



## Press Release – For Immediate Release

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### **Essential report on campus sexual assault policies released**

Toronto, ON, November 20, 2014 – Another academic year is well underway, but campus sexual assault remains a pressing concern for Canadian universities and colleges and the students who attend them. Today, METRAC released a new report entitled *Sexual Assault Policies on Campus: A Discussion Paper*, available at <https://www.metrac.org/resources/sexual-assault-policies-on-campus-a-discussion-paper-2014/>. METRAC is a community-based organization that prevents violence and has a 30-year history making spaces safer for women and others at high risk of gendered violence.

The paper includes results of a cursory review of sample policies related to sexual assault by and against students from 15 post-secondary institutions. Results suggest gaps and a lack of clarity in how some universities and colleges handle sexual assault reports, investigations and hearing processes. It also suggests inconsistent practices across institutions. “For instance, some policies don’t specifically outline the rights a survivor of sexual assault has when reporting violence on campus,” explains Wendy Komiotis, Executive Director of METRAC. “This is an underreported crime as it is – policies that aren’t clear on how a survivor would be protected can be a major barrier.”

The report details promising practices to improve policies and key recommendations to strengthen the response to sexual violence. “But even well-crafted policies can fail in practice,” notes Komiotis, “and campus community members of all identities and abilities must be educated on what the policies say in order to access their full benefits.” The report includes a recommendation that a full review of all Canadian post-secondary sexual assault policies and their real-life impact on students be undertaken as a next step. It also outlines the need for new provincial and federal policy standards that lay out institutional responsibilities, survivor/victim rights and transparency and accountability measures. To access the full report, visit [www.metrac.org](http://www.metrac.org).

**About METRAC:** METRAC works with individuals, communities and institutions to change ideas, actions and policies with the goal of ending violence against women and youth. Delivering relevant and boundary-breaking services and programs, we focus on education and prevention and use innovative tools to build safety, justice and equity.

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