

# Needs Assessment of Ottawa's 2SLBGTQ+ Youth and Young Adults with Regard to Violence Prevention

## Évaluation des besoins des jeunes 2SLBGTQ+ d'Ottawa en matière de prévention des violences

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of Ottawa's  
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# Introduction

Crime Prevention Ottawa (CPO) engaged The Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity (CCGSD) to research and report on the needs of 2SLGBTQ+ communities with regard to violence and violence prevention.

As part of its research, CCGSD conducted:

- interviews with informants from Ottawa's network of providers of victim services and health and wellbeing services
- an online survey inquiring into violence and violence prevention from the perspective of 2SLGBTQ+ youth and young adults in Ottawa

# Introduction

This presentation introduces CCGSD's findings, including:

- Perceptions of the prevalence of violence against and within Ottawa's 2SLGBTQ+ communities
- Feelings and opinions about the violence prevention measures and messaging that currently exist in Ottawa
- Statements of need in the area of violence prevention
- Recommendations for meeting the violence prevention needs of Ottawa's 2SLGBTQ+ communities

# Methodology

An exploratory project investigating the needs of Ottawa's 2SLGBTQ+ youth and young adults with regard to violence prevention, guided by:

- Advisory committee members and research team members who either self-identified as 2SLGBTQ+ or work in the area of the project scope
- A comprehensive review of current applicable research
- Primary sources, including online survey respondents and informants from Ottawa's network of providers of victim services and health and wellbeing services

# Online Survey

CCGSD invited 2SLGBTQ+ youth and young adults, age 15-30, who live in the city of Ottawa to complete an online survey inquiring into their perspectives on violence and violence prevention in Ottawa.

- CCGSD relied on its network of community organizations, social media and word-of-mouth to recruit online survey participants.
- The survey was live from Nov. 8, 2019 to Dec. 1, 2019.
- The survey allowed for self-identification and open-ended responses to the greatest extent possible.
- The survey attained a 43% completion rate. Data was collected from 62 qualifying respondents.

# Key Informants

- Criteria for selecting key informants was based on participants' knowledge of Ottawa's 2SLGBTQ+ population and their experiences with violence and/or violence prevention.
- CCGSD relied on its network of community organizations, social media and word-of-mouth to recruit informants.
- Interviews with 12 key informants were conducted between November 2019 and January 2020.
- The interviews were semi-structured, allowing participants to share professional and lived experience to the extent they felt comfortable.

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*Providers are underfunded, under-resourced, yet demand [for our services] is high. We can't keep up with the demand. Add 2SLGBTQ+ services, and more training will be required. We need to build up the existing services in ways that don't take away from what we already do. Ensure that new services can be sustained. If you're not building with sustainability in mind, then you're doing a disservice to the community.*

**-Gender-based violence support worker**

# Findings from the Key Informant Interviews

- The informants indicated that there needs to be more education on the spectrum of violence that affects the 2SLGBTQ+ individuals, particularly microaggression and intimate partner violence.
- Informants noted that trans, racialized, and newcomer populations are particularly susceptible to experiencing violence.
- Identified the following gaps in violence prevention services for ensuring the safety of 2SLGBTQ+ communities in Ottawa:
  - Support for trans and racialized individuals
  - Information about available services is not reaching the intended audiences

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*Folks who identify as transgender, transfeminine or trans women... they experience violence on another level. They need increased protection from violence: self-defence courses, workshops on healthy relationships, guidance on how to protect themselves from street harassment. They should have access to services that try to create a safer world for them.*

-Community support worker

# Findings from the Key Informant Interviews

Informants also identified three key barriers to accessing violence prevention services:

- Low awareness among 2SLGBTQ+ communities that support exists
- Difficulty in accessing service locations
- Fears related to the service process

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*There's a history there... with respect to police not taking members of the 2SLGBTQ+ communities seriously. That's a history that carries on. We're dependent on how OPS perceives the crime, the threat of violence. [2SLGBTQ+ people are] worried they won't be taken seriously, and that's a stress.*

