

Tips for

**RECOGNIZING AND
SUPPORTING**
Exploited Youth



Children
of the Street

Tip 1 – Criminal Code

The framework of offences related to trafficking in persons under the *Criminal Code* include:

1. Trafficking of a person (s. 279.01)
2. Trafficking of a person under the age of eighteen years (s. 279.011)
3. Materially benefitting from human trafficking (s. 279.02)
4. Withholding or destroying travel or identification documents (s. 279.03)

The offence of trafficking in persons and its related offences were originally created in 2005 and have been subject to several amendments since that time. The primary elements of the offence are the *criminal conduct* and the required *intent* of the accused.

The offence of human trafficking under the *Criminal Code* can be broken down into the elements of *Act* (**What** is done), *Means* (**How** it is done), and *Purpose* (**Why** it is done):



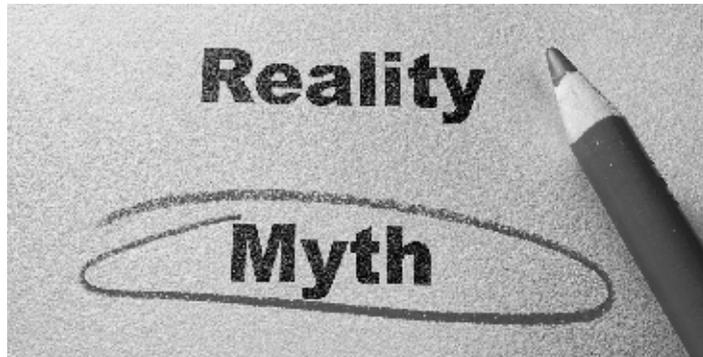
***Please note** that the tips provided in this booklet are taken from our full Service Provider Toolkit. Therefore, you may find that some pages reference it in the footer. You can find it here: www.childrenofthestreet.com/serviceproviders

CRIMINAL CODE

ACT (What?)	MEANS (How?)	PURPOSE (Why?)
Recruits, or Transports, or Transfers, or Receives, or Holds, or Conceals, or Harbours, or Exercises control, direction or influence over the movements of a person	Use of force, or Threat of force, or Coercion, or Deception, or Abuse of a position of trust, power or authority	<p>Exploitation:</p> Victim provides labour/service because they believe (or a reasonable person in their circs would believe) their safety (or the safety of someone known to them) would be threatened if they failed to do so.

For more information, refer to page 9 in the Toolkit <https://www.childrenofthestreet.com/serviceproviders>

Tip 2 – Trafficking Myths vs. Reality



Human trafficking is often considered a form of modern day slavery. The issue quickly ignites images of whips, chains, and victims being held hostage in dirty, underground rooms and basements. Similarly, people think of sweatshops or child labour in foreign countries. While this still holds true, myths about human trafficking mask the reality of what is happening to Canadian youth.

Myth: Human trafficking always involves the movement of a person across an international border.

Reality: Many of the elements of human trafficking (including recruitment, holding, and exercising control, direction or influence) in the *Criminal Code* do not imply physical movement. Victims of trafficking in Canada may be foreign nationals who were transported or recruited into Canada; however, most of the cases of human trafficking in Canada have involved Canadian citizens being trafficked within Canadian borders.

Myth: Victims of trafficking are kept enchained in locked rooms.

Reality: Rather than being held by physical restrictions, victims often have freedom of movement but are controlled through fear and threats.

Myth: Men are always the traffickers and the victims are always women and children.

Reality: Offenders convicted of human trafficking in Canada include men, women, and minors. While the majority of identified victims are women and young girls, male and transgender youth are also human trafficked or sexually exploited. For this population, they may be less likely to disclose their situation or seek support due to social stigma, prejudice, embarrassment, or fear.

Myth: Only street-entrenched or 'high-risk' youth are exploited.

Reality: Sexual exploitation and human trafficking can and does happen to any youth, regardless of their age, ability, ethnicity, gender, religion, family income, class, or sexual orientation. Traffickers will try to exploit any vulnerability, including low self-esteem or attention-seeking behaviour, a characteristic found in many youth, regardless of their history or upbringing.

Myth: Youth who are being exploited, at one point, consented to their situation.

Reality: In order to ensure their cooperation, traffickers will employ manipulative and coercive tactics that target a youth's particular vulnerabilities. This may include false promises or feigning love, providing protection or shelter, gifting, or threat of violence and retaliation if they refuse to cooperate. Legally, **no one** can consent to being trafficked.

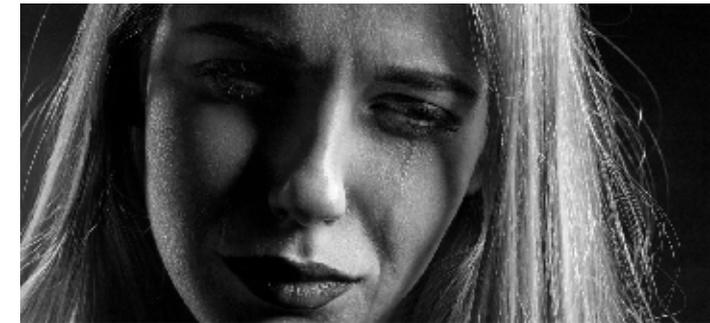
For more information, refer to page 12 in the Toolkit.

