

Far from home: Experiences of sexually exploited Aboriginal youth in Vancouver, B.C.

Urban Aboriginal Youth Domestic
Trafficking in Persons
Policy Research Report

Prepared for the Office of the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians

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6/29/2012

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Executive Summary

Main findings from literature review

60% of male and female sexually exploited youth in Vancouver are Aboriginal.

82% of Aboriginal sex trade workers reported a history of childhood sexual abuse, by an average of 4 perpetrators.

10 – 15% of those charged with Prostitution were youth, and 3% charged are ages twelve to seventeen years old.

Prosecution had little impact on the overall practice of youth prostitution and may even further entrench some youth in street life by “consolidating their ‘outlaw’ identity’.”

Main predictors of Aboriginal youth involvement in the sex trade today are low self-esteem, cultural and familial fragmentation, lack of life skills and education, substance abuse, poverty, physical, sexual and emotional abuse and racism.

Main findings from in-person interviews

A major contributing factor for entry into the sex trade is age that one leaves home, with all participants in this study having left home from ages 18 and younger (as young as 10 years old).

The overwhelming majority of participants had been sexually violated while growing up, and suffered other physical violence or emotional abuse. They were victims long before they entered the sex trade.

At the time the youth entered into the sex trade, close to half were either living in a foster home or living on the street.

Many had at least one parent who has a mental illness, was a student in a residential school, who had problems with alcohol or drug use (or both), or had a criminal record.

There are the challenges of being young, not being able to support oneself financially outside of sex trade work, dealing with addictions, and having no connection to their families during this time in ones' lives, while also seeking a connection to ones' Aboriginal culture.

Policy Recommendations and Key Criteria

Recommendation #1

Ensuring that there is someone for these youth to talk to - a resource, program, or an aboriginal service. Youth are less likely to talk to someone at the outset of their entry to sex trade work, but after time we find a much larger number who do end up talking to someone for support regarding their current circumstances. Young people require these resources to be accessible, culturally appropriate, in real time (when needed), and provide comfort, direction, and insight. Investments should strive to include experiential people to reach out to youth and provide supports and guidance.

Recommendation #2

Offer positive continuum of support networks targeted at runaway and homeless Aboriginal youth ages 24 and younger for transitions support, housing supports, including emergency services, medical care, food, clothing, mental health treatment options, work experience, education opportunities, cultural connections, and family reunification (either with family members in their home community or within the urban community they currently live), and access to legal help should be available. Too many Aboriginal youth find themselves without access to options outside of sex trade work for a livelihood and means of supporting themselves.

Recommendation #3

The majority of the youth interviewed had little awareness of the rights they have, either as victims, or as offenders (whether they know what they are engaged in is against a law or not). Promotion of the rights of the child and sex trade workers must include local, national, and international legal contexts. Aboriginal youth must have accessible resources that educate on the types of activities that involve harm to oneself or others, including exploitation and trafficking of persons, and what their options are if they think they are being abused including knowledge of and access to victims services.

Recommendation #4

Addictions services targeted at Aboriginal youth in both First Nations communities and in urban environments must be available in both short term and long term supports. Meaningful options must be available to Aboriginal youth or the risk of dangerous and fatal lifestyles will continue to occur and grow as the Aboriginal youth population grows.

Recommendation #5

Safe and secure shelters, safe houses, and low income housing, on a short and long term basis to target minors and young victims of sexual exploitation and trafficking. Lack of a safe, stable place to live is part of youths' entrance to sex trade work to begin with. These safe spaces should focus on recovery from trauma and rehabilitation, including skills training, and cultural connections. It is important that these spaces protect youth from their traffickers.

Key Criteria

1. Aboriginal youth engagement

Programming must be developed through processes that involve experiential and community based Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth. Youth engagement and the inclusion of peer supports is key to meaningful and effective youth initiatives, as identified in Sacred Lives (2000).

2. Community based

Preventative initiatives must be made available in both First Nations communities, and in urban environments for Aboriginal youth.

3. Cultural Engagement

Connection to cultural experiences and the development of cultural and traditional knowledge must be included in any programming or policy aimed at at-risk Aboriginal youth.

4. Promotes a network

Because there is a paucity of services that specifically support Aboriginal youth at risk in Vancouver, or for those Aboriginal youth involved in sex trade work there needs to be a concerted effort at developing partnerships between current programs for Aboriginal youth at risk and sex trade workers. One program alone will not meet the needs of at-risk Aboriginal youth. Youth who are properly connected receive better services.

5. Safe spaces

Initiatives, programs, and services that provide support for at-risk Aboriginal youth or young sex trade workers should do so without judgement and the threat of jail or incarceration for activities involving sex trade work. Nor should youth be punished by being removed from a program because of their involvement in the sex trade. The issue

should not be that the youth are engaging in criminal behaviour but that they require safe spaces in order to attain the support they need at this time in their lives.

Introduction

This research is the result of a collaboration between Public Safety Canada and the Office of the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians in order to advance policy research in support of the prevention of trafficking in persons and related forms of exploitation of Aboriginal youth in urban centres in Canada.

The scope of work included the development of this policy research paper that explores in a gendered perspective Aboriginal (female and male) youth sexual exploitation¹ and domestic trafficking in persons and its relation to the broader legal and policy context. This was accomplished through conducting a literature review and interviews with key participants on sexual exploitation and domestic trafficking in persons and the preparation of the policy research report.

The objective of the project was to better understand current realities of these issues for Aboriginal youth:

- How exploitation and/or trafficking is occurring for these youth and their paths to being exploited and/or trafficked such as whether this is by family, relationships, friends, acquaintances, gangs, or whether there is an economic benefit to that person or in exchange for goods or other items.
- A description of any efforts by the youth and by others to prevent the youth from taking this direction;
- Insights of the interviewed youth on what would be helpful to prevent exploitation in the first instance, or any reoccurrence.
- When/how/if trafficking and sexual exploitation is reported to police, and if not reasons for underreporting.
- Another aspect of the project is to broadly explore and relate the research findings to the current legal and policy context.

A three-member team comprised of Aboriginal young professionals compiled the findings in this report – Ginger Gosnell-Myers, Matthew Louie, and Jerilynn Webster. The Research Lead, Ginger Gosnell-Myers worked with two young Aboriginal leaders, Matthew Louie and Jerilynn Webster, whom conducted the in-person interviews with Aboriginal young people who are currently involved or who have exited the sex trade. All three team members engaged in consultations with relevant agencies and organizations in Vancouver, B.C.

¹ In legal terms 'sexual exploitation' applies to involvement of youth under age 18 in prostitution related activities, however, the term 'sexual exploitation' is used throughout this document to refer broadly and inclusively to all forms of prostitution as well as trafficking for the purposes of prostitution, of youth and adults, to acknowledge the vulnerabilities of most of those recruited to or are involved in the commercial sex industry.

Methodology

The structured interview format comprised 71 closed and open-ended survey questions. Development of the questions was guided in part by a scan of the literature and identification of research gaps in this area, and with an experiential youth who provided input to the development of the questions for relevancy on subject matter. Dr. Susan McIntyre, along with the research team in Winnipeg, MB – AMR Planning & Consulting Inc., also provided key expert input into the methodology of this project.

Participants were selected by the Aboriginal youth researchers, drawing on their connections with the various organizations throughout Vancouver, and knowledge of Aboriginal youth issues in the city. During the interview stage of the project, contact was made with potential informants, but not all appointments for an interview took place because of last minute cancellations by the informants, and all those who canceled did not want to reschedule.

A total of 14 face to face interviews were conducted with Aboriginal young people ages 22- 34, with one aged 41 who was not included in the overall findings. Of the total interviews conducted, three identified as male, three as transgendered, and eight as female.

Limitations

- The research is not generalizable for males, females, transgendered, or ages, although there are some commonalities that may be similar to others' sex trade workers/sexually exploited experiences.
- Many of the agencies for sex trade workers did not regularly have young Aboriginal people go through their organizations, making referrals or connections possible. This could be due to the youths' fear of being turned away or reported for being underage, or because young Aboriginal people who are relatively new to the city have no experience in accessing the myriad of services available.
- Aboriginal young female sex trade workers in Vancouver are referred to as living in the shadows, many are hiding due to personal reasons, such as shame, or control from their traffickers, partners or pimps.
- Aboriginal young sex trade workers are highly transient, and disenfranchised population with limited connections to the urban Aboriginal community in Vancouver, making them harder to find and therefore approach for an interview.
- The discussion of trafficking is difficult to approach with female sex trade workers due to possible danger or coercion by the trafficker, partner or pimp.

- The project focus was targeted at youth 18 and above due to the challenge of receiving parental consent for minors under the age of 18 many of whom are estranged from their families.
- There is a possible fatigue amongst female sex trade workers in Vancouver due to the long standing impact of the Robert Pickton murders, the Murdered and Missing Women's Inquiry not providing any sense of justice to the community and those affected, and the closure of PEERS, which was a sex trade worker run organization that provided unique supports to their community but recently lost all its funding.

Literature Review – Patterns among the trafficking of Aboriginal youth for sexual exploitation

The Sex Trade in Vancouver

Throughout Canada, the name “Downtown Eastside” is synonymous with chronic homelessness, mental illness, drug addiction including injection drug use, sex trade work, and murdered and missing Aboriginal women. At least 137 Native women missing and murdered in BC since 1980, and more than 68 women are still missing from the city's Downtown Eastside (DTES) (Rolbin-Ghanie, 2010). The severity of the issue of murdered and missing Aboriginal women permeates all discussions around Aboriginal women involved in the sex trade, and has drawn the Province of British Columbia to conduct an inquiry into the Robert Pickton trial which is led by former Attorney General Wally Oppal as the Commissioner of the Inquiry (<http://www.missingwomeninquiry.ca>). The Missing Women Commission of Inquiry has been fraught with controversy and has not concluded as of the finalization of this paper. There continues to be a high level of international attention to this matter. In December, 2011 the United Nations Office for the High Commissioner on Human Rights stated they will examine all evidence pertaining to the more than 600 Aboriginal women who have gone missing and determine if the United Nations will initiate an official inquiry (Talaga, 2012), (NWAC, 2011) . There is no decision as to whether this United Nations inquiry will commence as of the finalization of this paper.

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Literature on the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver shows a disproportionate number of Aboriginal peoples, including Aboriginal youth, many of whom left their home communities for Vancouver and have become vulnerable to sexual exploitation, and homelessness (Federal/Provincial Working Group, 1998). Poverty is a large factor that has lead Aboriginal youth into the sex trade, as well as drug dealing, theft, and other crimes that can be profited from (UNYA, 2002).

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According to UBC's It's Not What You Think: Sexually Exploited Youth in British Columbia (2008), 60% of male and female sexually exploited youth in Vancouver are Aboriginal which is consistent with research by Urban Native Youth Association (2002) who also found that 60% of sexually exploited youth are Aboriginal. Among homeless youth in Vancouver, 40% are Aboriginal. There is a disproportionate number of high risk youth who end up on the downtown eastside because of a multitude of situations that put them at a disadvantage. Some studies estimate that up to one-third of all children who runaway or end up on the street (in Oregon)

are lured into the sex trade within 48 hours (International Human Rights Clinic at Willamette University College of Law, June 2010). The potential for sexual exploitation is extreme for youth who run away and end up on the street, even for a short time.

