

The Toll

Impacts on Survivors of Workplace Sexual Harassment in
Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries

SPOTLIGHT REPORT

aftermetoo

March 2021



By Kelly Hill

“I will say that my career has been incredibly damaged by workplace sexual harassment... it is the air we breathe. Whatever you think is going on, triple the number and triple the effect.

It’s obviously a human rights issue.”

“It was gross and illuminating to take this survey.

I hadn't tallied up how much and how often I had to ‘get over it’, and how huge a factor it has been to my mental health and happiness.”

Source: Direct quotes from anonymous respondents to *The Change You Want to See: Aftermetoo Survey of Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries*

“Sexual harassment is the beginning of the conversation: we need to discuss psychological and institutional harassment, abuse of power and the dangers related to mental health due to our precariousness.”

(Authors’s translation of: « Le harcèlement sexuel est le début de la conversation: il faut parler ensemble d'harcèlement psychologique et institutionnel, d'abus de pouvoir et des dangers liés à la santé mentale dus à notre précarité. »)

“The events impacted the way I pursued my career. I avoided certain companies and professionals that were needed to escalate my career. It cost me advancement and job security.”

Source: Direct quotes from anonymous respondents to *The Change You Want to See: Aftermetoo Survey of Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries*

- **Aftermetoo** is creating Canada's first national digital platform centralizing the laws around sexual harassment, breaking down information about what to expect if you report, how to protect yourself and how to prepare.
- **Aftermetoo** is there to help you navigate how legal systems work and where to find help. We make the information clear and straightforward, so you understand your rights.
- **Aftermetoo** empowers you to stay safe, healthy and in control.
- More information: [aftermetoo.com](https://www.aftermetoo.com)



- Based on findings from *The Change You Want to See: Rosa Survey of Workplace Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries*
 - First-ever survey of workplace sexual harassment in these industries
 - Survivor-centered and trauma-informed approach throughout the survey design and outreach process
- **Survey goals**
 - Paint a picture of what arts workplaces looked like before #MeToo (late 2017 or earlier) and post #MeToo for contract arts workers (specifically: performing arts, film, and television)
 - Understand changes that arts workers want to see from employers, unions, agents, managers, associations, and funders in order to keep workers safe and able to focus on doing their best work.
- **Survey design and analysis by Hill Strategies Research**
 - Rigorous and reliable research on the arts and culture + clear and effective communications
 - Custom surveys, *Statistical Insights on the Arts* series, *Arts Research Monitor* series, and much more



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- Survey was open between September 21 and October 25, 2020
- Survey outreach: significant social media efforts and direct communication with many unions, arts service organizations, and associations across the country *
- 1,102 individuals responded, including 873 in English (79%) and 229 in French (21%)
 - Anonymity of respondents was carefully protected
- Responses were received from all 13 provinces and territories.
- Regional breakdown: Atlantic provinces (6%); Quebec (23%), Ontario (39%), Prairie provinces (18%), British Columbia (13%); the three northern territories (0.5%); Canadians residing outside of the country (0.9%).
 - The survey sample from Quebec has higher proportions of men, permanent workers, and people under 40 than the samples from the other provinces.

** Hill Strategies wishes to thank Alix MacLean for her work throughout the survey design and outreach process, as well as two Francophone outreach personnel: Myriam Benzakour and Alexia Martel.*

About the survey

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- Gender: **77%** identify as women; **19%** as men; **5%** as transgender / two-spirit / gender diverse *.
- LGBTQ: **29%** **
- BIPOC: 15% (includes Indigenous: **3%**, Black: **2%**, other people of colour: **10%**)
- People who have a disability and/or are Deaf: **14%**
- Age ranges: **20%** between 18 and 29; **32%** in their 30s, **22%** in their 40s; **15%** in their 50s; **9%** 60 or older.
- People who have (ever) worked in live performing arts: **83%**
- People who have (ever) worked in film, TV and/or web series: **64%** (*multiple selections were possible*)

** Transgender / two-spirit / gender diverse is a combination of the following gender identities in the survey: transgender; two-spirit; gender non-conforming / gender fluid; non-binary; agender; and a gender not listed. Multiple selections were allowed, and this roll-up category was prioritized in the summary statistics over “woman” and “man” if both were selected.*

*** LGBTQ includes the following sexual orientations: lesbian; gay; bisexual; asexual; queer; questioning; pansexual; and a sexual orientation not listed. Multiple selections were allowed, and this roll-up category was prioritized in the summary statistics over “heterosexual” if both were selected.*

These roll-up categories, along with BIPOC, were created to protect respondents’ confidentiality and improve data reliability.

