



EAST PRESTON FAMILY RESOURCE
CENTRE

SEXUAL VIOLENCE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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Sexual Violence Community Engagement Coordinator

April Issue: Sexual Assault Awareness Month

**April is
Sexual Assault
Awareness Month**

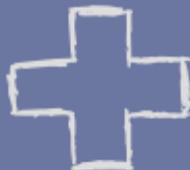
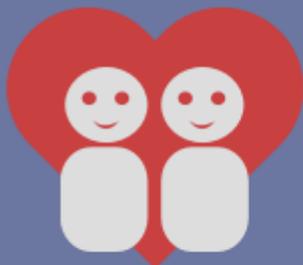
"Practicing consent is an important step in creating a culture we want to live in. A culture in which people are respected and have autonomy, choice, agency, to decide for themselves what is best for them."
-Anti-Violence Project, University of Victoria

To take the online training, please visit
www.breakthesilencens.ca/training

Consent Culture

A culture of consent is one where consent is normalized both within...

... Our relationships



... Society at large



It is one where...

People can freely choose to engage in sexual activity

Services for victims/survivors are adequately funded

Victims/survivors are believed

Sexual violence is taken seriously



There is comprehensive and inclusive sex education

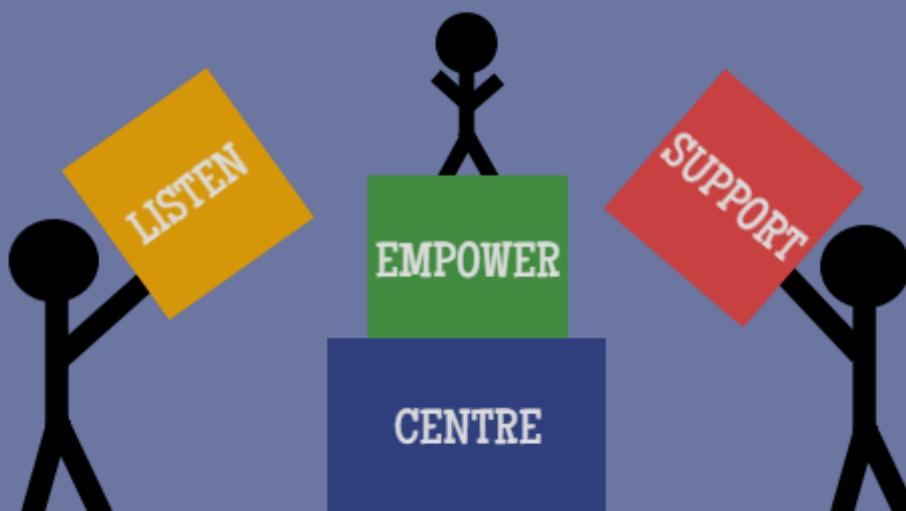
Everyday consent is the norm - autonomy, privacy, needs & wants are respected in all interactions

Individuals are empowered to express their needs, wants & desires in regards to sexual activity and they are respected

It means that each person has autonomy over their own...



As we work towards building a culture of consent we must...