Tip 3 – Indicators of a Trafficked Youth

It is very unlikely that an affected youth will come to you and identify themselves as a victim of trafficking. However, they may come to you seeking services that are related (or unrelated) to their trafficking situation or as a result of an established relationship between you and the young person.

Human trafficking is located on a continuum of exploitation. Some factors may clearly indicate a trafficking situation, however many of the warning signs indicating human trafficking overlap with sexual exploitation.

The sexual abuse and exploitation of children will not always be trafficking—however, it is always illegal.



REMEMBER:

It is not your responsibility to determine—without a doubt—that a youth has been trafficked. Your responsibility is to recognize indicators that a youth may have been trafficked or sexually exploited so you can provide the most effective support and most appropriate referrals.

Indicators of sexual exploitation and trafficking may include:

Attitudes

- » Withdraws from family, friends or peer groups and extra-curricular activities
- » Maintains a high level of secrecy and is reluctant to share where they have been or with whom
- » Responds to conversation as if they are reading from a practiced script
- » Unexplained mood swings
- » Angry, confrontational, or abusive
- » Secretive about their daily life routines
- » Protective of new relationships, providing little information when asked
- » Appears to be protective of loved ones or fears for their safety
- » Fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, tense, or nervous/paranoid
- » Experiences anxiety when they are unable to answer their phone or respond to messages

Behaviours

- » Disappears for extended periods of time (days, weeks, months)
- » Hangs around with new and different groups of friends, including older individuals
- » Wears expensive clothing or jewelry that he/she could not normally afford
- » Frequents hotels or unusual locations to meet friends
- » Adopts slang and speech that is 'street' level talk or lingo associated with the sex trade
- » Has pre-paid calling cards, credit cards, hotel room keys, business cards
- » Has pornographic images or videos of themselves openly available or posted online
- » Has profiles on online sites such as Seeking Arrangements or Sugar Daddy

Tip 3 – Indicators of a Trafficked Youth

- » Does not attend school or has unexplained absence during school hours
- » Has numerous taxi numbers programmed into their cell phone
- » Attempts to downplay obvious health problems or risks
- » Attends a clinic to obtain a verification that they have no STIs (this is often required by the pimp on a regular basis or when they suspect they may have contracted an infection)
- » Has multiple cell phones
- » Lies about age or has false identification
- » Inconsistencies when describing and recounting events
- » Unable to sleep at night and sleeps excessively during the day
- » Refers to self or friends with different names (adopting a street name)
- » Does not have control over their schedule or schedule is regularly changing
- » Youth states their “boyfriend/girlfriend” tells them who they can or cannot spend time with, what they wear, and controls their phone and/or online activity
- » History of travel between cities in Canada and possibly the US (can indicate being moved around on a circuit)
- » Involved in a gang or in criminal activity such as running drugs or theft

Physical Indicators

- » Sexually transmitted infections or diseases
- » Evidence of unprotected or violent sex
- » Mental health concerns, including depression or anxiety
- » Post-traumatic stress disorder
- » Memory loss
- » Drug and/or alcohol addiction
- » Lacks basic healthcare
- » Appears malnourished
- » Unexplained bruises, cuts, and broken bones
- » Black eye(s)
- » Tattooing or branding symbols such as names on neck, wrists, or lower back
- » Cigarette burns on body
- » Physical scarring, scrapes, or scratches

For a list of questions that may be asked if you suspect trafficking or sexual exploitation, see [Appendix 6: Questions to Identify a Trafficked Youth](#).

For more information, refer to page 26 in the Toolkit.

Tip 4 – Support Principles

When responding to the trafficking of youth, the first step is to build their trust. Establishing trust is essential in all social interventions; however, it is of utmost importance in a trafficking situation, where youth have experienced lies, deceit, excessive control, and violence. Part of building trust is to be consistent, patient, and to provide a timely response to service needs and to make useful referrals.

“Support is a process, not an event.”

– Outreach Worker

In conjunction with the frameworks guiding this toolkit (outlined in the introduction of the toolkit), there are specific principles that should inform the support services provided for trafficked youth:

Human rights approach: Human trafficking is a gross violation of fundamental human rights. A human rights approach recognizes that human trafficking is a violation of rights and views the trafficked person as someone in need of protection and services rather than as a criminal. Principles of a human rights approach include:

- » **Be safe:** Ensure privacy and confidentiality and offer trafficked youth safe options for exiting their situation and accessing services
- » **Do no harm:** Treat each interaction with a trafficked youth with extreme care. Do not undertake actions that could make the person’s situation worse.
- » **Give back control and obtain consent:** Provide care and support to assist trafficked youth to regain control of their lives, promoting their ability to make informed decisions for themselves.
 - To restore the power that has been stripped from them, affected youth need to be given as much ownership over their rehabilitation process as possible. This includes providing them with all the information needed to make an informed decision, giving them decision-making power, and supporting them in the decisions they make.
- » **Consider the whole person:** Treat trafficked youth with dignity and respect.
- » **Provide culturally competent services:** Consider the role of cultural differences in your work with trafficked youth.
 - Culture can affect a youth’s perception of the trafficking situation, as well as their understanding of the impact it has had on their life. Cultural competence includes awareness of how culture influences a client’s beliefs, behaviour and understanding about their situation, as well as an awareness of your own attitudes and biases as a service provider. If possible (with consent), connect youth with services specific to their community or culture, including language services. Cultural competence is important for working with any client, but is especially important when working with youth who identify as Aboriginal, LGBTQ+, or are from the newcomer/immigrant community.

Tip 4 – Support Principles

Be patient: Recognize that healing and recovery is a long process and that trafficked youth benefit from patience and a continuum of support.

- » **Offer options to seek justice:** If trafficked youth wish to work with police, provide information and options to do so.

For more information regarding the principles of a human rights approach, go to [OCTIP's Online Training](#).¹

Best interests of the child: In BC, youth who are under the age of nineteen are considered children. Children have a right to physical and emotional safety, security and well-being. Children who are being sexually exploited through prostitution require support services and may be in need of protection.

Trauma-informed Care: This begins with understanding the physical, social, and emotional impact of trauma on the individual. Trauma-informed practices recognize the prevalence of trauma, how it affects not only the individual but all surrounding supports, and responds by putting this knowledge into practice. Trauma-informed practice encourages safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration, and empowerment. For more information on how trauma can affect behaviour and beliefs, see [Appendix 4: Impacts of Trauma](#).

Psychosocial Care Model: Human trafficking affects youth emotionally, physically, spiritually, and socially. Supports may reflect this reality by helping youth to rebuild their lives in each area that has been damaged. Psychosocial care promotes this and emphasizes social reintegration. This can be incredibly helpful for trafficked individuals due to the high degree of social isolation they experience. For an overview of this model, visit [Psychosocial Rehabilitation Canada](#).²



REMEMBER:

Trafficked youth may not want to receive supports from someone in their 'group' if they have concerns regarding confidentiality or experience shame from speaking with someone from the same community.

There are multiple barriers that prevent trafficked youth from exiting their situation and accessing services. Support services need to be patient and recognize that the process may be slow. This may require second, third, and fourth chances for youth to access services.

For more information, refer to page 31 in the Toolkit.

¹ OCTIP, Human Trafficking: Canada is Not Immune, <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/victims-of-crime/human-trafficking/human-trafficking-training>

² PSR Canada, Principles of Psychosocial Rehabilitation, <http://psrrpcanada.ca/index.php?submenu=home&src=>

Tip 5 – Services a Trafficked Youth Might Need

The service needs for trafficked youth will vary depending on the young person, their situation, and how you first came into contact with them. Every support plan needs to be individualized and reflect the principles discussed in Tip 4.

“The rehabilitation process must involve the survivor at every step of the way, otherwise support becomes the replacement control to what they have experienced.”

– Larissa Maxwell, Manager, Salvation Army Anti-Human Trafficking Programs

The rehabilitation process for a trafficked youth is long, and their support needs should be addressed with a continuum of care model. This type of model identifies the specific support needs of affected youth at each stage of the process: immediate/emergent needs, stabilization/short-term needs, reintegration/medium-term needs, and transition to long-term needs.



REMEMBER:

Youth need to be the creators of their rehabilitation plan. Ultimately, they must decide which services they would like to access. To support self-determination and participation, present youth with the options that are available to them and let them decide. By giving them the power to make decisions, no matter how small, they will begin to rebuild the power that was taken from them.

Services that a trafficked youth may need to access include:

- » Shelter and housing services (ensure shelter/housing services are youth-appropriate and equipped for possible heightened security risks due to the trafficking situation).
- » Health services (including medical, dental, and mental health care).
- » Addictions services (including detox programs and recovery house placements).
- » Police, Crown, and Victim Services.
- » Emotional support and counselling.
- » MCFD/designated First Nations child welfare agency.
- » Youth services (empowerment, support, outreach).

Tip 5 – Services a Trafficked Youth Might Need

- » Legal services
 - Some youth may have criminal charges of their own, related or unrelated to the trafficking situation.
 - In one case, legal services were required for a complainant in order to remove existing warrants for arrest. This allowed police to be able to meet with the complainant as a victim/witness rather than being obligated to arrest them.
- » Multicultural services
- » Spiritual support
- » Long Term Services
 - Once immediate needs have been met, longer-term supports will be required. This may include life skills training, education, career guidance or employment programs, and long term trauma counselling.

