

Young men charged for pimping teens

By Maple Ridge News

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Two young men are facing charges for trying to recruit teenage girls into the sex trade.

Procurement charges were filed last week against David Kevin May, 22, and Nicholas Boscoe, 18, who is also known as Nicholas Van Diest.

"The police investigation alleges the two accused lured two teenaged girls into prostitution," said Cpl. Alanna Dunlop.

"One of the victims was promised money and other incentives in order to cooperate with the suspects."

Police learned about the crime by chance on Jan. 24 after the group was involved in a car crash in Surrey on 151st Street at 96th Avenue.

"Some great police work by an alert Surrey RCMP police officer located our victim, and the two accused, and the details were disclosed," said Dunlop.

The information led police to a house on 123rd Avenue in Maple Ridge, where officers executed a search warrant on Jan. 29.

The RCMP Lower Mainland District Emergency Response Team helped with the search, which resulted in key evidence being located.

Police won't disclose the age of the victims, just that they are both under 18.

May was arrested and appeared in court on Thursday, March 6. He has been remanded in custody until his next appearance.

The courts have issued a warrant for Boscoe's arrest, but police need the public's help to locate him.

Diane Sowden isn't surprised that a teenage boy and an accomplice, not much older, are being accused of exploiting young girls.

The average age of these men is 25, said Sowden, executive director of [Children of the Street Society](#), a non-profit which works to prevent the sexual exploitation and human trafficking of children and youth in British Columbia.

Sowden and her family were directly affected by the issue when her daughter was drawn into a life of drug addiction and sexual exploitation at the age of 13.

"The men are at an age that young girls easily believe. They are older but not too much older than the victims," she added.

Sowden's organization delivers workshops on the exploitation of teens and she often hears the retort, "this does not happen in our area."

Sowden stressed that no community is immune.

"It happens in every single community, especially [now with technology](#)."

Sexual exploitation can range from involvement in the sex trade and youth exchanging a sexual act for a place to stay or drugs to family supported exploitation.

Statistics show that between 100,000-300,000 children and youth are sexually exploited throughout North America at any given time.

The key to preventing sexual exploitation is education.

"I'm a very strong believe in awareness," said Sowden.

"I believe it has to be mandated in schools and should start at a very young age."

There is no simple cause or explanation for sexual exploitation, but some factors may increase a young person's risk, including low self-esteem or self worth; previous sexual or physical abuse; mental health issues and a lack of belonging or acceptance with family, peers and school.

Sowden relates an encounter with a young woman who connected on social media with a man in New York. He sent her an airline ticket via cell phone, promising her a three-day long shopping spree to buy designer shoes.

"When I met with her, she had no concept of what was going to happen when she got there," said Sowden.

"You have to remember we are talking about 14-, 15-, 16-, 17-year-olds. They don't understand what's happening."

Unfortunately, it's rare to see cases where teens are lured into the sex trade go to trial.

Reza Moazami is first person to be [charged with trafficking underage girls](#) in B.C. His trial is currently underway in Vancouver Supreme Court.

Moazami is accused of running an underage prostitution ring with girls as young as 14 years old. Among his 11 victims is a young girl from Maple Ridge.

"The biggest problem is getting a young person to give a statement," said Sowden, who is hoping the Moazami case is an impetus for change.

Sowden compares the situation of a teen who is being exploited to a person subject to domestic violence.

"When it comes to domestic violence, we as a society have come to understand the reasons why women don't reach out and give statements because of fear. It's exactly the same situation with sexual exploitation," she said.

When it comes to spousal assaults, there are safeguards in place which allow police officers or social workers to make recommendations to Crown without a victim's statement.

"We are not there with young victims of human trafficking," said Sowden, explaining that victims must give police a statement before an investigation is sparked.

"We are going to learn a lot through the Moazami case."

More victims came forward only after Moazami breached his house arrest and was taken into custody.

"That's because they felt safe to speak out," said Sowden.

"For someone to speak out, we have to make sure they feel safe."

- Anyone with any information on the whereabouts of Nicholas Boscoe is asked to call Ridge Meadows RCMP at 604-463-6251.

To remain anonymous, call CrimeStoppers at 1-800-222-8477 or leave a tip online at www.solvecrime.ca. CrimeStoppers will pay a reward of up to \$2,000 for information leading to an arrest and conviction.

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