Response time, percentage calculations, and margins of error

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- For those who completed the entire survey, the median response time was 16.8 minutes.
- Partial responses were kept if respondents completed a substantial proportion of the survey.
- For questions with fewer than 1,102 respondents, the percentages are based on the actual number of people responding. Also excluded from the percentages are respondents who selected “prefer not to say”, which was an option offered in many questions, given the extremely sensitive nature of the survey content.
 - For most questions, there were over 1,000 respondents. For particularly sensitive questions, as well as questions appearing toward the end of the survey (e.g., demographics), there were about 900 respondents.
- Margins of error have not been estimated for the results
 - The sample was not random
 - Respondents who have been harassed may have been more likely to respond and “tell their story”
 - In general, differences of less than 3% between groups of respondents are not considered substantially different in this report

Survey results: Sexual harassment

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The prevalence of sexual harassment in the Canadian performing arts, film, and entertainment industries is stunning.

- **92%** of respondents (almost 1,000 people) have experienced and/or witnessed sexual harassment during their arts careers
 - Includes 10 different types of sexual harassment that respondents might have experienced and/or witnessed in Canada's performing arts and film sector
- **82%** of respondents (about 850 people) have personally experienced sexual harassment
- **90%** (953 people) have witnessed sexual harassment happening to someone else around them
 - Of the 953 people who witnessed sexual harassment, **94%** also experienced harassment themselves

Experienced sexual harassment

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Prevalence of sexual harassment experienced by Aftermetoo survey respondents	Personally experienced	
	%	#
Any form of sexual harassment (i.e., any of the 10 behaviours below)	82%	849
Unwelcome invasion of personal space (e.g., crowding, leaning over)	63%	658
Unwelcome sexual teasing, jokes, comments, or questions	61%	637
Unwelcome sexually suggestive looks or gestures	47%	636
Unwelcome communications of a sexual nature (e.g., emails, phone calls, notes, text messages, social media contacts)	38%	486
Use of derogatory or unprofessional terms related to a person's sex/gender (e.g., slut-shaming)	38%	399
Pressure for dates and/or sexual favours	24%	395
The presence of sexually oriented material in any format (e.g., photos, videos, written material)	22%	253
Sexual assault (i.e., sexual contact with a person without that person's consent)	18%	224
Stalking (i.e., unwanted intrusion – physically or electronically – into someone's personal life)	14%	190
Someone offering preferential treatment in the workplace in exchange for sexual favours	13%	149

Note: 1,040 people responded to the question:

"Have any of the following behaviours ever been **directed at you** in your performing arts, film, or television workplaces (or training institutions)?"

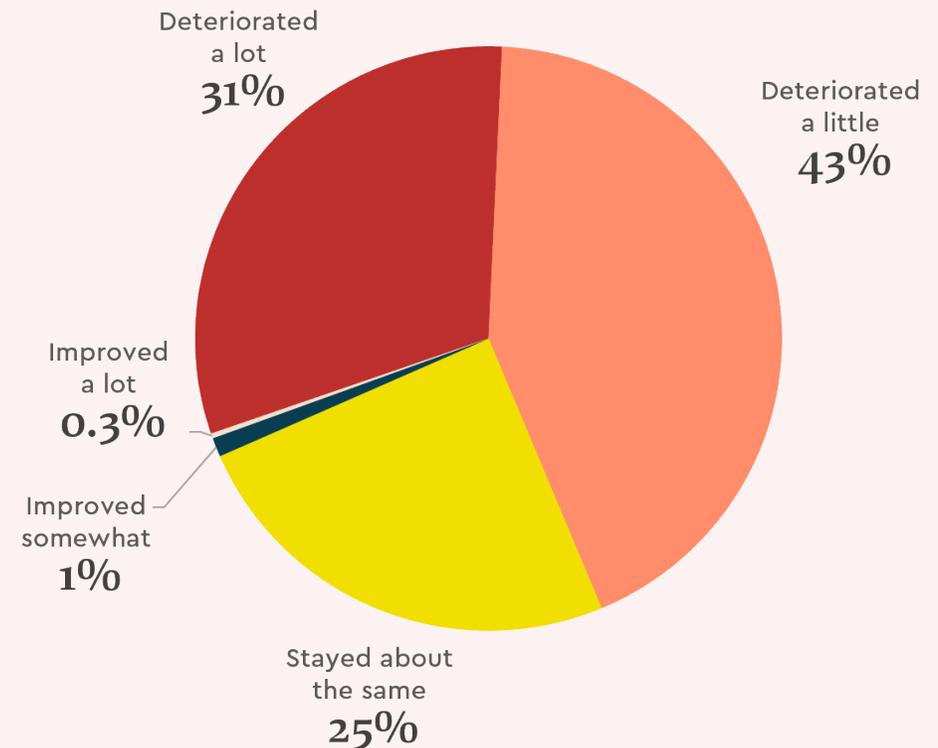
Impacts of sexual harassment on mental health