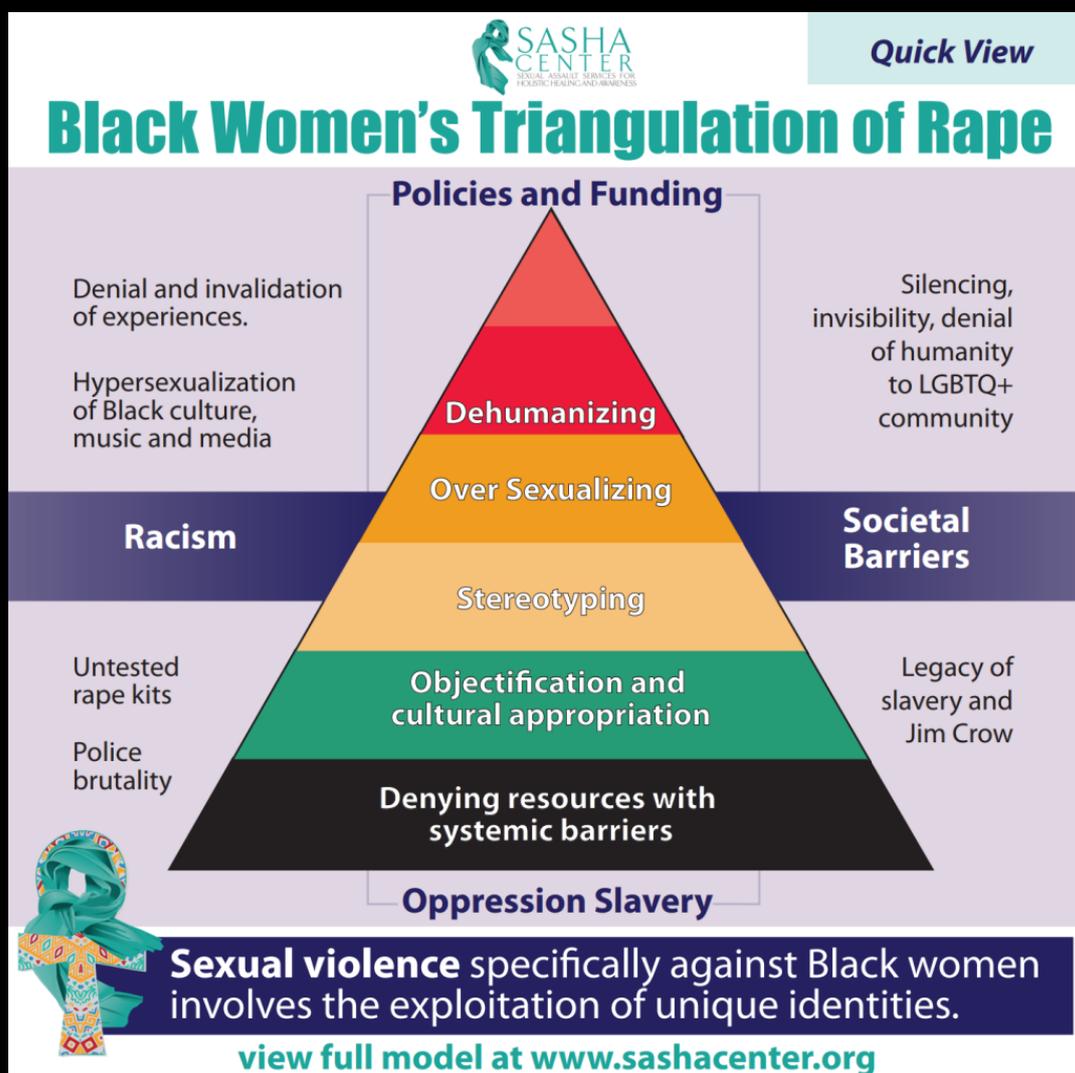


...People from marginalized communities.

Current Lived Realities

White supremacy is the racist belief that white people are superior to those of all other races and should therefore dominate them. White supremacy perpetuates and maintains social, political, historical, and institutional domination by white people. Historically, white supremacy justified the transatlantic slave trade. The transatlantic slave was the buying, selling and forced migration of African peoples, breaking up families and displacing individuals, for centuries. The unspoken reality is that the slave trade was not only a trade in bodies of people for labour. It was also a trade in the bodies of people for sexual exploitation. The History of enslavement, along with racial segregation, and oppression of African Canadians has left a legacy of systemic racism in Nova Scotia. Systemic racism is a series of barriers, including things like policies, processes and ideas that disadvantage people of colour. It is embedded in social norms and formal institutions like the police, criminal justice, education, and health systems.

Systemic racism leads to the conditions that impose poverty, lack of education, criminalization and incarceration; all of which make African Nova Scotians more vulnerable to sexual violence. So remember how we mentioned the slave trade? Well you can guarantee that this would have been an extremely traumatic experience to endure. We know that trauma and its effects can be passed on from one generation to the next. This is especially the case when people see and hear about generations of sexual violence within and against members of their own community. The rape of Black women and the castration and sexual control of Black men during enslavement has led to intergenerational trauma and destructive racial stereotypes.