In Vancouver, 52% of 183 women involved in sex trade work were first exploited and became involved when they were younger than 16 years old, and 70% were exploited and became involved prior to 18 years of age (Cunningham & Christenson, 2001).

The types of services and organizations utilized by Aboriginal sex trade workers ranges from hospitals, faith based services, a variety of health services, to those specifically for sex workers such as PEERS Vancouver, PACE, WISH Drop in Centre, SHOP, The Front Room, and the MAP Van (Bowen, 2006). There are women who indicated that they do not use any services at all, or do not have any services available in their area. Those who don't access services because they are scarce to begin with, youth who are new to the city have no experience in accessing or locating supports, or for fear of being turned away, judged, or reported to police.

Trafficking

The definition of 'Trafficking in Persons' in Canada can be found through the Canadian Criminal Code, the Canada Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, and the United Nations definition of Trafficking to which Canada is a signatory. The Canadian Criminal Code, sections 279 includes the kidnapping, forcible confinement, trafficking in person, and exploitation of persons. Since 2002 the Canada *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, section 118 addresses the international trafficking of persons, and their entry into Canada. The United Nations *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children* definition of Trafficking goes further to address sexual exploitation and forced labour, and the recruitment, transfer, transportation, harbouring , or receipt of a child (ages 18 and under) for the purpose of exploitation (Bowen, 2006). When a person is coerced into performing labour including sexual services, and they are not able to refuse or to have any control over their working conditions, that is considered trafficking (Sikka, 2009).

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The actual numbers of Aboriginal women and youth who are trafficked is not known. There is no national or provincial level data that can track a transient population, especially one that is

concealed from the general public (Ogrodnik, 2010). It is not known if the numbers of Aboriginal people trafficked is increasing or decreasing, or whether current justice responses are effective due to this lack of reliable data. The majority of trafficking instances go unreported as the young people involved are not in positions to take action against their abusers (Sethi, 2007). To further the problem, NGO's, law enforcement, and government each different criteria to determine who is a victim of trafficking, resulting in non-comparable information and an inability for any effective insight into the scope of the problem (Ogrodnik, 2010).

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According to Urban Native Youth Association (2002), there are many ways that Aboriginal youth are recruited into the sex trade. Recruitment involves the process a person uses to coerce or convince persons to enter into the sex trade. It can be through the exploitation of a friendship or relationship, peer pressure, lies, blackmail, intimidation, or through financial means. Because of this, the victims of domestic trafficking may not see themselves as such. Those who are, and fit the definitions of being 'trafficked' may not realize until later in life what had happened to them was actually trafficked exploitation (Ogrodnik, 2010). This further complicates an ability to intervene as the victim's trafficker may be a boyfriend, girlfriend, or family. Traffickers can pose as boyfriends in order to seduce young girls, or as a girlfriend who offers a new and exciting lifestyle in order to lure the victim into conducting sex work (Sethi, 2007).

In Vancouver, Aboriginal girls as young as 10 have been targeted by sex trade recruiters at Grandview Elementary School. "Every spring, active recruitment of our Grade Six and Seven First Nations girl students takes place," said Caroline Krause, principal of the Grandview Elementary School. "We find that groups of traffickers and recruiters try to come onto the school grounds. Sometimes they come into the school trying to lure away our girls." (West, 2005). Traffickers come onto school property, in the playgrounds, or approach girls on their way to school. Those who are targeted can be in grades six or seven, and promised a glamorous lifestyle and enticed with gifts and attention, followed by offering drugs and initiating an addiction over time (Sethi, 2007). The steps taken by pimps for young girls involves isolating them away from their support network, removing her from her family, friends, and home until she is completely controlled and on the streets (UNYA, 2002).

A main difference between the ways Aboriginal youth and non-Aboriginal youth are coerced into the sex trade is the prevalence of family members as the trafficker. The youth may come

from a family with a history of involvement in the sex trade, through their parents (as both sex worker or pimp), or siblings (Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Centre, 2009). The disparate socio-economic living conditions of Aboriginal families too easily impacts children, making them the most vulnerable to predators and traffickers. Once a child is brought into the sex trade and is sexually exploited they become the most difficult to find and help because they are normally kept in a closed environment or at home. Aboriginal women and children comprise the majority of people who are domestically trafficked in Canada (Oxman-Martinez, Lacroix, & Hanley, 2005).

The mobility of Aboriginal youth incurs additional vulnerability as they are integrated into the sex trade by a trafficker. Oxman-Martin et al. (2005) found that Aboriginal girls are rotated between Winnipeg – Vancouver – Calgary to avoid detection, and that more cities, such as Prince Rupert, and other northern centres in BC have similar routes (British Columbia, 2000). Although Sikka (2009) disputes whether there is a circuit between cities where Aboriginal youth are moved regularly, and that instances where this occurs is now rare whereas in the past it was much more common. There does not appear to be any consensus or understanding of the true extent of mobility and a sex trade circuit of Aboriginal youth throughout Canada.

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In Oregon, a U.S. state with a high Native American population, studies show an increase in adults who will travel to that state to engage in sexual activities with children that they met online. These children are mainly from rural communities, not inner city areas. Throughout Oregon crimes involving child pornography and child sexual exploitation has increased by 29% between 2009-2010 (International Human Rights Clinic at Willamette University College of Law, June 2010).

The Sex Trade in BC

The instances of sexually exploited Aboriginal youth in British Columbia is not limited to the city limits of metro Vancouver. The communities of Burnaby, Dawson Creek, Kamloops, Kelowna, Port Hardy, Prince George, Vancouver, Victoria, Nanaimo, Prince Rupert and Whistler have all reported incidents of young Aboriginal people involved in sex trade work (British Columbia, 2000). With only estimates about the numbers of sexually exploited youth to draw upon, there have been reports of 14% - 60% of Aboriginal youth involved in sex trade work, depending on the community consulted (British Columbia, 2000). The numbers can fluctuate due to seasonal variability and population increase in some communities for seasonal work. Throughout B.C.'s north along highway 16, also known as the 'highway of tears', young girls who resort to hitchhiking are vulnerable to sexual exploitation and experiences with violence. The story of the highway of tears is a somber reality about the consequences of poverty and lack of transportation, as several Aboriginal women and girls have gone missing or been found murdered (Sethi, 2007). There is little information on the numbers of sexually exploited youth in each of B.C.'s communities. Without a database to track numbers, the problem remains hidden. Youth are at a higher risk for victimization than adult sex trade workers (Currie, Laliberte, Bird, Rosa, & Sprung, 1995). In a number of communities across Canada, Aboriginal youth comprise '90% of the visible sex trade' (Save the Children Canada, 2000).

The locations where the youth sex trade takes place varies between urban and rural locations. In rural communities where the sex trade is not visible, venues for exploitation included private homes, public docks, fishing boats, truck stops, parks, and back alleys. In larger urban centres an estimated 20 – 50% of the exploitation happens on the street, while other locations included trick pads, bars, parties, and massage parlours (British Columbia, 2000) (PEERS, 2000). The street is the most common location for sex trade work among Aboriginal youth, though the usage of cell phones opens up multiple possibilities for sex work to take place (British Columbia, 2000).

There is little consensus to the age of first entry into the sex trade. In a consultation with 75 sexually exploited youth in Victoria, the study found that the average age of entry into the sex trade was 15.5 years (British Columbia, 1997), while PEERS of Victoria found in their research that the average age of entry was 13 - 18 years old, and still another study conducted by the Assistant Deputy Minister's Committee on Prostitution and the Sexual Exploitation of Youth shows the age being as young as 11 years old (British Columbia,

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2000) (PEERS, 1996) (PEERS, 2000). PEERS (2000) found that women were slightly younger than men when they first entered the sex trade, while McIntyre (2006) found that males were younger than females upon their entry to the sex trade.

Among street involved youth (ages 12-18), the research conducted by the University of British Columbia, shows a greater percentage of exploited males (34% vs. 27% of females in 2006). Among older street-involved youth (ages 19-25), a higher percentage of females reported sexual exploitation (53% females vs. 32% males). Fewer than half of sexually exploited street involved youth identified as heterosexual (Saewyc, MacKay, Anderson, & Drozda, 2008).

More than 33% of the marginalized street-involved youth have been sexually exploited, as have 20% of the youth in custody. Youth most commonly exchange sex for money or drugs, but they are also exploited when they are trying to meet their basic needs of shelter (33%), transportation (25%), and/or food and clothing (20%). 70% of sexually exploited youth are exploited by males, but half (50%) had also been exploited by females (Saewyc, MacKay, Anderson, & Drozda, 2008).

Roots of Sexual Exploitation

Urban Aboriginal Youth "are profoundly influenced by both historical injustices and current inequities. Issues facing youth are rooted in a history of colonization, dislocation from their traditional territories, communities and cultural traditions, and the inter-generational impacts of the residential school system". - *Senate Report on Urban Aboriginal Youth* (Chalifoux and Johnson, 2003).

The generational impact of colonization in Canada upon Aboriginal peoples has been a major aspect in building and sustaining the barriers of social, economic and political inequality.

The traumatic experiences of American Indian people during the colonial era and their constant exposure to new losses and government-sponsored new trauma each generation significantly reduced the ability of Native people, families, and communities to develop and sustain the four beliefs found to be essential for a coherent and resilient sense of self. The absence of time and safety to grieve losses and heal from trauma resulted in generational trauma, the passing of trauma responses to the next generation (Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Centre, 2009).

Aboriginal youth speak of the physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse they experienced in their home lives, as their parents, relatives, care givers, and neighbours continue to suffer from "the legacy of cultural fragmentation" (Save the Children Canada, 2000). The impact of the residential schools is illustrated by harmful behaviours adopted by many of the survivors like

alcoholism, compulsive gambling, substance abuse, and high incidences of sexual problems including sexual abuse and incest. These intergenerational effects of trauma leech outward from the victims to touch all the people surrounding them, like parents, spouses, children, and friends. The effects of the emotional, physical, and sexual abuse continue to reach every subsequent generation to date (Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2003). While involved in the sex trade females may experience physical and psychological abuse, confinement, and rape, and many have suffered similar traumatic events to individuals who have experienced torture. Some will experience “inhuman cruelty and deprivation, whereas others will be controlled through various levels of coercion, threat, or intimidation (Zimmerman, Oram, Borland, & Watts, 2009)”.

Youth in government care are more likely to be sexually exploited than those who have not been in care (Saewyc, MacKay, Anderson, & Drozda, 2008), and in Canada Aboriginal children are disproportionately represented in the child welfare system making them more vulnerable to sexual exploitation. Between 1995 and 2001, the number of First Nation children entering the child welfare system increased by 71.5% across Canada. The First Nations Child and Family caring society has also found that there are three times more First Nations children in care now than at the height of the residential schools era in the 1940s. As of May 2005, 10.23% of all Status Indian children were in care, as compared to 0.67% of non-Aboriginal children. According to NWAC 30% to 40% of all children in care in Canada are Aboriginal, but this varies from province to province and in BC over 50% of children in permanent care are Aboriginal (Canada, 2007).