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Mental health deterioration is very common among survivors of sexual harassment

- **74%** of arts workers who personally experienced harassment reported a deterioration
 - **31%** reported that their mental health deteriorated “a lot”
- Specific mental health challenges
 - Anxiety (selected by **82%** of survivors who experienced a deterioration in their mental health)
 - Depression (**52%**)
 - Lack of sleep (**45%**)
 - Post-traumatic stress disorder (**26%**)
 - Substance use or abuse (**22%**)
 - Eating disorder (**13%**)

As a result of the incident(s), would you say that your mental health deteriorated or improved?



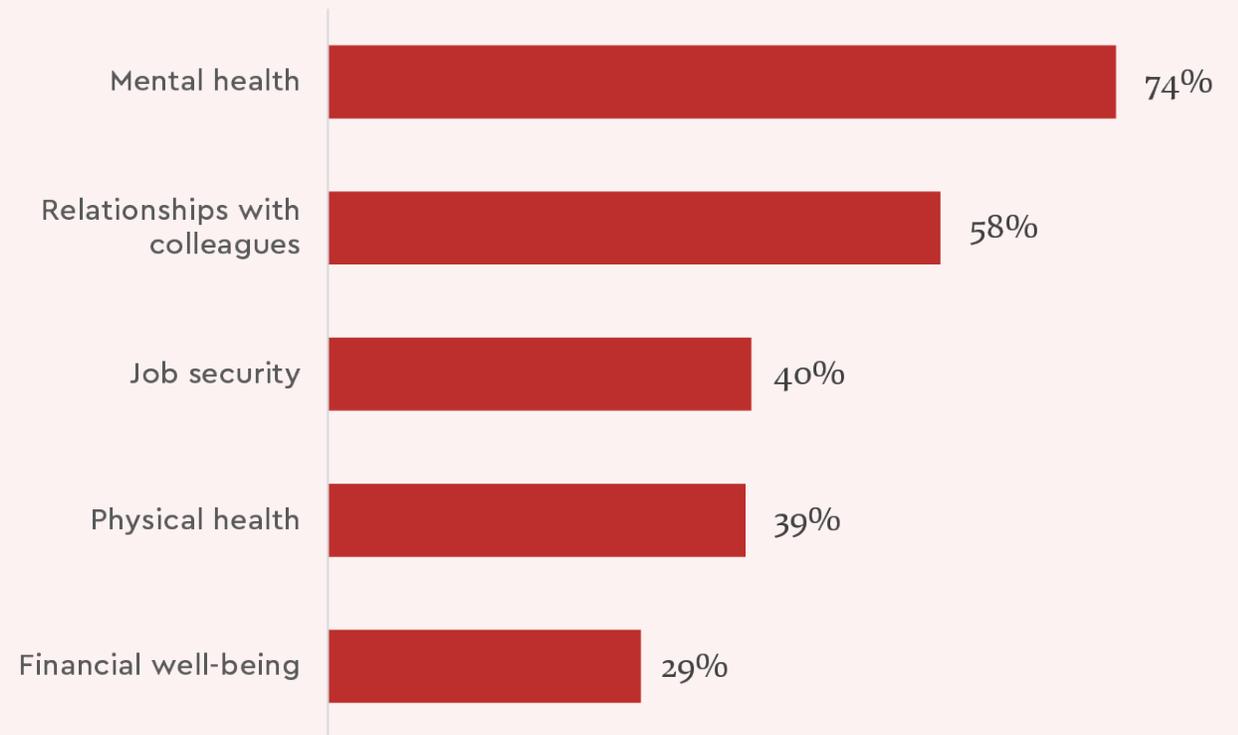
Source: 761 arts workers who experienced sexual harassment and responded to the Aftermetoo survey of *The Change You Want to See*, 2020. Analysis by Hill Strategies Research.

