installed on their computers, so that their abusers can see any communications they may have, including learning their passwords...Abusers have posted slanderous things about their former partner on their own Facebook pages, or have distributed nude images of their former partners."

Survey Findings (cont.)

- ▶ 76% aware of posting or sharing intimate photos or text messages without consent.

“Young girls do not necessarily view obsessive partners as abusive – despite the escalation. This also applies to less overt photos that get shared and sent widely.”

- ▶ 65% aware of posting or sharing sexually harassing or violent texts or images.

“When we do presentations in high schools, it is quite alarming how many teen girls get harassed via text message and Facebook.”

Survey Findings (cont.)

- ▶ 52% aware of social media use for the sexual exploitation of minors.

- *“There appears to be ongoing issues with sexual exploitation of minors via digital images in the form of luring from someone who pretends to be something or someone they’re not in order to **gain trust and access sexual photos** of the victim.”*

- ▶ Overlapping relationship between cyberbullying & sexual violence.

- *“I think that sexual violence would be on a continuum of cyberbullying. For example, **slut shaming via social media** can be considered sexual harassment.”*

Survey Findings: Data Collection and Evaluation

- ▶ Most knowledge of sexual violence related to social media appears to be collected informally.
 - *“It is difficult to place a “number” per say on how often this happens because it is usually tied in with a host of other experiences...”*
- ▶ Formally evaluated prevention efforts still to come.
 - *“We have not had any measured success in terms of quantitative data. However, we have had positive feedback from clients and community members (teachers) about the importance of resources and education about the connection between sexual violence and social media.”*

Survey Findings: Prevention Challenges

- ▶ Rapidly changing media environments.
- ▶ Need for technology training and support for staff and volunteers.
- ▶ Lack of data and/or evaluation.
- ▶ Need for collaboration and parental engagement.
- ▶ Challenges getting the message out to a wider audience.

Interviews: Key Themes

▶ General awareness

- *"It is ok to [report abuse]...even in this medium, it is abuse. It is sexual harassment...to know that it's not something to be dismissed, and it's not something to say, 'oh it's ok, it will go away'...the education piece of what it is, what it actually is, that it is abuse."*

▶ Online anonymity and cruelty

- *"The amount of people that can sit behind closed doors and do it on their computer...We still look for perpetrators outside, and lurking in the dark alleys, and still don't really think those trolls could be that perpetrator."*

Interviews: Key Themes (cont.)

▶ Self-protection and victim-blaming.

- *"[It is] the difference between 'hey young women, this is how you can protect yourselves', as opposed to putting the onus on everybody in the online community to take responsibility for what they're doing."*

▶ Consent

- *"Informed consent would definitely be a key piece..the language or the skills to help them figure out in their own minds what are they comfortable doing..helping them establish some boundaries...that consent does apply to social media."*

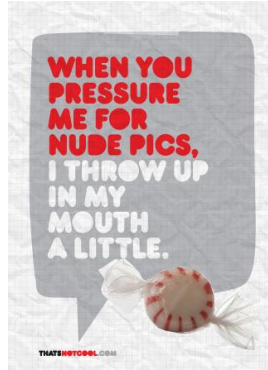
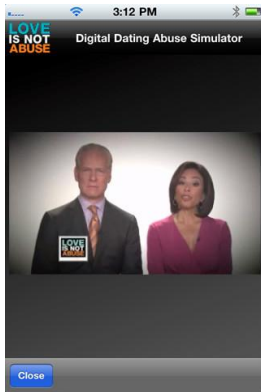
Interviews: Key Themes (cont.)

- ▶ Engaging parents and bystanders.
 - *“Targeting the bystanders, the people who are the ones who got the message and just forward it on, for example, instead of stopping and thinking about what are the implications of doing this, can I take a stand here...we have to engage people in those discussions in a meaningful way.”*
- ▶ Need for training and resource development.
 - *“If there’s a concern around safety, around physical safety...we would know that we can bring in [the authorities, counseling]. But it feels...it feels huge. ...it’s layered, and re-traumatizing all the time...It’s really complex...and we’re not necessarily well prepared to deal with it.”*

Social Media Scan

- ▶ Offline prevention campaigns moving online.
- ▶ Focus on raising awareness, offering resources, or debunking myths.
- ▶ Some include a component specific to sexual violence and digital media/social media.

Campaign Examples



Appendix G: Research Launch Presentation Slides (French)

La violence sexuelle et les médias sociaux: Bâtir un cadre de prévention

Jordan Fairbairn, Université Carleton
Rena Bivens, Ph. D., Université Carleton
Myrna Dawson, Ph. D., Université de Guelph
En partenariat avec Prévention du crime Ottawa et la Coalition
d'Ottawa contre la violence faite aux femmes (COCVFF)



Objectifs de la recherche

- ▶ Explorer les liens entre la violence sexuelle et les médias sociaux en mettant l'accent sur les jeunes.
- ▶ Encourager la discussion et la planification d'un cadre de prévention pour l'élaboration et l'évaluation d'un programme à Ottawa.