REMEMBER: A network of supports also includes family, friends, and the wider community. A trafficked youth should be connected to a trusted adult. This may or may not include parent(s)/caregivers. If a parent is involved, it is important to recognize that the trafficking of their child will also impact them. For information about the impact on parents, see Children of the Street's [Parent Manual](#).¹

QUICK TIP:

In many communities across British Columbia, there are established Community Actions Teams (CATs) that are comprised of a group of service providers and community partners who are working to develop local strategies to address the sexual exploitation of youth. CATs are comprised of relevant services for trafficked youth or may be able to help connect you with the appropriate services. For a list of CATs in BC, see [Public Safety, Preventing Sexual Exploitation of Children and Youth](#).²

For more information, refer to page 33 in the Toolkit.

¹ Children of the Street, Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking of Children & Youth in Canada: A Prevention and Early Intervention Toolkit for Parents, <https://www.childrenofthestreet.com/parent-toolkit>

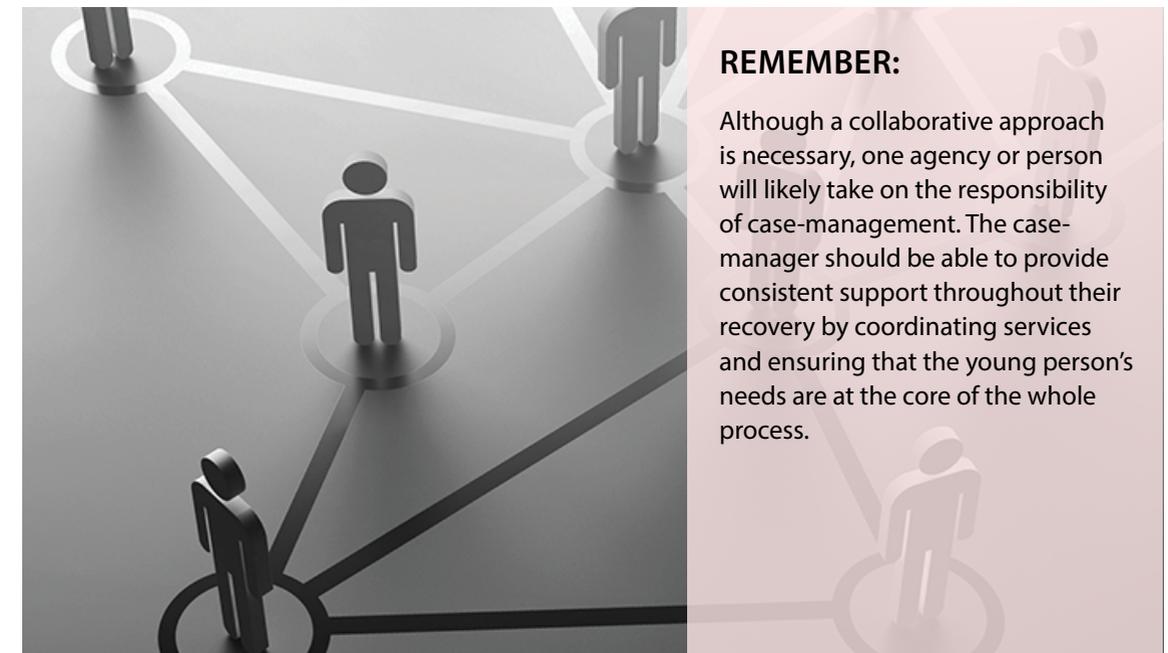
² Public Safety, Preventing Sexual Exploitation of Children and Youth <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/crime-prevention/community-crime-prevention/exploitation>

Tip 6 – Collaborative Practice

Given the wide range of needs that a trafficked youth may have, and the diverse services that may be involved in their recovery process, collaborative practice is the key to any response. No one agency will be able to address all the needs of a youth who has been trafficked.

“Traffickers work in highly connected and coordinated networks. We need to do the same on the solution side!”

– Frontline Service Provider



REMEMBER:

Although a collaborative approach is necessary, one agency or person will likely take on the responsibility of case-management. The case-manager should be able to provide consistent support throughout their recovery by coordinating services and ensuring that the young person's needs are at the core of the whole process.

Collaborative practice is not easy. It will initially require extra work and planning. However, it will result in a greater capacity to serve the immediate and longer-term needs of trafficked youth.

“When we identify a youth who may have been trafficked, we have to act immediately or we may lose them forever. This requires a lot of planning.”

– Frontline Service Provider

Tip 6 – Collaborative Practice

Tips for collaboration:

- » Have a pre-established network of supports
 - Consider: what services are already in place and can be adapted to meet the needs of trafficked youth?
 - See **Appendix 8: Building Your Network** for a fillable sheet to start this process for your community.
- » Clarify the role of each agency.
- » Recognize the differing mandates of each agency.
 - Rather than viewing different mandates as conflicting, try to see how they can complement each other.
- » Be willing to compromise.
 - Sometimes agencies will not be able to come to a consensus. Try to establish which option puts the needs and views of the affected youth first.
- » Release any sense of ‘ownership’ over a case.
- » Stick to what you do best and make referrals for everything else.
- » Develop information-sharing protocols and confidentiality policies.
 - Delegate one person or agency to take the lead on ensuring these policies are followed.
 - The policies will vary depending on the agencies involved. In some cases, informal understandings may work better.