Other impacts of sexual harassment

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- Wide-ranging negative impacts on survivors' well-being, other than mental health challenges
 - Relationships with colleagues (58% of people who personally experienced sexual harassment reported a deterioration)
 - Job security (40%)
 - Physical health (39%)
 - Financial well-being (29%)

As a result of the incident(s), would you say that the following aspects of your well-being deteriorated or improved?



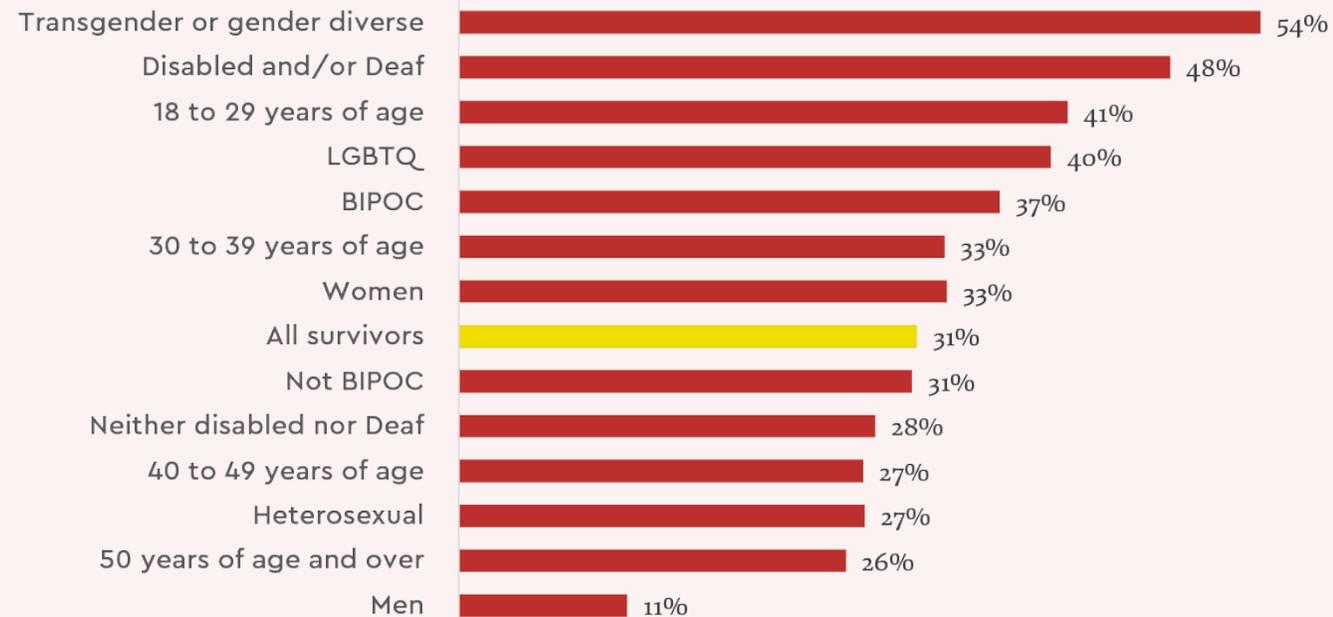
Source: 761 arts workers who experienced sexual harassment and responded to the Aftermetoo survey of *The Change You Want to See*, 2020.
Analysis by Hill Strategies Research.

Whose mental health deteriorated a lot after incident(s) of sexual harassment?

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- Some groups of sexual harassment survivors are more likely to have experienced a substantial deterioration in their mental health after being sexually harassed
 - Transgender and gender diverse arts workers
 - Arts workers with a disability and/or who are Deaf
 - Arts workers under 30 years of age
 - LGBTQ workers
 - BIPOC workers
 - Women
 - Anglophones
 - Arts workers residing in the three Prairie provinces
 - Self-employed arts workers
- Full details in the tables on the next page

Percentages of different groups of sexual harassment survivors whose mental health deteriorated a lot after being harassed in an arts workplace



Source: 761 arts workers who experienced sexual harassment and responded to the Aftermetoo survey of *The Change You Want to See*, 2020.
Analysis by Hill Strategies Research.

