



Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you for your work in supporting young people across Canada! My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am the \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.

I am writing to you today, as part of a collective effort by student leaders and youth across the country, to advocate for the formal adoption of [Consent Awareness Week](#) in \_\_\_\_\_.

As you know, sexual violence is an epidemic in Canada. Unfortunately, only 45% of Canadians fully understand what it means to give consent ([Canadian Women's Foundation](#)). Addressing this starts with awareness, action, and accountability.

The first national Consent Awareness Week took place last year, with over 70 organizations hosting events across the country, and declarations made in four provinces. This year, we want to see Consent Awareness Week established more formally through a Private Members' Bill. [Please click here](#) to find template language for the Bill.

This year's Consent Awareness Week will take place from September 18-22, 2023. This date was chosen because the first six weeks of school are designated [the Red Zone](#), when there is an especially significant increase in sexual violence at schools. We want every level of government to adopt and declare the third week of September annually as Consent Awareness Week. Canada would be the first country in the world to recognize and adopt this week to ensure that everyone feels respected and safe wherever they live, work and play.

Consent Awareness Week invites folks of all ages to have thoughtful, affirming, intersectional and age-appropriate conversations about consent. Responding to rejection, articulating boundaries, respecting bodily autonomy and active listening are valuable life skills. This week is a significant opportunity to reflect, champion, and celebrate consent as a cornerstone of all relationships, not just intimate ones.

When consent is not understood and respected, the epidemic of sexual violence continues:

- There are [636,000 sexual assaults](#) self-reported every year in Canada.
- In children and youth, [1 in 7 girls](#) reported that another student has sexually assaulted them.
- [15% of girls and 9% of boys](#) between the ages of 14 to 21 identified that they have had a sexual act forced upon them by a peer.
- At Canadian postsecondary schools, [71% of students](#) either witnessed or experienced unwanted sexualized behaviours in a postsecondary setting, and 41% of all reported incidents of sexual assault were reported by students.
- In the workplace, [one in four women \(25%\) and one in six men \(17%\)](#) reported having been personally subjected to inappropriate sexualized behaviours in 2020.
- 43.9% of survey respondents in the [Respect at Work: Harassment and Violence in Canadian Workplaces study](#) were subjected to at least one behaviour or practice of sexual harassment and violence while at work between 2020 and 2021.

Championing this annual initiative in \_\_\_\_\_ will help ensure that \_\_\_\_\_ are safe wherever they choose to learn, work, live, and play. Similar to other institutionalized days or weeks of significance, Consent Awareness Week is meant to engage the whole community. We hope you will join student leaders, community leaders, survivors, advocates, educators, and federal and municipal governments across the country in recognizing and adopting the third week of September annually as Consent Awareness Week. We welcome your leadership to help make Consent Awareness Week a reality.

I look forward to hearing your response.

Many thanks and best wishes,