Literature reveals that many sexually exploited youth come from economically disadvantaged, multi-problem families; have been abused sexually and physically as children; and have left school and home at an early age (Saewyc, Bingham, Brunanski, Smith, Hunt, Northcott, & the McCreary Centre Society, 2008) (British Columbia, 2000). A typical home environment consisted of poor relationships with parents, poor supervision, lack of communication, parents that did not provide positive affection, attention and social reinforcement. Further descriptions include regular violence between the adults in the home, substance abuse by parents, physical neglect, regular longer term absence from the home by the father, and to some extent by the mother usually due to shift or seasonal work (British Columbia, 2000). In addition to not having supportive adults in their lives due to past histories of school struggles and family disturbances, many of these youth have been part of the foster and group home environment which leads to an increased distrust of adults (PEERS, 2000).

Many of the Aboriginal youth who end up on the streets with very little work experience and education end up having to turn to prostitution as a way to survive (Save the Children, 2010). The average age of entry into prostitution varies depending on the research consulted, but does

show that many of these youth became involved in prostitution as a means of subsistence for food, shelter, and clothing (British Columbia, 1997). The reasons for entering the trade are complex. Both males and females said the need for food and shelter were important contributors, but females are more likely to enter the sex trade through the manipulation of family members or partners which suggest that the line between boyfriend and pimp is blurred (PEERS, 2000).

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NWAC (Native Women's Association of Canada) states that the "main predictors of Aboriginal youth involvement in the sex trade today are low self-esteem, cultural and familial fragmentation, lack of life skills and education, substance abuse, poverty, physical, sexual and emotional abuse and racism. Many children from rural areas who have experienced physical, sexual or emotional abuse move to urban centres. Having run away from unstable homes or state care institutions, they have few job opportunities and little access to social services." (Parliament of Canada, 2011). Within the Vancouver school system racism, family instability, poor school support services, and a lack of appreciation for education have led many Aboriginal youth to dropping out, or being pushed out of Vancouver schools before graduation (UNYA, 2002). Currently only 32% of Aboriginal youth graduate from high school in Vancouver (Ward, 2012).

In the 2005 Farley & Lynne's Vancouver based research on Indigenous women in the sex trade they found that 82% of the women reported a history of childhood sexual abuse, with an average of 4 perpetrators or abusers. This number did not include the women who answered the question "If there was unwanted sexual touching or sexual contact between you and an adult, how many people in all?" with *tons*, or *I can't count that high*, or *I was too young to remember*. As children 72% of the women reported that they had been struck or beaten by a caregiver until they had bruises or were injured. When comparing First Nations women with women of European-Canadian descent, childhood sexual abuse, and childhood physical abuse were reported significantly more often by the respondents identifying as First Nations, as compared to European-Canadian. When these women were asked about their needs First Nations women indicated a significantly greater need for self defense training, peer support, job training, and for individual counseling (Farley & Lynne, 2005). In Canada research has shown a correlation between child sexual abuse and adolescent/adult sex trade work, as approximately 76 to 90% of sex trade workers have had a history of child sexual abuse (Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2005).

Legal and Policy implications

As child sexual exploitation receives greater attention at the federal, provincial, and municipal level, a number of reports have been produced to help guide a framework for action. Within these reports a common recommendation is the need for legal strategies and effective law enforcement to deter commercial sex involving youth, but there is little reference in literature as to the legal context in which sexual exploitation of youth occurs, or the effectiveness of legal approaches in general (British Columbia, 2000).

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In his examination of '*juvenile prostitution*' in Canada, Badgley (1984) recommended that the Criminal Code be amended to criminalize the youth who engaged in commercial sex. Similarly Brannigan and Fleischman (1989) came to the conclusion that the youths involved in the sex trade were there by choice, and that laws and law enforcement should focus on the youth as sellers rather than the individuals who were the buyers of sex. This youth criminalization approach has been widely criticized as misdirected and ineffective by those who advocate on behalf of youth and those who view youth in the sex trade as a result of broader social issues that produce both the conditions for youth vulnerability and the demand for commercial sex (British Columbia, 2000).

There have been amendments made to the Canadian Criminal Code, mainly targeting the purchasers and the activities associated with commercial sex. This legal framework is complex, as some aspects of commercial sex are legal and others are not. Adult sex trade work itself is not illegal in Canada, but many of the other activities surrounding the act of sex trade work are prohibited. These specific sex trade work related offences are contained primarily in sections 210 to 213 of the Criminal Code, and to note - the penalty for procurement offences of commercial sex is raised when the sexually exploited person is under 18, which creates additional offence when the procurer lives on the avails of a child involved in the sex trade and uses threats or violence to compel the youth into sex trade work. Additionally and most significantly, section 212(4) of the *Criminal Code* states that "it is an offence to obtain or to communicate for the purpose of obtaining the sexual services of *any* person under 18 for consideration (Barnett & Julia, 2012)." Thus, solicitation of a minor in the sex trade is at all times illegal, and it is of no defence to say that the solicitor thought the child was 18 years old.

Bill C-49, a 1985 amendment to the Canadian Criminal Code made it illegal to communicate with another person for the purpose of obtaining the services of a sex trade worker. In 1989

after two years of this law being implemented 10 to 15 per cent of those arrested were young offenders, mostly 16 or 17 years of age. While reports show that this law had some positive results, it is expected to have displaced street prostitution to indoor venues- to what degree this happened is not clear. Regarding sexually exploited youth this amendment as seen as beneficial, as it provided an *initial hook* that gave professionals an opportunity to establish control and structure in the lives of the high- risk youth. In Vancouver it was felt that prosecution had very little impact on the practice of youth in the sex trade, and may have entrenched them further in the street life by “consolidating their ‘outlaw’ identity” (British Columbia, 2000).”

While sexually exploited youth represent 20% of those charged with prostitution and related offences where the law is strictly enforced (City of Burnaby, 1998) , the Federal/ Provincial/ Territorial Working Group (1998) found that 10% to 15% of those charged with prostitution were youth, and Tremblay (1998) and Duchesne (1997) goes further to state that 3% charged are ages twelve to seventeen years old. The prevalence of sexual exploitation was found to be just as likely for males as females (Saewyc, MacKay, Anderson, & Drozda, 2008) (Federal/Provincial Territorial Working Group on Prostitution, 1998).

• • •
10-15% of those charged with prostitution were youth, and a further 3% charged are ages 12-17 years old.
• • •

In consultations under The Living in Community collaborative initiative, as noted in the February 2012 report prepared for the Missing Women Commission Inquiry, some of the women involved in the sex trade said that the police were a support to them, especially the female officers, but many sex trade workers also spoke of being harassed by police officers, or not being taken seriously when they tried to report assaults against them (Missing Women Commission of Inquiry, 2012).

There has been a push by some groups for the decriminalization of prostitution, as law enforcement strategies may increase the vulnerability of sexually exploited youth to violence by forcing sex trade workers into more isolated areas. Other groups have pushed for more effective enforcement of the prostitution laws in relation to the individuals who are buying sex and/or profiting from the trafficking of sex trade workers. There has been emphasis on the prosecution of individuals who are buying sex from children and youth, and also the recruiters of children and youth into the trade.

“The message that “our kids are not for sale” needs to be demonstrated by the arrest and conviction of those who abuse children and youth. When arrests are made, pre and post-trial supports for the children and youth involved need to be comprehensive and

address the trauma they experienced. Courts need to be held responsible for the delivery of adequate sentencing. As well, changes that would assist in the investigation and prosecution of these cases must be identified and implemented. Potential areas include legal reform, training, and supports for victims and witnesses living in Community (Missing Women Commission of Inquiry, 2012)."

There is a division among those who want decriminalization, in order to increase safety, and those opposed, but both sides agree that safety is best met by increased social and economic security, as this will prevent initial entry into the sex trade, and will also provide the supports needed for the exit from the trade (Missing Women Commission of Inquiry, 2012).

Secure Care

Controversial child protection legislation has been used to try and regulate street sex trade work across Canada, from including sex work among criteria for classifying a child as in need of protection, to *secure care* legislation that authorizes the involuntary detention of minors involved in the sex trade.

The British Columbia *Secure Care Act*, legislation, which has met criticism in news media and from legal experts across the country, provides for the involuntary detention of children involved in prostitution, so that these children are counselled and assessed. A concern raised is that detention against the child's will, will not address the actual problem of their involvement in the sex trade, as involuntary detention could actually further alienate the children from society, which may drive them deeper into organized crime and the sex trade (Barnett & Julia, 2012). Instead of providing the long term support a child needs, they are instead treated more like a criminal.

Protection legislation in British Columbia clearly states that welfare authorities have the power to remove children at risk of prostitution and to place them in the child welfare system, with the possibility of being apprehended and placed in a foster home. B.C. courts have the power to issue a restraining order if a person has encouraged or coerced, or is likely to encourage or coerce, a youth involved in the system to engage in prostitution. This legislation also includes a term of imprisonment or a fine for individuals who sexually exploit and violate children (Barnett & Julia, 2012).

Gendered Perspectives

In 2008 the McCreary Centre Society conducted a health survey of marginalized and street-involved youth from six communities throughout B.C. and of the 762 interviewed, 410 identified as Aboriginal (54%). 30% of the male respondents and 23% of the female respondents reported being sexually exploited (Saewyc, Bingham, Brunanski, Smith, Hunt, Northcott, & the McCreary Centre Society, 2008).

Youth in the sex trade are primarily female, in 2000, reports show approximately two-thirds were female (British Columbia, 2000), and a more recent report by Living in Community shows that the numbers are more in the range of 75% to 80% female, and 20% to 25% male and transgendered youth (Living in Community, 2007). Another study shows that lesbian, gay, and bisexual Aboriginal youth were significantly more likely to report sexual exploitation than heterosexual youth (Saewyc, Bingham, Brunanski, Smith, Hunt, Northcott, & the McCreary Centre Society, 2008).

There is no consensus on which gender enters the sex trade at an earlier age. In the 2000 British Columbia's Assistant Deputy Minister's Committee on Prostitution and the Sexual Exploitation of Youth report, evidence supports females entering the sex trade at an earlier age than males, but Susan McIntyre's report, *Under the Radar: The Sexual Exploitation of Young Men*- British Columbia, points toward males entering the trade at a younger age. One study found that all the females they interviewed were under the age of 18 when they entered the sex trade, compared to a just under three-quarters of the males (British Columbia, 2000).

Both males and female youth in the sex trade have similar backgrounds of sexual and physical abuse prior to them entering the sex trade. For male youth abuse was prominent, as 78% reported sexual abuse, and 90% reported physical abuse (McIntyre, 2006).

Females are more likely to be targets for pimps for recruitment into the sex trade, and males usually tend to be on their own when they enter the sex trade and they may enter by trading sexual favours for their basic needs such as food and shelter, and then eventually start exchanging sex for money (UNYA, 2002).

While involved in the sex trade females in Vancouver are 10 times more likely to be physically abused by a pimp or manager than their male counterparts. Females are also 4 times more likely to be physically abused by a trick or date (Saewyc, MacKay, Anderson, & Drozda, 2008).

Males are spending a greater length of time on the street than females, as many females spend less time on the street and often take a break for child birth or pregnancy. And optimistically, these breaks would also disrupt drug use, as the birth of a child can be a medium to disrupt, alter and cease drug use and street involvement (McIntyre, 2006). Previously it was thought

that males tended to be involved in prostitution for a shorter period than females, and that their involvement was an adolescent phase for males, and that those who were involved in street life were likely to turn to other criminal activity (British Columbia, 2000). But since males do not have the opportunity of birthing which would disrupt, alter, or cease drug use and street involvement that without this break it will likely lead to greater and heavier drug use by males. Even the stigma of 'gay for pay' the male youth may feel more shame which leads to increased drug use (McIntyre, 2006).