Whose mental health deteriorated a lot after incident(s) of sexual harassment?

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Group of respondents	Percent
All 761 respondents who experienced sexual harassment and reported their mental health situation	31% (deteriorated a lot)
Unionized	
Yes	33%
No	29%
Employment status	
Self-employed contract(s)	34%
Employed on contract(s)	27%
Permanent worker (whether self-employed or employed)	21%
Gender	
Transgender and gender diverse *	54%
Woman	33%
Man	11%
Sexual orientation	
LGBTQ	40%
Heterosexual	27%

BIPOC	Percent
BIPOC	37%
Not BIPOC	31%
Disabled and/or Deaf	
Yes	48%
No	28%
Language	
Anglophones	32%
Francophones	23%
Region	
Atlantic *	20%
Quebec	26%
Ontario	32%
Prairies	39%
British Columbia	34%

* There were fewer than 50 usable responses from people in groups with an asterisk. These findings should be viewed with some caution.

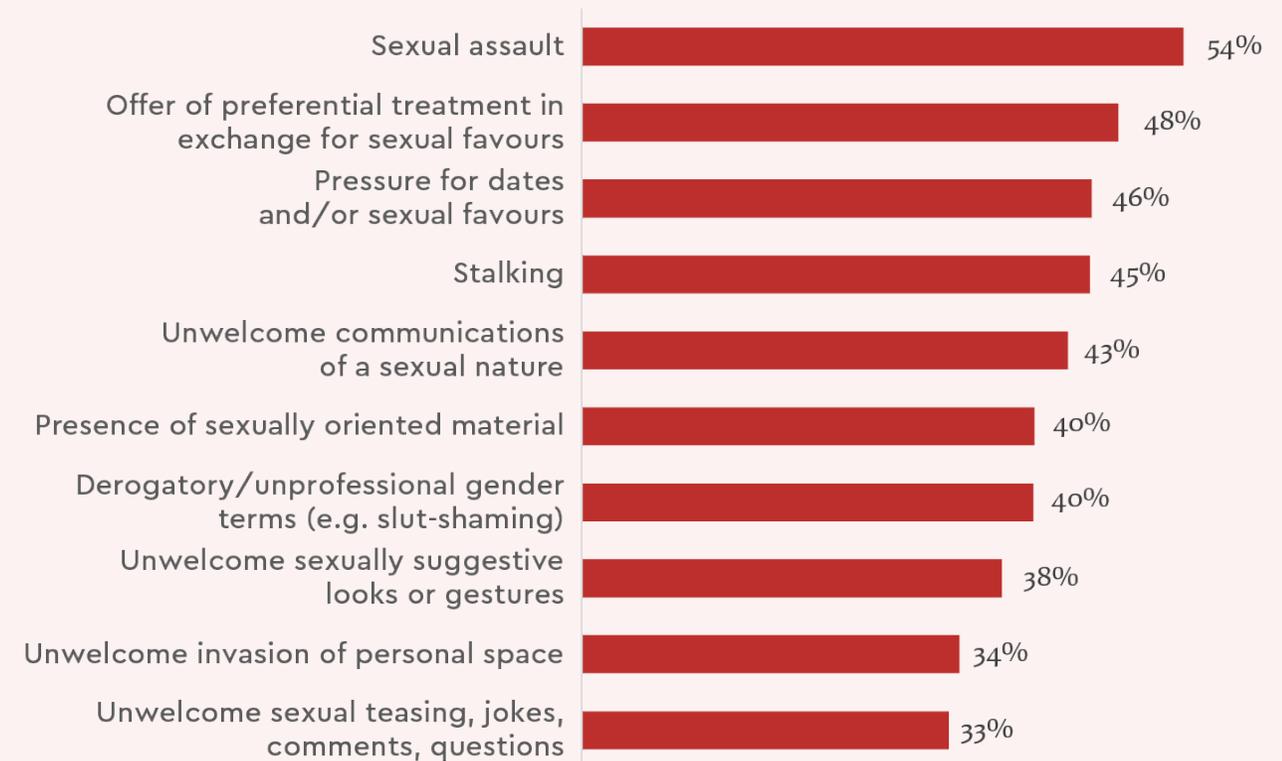
Age group	Percent
18 to 29	41%
30 to 39	33%
40 to 49	27%
50 and over	26%
Primary (current) occupation	
Performer	38%
Arts administrator/manager/educator	21%
Crew member	31%
Production worker	23%
Director/producer/choreographer	20%
Designer/screenwriter/playwright *	33%
Have worked in film, TV and/or web series	
Yes	33%
No	28%
Have worked in (live) performing arts	
Yes	31%
No	31%

Factors in mental health deterioration

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- The impacts of sexual harassment on mental health vary by type of harassment.
- The strongest negative impacts follow sexual assault, offers of preferential treatment in exchange for sexual favours, pressure for dates, and stalking.