For questions that may help to facilitate collaboration, see **Appendix 9: Questions for Collaboration**.

REMEMBER:

It is important to distinguish between the “need to know” and the “want to know” information. While working together and sharing information will assist in providing a more effective response, it may jeopardize rights to confidentiality and could in some cases heighten security risks for trafficked individuals.

For more information, refer to page 35 in the Toolkit.

Tip 7 – Child Protection Provisions

CHILD, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES ACT

Under the *Child, Family and Community Services Act (CFCS Act)*, there are certain protective and intervention orders available for a child who is, or suspected to be, sexually exploited. The *CFCS Act* defines sexual exploitation as the act of encouraging, helping, coercing, or enticing a child to engage in prostitution. These orders under the *CFCS Act* can, in some cases, be used as an alternative provision to the *Criminal Code*.

	S. 28- PROTECTIVE INTERVENTION ORDER	S. 98- RESTRAINING ORDER
<i>Available to Protect</i>	Child who is not in care of MCFD	1. Child-in-care (CIC) of MCFD or youth receiving services under a Youth Agreement 2. A caregiver of CIC (e.g., a foster parent) 3. A person providing support or education services to a CIC 4. A child protection worker
<i>Criteria for Application</i>	Reasonable grounds to believe that contact between a child and another person would cause the child to need protection	Reasonable grounds to believe that a person: a) Has or is likely to encourage, help, coerce, or lure a child into prostitution, or b) Has or is likely to otherwise exploit, abuse, or intimidate a CIC or youth receiving youth services
<i>Who can apply?</i>	Child protection social worker	Child protection social worker
<i>Who needs to be served notice?</i>	1. Person to be restrained 2. Child, if aged twelve or older 3. Person with care of the child	1. Person to be restrained 2. Any parties court may direct you to serve
<i>Maximum length of Order</i>	Up to six months (order can be extended for a further six months)	Up to six months (order can be extended indefinitely)

For more information, refer to page 41 of the Toolkit.

Tip 8 – Connecting with Law Enforcement

There are multiple barriers that prevent victims of trafficking from connecting with law enforcement. These barriers may prevent youth from connecting with police on their own initiative. However, **as a service provider, you play a vital role in connecting trafficked youth with law enforcement.** Once trust has been established, you may be able to bridge the gap between the young person and the criminal justice system.

- » Understand the role of police
 - In order to work effectively with police, it is necessary to understand how they operate and what their mandate is. Different police forces, and even different units within one force, may operate and function differently. Have a discussion regarding what this may look like when working with a trafficked youth.
 - For general questions to facilitate effective collaboration see **Appendix 9: Questions for Collaboration.**
- » Establish a relationship with police
 - While cold-calling police may be necessary in an emergency situation, having an established relationship with certain police officers allows for ease-of-communication and can ensure a basic level of trust.
- » Be willing to partner and assist
 - All agencies, including police, function on reciprocity to some degree. Oftentimes a trafficking situation requires agencies to go above and beyond their typical role and duties. By being willing to partner and assist with them (related or unrelated to this specific situation), it is more likely that they will in turn be willing to adapt their services to meet the specific needs of the affected youth.
- » Do not over-promise
 - Overpromising what the police can provide may set the situation up for failure, which may leave the trafficked youth disappointed or create barriers for them to seek help in the future. If you are unsure what the police can provide for a specific situation, just ask.

“As a social service agency dealing with a highly vulnerable population, it might seem difficult or even impossible to effectively work with police. But I just have to remind myself that at the end of the day their role is to keep people safe. They aren’t social workers. My role is to help support the individual, their role is to help protect them and bring the offender to justice”

- Frontline Service Provider



For more information, refer to page 45 of the Toolkit.

Tip 9 – Victim Court Support and CVAP

VICTIM COURT SUPPORT PROGRAM

The victim court support program provides direct support to victims dealing with specific issues and difficulties that arise from being a victim in a criminal court process. These programs operate from the courthouses located in Port Coquitlam, Surrey, and Vancouver.

This program complements services provided by the local police-based and community-based victim service programs.

For more information regarding the services a court support caseworker may provide as well as contact information for available programs, [click here](#).¹

CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCACY CENTRES

Child and Youth Advocacy Centres (CYACs) provide a coordinated approach to addressing the needs of children and youth who have been abused. Through an integrated and streamlined approach, CYACs engage various sectors to provide a single, accessible “one-stop-shop” where child/youth victims and their non-offending family members can receive necessary supports and services in a safe, child-centred environment. By co-locating police, child protection workers and victim services in one location, these centres minimize trauma for young victims, and reduce the number of meetings and interviews that children have to go through during the investigation process. Ultimately, bringing together service providers to jointly respond to cases enables a strengthened approach to investigating and prosecuting child abuse.

