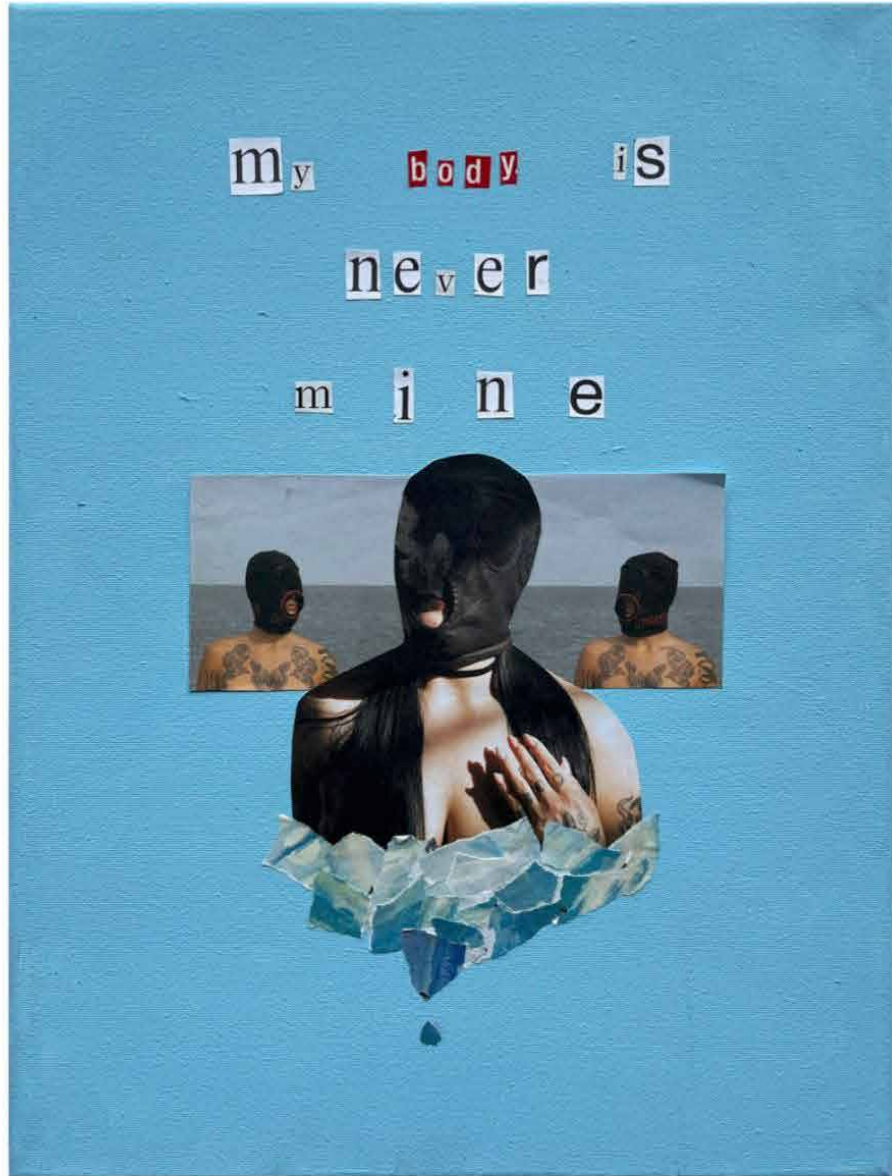


2S/LGBTQIA+ ART EXHIBIT

RISE:



**REACH INTO
SELF-EXPRESSION**

RISE: Reach into Self-Expression represents work completed in a collaborative participatory arts-based project between the *Community-Based Research Centre* and *Health Initiative for Men* that explored 2S/LGBTQIA+ people's definitions of gender-based violence (GBV) and their experiences of navigating systems of support in the Fraser Health Region.

This booklet shares artwork and reflections created by 2S/LGBTQIA+ survivors of GBV through arts-based workshops that took place between August and December 2025. It



also shares insights gathered through follow-up interviews with participants. All quotes included throughout this booklet are drawn directly from participants in the research study and members of the research team.

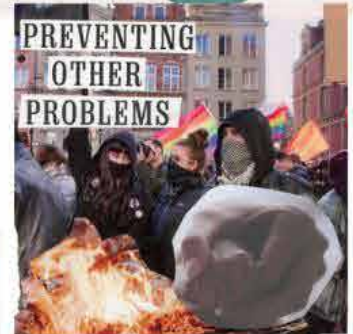




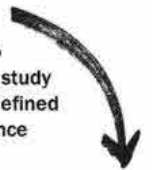
“Some people whisper in their presence but scream in their art”



“But we’ve created a system that makes it too easy to stop caring about people as people, it’s too easy to say you deserve this”



Unfold this booklet to learn more about this study and how participants defined gender-based violence





“When we do the work, and we’re explaining what we’ve done, and we show it to each other, it just opens me

up to the community that we have, that we’re not always alone, that we can be there

for each other, and that we can make a real difference”





“Basically, gender-based violence is the system with which we create gender. Create and enforce gender and then punish failure to perform. That’s what gender-based violence is to me”



