

## SAFE LANDING

Safe Landing was a 3-year (2016-2019) research and development initiative funded by Public Safety Canada and the NS Department of Justice. The purpose of Safe Landing was to:

Consult with communities affected by the issue of Sexualized Human Trafficking

Research existing housing programs and policies and provide opportunities for training and support in responding to the needs of individuals attempting to exit

Develop educational and awareness materials for a local and national audience

### COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS

Consultations took place with members of the African Nova Scotian community, the Francophone community, affected families, youth and individuals with lived experience. These consultations helped to highlight how each community is affected by sexual exploitation and informed the creation of Safe Landing education resources and training materials.

### Common Themes Across Communities

**Defining trafficking - The element of control.** More than one community highlighted the element of control as differentiating trafficking from sex work. Other defining terms included *coercion, against will, controlling every move, unwilling, forced, and abduction*. Sex work was thought of as offering an element of choice, and those who profited (to some degree) were the workers while others profited from trafficking. At the same time, groups felt there was continued ambiguity between definitions sex work and trafficking.

**The internet as a recruitment tool.** The increasing use of social media apps and online dating sites as a tool for recruiting potential victims of trafficking was identified by most community groups. Such tools would be used to contact individuals - referred to as 'inboxing' or 'PM' (private messaging) - and invite them to meet, usually with the intent of recruiting them into a trafficking situation.

**Creating culturally relevant resources.** Community groups discussed the importance of having access to culturally relevant resources, informed by concerned communities, in order to effectively identify and respond to trafficking. Equally important as need to recognize differences among cultures and language groups, was the need to recognize and respond to differences *within* cultural/language groups.

**The need for preventative education in schools.** Most groups suggested bringing conversations to schools in order to educate youth on trafficking and its risks. Consulted groups suggested involving peer supporters to access peer-to-peer knowledge exchange, providing education on sexual health and healthy relationships, and igniting sexual exploitation awareness campaigns with the goal of prevention.

**The need for supports specific to exploitation and trafficking.** All parties expressed the need for services and supports for victims and their families that are specific to sexual exploitation and trafficking through designated agencies. It was important for services to meet the needs of victims, be streamlined, offer long term wrap-around support, be built into communities and be community-specific.

### Community-unique Themes

**Impact of exploitation on victims and their families.** Affected families shared about the challenges they faced after discovery of exploitation of a loved one including shock, safety concerns and threats from traffickers, feeling isolated from friends and family, and parenting and supporting an exploited child.

**Trafficking as a reaction to inadequate opportunities.** African Nova Scotian community consultants described push and pull factors of human trafficking, including the

relationship between societal labelling of communities as contributing to inadequate opportunities to prosper. In this context, trafficking provides an alternative path for growth.

**Seeking help - Fear of 'system' involvement.** Those with lived experience highlighted specific challenges related to seeking help when the victim is a mother. This involved fear of DCS/CPS involvement and possibility of losing their child(ren), and facing repercussions for fleeing violent situations with a child as this may be considered an abduction. Young mothers faced additional challenges related to the Duty to Report.

**Culture and vulnerabilities.** Community consultants identified influences of patriarchy, familism, and conservatism as creating unique vulnerabilities for sexual exploitation. Such influences contributed to little to no discussion on trafficking or intimate partner violence which negatively impacts awareness and access to resources.

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*"Thanks so much for improving our knowledge and provide ways to help youth who are exploited"*

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### Development and Dissemination of Materials

#### **Quick Reference for Indicators and Language of Sexual Exploitation Booklet (English)**

Developed by the YWCA, this pocket-size reference guide provides information for users, such as family members or service providers, to help identify whether an individual is being sexually exploited. Twelve indicators of sexual exploitation are listed and briefly described with examples. A glossary to help inform service providers on language often used within the sex industry that has been developed and approved by people with lived experience is also provided. Contact information for local resources – such as the RCMP Human Trafficking Hotline and the Stepping Stone Associated – is provided for further information.