CYACs may be able to provide assistance for trafficked youth by:

- » Providing assistance and coordination from a multi-disciplinary team (may include law enforcement, child protection services, prosecution, mental health services, victim advocacy services and child advocacy centre)
- » Providing a safe, neutral setting for interviews with police and Crown
- » Providing victim advocacy and support, including court support

For a list of CYACs that are currently operational throughout BC, see **Appendix 7: Resources and Services.**

CRIME VICTIM ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CVAP)

Human trafficking can impact every aspect of a young person’s life. As a result, the youth (including immediate family members) may suffer financial loss or injury. The Crime Victim Assistance Program (CVAP) offers financial assistance to help with some of the costs and services needed to assist in recovering from or coping with the effects of violent crime.

REMEMBER:

Victim services workers are able to assist victims in completing the CVAP application form.

Tip 9 – Victim Court Support and CVAP

Benefits that may be available include:

- » Medical, dental and prescription drugs
 - Trafficked youth may have various medical and dental concerns as a result of abuse or neglect from their trafficker.
- » Counselling
 - Trafficked youth may suffer from multiple mental health concerns or other effects from the trauma experienced.
- » Protective measures
 - If a youth is at risk of additional harm by the trafficker or traumatized with fear, CVAP may be able to cover personal protection or relocation expenses.
- » Replacement of damaged or destroyed eyeglasses, clothing, disability aids
 - Traffickers will often destroy a youth's possessions to threaten or punish them.
- » Addiction treatment
 - CVAP benefits for addiction treatment are only considered in exceptional cases when a direct link can be shown between the actions of the trafficker and the resulting addiction. Generally addiction treatment programs for victims of human trafficking are not covered by CVAP.
- » Transportation and related expenses
 - Trafficked youth may need to be relocated due to security issues.
- » Income support or lost earning capacity

Note: For victims of sexual offences (including human trafficking), there is no time limit for when an application must be completed.

For more information regarding the benefits that may be able to assist trafficked youth and their immediate family members, including a copy of the application form, [click here](#).²

QUICK TIP:

CVAP can be compared to an insurance company. The trafficked youth will be required to prove how benefits claimed are the direct result of being a victim of crime. An application for a youth who has been trafficked may include information on complex trauma, addiction as a coping mechanism, or a youth's exploited vulnerabilities. If information is required to support a CVAP claim, such as a medical or police report, the CVAP Program staff can seek it out on the client's behalf.

For more information, refer to page 53 of the Toolkit.

¹Victim Court Support Program, <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/bcs-criminal-justice-system/if-you-are-a-victim-of-a-crime/the-court-case/court-support>

²Financial Assistance & Benefits, <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/bcs-criminal-justice-system/if-you-are-a-victim-of-a-crime/victim-of-crime/financial-assistance-benefits>

Tip 10 – Support During the Investigation

For youth involved in a human trafficking investigation, the process can be difficult. Working with police may induce anxiety and they may be experiencing fear of retaliation from their trafficker or others. They will also likely be asked to provide a statement to police, which will require them to discuss in detail their traumatic experiences.

Support during the investigative function may include preparation, accompaniment to the interview, advocacy, and debrief afterwards.

- » Preparation
 - Discuss any fears or anxieties they may have about the interview. Encourage them to speak to the police officer about this.
 - Practice calming, grounding exercises to reduce or address traumatic responses.
 - Inform youth that the police will probably ask a lot of detailed, personal questions.
- » Every detail is important and should be shared if they feel comfortable to share it. They are not the one being investigated. However, they are allowed to ask police why they need to know certain details.
- » At trial, the statement of the victim will be questioned. In order to corroborate as much of their statement as possible and increase their credibility, police will likely have to ask questions that seem unrelated to the trafficking situation.
 - Encourage the young person to be as honest as possible: it is okay if they are unsure of an answer or don't remember certain details. Remind them that they do not need to add or change details to sensationalize what they went through.
 - It is important to remember that preparation does not include coaching on how to answer or discussing specific details to the case.
- » Accompaniment and Emotional Support
 - Attending the interview with the youth may calm some of their anxieties and make them more

REMEMBER:

Let the police do their job. As a service provider, it is not your role to try to investigate or receive disclosures regarding criminal offences. Encourage youth to report important information to police and support them through this process.



Tip 10 – Support During the Investigation

comfortable. If the youth requests it, inquire with the investigator if they will allow you to be present for the interview. If you do accompany them, it is important to remember that you are there for support purposes only. You must not interfere or interject.

- » If you are part of an interview, this may also allow you to be called as a witness. Be aware of this, as you may not be able to provide support to the youth if you are also a witness in the trial.
 - After the interview, ask how they felt about the process and help them to recognize the reactions or emotions they may be experiencing as a result.
- » Advocacy and Education
 - Some police officers may be very aware of the complex dynamics of the trafficking situation and the traumatic impact this has on victims. However, you may also work with police officers with little experience in this area. It is important to be aware of the impact of trauma on youth and determine ways to reduce these impacts or support them as they occur.