**-Community educator**

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*We haven't reached a point where we can deliver services to 2SLGBTQ+ people completely in the ways they need it, but conversations are happening. A lot more work needs to be done. That's good news, in the sense that people are trying to help the 2SLGBTQ+ communities in meaningful ways. Ottawa could be better, but we're at a place where conversations are happening.*

**-Gender-based violence support worker**

# Findings from 2SLGBTQ+ Youth and Young Adults

- Data was collected from 62 individuals who identified as 2SLGBTQ+ youth and young adults, age 15 to 30, who lived in the City of Ottawa.
- The survey attained a 43% completion rate. Data was collected from 62 qualifying respondents.
- Low-occurring responses (mentioned <5 times) have been suppressed to ensure anonymity.

Ages 23 to 26	34% (21)
Ages 27 to 30	29% (18)
Ages 15 to 18	19% (12)
Ages 19 to 22	18% (11)

# Findings from 2SLGBTQ+ Youth and Young Adults



84%

of survey respondents indicated that violence against 2SLGBTQ+ youth and young adults in Ottawa needs wider attention

# Findings from 2SLGBTQ+ Youth and Young Adults

The survey respondents perceive that providers are not well supported to focus on violence prevention in 2SLGBTQ+ communities, and that there is an overall lack of messaging to promote awareness of supports that might be available.

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*Service providers often do not have staff who have been adequately trained to serve queer and trans people. As well, policies can be foundationally discriminatory, excluding folks from accessing certain services (for example, women with trans lived experiences accessing services at a shelter intended for cis women). Additionally, if folks have intersecting identities (two-spirit, racialized, immigrant, etc.), the services tend to only be able to provide support for one of their identities, not all of them together.*

# Findings from 2SLGBTQ+ Youth and Young Adults

**Recommendations from survey respondents for increasing support for those impacted by violence include:**

- Increased visibility of available services where youth and young adults are, namely, in school and online
- Increased diversity among frontline staff
- Creation of spaces exclusively for 2SLGBTQ+ youth and young adults to connect, offer each other support, and foster community

# Findings from 2SLGBTQ+ Youth and Young Adults

## Recommendations from survey respondents for programs or initiatives to prevent and address violence:

- Addressing these topics in secondary school curricula
- More education on 2SLGBTQ+ identities, adding programs that encourage community building and making violence prevention resources visible and easy to access
- Safe spaces for 2SLGBTQ+ youth and young adults, to access resources towards various violence prevention needs, hold workshops and provide a safe 'hangout' for 2SLGBTQ+ people.

# Recommendations and Opportunities

**Recurring suggestions from key informants and youth and young adults include:**

- Respondents gave the most detailed recommendations on the topics of advertising and training, such as
  - Improving visibility of campaigns for violence prevention
  - Encouraging service providers to obtain education and/or training on the unique needs of 2SLGBTQ+ communities
- Also, providing a greater number of safe spaces for young 2SLGBTQ+ people
- Making counselling on violence issues more affordable

# Recommendations and Opportunities

Many of the suggestions put forward by the key informants and survey respondents are supportable by the findings of current research on violence prevention.

The following prevention strategies, adapted to the topics addressed in this report, show promise in reducing the occurrence of gender-and sexuality-based violence by increasing the consideration for 2SLGBTQ+ individuals:

- Social-Emotional Learning Programs for Youth
- Engaging Influential Adults and Peers

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*A lot of the communities are connected online. But remember they're a complex of communities, not one 2SLGBTQ+ community. Social media is great... but going to the spaces where 2SLGBTQ+ people are, that has potential for immediate, meaningful impact. Launch campaigns that talk about the concerns of the BIPOC communities, for instance. Give more visibility to the issues of the more marginalized members of the 2SLGBTQ+ communities.*

**-Gender-based violence support worker**

**Thank You**