



**Covenant
House**

Opening Doors for Homeless Youth



Understanding and Addressing Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking



Ontario Municipal Social Services
Association

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Our Goal Today: to help you help them

Networks

The Toronto Counter Human Trafficking Network
HIPS

Partnerships

BOOST Children & Youth Advocacy Centre
East Metro Youth Services
Native Women's Resource Centre
Victim Services
Human Trafficking Enforcement Team (TPS)

Crisis Intervention

Victim Services 24/7 Response Model
2 Safe Beds supported by the City of Toronto (at Covenant House)

COVENANT HOUSE ADVOCATES



- Advocacy
- Counselling
- Case Management
- Partnership with Police
- Referrals to Community Agencies
- Support for legal/court related activities

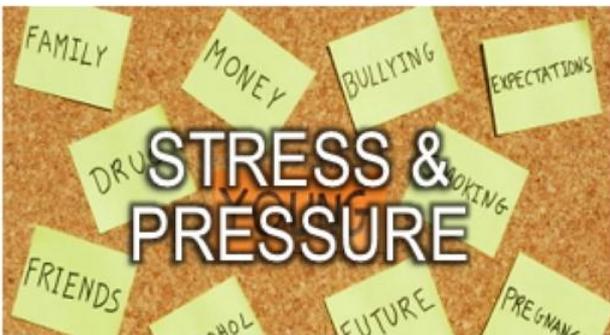
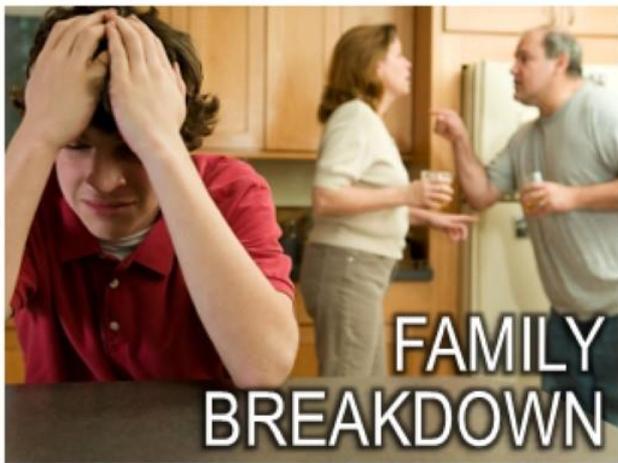
Who is at Risk?

Girls and young women are most at risk.

- Young girls are targeted by predators
- Young girls are lured in schools, malls, online
- Victims are recruited as young as 13
- From all economic/social backgrounds

What they have in common:

- Body image issues, insecurities
- Mental health concerns
- Addictions



Boyfriend/ Romeo Pimp

- Most often “Romeo” pimp
- Uses romance to lure vulnerable girls
- This can be over a short period of time
- Eventually he will expect something in return
- By this time she is bonded to the trafficker
- Male and female traffickers
- Emerging trend: peer on peer luring and recruiting

Indigenous Communities

- Indigenous girls in northern communities can be as young as 12 - 13
- Street-level exploitation
- Hot spots are infiltrated by drug dealers, traffickers– very high-risk situation
- Addictions in remote communities
- Easier to sell the dream in remote, isolated communities
- High schools are not available, flown into communities (Sudbury, North Bay, Thunder Bay, Sault St. Marie) and isolated from families