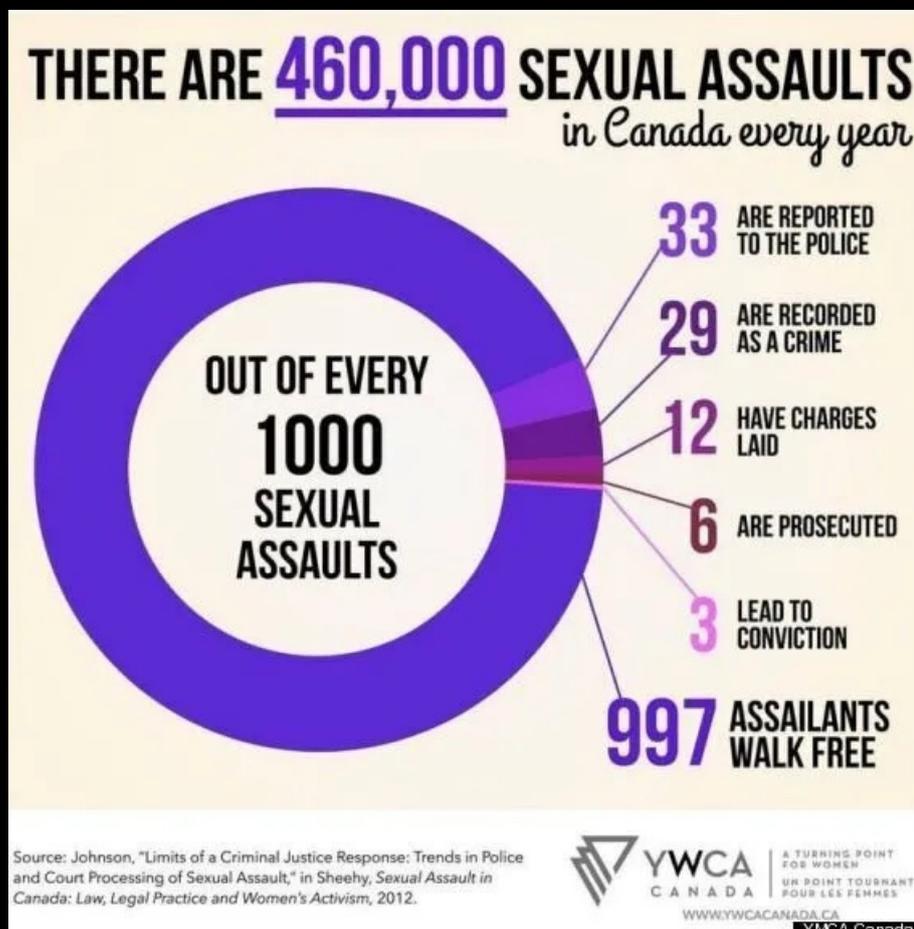
Current Lived Realities Continued

Women of African descent are often stereotyped as highly sexual, erotic and exotic. The persistence of this stereotype makes women of African descent more vulnerable to sexual violence and less likely to be believed when they report it. Girls and women of African descent are hypersexualized and objectified in the media and when cases of sexual violence are covered, the victims are blamed. Stereotypes of men and boys of African descent are often negative, depicting them as aggressive, hypersexual, violent, and criminal. This creates a harmful misconception of Black men being less than human, and perpetrators of violence who are incapable of being sexually victimized.

There is a distinct lack of representation of LGBTQ individuals in the African Nova Scotian community. Not addressing transphobia and homophobia contributes to the invisibility of LGBTQ African Nova Scotians.

African Nova Scotian communities have been deliberately impoverished, denied housing, and denied equal employment opportunities. This leads to increased vulnerability to sexual violence. Economic instability causes people to "do what they have to do" to survive.

Despite these harsh realities, African Nova Scotians are resilient in the face of ongoing systemic racism. Cultural pride is a major source of strength for African Nova Scotian communities. This includes things like music, dance, clothing, and spirituality. It is also the way we meet and greet, the way we work and celebrate, what we eat and how we eat it, the way we relate to each other and the way we solve our differences. I mean, come on, we are still here! Despite centuries of racism and slavery, we are still here, and we are still strong!



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Source: YWCA Canada





CHOOSE TO SPEAK UP

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