Percentages of sexual harassment survivors whose mental health deteriorated a lot after certain types of harassment in an arts workplace



Source: 787 arts workers who experienced sexual harassment and responded to the Aftermetoo survey of *The Change You Want to See*, 2020.
Analysis by Hill Strategies Research.

Factors in mental health deterioration

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- The impacts on mental health are much worse for people who had an ongoing work relationship with the person(s) who caused harm
 - Mental health deteriorated a lot for **43%** of arts workers who were harassed by a person with whom they had an ongoing relationship (i.e., over several projects, past or present)
 - Mental health deteriorated a lot for **24%** of arts workers who were harassed by a person with whom they had a short-term relationship (i.e., on a project or two, past or present)
- Negative mental health impacts were somewhat mitigated for survivors who were able to avoid the person who caused harm
 - Mental health deteriorated a lot for **34%** of arts workers who avoided the person who caused harm
- The impacts of sexual harassment on mental health are similar regardless of who caused harm
 - Mental health deteriorated a lot for **36%** of arts workers those who were harassed by a person in a position of power (e.g., director, producer, conductor, union representative)
 - Mental health deteriorated a lot for **32%** of arts workers who were harassed by a colleague or a co-worker (i.e., at a similar level of authority)
- Negative mental health impacts were worsened for survivors who were not well supported after the incident(s)
 - Mental health deteriorated a lot for **70%** of arts workers who feel like they didn't have the support of their colleagues
 - Mental health deteriorated a lot for **48%** of arts workers who feel like they didn't have the support of their stage manager / production manager (i.e., direct report)

Close to two-thirds of people who experienced sexual harassment (63%) suffered some type of reprisal – whether or not they reported an incident.

- The most common reprisals are:
 - Gaslighting (i.e., someone attempting to make them question their recollection of the incidents): selected by **37%** of respondents who experienced sexual harassment
 - Being considered “difficult to work with”: **33%**
 - Having fewer career opportunities: **23%**

Who experienced reprisals being sexual harassed?

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**63% of sexual
harassment survivors
experienced reprisals
after being harassed**

- Some groups are more likely to experience reprisals (see tables on next page)
 - Transgender and gender diverse arts workers (85%)
 - Arts workers with a disability and/or who are Deaf (82%)
 - LGBTQ workers (75%)
 - Crew members (74%)
 - Arts workers residing in the four Atlantic provinces (71%)
 - BIPOC workers (70%)
 - Arts workers residing in British Columbia (69%)
 - Self-employed arts workers (68%)
 - Performers (67%)
 - Anglophones (67%)
 - Women (66%)

Who experienced reprisals being sexual harassed?

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Group of respondents	Percent
All 760 respondents who experienced sexual harassment and reported whether or not they experienced a reprisal	63% experienced a reprisal
Unionized	
Yes	63%
No	62%
Employment status	
Self-employed contract(s)	68%
Employed on contract(s)	57%
Permanent worker (whether self-employed or employed)	48%
Gender	
Transgender and gender diverse *	85%
Woman	66%
Man	41%
Sexual orientation	
LGBTQ	75%
Heterosexual	58%

BIPOC	Percent
BIPOC	70%
Not BIPOC	62%
Disabled and/or Deaf	
Yes	82%
No	60%
Language	
Anglophones	67%
Francophones	39%
Region	
Atlantic *	71%
Quebec	47%
Ontario	65%
Prairies	67%
British Columbia	69%

* There were fewer than 50 usable responses from people in groups with an asterisk. These findings should be viewed with some caution.