HIV infection rates among female injection drug users (IDU) is much higher than males, which is a consequence of the sex trade conditions, as research in Vancouver shows that 80% of female IDU's are currently active in the sex trade (Cunningham & Christenson, 2001).

Research Findings

Summary of Research Findings

In total, there were fourteen current or former sex trade workers that participated in taking this survey, but the findings only take into consideration the responses of thirteen individuals as one of the survey participants was outside of the age limit (age 41, but had been involved in sex trade work since age 12). Of those respondents that are included in this research, there were three gender identifiers that were used - three identified as male, seven as female, and three transgendered individuals all whom are male, but one of which identifies as a transgendered female. Their ages range from 19 - 34 years of age.

The home environment points to a possible contributing factor to their eventual entry into the sex trade. The overwhelming majority of participants had been sexually violated while growing up, and suffered other physical violence or emotional abuse. Many had at least one parent who has a mental illness, was a student in a residential school, and also had at least one parent who had problems with alcohol or drug use (or both), or had a criminal record. A small minority also said their mother grew up in the foster care system. The majority of the youth interviewed have had negative experiences with substance use, both in their personal lives or within their family.

The circumstances that opened the door to the sex trade show that they were victims long before their entrance to the sex trade, with a lack of positive opportunities available soon after leaving their homes. The majority of respondents said they were very young when they had someone else in their lives present their entrance into the sex trade. Many more stayed in the sex trade to cover the cost of drugs. At the time, only one out of the thirteen respondents talked to anyone for help when they first started sex trade work.

When asked about their experiences while in the sex trade or during an attempt to exit the sex trade, a story emerges about the challenges of being young, not being able to support themselves financially outside of sex trade work, dealing with addictions, and having no connection to their families during this time in their lives, while also wanting a connection to their Aboriginal culture. The majority of respondents have been involved in the sex trade for 7-10 years and found it difficult to adapt to a lifestyle that did not include sex trade work.

When asked about their aspirations for the future, gaining an education and finishing post secondary school was most likely to be mentioned, followed by securing and maintaining employment. Each of the respondents had advice for other Aboriginal youth involved in sex

trade work, and discussed the importance of allowing oneself to be loved, to stay safe, and to seek balance and grounding.

General Demographics

In total, there were fourteen current or former sex trade workers that participated in this research study, but the findings only take into consideration the responses of thirteen individuals as one of the survey participants was outside of the age limit (age 41, but had been involved in sex trade work since age 12). Of those respondents that are included in this research, there were three gender identifiers that were used - three identified as male, seven as female, and three transgendered individuals all whom are male, but one of which identifies as a transgendered female. Their ages range from 19 - 34 years of age.

Table 1. What do you identify as (First Nations, Métis, Inuit)?

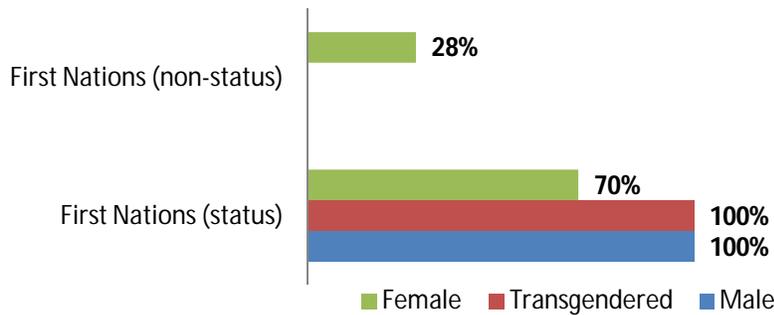


Table 2. How old are you?

Female	Transgendered	Male
Ages 22 - 28	Ages 19 - 29	Ages 19 - 34

All respondents identified as First Nations, with two identifying as being a non-status First Nation person. Their home communities are located throughout British Columbia to communities in Manitoba. There were a few responses that did not indicate which community they were from and instead reflected their First Nations ancestry. Seven have lived on a reserve for a few years, or most of their lives. Three said they have never lived on a reserve at any point in their life.

The levels of education completed varies. Three respondents have completed either college or university, another four have completed high school. Six respondents indicated that they entered high school, but did not complete.

When asked about their marital status, ten said they were single, two had boyfriends, and one of the female respondents is married.

Six of the seven female respondents said that they have children. Two out of those six still have their children. For those who no longer have their children in their care, two said their children were with the other parent, one with their grandparents, one was in foster care, and one has been adopted out. Of the male respondents, one male and one transgendered said that they had ever impregnated a woman but when asked if they had any children the response was no, neither had any children today. Further clarification as to whether this meant that the pregnancy was brought to term was not asked.

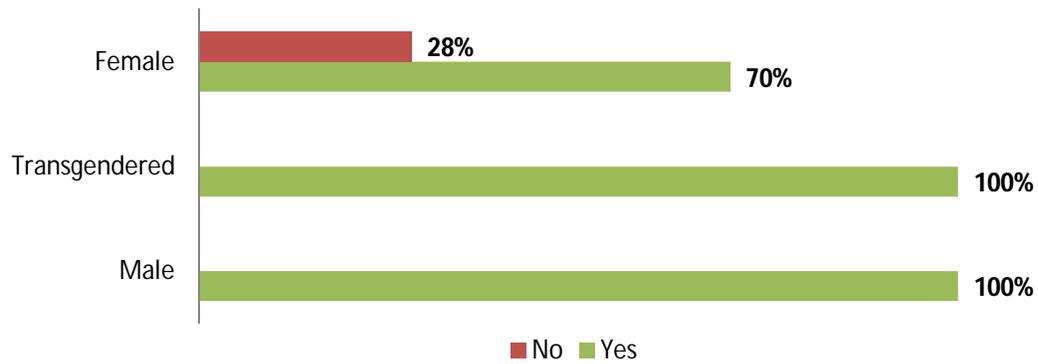
Life at home

The home environment as described by many of the participants could have been a contributing factor to their eventual entry into the sex trade. The overwhelming majority had been sexually violated while growing up, and suffered other physical violence or emotional abuse. Many had at least one parent who dealt with mental illness, residential school trauma, and a problem with alcohol or drug use (or both), and who had a criminal record. A small minority also said their mother grew up in the foster care system. At a very young age, the majority of these respondents were either removed from their home or chose to leave and within 2-4 years entered into the sex trade.

The experiences of the youths' family members include a history of abuse, instability, and poor health. Of the respondents, four youth said that their mother had grown up in the foster care system, as well as another five who said they have other family who were placed into foster care. For many of the respondents, five had mothers who suffered from a mental illness. Another five respondents had mothers who attended residential schools and three youth said either their mother, father, or both have a criminal record. Experiences with the sex trade for many of these youth extend back to their families - six youth had family who were involved in the sex trade, three of which identified their mother as having been involved in the sex trade.

For many of the youth interviewed for this study, the majority (11) had been sexually abused or violated while growing up. Another seven said they experienced physical and emotional abuse or violence in their lives. Of the participants, eight had experienced violence during their time in the sex trade.

Table 3. Do you have a background of sexual abuse/violation?



The age of respondents when they left home ranged from 9 years to 18 years. While half of the respondents said they decided to 'just leave', those who said it was a personal decision to leave were under 18 years old at the time, many under the age of 15 and one as young as 10 years of age. Of these, all of the transgendered respondents said they chose to 'just leave'. The other half of total respondents said they ran away from home, were kicked out, or were taken into foster care.

Substance use

The majority of the youth interviewed have had negative experiences with substance use, both in their personal lives or with their family history.

Of the total respondents, nine said they had an alcohol or drug problem before they entered into the sex trade, with ten respondents who said that drugs or alcohol was a problem after exiting the sex trade. Only one female indicated that she has never had a problem with either drug or alcohol addictions.

Table 4. Has alcohol or drug addiction ever been a problem for you?

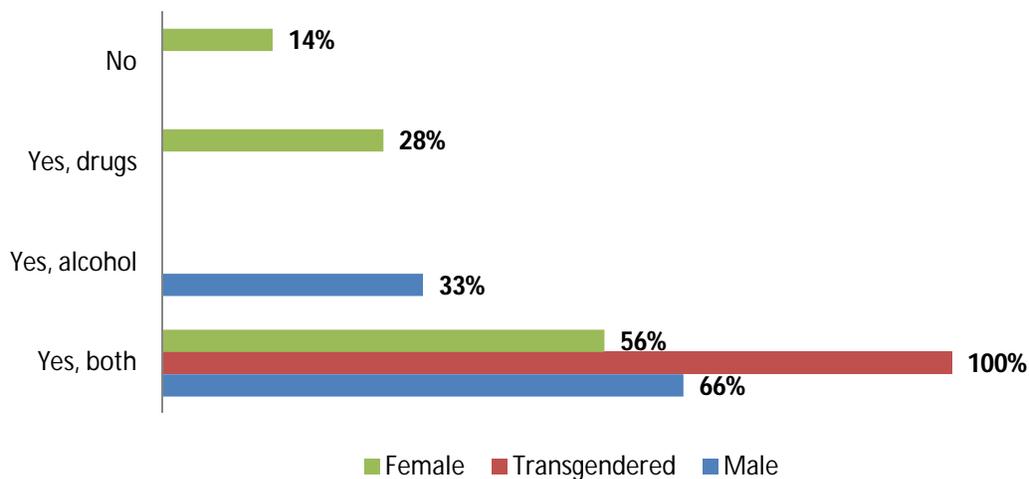
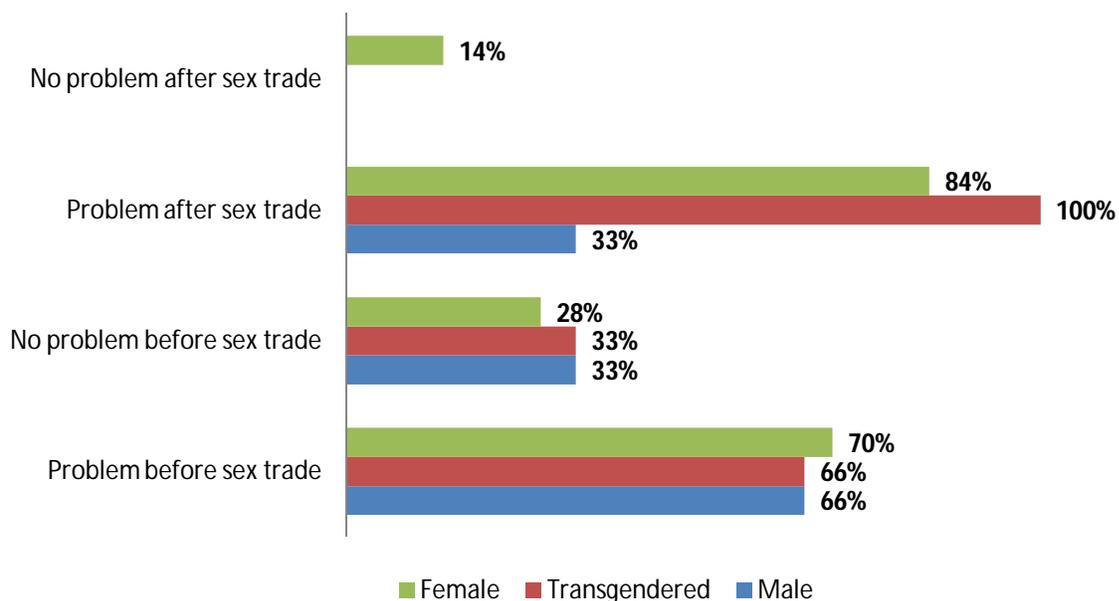


Table 5. Alcohol and drug addiction problem before and after involvement in sex trade



Within their family history, seven identified their mother as having an alcohol problem, with six saying that their father suffered with an alcohol problem. Of those who identified either parent, four said that both their parents had an alcohol problem.