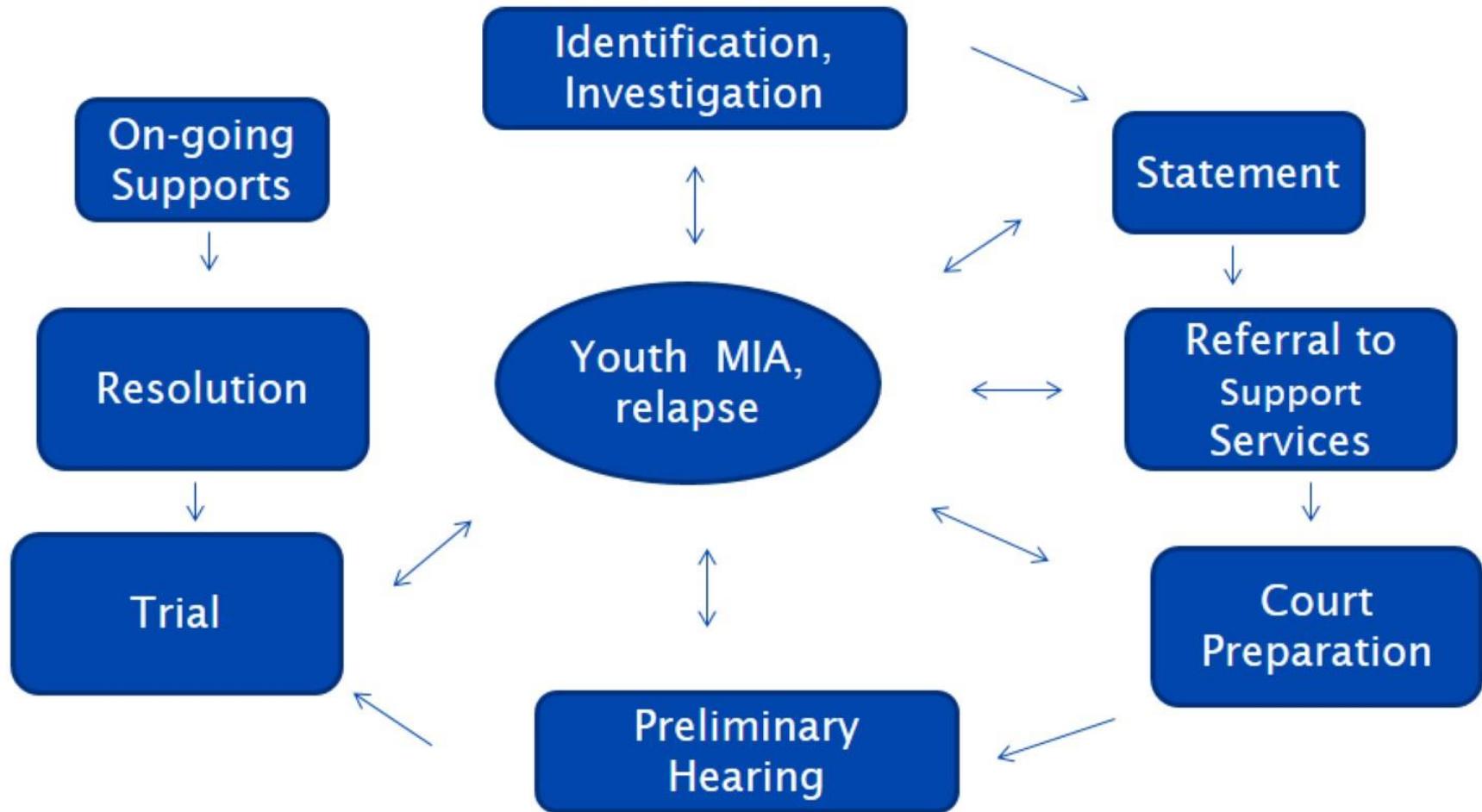
Why Sex Trafficking Can Occur in these Communities

- Remote communities
- Economically disadvantaged
- New Immigrants
- Boys
- Homeless Youth

Mindset of a Trafficked Person

- Doesn't believe they're a victim
- Shame interferes with disclosure
- Life is controlled
- Identification and licenses may be withheld
- Held by threats, violence, drugs, etc.
- Trauma bond
- Complete reliance on Trafficker

Engagement in the Criminal Justice System



Risk Assessment



1

Imminent physical danger

- Is the Pimp close by or in another jurisdiction?
- Does she have a safe space to stay?
- Has family been threatened?
- Are drugs and alcohol factors?
- Is there a need for a Safety Plan?
- Are there any mental health concerns?

2

On-going physical safety

- Does she have a Facebook (Social M) account? Recommend they be shut down.
- Does she have a cell phone? Remove SIM.
- Are there other victims involved?

3

Creating Care and Support Network

- Is Family a support?
- Explain role of HTET and other community supports
- Secure safe housing (need for physical move?)

Risk Assessment Ongoing

Risk Assessment not a static process.

- It is fluid and ongoing.
- Change in the survivor's safety status can shift at any time.
- **Challenges**
- **Cross Jurisdictional Cases** where the complainant and threats against her are not in the local vicinity. Who has responsibility if the complainant is at risk of harm? Advocates **bridge** this gap.
- **Family Breakdown/ Housing** as a result of tensions related to the fallout of exploitation the complainant may lose their housing.
- **Social Media** even with all the safety precautions put in place an accused/ associates can still locate the complainant.
- **Health and Well Being** can be difficult to maintain especially under the pressure cooker of being before the court. This includes addictions.
-

Victims of Sex Trafficking

Red flags – signs to help identify a victim:

Environmental/Situational

- Suspicious employment situation/claims to work nights
- Arrives at meeting with “companion” who tries to speak for them
- Has more than one cell phone

Verbal/Emotional/Psychological

- Providing contradictory information
- Suicidality, depression
- Fearfulness, anxiety, displays trauma symptoms

Physical

- Untreated injuries, explanations inconsistent with injuries
- Multiple STIs or abortions
- Evidence of sexual abuse and/or violence – bruises, **branding, unusual tattoos**