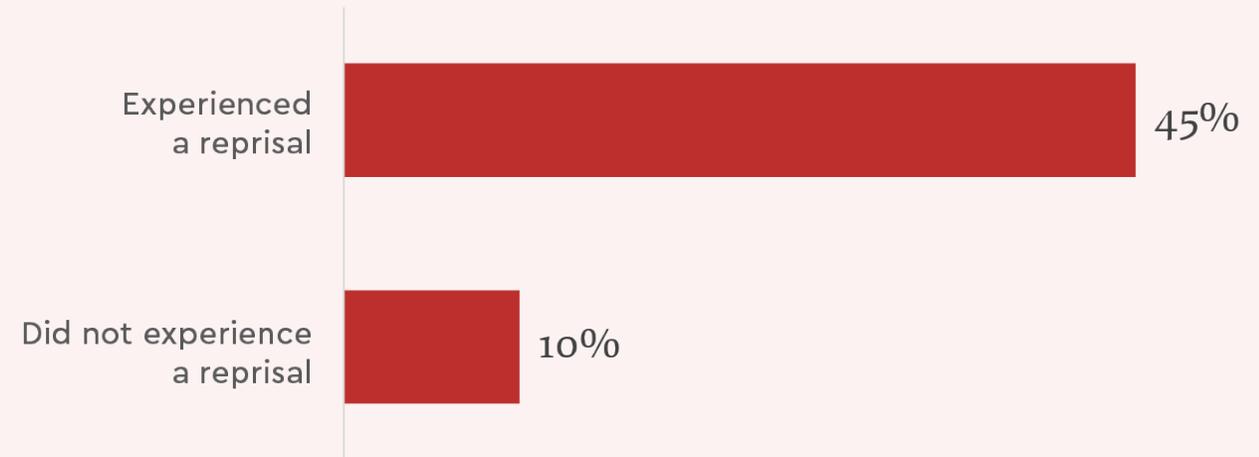
Age group	Percent
18 to 29	62%
30 to 39	64%
40 to 49	65%
50 and over	61%
Primary (current) occupation	
Performer	67%
Arts administrator/manager/educator	49%
Crew member	74%
Production worker	50%
Director/producer/choreographer	66%
Designer/screenwriter/playwright *	61%
Have worked in film, TV and/or web series	
Yes	67%
No	53%
Have worked in (live) performing arts	
Yes	62%
No	65%

Strong relationship between reprisals and negative mental health impacts

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- Sexual harassment survivors who experienced at least one reprisal are much more likely to have experienced a substantial deterioration in their mental health after being sexually harassed
 - Experienced a reprisal: **45%** experienced a substantial deterioration in their mental health
 - Did not experience a reprisal: **10%**

Strong deterioration in mental health much more common among sexual harassment survivors who experienced a reprisal



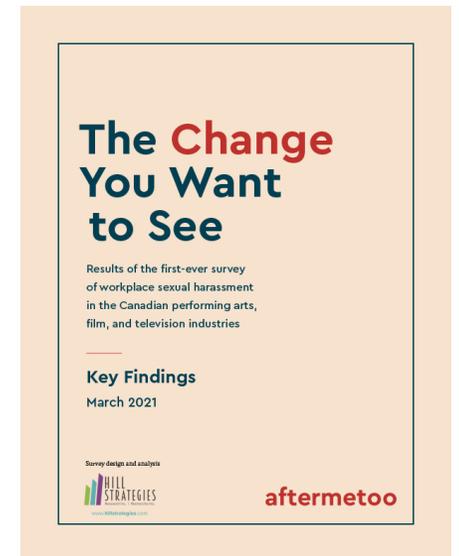
Source: 749 arts workers who experienced sexual harassment and responded to the Aftermetoo survey of *The Change You Want to See*, 2020.
Analysis by Hill Strategies Research.

Other Reports Available

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Reports available from “The Change You Want to See”, the first-ever survey of workplace sexual harassment in the Canadian performing arts, film, and television industries

- **Key Findings:** The Change You Want to See
- **The Status:** Workplace Sexual Harassment in Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries
- **The Toll:** Impacts on Survivors of Workplace Sexual Harassment in Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries
- **The Aftermath:** Reporting, Supports for Survivors, and Who Caused Harm Related to Workplace Sexual Harassment in Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries (this report)
- **The Future:** Changes that Arts Workers Want to See Regarding Workplace Sexual Harassment in Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries
- **The Field: In Survivors’ Words.** Analysis of Respondents’ Written-In Suggestions Regarding Workplace Sexual Harassment in Canadian Performing Arts, Film, and Television Industries



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