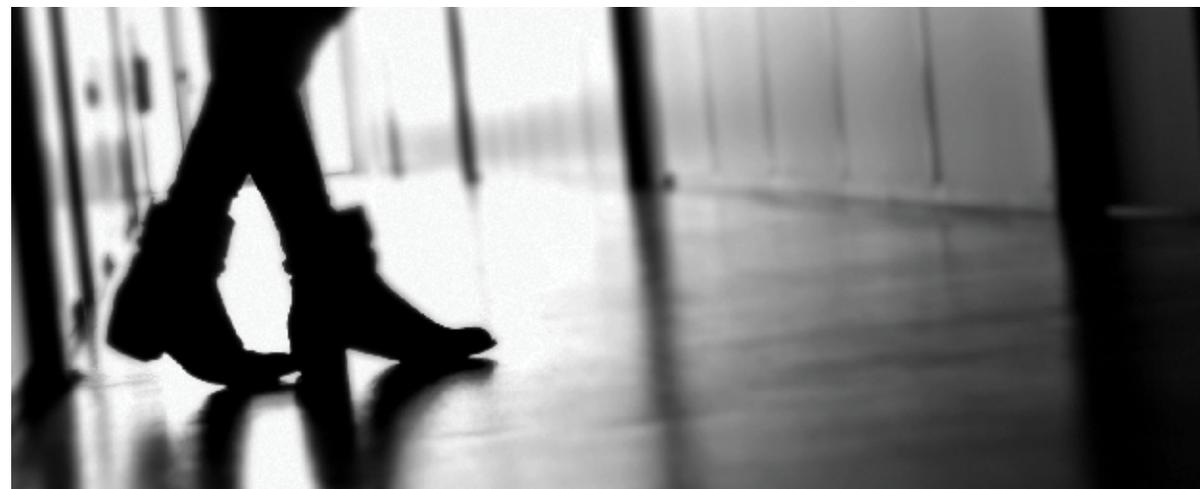
REMEMBER:

Traffickers are often incredibly controlling and possessive over their victims. Depending on the situation, they may still be in contact with the youth during the investigation. In *R v Urizar*, the accused sent a total of thirty-nine text messages to the complainant in the two days surrounding the time she gave her statement to police.

- During the investigative process, advocacy may involve:
 - » Helping youth ask for things they may need:
 - » Scheduling interview times around victims needs.
 - » Asking for the interview to take place in a neutral, safe environment. Depending on the situation, the police department may be the best place for the interview to take place. Some buildings may be equipped with specific rooms for interviewing children.
 - » Taking breaks throughout the interview.
 - » Communicating or explaining certain behaviours to police/Crown:
 - » Not showing up or showing up late could be an impact of trauma, or a reflection of the schedule/lack of schedule they had while in the trafficking situation.
 - » Dishonesty or reluctance to share may indicate a lack of trust.
 - » Gaps in memory or inconsistencies could be an impact of trauma.

For more information, refer to page 64 of the Toolkit.

Tip 10 – Support During the Investigation



REMEMBER:

A trauma-informed approach recognizes the impact of trauma and responds by putting this knowledge into practice. In one case, after agreeing to cooperate with police, a young victim failed to show up for the interview that was scheduled in the morning. Several hours later, she eventually showed up. During the interview with the male investigator, she was angry, dismissive, and only gave one-word answers. A support worker recognized something wasn't right. After speaking with the youth alone, it was discovered that the youth wasn't sleeping at night and the male investigator reminded her of her trafficker. The support worker asked the youth to choose the time of day for the next appointment and asked whether she would prefer questions to be asked by a female officer. The place of the meeting also changed from the police station to a safe, neutral spot that made the youth more comfortable.

QUICK TIP:

Ask the affected youth what would make them most comfortable. Some female youth may actually prefer to speak with a male officer because they are used to talking with Johns or may feel more shame when recounting details to another woman. Remember to consider this for male and transgender youth as well.

Tip 11 – Support During the Trial

For any victim of crime, testifying in court can be a frightening and difficult experience. However, this experience may be particularly difficult for a young person who has been exploited through trafficking due to the coercive practices involved, such as violence or threat of violence. There are many times throughout this process where an affected youth may be triggered.

QUICK TIP:

[VictimsInfo](#)¹ and [CourtPrep](#)² are useful online resources for victims of crime that provide general information about the court process, including frequently asked questions and links to additional sites for further information.

Supporting youth through the trial function may include:

- » Preparation
 - Discuss the court process, what to expect, and the roles of Crown, defence, and the judge/jury.
 - Tour the courthouse prior to trial, making them aware of where they will testify, where you (the support worker) will be, where the accused will be sitting, etc.
 - Ask them about any questions, anxieties, or concerns they may have about the process.
 - Practice strategies for recognizing, preventing, and managing a traumatic response. This includes identifying normal physical reactions like feeling cold or shaky, or having difficulty breathing or thinking clearly. Helpful strategies include calm breathing and grounding exercises.
- » [Anxiety BC](#)³ has useful information regarding self-help strategies for coping with anxiety and PTSD.
 - Provide support as they read through their statement.
 - As discussed in Section 8, there are a number of accommodations (see testimonial aids) available to vulnerable victims testifying in the court system. Crown counsel usually needs to apply for these so discuss it with Crown early on in the court preparation process.
- » Accompaniment and Emotional Support
 - Help the young person address any unexpected things that arise.