Victims of Sex Trafficking

Warning signs:

- Fears consequences of identifying as victim
 - retaliation by trafficker
 - deportation (foreign national)
 - social services interventions (especially for youth who previously experienced abuse or harassment in foster care placements)
- In crisis mode
- Trouble recounting history/details
- May not self-identify as victim
- Loyalty to trafficker(s) TRAUMA BOND
- Cultural/language barriers
- Mistrust of professionals
- Limited understanding of rights

Best Practices: Engaging a Victim of Trafficking

- Use the same words the youth is using and do not correct them
- Be open to unfamiliar narratives and stories
- Create a safe space for talking. Always speak to your youth privately.
- Always use professional interpreter services when a language barrier exists. DO NOT rely on a friend, associate or family member of the victim for interpretation services.
- Use a trauma-informed, non-judgemental approach.
- Keep them informed. Be as transparent as possible.

Ask Simple, Direct Questions

- Are you in a personal or work relationship with a person who physically harms or threatens you?
- Do you feel safe at home and/or work?
- What are your working or living conditions like?
- Where do you sleep? Where do you eat?
- Have you been hurt while working on the job either by someone you work for or with?
- Can you leave your job or situation if you want?

Ask Simple, Direct Questions

- Can you come and go as you please?
- Is anyone forcing you to do anything you do not want to do?
- You seem in a hurry to leave. We are here to help you. What is making you feel anxious to leave right now?

If you think a youth is being exploited: **DON'T**

- **Do not** try to rescue the youth.
- **Do not** ask about the youth's immigration status.
- **Do not** contact authorities without youth's permission (unless mandated to do so).
- **Do not** make promises you can't keep.

If you think a youth is being exploited: **DO**

Communicate messages of hope

- You have rights.
- You are not alone and not to blame.
- You are entitled to services and help.

Make referrals

- Connect your youth with an appropriate service provider

Approaching Community Organizations

- Call police only with victims' permission
- Accompany victim to community agency if necessary
- Be transparent – keep victim informed
- Be an advocate
- Make calls on their behalf in their presence

If an identified youth isn't ready to accept help: **DO**

Validate/normalize their feelings

- Reassure them that they have the choice not to accept your help at that time

Provide information

- Many trafficked persons will seek assistance for their situation when they feel safe and able to do so
- Tell the youth where they can go for help in the future (i.e., provide other options where they may be more comfortable seeking help)
- Make sure to communicate options verbally since traffickers are likely to destroy written instructions if they are found

Success for Advocates Something to Celebrate

- Right to be Forgotten. Privacy Commission.
- Priority Housing Accepting H.T. Survivors.
- Reinstatement of Tuition.
- Challenging 3rd Party Records.
- Criminal Injuries Compensation Successes.
- Supporting New Mothers.
- Family Reunification.
- Intervenor status on H.T. legal challenges.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead



**CHANGE
AHEAD**

Community Service Supports

Community Case Management Consultations:

Anderson@covenanthouse.ca

Dodson@covenanthouse.ca

DiFederico@covenanthouse.ca

The Rogers Home Referrals/Inquiries:

Neubauer@covenanthouse.ca

416-204-7049

School Presentations:

tarlattini@covenanthouse.ca

Community Trainings:

Neubauer@covenanthouse.ca



Barrie Native Friendship Centre- Community Response to Human Trafficking



Barrie Native Friendship Centre

Vision Statement

To improve the quality of life for Urban Aboriginal people, regardless of legal definition, by providing a gathering place that would promote unity and holistic healing in the community through a network of culturally based programs and services for the Barrie area.

Programs and Services

Our programs and services address all stage of the Life Cycle.

Aboriginal Healthy Living Program

Life Long Care Program

Cultural Resource Program

Apatisiwin Employment Program

Criminal Court Work program

Indigenous Bail Verification program

Restorative Justice Program

Aboriginal Healing and Wellness

Aboriginal Family Support Program

Akwe:go Program

Wasa-Nabin Program

Kizhaay Anishnaabe Niin

Aboriginal Health Outreach

Aboriginal Healthy Babies, Healthy Children



What We Do

Monthly Calendar of Events

Hunger To Hope- Food Bank

Kizhaay-Kind Man

Access to Services (i.e. Dr. Connors-Psychologist, Athena's Sexual Assault, Red Road To Recovery)

Cultural Events (Annual Pow Wow, Feasts, Ceremony)

Obtain Donations to provide for Basic Needs



Terminology

Aboriginal VS Indigenous

Constitution Act 1982

“aboriginal peoples of Canada” includes First Nation, Metis and Inuit

June 2017: Trudeau changes National Aboriginal Day to National Indigenous Peoples Day