Violence sexuelle

Tout acte sexuel, toute tentative afin d'obtenir un acte sexuel, tout commentaire ou toute avance de nature sexuelle, ou tout acte visant à un trafic ou autrement dirigé contre la sexualité d'une personne en utilisant la coercition, commis par une personne indépendamment de sa relation avec la victime, dans tout contexte, y compris, mais s'en s'y limiter, le foyer et le travail.

Médias sociaux : notre préoccupation centrale

Type de média social	Description	Exemples populaires au Canada
Sites de réseautage social	Les personnes créent un profil public ou semi-public dans un système encadré et entrent en contact avec d'autres utilisateurs avec lesquels ils partagent des liens.	Facebook, LinkedIn
Sites de partage multimédia	Les utilisateurs affichent des vidéos ou des photographies que d'autre peuvent partager, commenter ou « aimer ».	YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest
Services de mise à jour du statut	Services de micro-blogage permettant aux utilisateurs d'échanger de courtes mises à jour (p. ex. « tweets ») et de voir les mises à jour d'autres personnes.	Twitter

Examen de la documentation

- ▶ Émane de plusieurs domaines se chevauchant :
 - Intimidation et harcèlement virtuel/en ligne
 - Échange d'images à caractère sexuel
 - Enregistrement et diffusion d'agressions sexuelles
 - Violence conjugale et cyber-harcèlement
 - Corruption/exploitation en ligne de mineurs
 - Trafic sexuel
 - Agression sexuelle virtuelle

Que dit la documentation?

Violence sexuelle liée aux médias sociaux :

- ▶ Nature sexuelle d'une grande partie des actes de violence et de harcèlement
- ▶ Faible taux de signalement
- ▶ Relations de violence
- ▶ Analyse différenciée requise selon les sexes

Que dit la documentation? (suite)

Jeunesse et prévention :

- ▶ Connaissances médiatiques
- ▶ Relations saines
- ▶ Intervention des spectateurs
- ▶ Initiatives inspirées par les jeunes

Sondage

- ▶ Objectifs :
 - Recueillir des renseignements sur la violence sexuelle liée aux médias sociaux.
 - Cerner toute stratégie de prévention existante.
 - Recueillir des recommandations afin d'aider à faire progresser l'élaboration d'un programme de prévention.
- ▶ Envoyé aux organismes communautaires, aux fournisseurs de ressources, aux intervenants de première ligne et aux éducateurs de l'Ontario en février et en mars 2013.

Répondants au sondage

Type d'organisme	Part du nombre total de répondants (N=187)
Ressources communautaires/centres de loisirs	21%
Refuges/services aux familles et à l'enfance	19%
Services de soutien aux victimes d'agression sexuelle	14%
Établissements d'enseignement/commissions scolaires	12%
Coalitions/réseaux de prévention de la violence	11%
Centres de santé communautaires	7%
Programmes de justice pénale	6%
Centres autochtones	5%
Sans affiliation/autres	5%

Conclusions du sondage

- ▶ 79 p. 100 sont conscients du fait que les médias sociaux sont utilisés pour contrôler, harceler ou traquer un partenaire intime, actuel ou ancien.

« Des clients ont vu des programmes installés sur leur ordinateur afin que leurs agresseurs puissent voir toutes leurs communications, entre autres apprendre leurs mots de passe... Les agresseurs ont affiché sur leur propre page Facebook des messages diffamatoires sur leur ancien partenaire ou ont diffusé des images de leur ancien partenaire nu. » [traduction]

Conclusions du sondage (suite)

- ▶ 76 p. 100 sont conscients du fait que des photos ou des messages texte de nature intime ont été affichés ou échangés sans leur consentement.

« Les jeunes filles ne perçoivent pas nécessairement un partenaire obsessif comme un agresseur – malgré l'escalade. Cela s'applique également aux photos moins explicites qui sont échangées et transmises de manière générale. » [traduction]

- ▶ 65 p. 100 sont conscients du fait que des textes ou des images constituant de la violence ou du harcèlement sexuel sont affichés ou échangés.

« Lorsque nous faisons des présentations dans les écoles secondaires, il est alarmant de voir combien d'adolescentes sont harcelées par message texte et par Facebook. » [traduction]

Conclusions du sondage (suite)

- ▶ 52 p. 100 sont conscients du fait que les médias sociaux sont utilisés pour l'exploitation sexuelle de mineurs.

- *« Il semble y avoir des problèmes constants d'exploitation sexuelle de mineurs sous forme d'images numériques, le mineur étant leurré par quelqu'un prétendant être une personne qu'elle n'est pas ou avoir une fonction qu'elle n'a pas afin de gagner la confiance de la victime et ainsi obtenir des photos à caractère sexuel de la victime. »* [traduction]

- ▶ Chevauchement entre le cyber-harcèlement et la violence sexuelle.