The transgendered respondents show a more stable home life when it comes to substance problems in the home. Out of the three transgendered participants, one had identified their father having a problem with alcohol (the mother did not have a problem with alcohol), and all three answered that both parents had no drug use problems, nor did either parent have a criminal record. However, when asked about a history of mental illness in their home, two out of the three transgendered respondents identified their mother as having a mental illness.

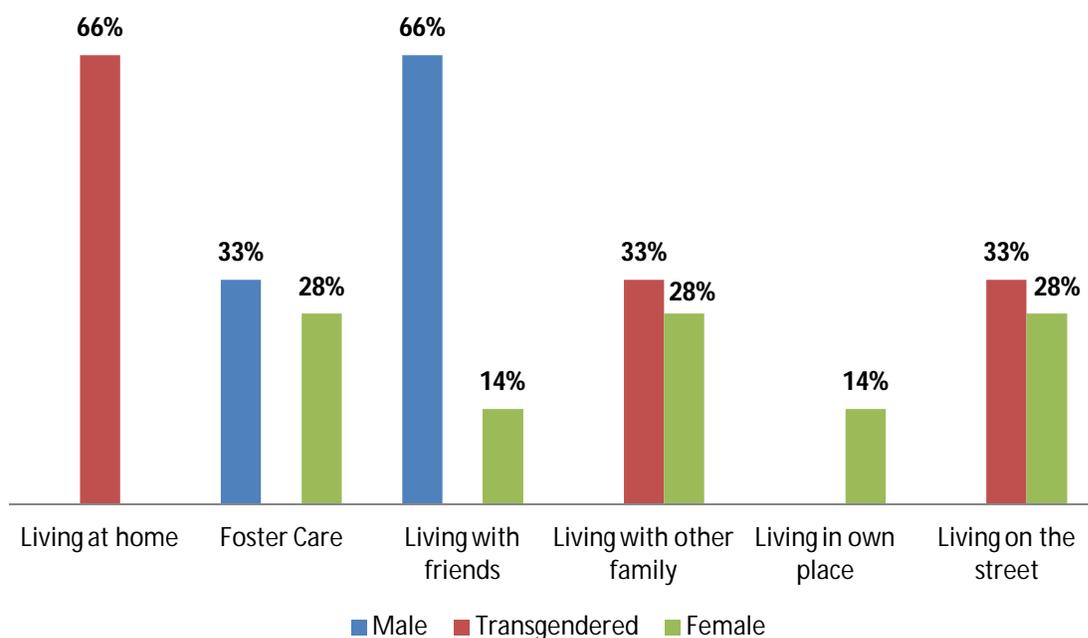
Sowing the seeds of exploitation

The circumstances that opened the door for many of these participants into the sex trade are indicative of a lack of positive opportunities available soon after leaving their homes. Victimization began long before entrance to the sex trade. The majority of respondents said they were very young when they had someone else in their lives present their entrance into the sex trade. Many more stayed in the sex trade to cover the cost of drugs. At the time, only one out of the thirteen respondents talked to anyone for help when they first started sex trade work. All but three respondents were under the age of 18 when they turned their first trick and entered the sex trade.

The place of residence for the participants at the point where they entered into sex trade work was in a familiar setting - five were living at home or with other family when they first entered, but there were another three who were living on the street at the time. The timeframe between leaving their home and engaging in sex trade work shows a small majority (eight respondents) that entered the sex trade within 2-4 years of leaving their home.

Close to half of respondents were living in high risk environments at the time they entered into the sex trade - three were in foster care and another three were living on the street.

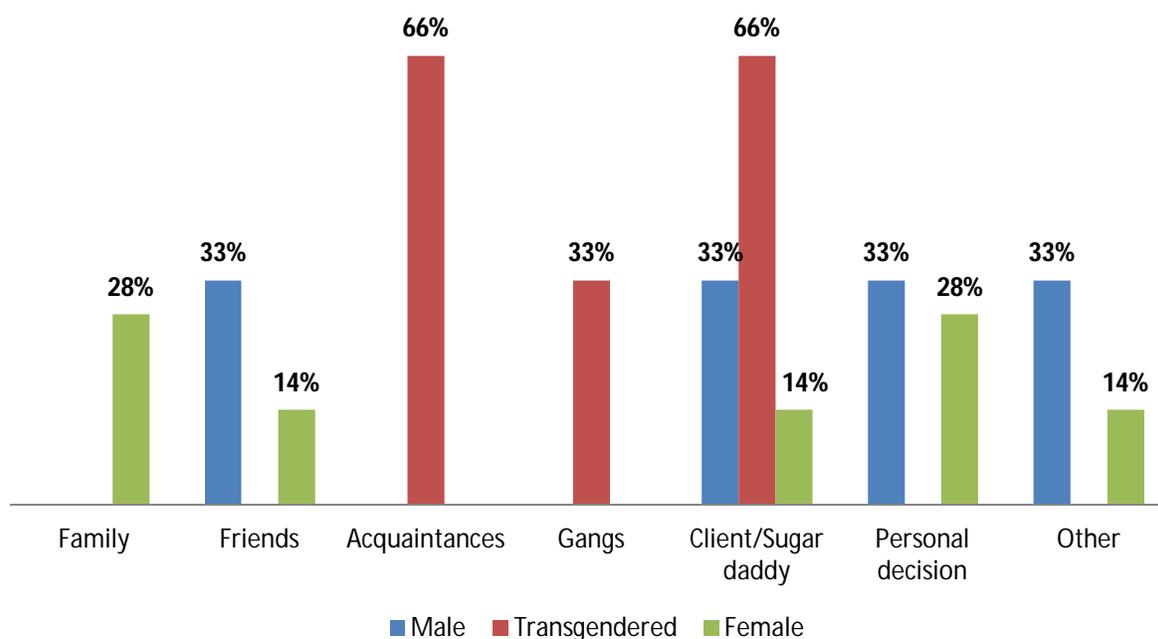
Table 6. Where were you living when you first entered?



Of all the respondents, three said it was a personal decision to enter into the sex trade. Ten said that it was another person who led to their entrance into the sex trade - friends (2), family (2), foster family (1), acquaintances (2), clients such as a john or sugar daddy (4), and a boyfriend (who was also involved in a gang) were mentioned. There is a small pattern between male, female, and transgendered responses when it comes to the perpetrators who provided entry to the sex trade. Clients or Sugar daddy's were mentioned by at least one male, female, or transgendered respondents. However there is not enough evidence from the survey responses to say that Aboriginal youth are more likely to have friends or family involved in this entry process as other research outlined in the literature review suggests.

More than half of all respondents have worked in places other than Vancouver, in cities found in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec.

Table 7. Who got you first involved in the sex trade?



The reasons that lead the youth to being involved in the sex trade were predominantly (7) drugs, and (7) quick money.

Only one of the respondents said that they talked to anyone for help when they first started in the sex trade. This person talked to a youth outreach worker. Of those who said there is someone that they can talk to for support today, seven participants said there was someone they could talk to about their circumstances or activities now.

The participants were asked about any services or initiatives that they turned to for help while they were involved in the sex trade. Five respondents indicated there were no services or initiatives they used while they were involved in the sex trade. Of those who provide responses, their answers are as follows:

- Testing
- Needle exchange
- Hassle free clinic
- Aboriginal health services
- Covenant House
- Directions
- WISH (mentioned by five respondents)
- Women's centre, Union Gospel Mission
- An Evaluation of Sex Workers' Health Access (AESHA) project
- Native Friendship Centre in Mission
- None, because of age and not wanting to risk getting caught and put into foster care if I told them about my activities

In order to gain a sense of the types of programs or services that support those who have exited or are still involved in sex trade work, participants were asked to provide the names of associations, organizations, or groups that have been helpful to them in general (outside of sex trade work supports). Only one respondent said that there weren't any services or organizations that they found helpful (in general). Of those who provided responses, their answers are as follows:

- Two-spirited in Toronto
- Healing our Spirit
- Vancouver General Hospital
- St. Paul's Hospital
- Directions
- Hustle
- Elements
- PEERS
- PEERS Van
- Creative writing
- WISH
- Map Van (WISH)
- Women's Centre, Union Gospel Mission
- Crabtree Corner
- Friendship Centre
- Vivian Supportive Housing for Women
- UNYA (Young Bears Lodge)
- Native Education College
- PLEA
- Oppenheimer Park Life Skills
- Broadway Youth Resource Centre
- KAYA
- LOVE BC - Leave Out Violence
- Urban Aboriginal Youth Collective
- Youth Co
- BCAFN

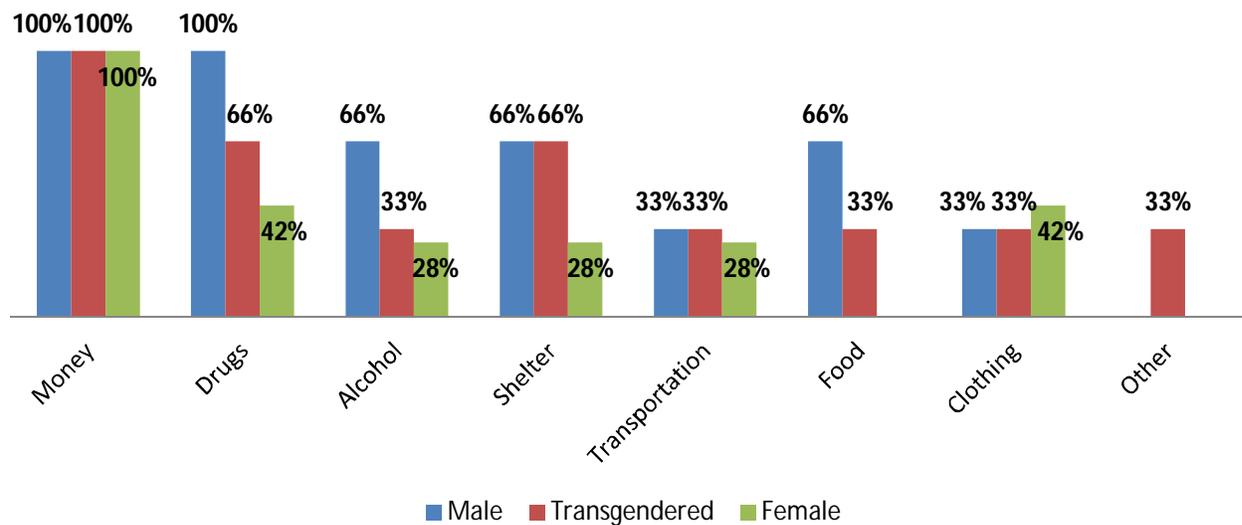
Three of the participants said that they were made to feel unwelcome in an organization or service (names withheld). When asked what it was about these places that made them feel unwelcome, they said it was because one organization 'did not allow you to work [in the sex trade] while staying there', another said they were turned away from a male focussed sex trade worker organization (the respondent identifies as female), and one transgendered respondent said they felt unwelcome "at all sex worker services because of fear of prosecution".

