

42 women working in body rub parlours voluntarily filled in these surveys June - August, 2016. We have split the responses into 2 sections: (1) those who reported physical or sexual violence and (2) those who did not.

Of the 42 respondents, 24 (57%) identified some form of physical and/or sexual violence was perpetrated against them by men who sought to buy their services.

We would like to learn if there are any safety or violence issues that you have experienced and your suggestions for how to improve safety for women. Safety includes physical, sexual, emotional safety where you do not feel abused in any way, or, you do not feel threatened by someone using their power over you to make you do something you do not want to do. Thank you for your time and your suggestions! ☺

1. What would you describe as physical, sexual, or emotional safety hazards in body rub parlours?

Risk of violence from sex consumers

- A client forcing themselves upon you or pushing you to do things you aren't comfortable with
- Risk of robbery, a lot of emotional abuse due to clients sick fantasies
- Verbal and emotional abuse
- Well, you always have to be prepared for anything. Self-esteem can be low
- Having a lot of guys asking for unprotected sex
- Someone who doesn't take "no" for an answer and pushes the script insults the girls
- Biting, hair pulling, name calling, forcing and controlling
- Emotional abuse
- Violent or sexually pressuring clients who do not listen to the word "no". Owners who mistreat their staff, pressure them into prices and services
- Forceful, doing something you were told not to
- Anything restricted by the spa or ladies, and ignored by the clients
- Guys looking for unsafe services and trying to take off condom
- Someone pressured me to do something I don't want to
- Physical safety hazards – no screening of people who might be abusive. No one knows what could happen behind closed doors

External Protection

- No cameras, no security door, no panic buttons
- Being alone in the studio (3)
- Not enough cameras; locks on doors; receptionist should have keys in case of emergency
- Cameras, panic button, security doors

No Safety Concerns:

- Our studio has everything to make us safe: cameras, locked doors
- All good places I have worked
- Gotta stay safe
- When it is not consensual

2. Have you ever been:

21/24 (88%) responded that they had been victims of these 3 types of physical assaults.

Note: Many identified all 3 forms of assault

15/24 Choked (62%) 13/24 Slapped (54%) 18/24 Bitten (75%)

Of these 21:

47% (10/21) were victims of all 3 forms of physical assault

38% (8/21) were victims of 1 form of physical assault

24% (5/21) were victims 2 forms of physical assault

One respondent who suffered all 3 forms of abuse also wrote: "clients holding me down"

Other forms of physical assault – please list:

3 additional respondents described being held down:

- held down and stalked
- have been held down and he tried to force me to do things
- being held down

hair pulled

pushed around, expected to do everything

sexually assaulted, rough play, spit on, held down

a. Have you ever been pressured to provide a sexual act you did not want to provide?

16/24 (67%) YES 8/24 (33%) NO

Comments:

- pressured in customer asking but I do what I am comfortable with
- but I don't give in to pressure
- Anal, anal play
- Bareback. But I do not provide this service so when he tried to take the condom off, I kicked him out
- Consistently pressured to perform "unsafe" services, like bareback, but I do not give in
- A man came in and forced anal sex on me and I wasn't ok with it
- Just dealt with it – figured he would have gotten out of control
- By certain bosses
- Sometimes people complain or make you feel bad but I do not give in to the pressure

b. Are you familiar with the laws around consent? 21 Yes 2 No (1 somewhat)

4. If you were harmed in any way in the past, did you:

- know where to go or who to call for help? 20 Yes 4 No

- did you need to seek medical attention? 7 Yes 17 No

- did you tell anyone? 11 owner 16 friend 7 police 5 other
- did you get support to go through the police and court process? 3 Yes 16 No
- Can you tell us which who or which organizations supported you? Vice, Sherwood Park RCMP, Edmonton John Howard Society