- *« Je crois que la violence sexuelle est le prolongement du cyber-harcèlement. Par exemple, le « slut-shaming » (humiliation des femmes au comportement sexuel hors normes) au moyen des médias sociaux peut être considéré comme du harcèlement sexuel. »* [traduction]

Conclusions du sondage : Cueillette et évaluation des données

- ▶ La plus grande partie des connaissances en matière de violence sexuelle liée aux médias sociaux semble être recueillie de manière officieuse.
 - « Il est difficile de mettre un chiffre en soi sur la fréquence de cette situation parce qu'elle est généralement *liée à quantité d'autres expériences...* » [traduction]
- ▶ Une évaluation officielle des efforts de prévention reste à réaliser.
 - « Nous n'avons pu mesurer notre réussite en termes de données quantitatives. Toutefois, nous avons reçu une *réaction positive des clients et des membres de la collectivité (enseignants) sur l'importance des ressources et de l'éducation sur le lien entre la violence sexuelle et les médias sociaux.* » [traduction]

Conclusions du sondage : Défis en matière de prévention

- ▶ Environnements médiatiques changeant rapidement.
- ▶ Besoin de formation et de soutien technologiques pour les employés et les bénévoles.
- ▶ Manque de données et/ou d'évaluations.
- ▶ Besoin de collaboration et de participation de la part des parents.
- ▶ Difficulté à transmettre le message à un public plus vaste.

Entrevues : Principaux thèmes

▶ Sensibilisation générale

- « Il est autorisé à [Signaler un abus] ... même dans ce milieu, il y a abus. C'est harcèlement sexuel ... de savoir que ce n'est pas quelque chose à être rejetée, et ce n'est pas quelque chose à dire, 'Oh, c'est ok, ça va passer' ... la pièce de l'éducation de ce qu'elle est, ce qu'elle est en réalité, que c'est un abus » [traduction]

▶ Anonymat et cruauté en ligne

- « Le nombre de gens qui peuvent rester assis dans une pièce fermée et le faire sur leur ordinateur... Nous cherchons encore les agresseurs à l'extérieur, rôdant dans les allées sombres, et nous ne croyons toujours pas vraiment que ces « trolls » pourraient être des agresseurs. » [traduction]

Entrevues : Principaux thèmes (suite)

▶ Autodéfense et condamnation de la victime.

- « [C'est] la différence entre dire « Hé, jeunes filles, voici comment vous pouvez vous protéger » et imposer à tous les membres de la communauté en ligne d'accepter la responsabilité de leurs actes. » [traduction]

▶ Consentement

- « Un consentement éclairé serait certainement un élément essentiel... le langage ou les compétences nécessaires pour les aider à déterminer par et pour elles-mêmes ce qu'elles sont à l'aise de faire... les aider à fixer des limites... leur faire comprendre que le consentement s'applique effectivement aux médias sociaux. » [traduction]

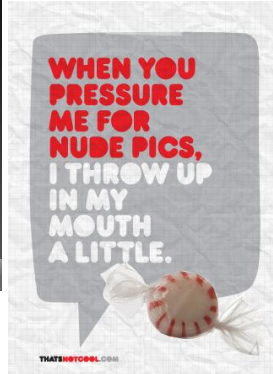
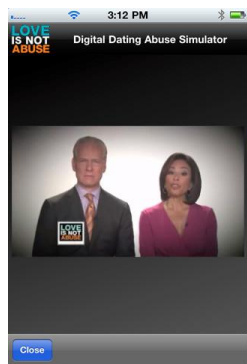
Entrevues : Principaux thèmes (suite)

- ▶ Participation des parents et des spectateurs.
 - « Cibler les spectateurs, les gens qui ont reçu le message et se contentent de le retransmettre, par exemple, plutôt que d'arrêter et de réfléchir aux répercussions, de se demander « Puis-je prendre position sur ce sujet? »... nous devons engager les gens de manière concrète dans ces discussions. » [traduction]
- ▶ Besoin de formation et de perfectionnement des ressources.
 - « Si la sécurité, la sécurité physique soulève des préoccupations... nous savons que nous pouvons faire appel [aux autorités, à des thérapeutes]. Mais cela nous semble... cela nous semble énorme. Il y a plusieurs niveaux, et c'est traumatisant à chaque fois... C'est très complexe... et nous ne sommes pas nécessairement prêts à nous y attaquer. » [traduction]

Analyse des médias sociaux

- ▶ Les campagnes de prévention hors ligne passent en ligne.
- ▶ On met l'accent sur la sensibilisation, l'offre de ressources ou la démystification.
- ▶ Certaines comprennent une composante propre à la violence sexuelle et aux médias numériques et sociaux.

Exemples de campagnes



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OTTAWA

Crime Prevention Ottawa

Partners for a safer community

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