Barriers to exiting the sex trade

Every participant in this study entered into the sex trade at a young age, and engaged in a lifestyle that would be disadvantageous to long term health. When asked about their experiences while involved in sex trade work, and while attempting to exit the sex trade a story is told about the challenges of being young, not being able to support themselves financially outside of sex trade work, dealing with addictions, and having no connection to their families during this time in their lives while also wanting a connection to their Aboriginal culture. When asked how many calendar years they have been involved in the sex trade, the answers ranged from 1-15 years (reflecting a total accumulation of time in overall years, not counting any breaks they took) with the majority saying that they have been involved for 7-10 years.

Sex was traded for various things - there was consensus amongst all respondents when answering that they traded sex for money; (8) for drugs; (6) for shelter; (5) for food; (5) clothing; (5) shelter; (5) alcohol.

Table 8. What did you trade or exchange for sex?



When asked about their experiences with exiting the sex trade, eleven said that addictions were their biggest barrier to exiting. Other reasons included (6) homelessness; (5) poverty; (5) no family support; (3) physical violence; (3) racism/discrimination; (3) lack of life skills; (2) small assistance payments/welfare; (2) lack of work experience; (1) coercion, intimidation.

Table 9. Name some exiting block and barriers that you faced in exiting.

	Female	Transgendered	Male
Poverty	28%	33%	66%
Homelessness	28%	66%	66%
Addictions	84%	66%	100%
Coercion, intimidation		33%	
Physical violence	14%	33%	33%
No family support	42%	66%	
Racism, discrimination	14%	33%	33%
Small assistance payments, welfare	14%		33%
Lack of life skills	14%	33%	33%
Lack of work experience	14%	33%	

The participants were asked an open ended question on what changed for them the first time they exited the sex trade. Of all the participants, only two did not provide any answers. The responses for the eleven who did are as follows:

"Not using drugs as heavy, had a stable place to live in the country"

"The fact that I missed the work, and mourned for it like someone had died. It was hard to live outside of it [*sex trade*]"

"I learned to stay away from people who would steer me on the wrong path"

"My living situation, my self-esteem"

"Nothing"

"Stayed the same"

"I went to treatment and got beat up pretty badly"

"Many emotions came up"

"Not much"

"I didn't really learn anything. The first time I left I had no choice because my workplace got shutdown"

"I learned how to be intimate versus how to be about the work"

"I found housing and got a place"

To further explore the experiences the participants had with exiting the sex trade, they were asked the open ended question "if you have ever exited, what pushed or compelled you to exit or leave the trade, even if it was a short break?". Their answers are as follows:

"Easy access of drugs and alcohol"

"Shame, I was scared of people, and my family almost found out"

"Unhappiness - I wanted to be like my role models and be with my family and know my culture"

"Bad dates"

"Too risky"

"Getting arrested"

"I went to treatment and got beat up badly"

"I got pregnant"

"I wasn't comfortable with myself"

"There were times when I was being intimate with my boyfriends and it felt like work and not fun. I wanted to get my mind and heart back to the place when being intimate was normal and felt good"

"Having a home, feeling like it was safe to go home"

For those who have exited the sex trade, the supports that have contributed to the youth from re-entering focus around a connection to a community of support - friends (6), family (4), and connection to culture (5) and reclamation of their Aboriginal identity (4).

Table 10. Which supports have helped you from re-entering?

	Female	Transgendered	Male
Culture	42%	66%	
Reclaiming identity	14%	66%	
Treatment program			
Counseling	14%	33%	33%
Aboriginal services	14%	33%	
Work skills		66%	
Employment		66%	
Friends	42%	66%	33%
Family	28%	66%	
Elders	14%	33%	
Safe housing	14%		
Housing supports	14%		
Transition program	14%		
Education program		66%	
In school, finish school	14%	33%	

Of those who re-entered into the sex trade after initially exiting, seven said they went back mostly because of the quick money. Other reasons included - four mentioned addictions; four said the attention from clients; three identified it was for survival; three felt a sense of control and sense of independence; one said poverty; another one said it was for excitement and living on the edge.

There were people involved in the lives of these young sex trade workers who tried to help them out of the sex trade - (5) regular or sugar daddy; (3) friends; (3) family; (2) youth outreach worker; (2) doctor, nurse, or street nurse; (2) boyfriend; and single responses for an elder, an Aboriginal worker, a substance use counsellor, and a mental health worker. But three respondents said that there wasn't anyone who tried to help them exit the sex trade.

Table 11. Did anyone try to help you get out of the sex trade?

	Female	Transgendered	Male
Friends	14%		66%
Family	42%		
Regular or Sugar daddy	14%	66%	66%
Elder			33%
Boyfriend	14%	33%	
Aboriginal worker			33%
Youth, outreach worker			66%
Doctor, nurse, street nurse		66%	33%
Alcohol or drug counselor			33%
Mental health worker			33%
Didn't ask for help	14%	66%	

The majority of respondents (9) said that they felt a connection to their culture could have helped them get out, or supported them once they got out of the sex trade; eight said family could have helped; seven said housing supports could have helped with their exit from sex trade work.

A majority of the participants (9) said their family was/is not aware of their involvement in the sex trade. Another nine are still currently involved in the sex trade.

The participants were asked about any programs or organizations that they became involved with as they exited the sex trade. Only four of the respondents indicated they did not use any program or organization when they tried to exit. The organizations mentioned are as follows:

- Rainbow Community Church
- Narcotics and Alcoholics Anonymous
- Healing Our Spirit
- PEERS Vancouver
- Hustle
- Warriors Against Violence
- KAYA
- WISH
- Crabtree Corner
- UNYA
- Detox

Experiences with the criminal justice system

Each of the young sex trade workers had varied experiences with the criminal justice system. While there was no consensus by female, male, or transgendered respondents in their answers a picture does emerge that shows a higher than average incidence of victimization, mixed views on how to approach reporting these crimes, and a general lack of knowledge on the laws that are there to protect them. Even the levels of confidence the respondents have on aspects of the criminal justice system varies from individual to individual. Female and male respondents seem to feel a higher level of confidence in certain parts of the justice system than the transgendered sex trade workers.

The types of experiences with the criminal justice system have been varied for each of the participants, ranging from being a witness to a crime (3), victim of a crime (9), and having been arrested (8). Of those who have experienced violence or a crime against themselves at any point in their life, a majority of respondents (9) reported this incident, while four did not. These crimes were reported through a number of different ways - by calling 911 (4), in-person at a police station (3), reporting it to a doctor or nurse (2), telling a family member (2), and other methods of reporting included telling a support worker, friends, and an organization.

There is little knowledge about the laws surrounding sex trade work that are preventative in nature. When asked "Is there any law that might have prevented you from entering or helped you exit the sex trade?", the majority reported not to know or no (10), while two mentioned 'Soliciting in a public place' and another said 'age of consent'.

There were a number of differing responses to the level of confidence each of the participants have regarding various segments of the criminal justice system, and the options they had ranged from 'no confidence', 'little confidence', 'some confidence', or 'a lot of confidence'. Of the seven criminal justice areas that were asked about, the Vancouver Police rated highest with ten respondents saying they have either little or some confidence, with all three male respondents and the majority of female respondents (five out of seven) acknowledging some feeling of confidence. Followed by the RCMP with seven who had little or some confidence (five said did not know or no answer), followed by Rural Police with seven who stated little or some confidence with all three male respondents acknowledging some level of confidence (five participants did not know or said no answer), and the Court System with six having little or some confidence (four said did not know or no answer). When it comes to the Jail System four had no confidence (five said did not know), and the majority (9) stating they did not know or no answer when it came to Probation Officers, and another eight who responded with no answer or did not know regarding the Parole System.

When asked if the participants felt they were treated fairly or unfairly in their experience with the justice system, there were higher numbers of females (four out of seven) who felt they were treated fairly, while two out of three individuals identifying as transgendered said they were treated unfairly.

Two-spirited youth are treated unfairly by the criminal justice system

There were 3 questions that explored perceptions of treatment of two-spirited youth by the justice system. The answers provide a picture that the justice system unfavourably treats two-spirited and transgendered sex trade workers by the broader criminal justice community. Whether as a victim, or offender, young two spirited sex trade workers are seen to be treated differently through the criminal justice system.

The majority of participants (11) said that two-spirited youth are treated differently through the criminal justice system, as a victim (two said did not know, or no answer). Again, the majority (9) said that two-spirited youth are treated differently through the criminal justice system, as offenders (one female said she did not think they were treated differently and two said did not know).

Of those who said they think that two-spirited youth are treated differently, they said it was because those youth are not listened to or taken seriously, not respected, they are teased or ignored, or in some cases victims are treated as offenders or are physically abused (four female respondents said they did not know or had no answer).

Aspirations for the future

Each participant was asked what they thought their life would be like 5 years from now, with the most common aspiration being to have graduated from a post secondary institute. For transgendered respondents there was consensus on wanting to have graduated from a post secondary education institute and having employment. Female respondents varied somewhat in their answers, with the majority (five out of seven) also stating they want to have graduated from a post secondary institution, followed by (four out of seven) being employed, owning a home, and (three out of seven) wanting a family of their own or being in school. There was no consensus with the male respondents, with one wanting to be employed, another wanting to have graduated from a post secondary institute, and the other who did not know or had no answer. Only one female respondent said she felt her life would be no different in 5 years from now.

Advice for other young Aboriginal sex trade workers

Each participant was provided the opportunity to provide any advice to Aboriginal youth who may one day enter into sex trade work, or who are currently involved. Their advice and words to other Aboriginal youth are as follows:

Stay safe

"always tell someone where you are"

"don't walk down dark streets alone"

"stay away from drugs"

"work with someone"

"you always have the right to say no"

You are loved

"you're always a good person no matter what people say"

"get in touch with your family because they love you"

"remember there is always someone behind that door"

"allow yourself to be loved"

"love yourself before you love someone else"

"everyone has an angel looking out for them"

"never allow anyone of power tell you that you are unworthy or not worth it"

Seek balance and ground yourself

"don't lose yourself"

"don't forget where you come from"

"find connections to the creator or a higher spiritual power"

"have faith"

"eliminate the glamour in the sex trade"

"realize you have to leave it all - the scene, the people, the drugs"

"you have a choice"

"don't be afraid to ask for help"

"ask a lot of questions"

"pay attention to your intuition"

"never let someone take your power whether that be emotional, physical, spiritual, intellectual, or sexual power"

Policy Recommendations

The objective of the project was to better understand current realities of experiential Aboriginal youth who have been involved in sex trade work in the Vancouver region. The following policy recommendations stem directly from the in-person interviews conducted in Vancouver with experiential Aboriginal young people specifically for this research. While not an extensive list, these recommendations are within the bounds, scope, and recognize the limitations of either Government, or possibly First Nation community or Aboriginal organization that finds benefit in supporting at-risk Aboriginal youth from engaging in sex trade work.