QUICK TIP:

Role play prior to trial may help to build the young person's ability to enlist these strategies on the day of trial. During role play, walk through what happens when they start to feel defensive and discuss tips and strategies for how to address these reactions in the moment.

Tip 11 – Support During the Trial

- » Example: In one case, the affected youth had a breakdown each time after court. It was important for the support worker to find a place to park the car outside of the courthouse that was out of everyone's view.
 - Help to explain what is going on during the trial.
 - During the trial, youth may run into the accused (if not in custody) or their family members/associates before trial, during breaks, or after the trial. This could happen outside of the courtroom or in any public space in the courthouse. If you have specific concerns on the day of the trial, speak with the courtroom sheriffs about any concerns.

“One young woman was very triggered by being offered a hotel room to stay in the night before her court appearance. It made her feel like she had to do something to earn that, that it gave someone power over her.”

– Victim Support Worker

- » Debrief
 - Testifying in court may have lasting impacts on youth. It is important to be aware of these impacts and to debrief with youth after they have testified.
 - Example: After testifying, the individual was so traumatized by her experience that she was afraid to be alone. Her support worker needed to check in with her every few hours for the next couple of days.

REMEMBER:

Crown counsel does not represent the victim, but acts on behalf of society and the state. In court, the victim is referred to as a ‘witness’ for the Crown. While victims have certain rights and support needs during the criminal justice process, it is important to remember that it is not the primary role of Crown to provide these. **It is the role of victim services to ensure the rights of the victim and that they receive sufficient support during the court process.**

For more information, refer to page 69 of the Toolkit.

¹VictimsInfo, Get to Know BC Court, <http://www.victimsinfo.ca/about-court/get-to-know-bc-court>

²CourtPrep, www.courtprep.ca

³Anxiety BC, Self-Help Strategies for PTSD, http://www.anxietybc.com/sites/default/files/adult_hmptsd.pdf

Tip 12 – Support After Court

SAFETY FIRST

The details of the judgment and sentencing decision will impact the affected youth, particularly as it relates to their safety.

If the accused is found guilty, they may be sentenced to serve time in a correctional centre.

- To be informed of the status of an adult accused/offender being supervised by BC Corrections, youth may want to register for the victim notification program. The Victim Safety Unit runs this program. For more information and an application form, [click here](#).¹
- If the accused is sentenced to more than two years then the offender will be part of the federal corrections system and youth may want to register with the [National Parole Board/Corrections Canada for notification](#).²

However, the accused may also be released if found not guilty. At this point, safety for the youth is the primary concern. Creating a safety plan with the young person may include:

- » Developing personal self-protection skills.
- » Pursuing protections provided by Section 28/98 in the *Child, Family and Community Services Act* (If youth is still under the age of nineteen).
- » Applying for alternative protection orders. For more information, [click here](#).³
- » Youth may also be eligible for protective measures, including security systems or relocation, through the Crime Victim Assistance Program (CVAP).

LONG-TERM SUPPORT SERVICES

If a case proceeds through the full trial process, years may have elapsed since a trafficked youth was first identified. As a result, youth will likely be at varying stages of their rehabilitation process. They may also still be in a precarious situation (due to further exploitation or to factors such as addictions or other mental health barriers).

When a young person has successfully exited their exploitative situation, and emergent and stabilization needs have been met, supports and services will shift to address longer-term needs for successful reintegration. While this may happen at any point during the criminal justice process, the end of it may provide an opportunity for the trafficked youth to finally move beyond their exploitative experience and start to look to the future.

Tip 12 – Support After Court



Long-term needs for social integration may include :

- » Long-term and permanent housing.
- » Life skills training.
- » Education upgrading.
- » Job seeking and career guidance.
- » Long-term trauma informed care and counselling.
- » Transition planning including integrating into the local community.
- » Building and maintaining a social support network.
- » Creating a self-care plan to deal with ongoing impacts of trauma.

For more information, refer to page 77 in the Toolkit.

¹ Victim Notification, <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/bcs-criminal-justice-system/if-you-are-a-victim-of-a-crime/victim-of-crime/victim-notification>

² Parole Board of Canada, Victim's Guide to Information Services, <https://www.canada.ca/en/parole-board/services/victims.html>

³ Peace Bonds and Restraining Orders, <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/bcs-criminal-justice-system/if-you-are-a-victim-of-a-crime/victim-of-crime/staying-safe>

⁴ OCTIP, Human Trafficking: Canada is Not Immune, "Long Term Services", <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/victims-of-crime/human-trafficking/human-trafficking-training>

**Children of the Street
is a program of**

PLEA Community Services Society of BC

Bernie Agg Centre

3894 Commercial Street

Vancouver, BC, Canada, V5N 4G2

T: 604 871 0450

F: 604 871 0408

E: info@plea.bc.ca

childrenofthestreet.com



Charitable registration # 10781 0467 RR0001

Please note the images used by PLEA are stock images used solely for illustrative purposes. Any person depicted in the images is a model.