Self Identifying: voluntary for anyone with First Nations, Metis or Inuit ancestry. Includes “Status” and “Non Status”



Justice Services

BNFC Justice Services provides wrap-around services to assist clients at each point of their involvement with the Criminal Justice System

Angela Knowlton: Restorative Justice Worker

Charmaine Nolan: Indigenous Criminal Court Worker
Justice Team Lead

We also have Indigenous Bail Supervision Program



Indigenous Women

- ❖ **Aboriginal people make up about 4% of the Canadian population but represent 23.2% of the Federal Inmate population (Government of Canada- Aboriginal Offenders-A Critical Situation, 2013)**



Indigenous Women

According to Statistics Canada (2004)

- ❖ **Aboriginal Women 15 years and older are 3.5 times more likely to experience violence than non-Aboriginal Women**
- ❖ **Rates of Domestic Violence against Aboriginal Women are more than 3 times higher than those against non-Aboriginal Women**



Indigenous Women

Native Women's Association of Canada: Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking of Aboriginal Women and Girls (October 2014)

- ❖ **2006 Census: Aboriginal People made up 3.8% of the population, 51.2% being female.**
- ❖ **A 2010 (Nicole Barrett) report “studies on human trafficking in Canada conclude that the majority of people trafficked in Canada are Aboriginal Women and Children”**



Why Higher Risk?

Native Women's Association of Canada: Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking of Aboriginal Women and Girls

- ❖ **Greater increase of childhood sexual abuse**
- ❖ **Greater increase of childhood physical abuse**
- ❖ **Increased rates of poverty and homelessness**
- ❖ **Increased rates of being part of the Child Care system**
- ❖ **Multi-generational systemic impacts affecting families as a result of Residential Schools and 60's Scoop**



BNFC Human Trafficking Statistics

In 2017 BNFC came into contact with 17 clients that were confirmed or suspected being involved in Human Trafficking

14 Female Adults

2 Female Youth

1 Male

7 Assisted to immediate safety (i.e. drove to family, taken to Rosewood Shelter, other shelters)

2 Exited "The Game"

1 Reported to Police, charges laid



How are we finding out?

- ❖ **Majority are currently being identified through their involvement with the Criminal Justice System**
- ❖ **Many are presenting with cases of Domestic Assault or Drug Possession charges**
- ❖ **Through intake process and relationship building identifying common “red flags”**



Common Red Flags

- ❖ **Secretive about personal information (i.e. where they live, who the information will be shared with)**
- ❖ **Frequent telephone number changes, not appearing for court, having someone with them that wants to know all of the information being discussed**
- ❖ **Moving around a lot and disappearing at times**
- ❖ **Disclosure of previous involvement in the sex trade industry**



Next Steps Once Suspected or Identified Human Trafficking

- ❖ Try to maintain frequent contact
- ❖ Assist with basic needs
- ❖ Build a relationship and trust
- ❖ Gently probe with questions about their well being
- ❖ Listen and observe



Next Steps Once Confirmed Involvement in Human Trafficking

- ❖ **Discuss their safety or safety planning**
- ❖ **Are they looking to Exit “the game” and need assistance**
- ❖ **Can we connect them to services immediately (i.e. VQRP)?**
- ❖ **What can we provide to assist with basic needs?**
- ❖ **Identify their goals (i.e. wish to exit, treatment, reconnection with family)**
- ❖ **Do they wish to speak with Police?**



Profile of Boyfriend/Pimp

- ❖ **Romeo pimps**
- ❖ **Grooming**
- ❖ **Drug Control**
- ❖ **Alienation**
- ❖ **Violence and threats**



Our Experience

- ❖ **No two cases are the same**
- ❖ **No one has wished to report their experience to Police**
- ❖ **Often present as Domestic violence case or Drug Possession**
- ❖ **In every case there was addiction/substance abuse**
- ❖ **Many are fearful of their “Boyfriend” if he were to find out they were “speaking out”**
- ❖ **In the one case where HT Trafficking charges were laid the case collapsed the minute the victim saw her Traffickers**
- ❖ **All are high needs for case management**



Our Successes

- ❖ **Provided HT training to our staff**
- ❖ **Networked with other community organizations through participation on Project Safe Horizon committee**
- ❖ **Successful resolution of legal matters**



Project Safe Horizon

- ❖ **Protocol**
- ❖ **Agency involvement and Networking**
- ❖ **Sub-committees**



Identifying Gaps

- ❖ **No funding**
- ❖ **Not equipped to meet the complex needs**
- ❖ **Access to safe shelter**
- ❖ **Need for immediate crisis intervention**
- ❖ **Access to specialized resources to address trauma and addiction**
- ❖ **Increased dialogue in the community**



Questions?

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Centre

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