Recommendation #1

Ensuring that there is someone for these youth to talk to - a resource, program, or an aboriginal service. Youth are less likely to talk to someone at the outset of their entry to sex trade work, but after time we find a much larger number who do end up talking to someone for support regarding their current circumstances. Young people require these resources to be accessible, culturally appropriate, in real time (when needed), and provide comfort, direction, and insight. Investments should strive to include experiential people to reach out to youth and provide supports and guidance.

Recommendation #2

Offer positive continuum of support networks targeted at runaway and homeless Aboriginal youth ages 24 and younger for transition support, housing supports, including emergency services, medical care, food, clothing, mental health treatment options, work experience, education opportunities, cultural connections, and family reunification (either with family members in their home community or within the urban community they currently live), and access to legal help should be available. Too many Aboriginal youth find themselves without access to options outside of sex trade work for a livelihood and means of supporting themselves.

Recommendation #3

The majority of the youth interviewed had little awareness of the rights they have, either as victims, or as offenders (whether they know what they are engaged in is against a law or not). Promotion of the rights of the child and sex trade workers must include local, national, and international legal context. Aboriginal youth must have accessible resources that educate on the types of activities that involve harm to oneself or others, including exploitation and trafficking of persons, and what their options are if they think they are being abused including knowledge of and access to victims services.

Recommendation #4

Addictions services targeted at Aboriginal youth in both First Nations communities and in urban environments must be available in both short term and long term supports. Meaningful options must be available to Aboriginal youth or the risk of dangerous and fatal lifestyles will continue to occur and grow as the Aboriginal youth population grows.

Recommendation #5

Safe and secure shelters, safe houses, and low income housing on a short and long term basis to target minors and young victims of sexual exploitation and trafficking. Lack of a safe, stable place to live is part of youths' entrance to sex trade work to begin with. These safe spaces should focus on recovery from trauma and rehabilitation, including skills training, and cultural connections. It is important that these spaces protect these youth from their traffickers.

Criteria for policy development

In order for policies aimed at prevention measures or support systems for sexually exploited Aboriginal youth to be effective, the following criteria must be taken into consideration.

1. Aboriginal youth engagement

Programming must be developed through processes that involve experiential and community based Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal youth. Youth engagement and the inclusion of peer supports is key to meaningful and effective youth initiatives, as identified in Sacred Lives (2000).

2. Community based

Preventative initiatives must be made available in both First Nations communities, and in urban environments for Aboriginal youth.

3. Cultural Engagement

Connection to cultural experiences and the development of cultural and traditional knowledge must be included in any programming or policy aimed at at-risk Aboriginal youth.

4. Promotes a network

Because there is a paucity of services that specifically support Aboriginal youth at risk in Vancouver, or for those Aboriginal youth involved in sex trade work there needs to be a concerted effort at developing partnerships between current programs for Aboriginal youth at risk and sex trade workers. One program alone will not meet the needs of at-risk Aboriginal youth. Youth who are properly connected receive better services.

5. Safe spaces

Initiatives, programs, and services that provide support for at-risk Aboriginal youth or young sex trade workers should do so without judgement and the threat of jail or incarceration for activities involving sex trade work. Nor should youth be punished by being removed from a program because of their involvement in the sex trade. The issue should not be that the youth are engaging in criminal behaviour but that they require safe spaces in order to attain the support they need at this time in their lives.

Conclusion

It is hoped that the voices of those young people who lent their time and experiences to this study will one day recognize that they contributed to the diminishment of sexual exploitation of Aboriginal youth in Vancouver, and were part of developing positive solutions and healthy alternatives.

The experiences that lead Aboriginal youth to engage in sex trade work are preventable under a large scale strategic and holistic approach that takes into consideration the historical trauma experienced by the families of these young people. It would include the concerted efforts of multiple decision making levels involved in these youths lives - from the family, to the Aboriginal community where leadership would play a significant role, to the education institutions in place, and provincial and federal government policy and legislation. Family members need to take accountability for the intergenerational trauma and hurt they cause the younger generation, despite the hurt they themselves experienced in their youth and continue to carry as a painful burden. And government needs to acknowledge that Aboriginal children in Canada do not receive equitable levels of education or support when it comes to the care of a child. Aboriginal children and youth who are sexually exploited and trafficked were victimized long before they ran away from home, found themselves on the street, and entered into the sex trade.

Unfortunately it is an unrealistic feat that change on so many plains would take place and provide Aboriginal youth with an equal opportunity for a healthy life, in comparison to their non-Aboriginal counterparts. Instead, the kinds of changes needed must be focussed on ensuring that Aboriginal youth have, and are aware of options when they face hostile circumstances, violation and abuse, and displacement. That when a foster home and the child welfare system fail to meet the youths' needs they are not left feeling like sex trade work is a viable alternative. Upon arrival to a new city, friendly, accessible Aboriginal youth initiatives are promoted and funded at levels to be effective and are available over the longer term. And that no youth should feel like the option available to help meet their basic needs is by the exploitation of their wellbeing, but if they do enter that they are aware of their rights before and after they engage in sex trade work.

Further research into the experiences and numbers of sexually exploited Aboriginal youth would provide important insights that could be useful, but in Vancouver there is an obvious need for visible, Aboriginal youth focussed supports in housing, education, employment, abuse counseling, and cultural connections.

The efforts made by Vancouver organizations such as UNYA, WISH, Crabtree Corner, Hustle, Youth Co, PLEA, and many others are doing the best they can with what they have. But sex trade work continues to become the option that Aboriginal youth engage in, or are coerced into, meaning positive supports to prevent youth sexual exploitation needs additional reinforcements all around.

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Appendix 1

Survey Instrument

A. Demographic Questions

A 1. What do you identify as?

- 01- First Nations - status
- 02- First Nations - non-status
- 03- Métis
- 04- Inuit

A 2. What gender do you identify as?

- 01- Male (GO TO QUESTION A.3.01)
- 02- Female (GO TO QUESTION A.3.02)
- 03- Transgendered/two spirited (GO TO QUESTION A.3.03)
 - a. Female
 - b. Male

A 3. What gender to you identify as in your private life?

- 01- Male (GO TO QUESTION A.4.01)
 - a. Gay
 - b. Straight
 - c. Bi-sexual
- 02- Female (GO TO QUESTION A.4.02)
 - a. Lesbian
 - b. Straight
 - c. Bi-sexual
- 03- Transgendered/two spirited (GO TO QUESTION A.4.03)
 - a. Female
 - b. Male

A 4. While working?

- 01- Male
 - a. Gay
 - b. Straight
 - c. Bi-sexual
- 02- Female
 - a. Lesbian
 - b. Straight
 - c. Bi-sexual
- 03- Transgendered/two spirited
 - a. Female

b. Male

A 5. How old are you?

A 6. Where do you consider your home community of origin?

A 7. Have you ever lived on reserve?

01- Never

02- 1 year or less

03- A few years

04- Most of my life

A 8. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

01- No degree

02- Entered high school

03- Completed high school

04- Trade school

05- College

06- University

A 9. What is your marital status?

01- Single

02- Married/Common law

03- Divorced

04- Separated

05- Have boyfriend

06- Have girlfriend

A 10. Do you have any children?

01- Yes (GO TO QUESTION A.11)

02- No (SKIP QUESTION A.11)

VOLUNTEERED

99- DK/NA

A 11. If yes, Where are your children now?

01- In your care

02- With other parent

03- With grandparents

04- With other family

05- In custody/foster home

VOLUNTEERED

99- DK/NA

A 12. Males: Have you ever impregnated a woman?

01- Yes

02- No

VOLUNTEERED

99- DK/NA

B. Life at home

B 1. At what age did you first leave home?

B 2. How did you leave?

01- Just left

02- Ran away

03- Kicked out

04- Taken into foster care

VOLUNTEERED

99- DK/NA

B 3. Has alcohol or drug addiction ever been a problem for you?

01- Yes, both

02- Yes, alcohol

03- Yes, drugs

04- No

VOLUNTEERED

99- DK/NA

B 4. Was it a problem for you before the sex trade?

01- Yes

02- No

B 5. Was it a problem after you exited?

01- Yes

02- No

B 6. Was alcohol use a problem in the home you grew up in?

01- Mother had this problem

02- Father had this problem

03- Other family members had this problem

04- None of the above

B 7. Was drug use a problem in the home you grew up in?

01- Mother had this problem

- 02- Father had this problem
- 03- Other family members had this problem
- 04- None of the above

B 8. Did anyone in the home you grew up in have a criminal record?

- 01- Mother had this problem
- 02- Father had this problem
- 03- Other family members had this problem
- 04- None of the above
- 99- DK/NA

B 9. Did anyone in the home you grew up in experience mental illness?

- 01- Mother had this problem
- 02- Father had this problem
- 03- Other family members had this problem
- 04- None of the above
- 99- DK/NA

B 10. Was any member of your family, ever a student at a federal residential school or a provincial day school?

- 01- Mother
- 02- Father
- 03- Other family member
- 04- None of the above
- 99- DK/NA

B 11. Did any of your family grow up in foster care/child welfare custody?

- 01- Mother
- 02- Father
- 03- Other family member
- 04- None of the above
- 99- DK/NA

B 12. Did you experience physical violence in the home you grew up in?

- 01- Yes
- 02- No
- 03- Witnessed only

B 13. Did you experience emotional abuse in the home you grew up in?

- 01- Yes
- 02- No
- 03- Witnessed only

B 14 . Do you have a background of sexual abuse/violation?

01- Yes

02- No

B 15. Who did you talk to for help at that time? (DO NOT READ, CIRCLE ALL ANSWERS)

01- Friends

02- Family

03- Elder

04- Aboriginal worker

05- Other Aboriginal community member

06- Social worker

07- Youth/Outreach worker

08- Doctor/Nurse/Street Nurse

09- School Counsellor/Teacher

10- Financial aid worker

11- Police

12- Alcohol or drug counsellor

13- Probation officer

14- Family support worker

15- Mental health worker

16- Housing worker

17- Didn't ask for help

97- Other: _____

B 16. Is anyone else in your family of origin involved in the sex trade? (DO NOT READ, CIRCLE ALL ANSWERS)

01- Mother

02- Father

03- Sister

04- Brother

05- Cousin

06- Step parent

07- Aunt

08- Uncle

09- Grandmother

10- Grandfather

97- Other: _____

c. Entry into the Sex Trade

C 1. What age did you enter into the sex trade (age of entry)?

C 2. At what age did you turn your first trick?

C 3. Where were you living when you first entered? (DO NOT READ, CIRCLE ALL ANSWERS)

- 01- Living at home
- 02- Foster care
- 03- Group home
- 04- Living with friends
- 05- Living with other family
- 06- Living in own place
- 07- Couch surfing
- 08- Living in a shelter
- 09- Living in a hotel
- 10- Living on the street
- 11- Other: _____

C 4. Who got you first involved?

- 01- Family
- 02- Friends
- 03- Acquaintances
- 04- Gangs
- 05- Client/ customer/ john/ sugar daddy
- 97- Other _____

C 5. What do you think led to you getting involved in the sex trade? (DO NOT READ, CIRCLE ALL ANSWERS)

- 01- Poor home life
- 02- Not fitting in at home
- 03- Parental rejection
- 04- Dropped out of school
- 05- Running away
- 06- Kicked out of home
- 07- Drug use
- 08- Alcohol use
- 09- Sexual abuse at home
- 10- Family violence
- 11- Mental illness
- 12- Fear and coercion
- 13- No positive role models
- 14- Quick money
- 97- Other: _____

C 6. Did you talk to anyone for help when it first started?

