



STATEMENT ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE AT WESTERN UNIVERSITY

Content Warning: Sexual Violence

September 13, 2021

We, the York Federation of Students, affirm our support and solidarity with the impacted students at Western University, and all survivors of sexual violence. We remain committed to working towards and advocating for a culture of consent that centres survivors, both within our institutions and in society.

Sexual violence is a widespread problem that continues to bring harm to survivors and post-secondary campuses. Rape culture continues to be prevalent within our society including at post-secondary institutions. The recent incidents at Western University serve as a reminder that the fight against sexual violence and the promotion of consent culture must continue to be prioritized. There is a collective responsibility to ensure that we are all playing an active role in dismantling rape culture and appropriately addressing instances of sexual violence. Survivors deserve to be provided with campus resources that meet their needs.

It is not enough to acknowledge sexual violence and its harmful effects, especially after an incident has occurred. Universities, post-secondary institutions, and the province of Ontario need to be proactive and make consistent efforts to fund, provide education surrounding sexual violence, and provide supports for survivors. This education and support should be led through a lens that truly prioritizes survivors. In addition, conversations surrounding rape culture and sexual violence must be equitable, intersectional, and representative of various communities and identities. Sexual violence and rape culture carry a significant impact, and Ontario universities must do better to address this.

If anyone is in need of support please do not hesitate to reach out to the YFS Wellness Centre, or The Centre for Sexual Violence Response, Support & Education at <https://thecentre.yorku.ca/>. We also encourage folks to check out the various resources and supports regarding sexual violence, compiled by the YFS Wellness Centre: <https://www.yfswellness.ca/resources/sv-resources>

The No Means No/Consent is Mandatory campaign is one of the longest standing campaigns at the York Federation of Students. Its purpose is to raise awareness, promote a consent culture, and reduce the occurrence of rape culture, victim-blaming and gender-based violence. For those interested in getting involved or discussing this campaign further, please feel free to email vpcampaigns@yfs.ca.