5. What would you like to see improved to help women be safe (physically, sexually, mentally)?

- Standards or maybe regulations within the business to help working girls to know who to call if anything were to happen.
- More security.
- I think massage spas are safe, in comparison to other options.
- Counselling services and more awareness for help.
- There isn't really anything you can do. Some girls just let the guys get away with the pushiness so they come in and think they can just get away with it with everyone and cause physical arguments so if some girls are afraid of guys or can't say no or tell someone they shouldn't work.
- Not sure. I always feel safe but it's just very aggravating.
- More call in numbers and courses more support.
- Alarm-security.
- Would be nice to have panic buttons put in our rooms.
- It's pretty safe.
- More counselling services.
- There should be a sign in every room stating that employee abuse will not be tolerated.
- I truly believe that how it is now is working for us.
- Have more support at massage parlour for girls facing problems.
- To have a counsellor that can provide services to the service providers for sure.
- Better information for the girls on the laws regarding consent and self-defense. Easier access to this information at every studio.
- Not sure.
- Rules should be clearly posted in spas.
- More accessible services for sex workers (ie. free condoms/testing, etc.).
- Signs in the studio. Men to be respectful.
- Put more video camera, be more than two people on the studio.
- Cameras and always have more than 1 girl.
- More rights for the women working under certain bosses with threats of being fired or punished.
- Have information on support groups of working girls and girls who have gotten out of the industry.

THESE 17 SURVEY RESPONDENTS DID NOT REPORT BEING CHOKED, SLAPPED or BITTEN

1. What would you describe as physical, sexual, or emotional safety hazards in body rub parlours?

- Forcefulness
- Anything that makes you uncomfortable or threatened.
- Filming, aggressive guys. If girls are not properly “trained”. Girls doing unsafe acts.
- Crazy men.
- Being ripped off.
- Guys ignoring personal safety, trying to be sneaky with safety.
- Physical-aggressive clients, clients with the intention to rob us (cameras prevent) and other working girls access to my personal information.
- I would describe it as unauthorized or unapproved touching, drug use, or invasion of privacy.
- Being alone, having a reception or manager.
- None.
- Safety at location on Whyte Ave due to homeless.
- Someone doing something you are uncomfortable with or say no too.
- Excessive force, clients with demeaning attitudes, not willing to use condoms.
- Anything not agreed upon.
- I feel safe and secure in the business I work in we have a great support system, cameras and receptionists on shift with us.
- STD’s.

2. Have you ever been: **No Respondents Identified these forms of Physical Assault**

_____ Choked _____ Slapped _____ Bitten

Other forms of physical assault – please list:

a. Have you ever been pressured to provide a sexual act you did not want to provide?

 3 yes 14 no

Comments

- But it’s important to be strong minded and say no.
- They pressure but I am assertive/aggressive. No problem for me but am sure 4 others.
- I said no.

b. Are you familiar with the laws around consent? 15 Yes 2 No

3. If you were harmed in any way in the past, did you:

- know where to go or who to call for help? 12 Yes 3 No
- did you need to seek medical attention? 10 Yes 5 No
- did you tell anyone? 7 owner 7 friend 3 police 1 other

- did you get support to go through the police and court process? 2 Yes 5 No

- Can you tell us which who or which organizations supported you? _____

4. What would you like to see improved to help women be safe (physically, sexually, mentally)?

- Double doors in studios.
- Proper safety rules. Maybe group counselling for working women.
- The minimum age be increased to work.
- I would like to see the health nurse come around more often.
- Longer or extended hours in body rub centers providing safety in numbers and no need for working alone, outside.
- Security systems, safety awareness, program placements and support systems.
- Constant monitoring of ladies and clients. Cameras that work!!!
- No concerns.
- Very happy with all programs and services available.
- Maybe some sort of panic button.
- Women need to be accountable for their safety as well. Watch for signs and work with other workers to be proactive about potential offenders.
- No comment.
- I feel safe with the studio I work in. We have cameras and receptionists on shift.
- Support group. STD testing for clients like in Australia.