- 01- Yes (GO TO NEXT QUESTION)
- 02- No (GO TO QUESTION C 8.)

C 7. Who did you talk to? (DO NOT READ, CIRCLE ALL ANSWERS)

- 01- Friends
- 02- Family
- 03- Elder
- 04- Aboriginal worker
- 05- Other Aboriginal community member
- 06- Social worker
- 07- Youth/Outreach worker
- 08- Doctor/Nurse/Street Nurse
- 09- School Counsellor/Teacher
- 10- Financial aid worker
- 11- Police
- 12- Alcohol or drug counsellor
- 13- Probation officer
- 14- Family support worker
- 15- Mental health worker
- 16- Housing worker
- 17- Didn't talk to anyone
- 97- Other:_____

C 8. Where did you work most often?

- 01- Cars
- 02- Hotels
- 03- Massage parlours
- 04- Room in a house
- 97- Other:_____

C 9. What did you trade or exchange for sex? (CAN CHOOSE MORE THAN ONE ANSWER, CIRCLE ALL ANSWERED)

- 01- Money
- 02- Drugs
- 03- Alcohol
- 04- Shelter
- 05- Transportation
- 06- Food
- 07- Clothing
- 97 – Other:_____

C 10. Were you able to "work safely?" How?

- 01- Condoms
- 02- Weapons
- 03- Work in pairs
- 97- Other_____

C 11. Did you work only in Vancouver?

01- Yes –(go to question D 1.)

02- No –(go to next question)

C 12. If no, where else did you work? (*LIST ALL CITIES, AND CONFIRM THE PROVINCE*)

01- Other cities in B.C.

02- Other provinces

03- Outside of Canada

LIST CITIES, PROVINCES, OTHER COUNTRY

D. Consequences

D 1. Did you experience violence (such as being beaten up) during the time you were involved in the sex trade?

01- Yes

02- No

D 2. How was the relationship with your family as a result of your involvement with the sex trade?

01- It changed

02- Stayed the same

03- Family not aware of my involvement

VOLUNTEERED

99- DK/NA

E. Exiting Issues and Barriers

E 1. Are you still engaged in the sex trade?

01- Yes

02- No

E 2. How many calendar years have you been involved in the sex trade, since you started?

E 3. Was there anyone you could talk to about your circumstances or activities?

01- Yes

02- No

E 4. Did anyone try to help you get out of the sex trade? (*DON'T READ, CIRCLE ALL ANSWERS*)

01- Friends

02- Family

03- Regular or "Sugar daddy"

04- Elder

- 05- Aboriginal worker
- 06- Other Aboriginal community member
- 07- Social worker
- 08- Youth/Outreach worker
- 09- Doctor/Nurse/Street Nurse
- 10- School Counsellor/Teacher
- 11- Financial aid worker
- 12- Police
- 13- Alcohol or drug counsellor
- 14- Probation officer
- 15- Family support worker
- 16- Mental health worker
- 17- Housing worker
- 18- Didn't ask for help
- 97- Other: _____

E 5. The first time you exited the sex trade, what changed for you?

E 6. If you have ever exited, what pushed or compelled you to exit or leave the sex trade (even if it were a short break)?

E 7. Name some exiting blocks and barriers that you faced in exiting. (DO NOT READ, CIRCLE ALL ANSWERED)

- 01- Poverty
- 02- Homelessness
- 03- Addictions
- 04- Coercion/ intimidation
- 05- Physical violence
- 06- No family support
- 07- Racism/Discrimination
- 08- Small assistance payments/welfare
- 09- Lack of life skills
- 10- Lack of work experience
- 97- Other: _____

E 8. Did you become involved with any organization or program when you tried to exit? If yes, what organizations? (LIST ALL ORGANIZATIONS)

E 9. If you re-entered the sex trade after leaving, why did you go back? (DO NOT READ, CIRCLE ALL ANSWERED)

- 01- Addictions
- 02- Survival
- 03- Poverty

- 04- Sense of independence
- 05- Quick money
- 06- Sense of control, work when wanted
- 07- Attention from clients
- 08- Excitement, living on edge
- 97- Other: _____
- 99- DK/NA

E 10. Are there any services or initiatives that you turned to for help while you were involved in the sex trade? If yes, which ones?

E 11. What are some services or initiatives that you wish existed or you wish you knew about while you were involved in the sex trade? (DO NOT READ, CIRCLE ALL ANSWERED)

- 01- Safe housing
- 02- Counselling
- 03- Addictions
- 04- Elders
- 05- Family reunification
- 06- Aboriginal specific
- 07- Life skills
- 08- Employment training
- 09- Work experience
- 10- Schooling/Education programs
- 11- Health care
- 12- Youth clinics
- 13- Sexual health education
- 97- Other: _____

Specific organization named: _____

E 12. What could have helped you get out or could have supported you once you did get out of the sex trade? (DO NOT READ, CIRCLE ALL ANSWERED)

- 01- Connection to culture
- 02- Reclaiming Aboriginal identity
- 03- Treatment program
- 04- Counselling
- 05- Aboriginal organizations
- 06- Work skills
- 07- Friends
- 08- Family
- 09- Elders
- 10- Safe housing
- 11- Housing supports
- 12- Transition program

- 13- Aftercare program
- 14- Education program
- 15- Being in school/finishing education
- 97- Other: _____
- 99- DK/NA

E 13. What associations, organizations, or groups have been especially helpful to you? (LIST ALL)

E 14. Did any organization or services make you feel unwelcome?

- 01- Yes (GO TO NEXT QUESTION)
- 02- No (GO TO QUESTION E 16.)

E 15. Which ones? What was it about these places that made you feel unwelcome? What would you have changed?

E 16. What, if anything, could have stopped you from getting into the sex trade in the first place?

E 17. If out, what kind of supports do you have today that help you from re-entering the sex trade?

(DO NOT READ, CIRCLE ALL ANSWERED)

- 01- Connection to culture
- 02- Reclaiming Aboriginal identity
- 03- Treatment program
- 04- Counselling
- 05- Aboriginal organizations
- 06- Work skills
- 07- Employment gained outside sex trade
- 08- Friends
- 09- Family
- 10- Elders
- 11- Safe housing
- 12- Housing supports
- 13- Transition program
- 14- Aftercare program
- 15- Education program
- 16- Being in school/finishing education
- 97- Other: _____
- 99- DK/NA

F. Police and the Law

F 1. In the last 10 years, have you personally had any involvement in the Canadian criminal justice system in any of the following ways...? (READ ALL)

	Yes	No	DK
a. Through a public information session or public consultations	01	02	99
b. As a witness to a crime	01	02	99
c. As a victim of a crime	01	02	99
d. Been arrested	01	02	99

F 2. Is there any law that might have prevented you from entering or helped you exit the sex trade?

F 3. In general, at any point in your life, did you ever report a crime or violence against you?

01- Yes (GO TO NEXT QUESTION)

02- No (GO TO QUESTION F 4.)

F 4. How did you report this crime?

01- Through an organization

02- Anonymous hotline

03- Call 911

04- In person at police station

05- Told to a doctor/nurse

06- Told to a support worker

07- Told a friend

08- Told to family

09- Told to an elder

97- Other: _____

F 5. In general, would you say you have a lot of confidence, some confidence, little confidence or no confidence in the... (READ ALL)

	A lot of confidence	Some confidence	Little confidence	No confidence	DK/NA
a. Vancouver Police	01	02	03	04	99
b. RCMP	01	02	03	04	99
c. Parole System	01	02	03	04	99
d. Rural Police	01	02	03	04	99
e. Probation Officers	01	02	03	04	99
f. Jail System	01	02	03	04	99
g. Court System	01	02	03	04	99

F 6. Do you think that two spirited youth are treated differently through the criminal system, as a victim?

01- Yes (GO TO NEXT QUESTION)

02- No (GO TO QUESTION F 9.)

99- DK/NA

F 7. Do you think that two spirited youth are treated differently through the criminal system, as an offender?

01- Yes (GO TO NEXT QUESTION)

02- No (GO TO QUESTION F 9.)

F 8. How are they treated differently?

01- Not listened to/taken seriously

02- Not respected

03- Ignored

04- Teased

97- Other: _____

VOLUNTEERED

99- DK/NA

F 9. Thinking now about your experiences with the justice system, would you say you were generally treated fairly or unfairly?

01 – Fairly

02 – Unfairly

99 – DK/NA

F 10. In general, do you have special service or support needs?

F 11. What do you think your life will be like 5 years from now? (DO NOT READ, CIRCLE ALL ANSWERED)

01- Have a job

02- Have own home

03- Have a family

04- Be in school

05- Graduate from post secondary institute

06- No different

97- Other: _____

99- DK/NA

F 12. What advice do you have for other Aboriginal youth who are involved in the sex trade?

Appendix 2

Participant Consent Form

Research Topic Title: Urban Aboriginal Youth Domestic Trafficking in Persons Policy Research Project

Sponsor Organization: Office of the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians

Method: In-person interviews

This consent form is part of the process of informed consent, and is intended to give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about anything mentioned in this document, or information not included here, please feel free to ask. Please take time to read this carefully.

This research based study will explore the issue of Aboriginal sexual exploitation and domestic trafficking in persons through a gendered perspective and provide policy recommendations on the issue.

The objective of the project is to better understand current realities of these issues for Aboriginal youth, including:

1. How exploitation and/or trafficking is occurring for these youth and their paths to being exploited and/or trafficked such as whether this is by family, relationships, friends, acquaintances, gangs, etc..., whether there is an economic benefit to that person or in exchange for goods or other items.
2. A description of any efforts by the youth and by others to prevent the youth from taking this direction.
3. Insights of the interviewed youth on what would be helpful to prevent exploitation in the first instance, or any reoccurrence.
4. When/how/if trafficking and sexual exploitation is reported to police, and if not reasons for underreporting.
5. Broadly explore and relate the research findings to the current legal and policy context.
6. Discuss if and how this issue fits within the legal parameters of domestic trafficking in

persons and, if not, explore/explain why that is the case.

7. A face to face structured interview will be used to gather data.
8. The survey interview will average between 60 to 75 minutes, but will vary depending on how much you have to say in response to the questions.
9. Your participation is completely confidential. The participant, interviewer, and Project Research Lead are the only individuals who will know of your participation. All of your responses and the information recorded by the interviewer will remain anonymous.
10. The data from the research may be used in other forms for publications such as a report and/or book, and articles for professional journals, maintaining the same standards of confidentiality and anonymity. That means no identifying information (e.g. names, addresses) will appear in any of this material.
11. You will receive \$100 in monetary compensation for your participation in this study.
12. Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time.
13. You will not be expected to incur any financial costs as a condition of, or because of, participation in the research.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate. You are free to withdraw from the study and/or ask for clarification or new information throughout our participation in this study, at any time.

Participant Name	Signature	Date
Interviewer Name	Signature	Date

If you would like more information, or have any concerns about this research or to register a complaint, you can contact Ginger Gosnell-Myers, Project Research Lead at [REDACTED] or via email at [REDACTED].

We thank you for your time and participation,

In Spirit,

Ginger Gosnell-Myers
Project Research Lead

***Each participant will be given a copy of an unsigned consent form so that they may contact Ginger if they wish.**