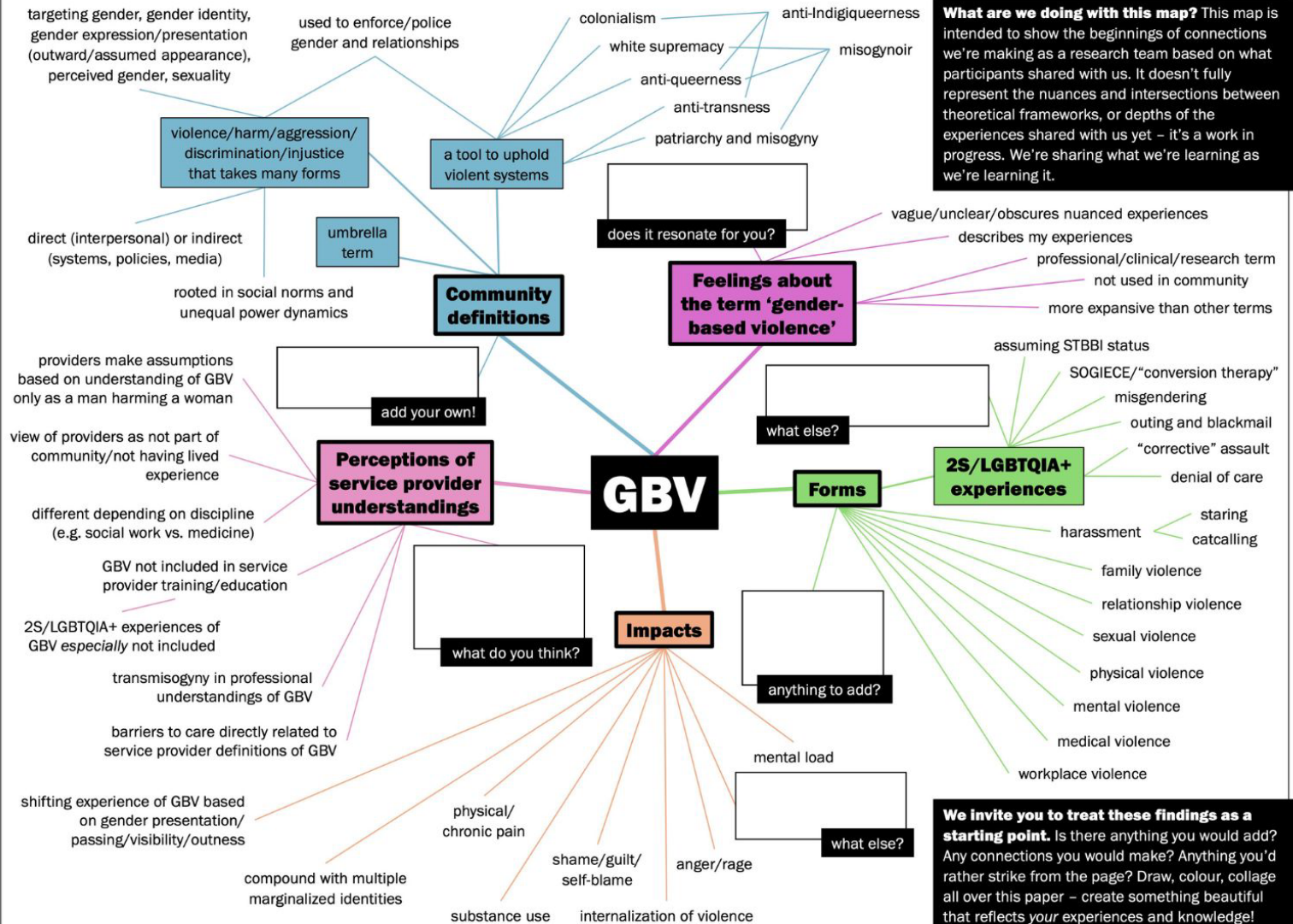
RISE: Reach Into Self-Expression

2S/LGBTQIA+ communities experience gender-based violence (GBV) in unique ways, including a higher risk of violence, significant barriers to accessing affirming support, and a lack of understanding from many service providers, policy-makers, and researchers. **This project invited participants from across the Fraser Health Region to share their insights and creativity, helping to deepen understanding of the distinct experiences and needs of 2S/LGBTQIA+ folks who have been harmed by GBV** (sometimes described as survivors).

The goal of this work is to understand how our communities understand and experience GBV and share these insights with service providers to improve supports for 2S/LGBTQIA+ survivors. Using arts-based methods, this work helps to illuminate both the realities of harm and the enduring strength of 2S/LGBTQIA+ communities. Each piece of artwork stands as an act of resistance; reclaiming voice, fostering connection, and imagining safer futures.

Our team engaged with 21 2S/LGBTQIA+ participants from the Fraser Region of BC, through 11 arts-based workshops designed to foster reflection, dialogue, and collective care. **Together, participants explored their own definitions and lived experiences of GBV, transforming personal and shared stories into powerful visual expressions of resistance through visual art and discussion.** Following the arts-based workshops, participants were invited to participate in an interview.

Initial findings: What 2S/LGBTQIA+ participants shared about defining gender-based violence (GBV)



**“Our drawings with little words
beside them speak louder than
our language at times”**



“Our stories matter”