#### **Indicators of Sexual Exploitation Poster (English & French)**

The poster describes twelve indicators of sexual exploitation for service providers to consider in identifying individuals who are potentially involved. It is suggested that no one indicator alone is indicative of exploitation, but rather that indicators should be considered by service providers in terms of the lifestyle of an individual in order to initiate conversation in regard to well being. The duty to report, as outlined in the Children and Family Services Act, in relation to sexual exploitation is also described.

#### **Service Provision Poster (English & French)**

Informed by people with lived experience, this poster informs service provision related to sexual exploitation. The poster describes that services and staff should be informed on the issue, focused on safety, participant-directed, holistic and collaborative, empowering and strength-based, peer supported, and trauma-informed. Each area is outlined and described, including practical information related to implementation.

Material type	# distributed
1. Quick Reference for Indicators and Language of Sexual Exploitation Booklet (English)	2665
2. Indicators of Sexual Exploitation Poster (English)	375
3. Service Provision Poster (English)	375
4. Indicators of Sexual Exploitation Poster (French)	53
5. Service Provision Poster (French)	53

The team disseminated materials to a variety of professionals working in the following sectors: education, law enforcement, health/mental health, housing and shelters, and child welfare.

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*"I see situations described today, every day at work. I'm usually overwhelmed with where to start. Thank you!"*

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### Training - Sexualized Exploitation 101 - Service Provision for Sexually Exploited People

The training focuses on identifying sexual exploitation, identifying who is involved, and determining how to respond to disclosure. Sections focus on the following areas: the continuum of 'choice' in the sex trade, language to use, victims/survivors, perpetrators of recruitment and exploitation, stages of exploitation, indicators of sexual exploitation and questions to ask, Duty to Report, and service provisions for victims of sexual exploitation.

This table describes participants who received the 'Safe Landing - Service Provision for Sexually Exploited People' training in terms of type of service provider (i.e., non-profit service providers, government agencies) and the number of trainees in attendance.

Who was trained	# Trained	Location
<b>Department of Community Services - Foster Families &amp; Residential Staff</b>	150	Rural N.S.
	75	HRM
<b>Non-profit Service Providers - NSTEP Service Providers</b>	48	Rural N.S.
	29	HRM
	17	New Brunswick
<b>Totals</b>	319	All

Participants of the training were invited to complete a short, anonymous evaluation of the training. This section describes themes arising from analysis of data in response to the question 'How do you hope to change your practice as a result of this training?'.

**Incorporating new skills in practice.** DCS described change in relation to identifying risk factors and indicators, being more conscious of the impact of social media, establishing safety plans, focusing on listening/rapport building, targeting prevention/early intervention, responding to disclosure, using the PIC tool, assessing skill of foster parents related to SEY, a focus on client-driven practices, and "not telling youth they are safe". Non-profit service providers described change related to identifying indicators, using safety planning, incorporating Maslow's hierarchy of needs, seeking naloxone training, and responding to disclosure.

**Resources and knowledge transfer:** DCS described change in relation to providing resources to foster/adoptive parents/social workers, educating others, sharing information with youth, making a connection to NSTEP/NSTAY, incorporating new resources into practice. Non-profit service providers described change related to working more collaboratively with NSTAY and incorporating resources into practice.

**Awareness of the issue and language use:** DCS and non-profit service providers described change in relation to an increase in awareness of the issue (e.g., prevalence and indicators), increased vigilance in practice in an effort to take action, making an effort to have more informed conversations with other service providers, and engaging in upfront and open dialogue with clients using informed and appropriate language and terms.

Other themes related to change in practice included: incorporation of trauma-informed and harm reduction practice; targeting prevention and early intervention; and taking an open and non-judgemental approach when working with clients.

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*"I have been trained in this area but never by people who have experienced sexual exploitation. This made it real, personalized it more, which made it a more effective training. Thanks for sharing."*

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