A REPORT FOR THE CALGARY COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Community perspectives on the landscape and realities of **HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN CALGARY**

ACT ALBERTA

CALGARY COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN on HUMAN TRAFFICKING

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Acronyms Used

- **ACT Alberta** – Action Coalition on Human Trafficking Alberta
- **AINP** - Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program
- **AISH** - Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped
- **CBSA** – Canadian Border Services Agency
- **CCAP** – Calgary Community Action Plan on Human Trafficking
- **CCASA** - Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse
- **CCIS** - Calgary Catholic Immigration Society
- **CDVC** - Calgary Domestic Violence Committee
- **CPIP** - Crime Prevention Investment Plan
- **CPS** – Calgary Police Service
- **CYOC** - Calgary Young Offender Centre
- **EFRY** - Elizabeth Fry Society of Calgary
- **ESDC** - Employment and Social Development
- **FASD** - Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
- **FOSTA** - Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act
- **IRCC** - Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
- **IRPA** - Immigration and Refugee Protection Act
- **LGBTQ2+** – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual, Queer, Questioning, 2/Two-Spirit. + = Intersex, Asexual, Ally, Pansexual, Agender, Gender Queer, Bigender, Gender Variant & Pangender
- **LMIA** - Labour Market Impact Assessment
- **NGO** – Non-governmental Organization
- **PCEPA** - Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act
- **PChAD** - The Protection of Children Abusing Drugs Act
- **PDD** - Pervasive Developmental Disorder
- **PR** - Permanent Resident
- **PSC** – Project Steering Committee
- **PSECA** – Protection of Sexually Exploited Children Act
- **PTSD** – Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome
- **RCMP** – Royal Canadian Mounted Police
- **SESTA** - Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act
- **STI** – Sexually Transmitted Infection
- **TBI** - Traumatic Brain Injuries
- **TFW** - Temporary Foreign Worker
- **TFWAO** - Temporary Foreign Worker Advisory Office
- **TFWP** – Temporary Foreign Worker Program
- **TRP** – Temporary Resident Permit
- **UN** – United Nations

Acknowledgements

This project took place on the traditional territory of the Siksika, Kainai, Piikani, Nakoda and the Tsuut'ina Nations and the Métis Nation of Region 3. The City of Calgary resides in Treaty 7 Lands within Traditional BlackFoot Territory. We would also like to acknowledge the First Peoples who resided on these lands before the treaties were created and signed.

This project was funded by the City of Calgary under the Crime Prevention Investment Plan, with additional funding from The Calgary Foundation.

ACT Alberta would like to acknowledge all the individuals and organizations who made this project possible. We are grateful for the enthusiasm demonstrated throughout this project, and all the time, energy, and resources shared with us as we reached out to learn and formulate this action plan on human trafficking.

We gratefully acknowledge the critical contributions of our engagement participants, forum attendees, dedicated staff members, and community stakeholders whose knowledge and insight guided this project and form the basis of this report. We would especially like to thank those who met with us to share their lived experiences of vulnerability, abuse and exploitation. Their life stories and survival are a testament to their resiliency and the human spirit in the face of adversity of trauma. We all have much to learn from survivors and how we can do better as a city to prevent abuse and support recoveries.

We also acknowledge the following partners who formed the Project Steering Committee and contributed their time, wisdom, and resources to the project.

PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE

Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS)
Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse (CCASA)
Calgary Police Service (CPS)
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Note on the Language Used

Language choices related to human trafficking can be contentious or confusing. In this report, labels and language remain constant with that used by our participants and research sited as much as possible. Some examples are cited below.

Throughout the course of this report, various terms are used to refer to a trafficked or previously trafficked person, including *victim*, *survivor* and *trafficked person*.

Within this document there is dynamic debate around the use of these labels, with various arguments made advocating for and against their respective use.

In our Indigenous Sister Approach, we were committed to following the lead of community members. Word choices such as *Elder* and *Knowledge Holders* reflect the language used by community members within the Sister Approach.

The term *Indigenous* is used throughout to refer to the first inhabitants of Canada and their descendants: First Nations, Metis, and Inuit. The authors recognize that this term is unable to adequately encompass the rich variety of languages, cultures, and histories of the peoples referred to. However, this term was chosen as the most commonly used at the time of writing.

The following information was collected during the 2018 community engagement portion of the Calgary Action Plan on Human Trafficking. This information does not reflect the opinions of ACT Alberta but rather captures the comments and sentiments of participants.

Endorsement

We, the undersigned, hereby formally endorse this community action plan to prevent sex and labour trafficking in Calgary.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Human trafficking is a worldwide violation of human rights that cuts across cultural, geographic, social, and economic boundaries. At the time of this project, there was little published about the landscape and dynamics of human trafficking in Calgary. This project was commissioned in 2017 by the City of Calgary through the Crime Prevention Investment Plan (CPIP). The objectives of this project are three-fold. First, within the first year of community engagement, to gain knowledge and understanding of the landscape of human trafficking in Calgary: the root causes, the nature of human trafficking, and the response and service landscape in the city. Second, to utilize this knowledge and relationships built within the community to work together to create a strategic action plan, where all stakeholders are willing to take responsibility and commit to meaningful actionable items within their everyday work. And third, in phase three, to implement these strategies and work to prevent human trafficking and to support victims through community-identified best practices.

A core group of 12 agencies in Calgary formed the project steering committee (PSC) that provided a forum for guidance, organization, monitoring and accountability. A parallel Indigenous Sister Approach was undertaken with Knowledge Holders in Calgary, who guided our learnings of human trafficking from an Indigenous worldview, where oral methodologies and processes were critical.

Ultimately, 96 individuals took part in interviews in the general Calgary community engagement. Of these, 16 group interviews took place and an additional 28 one-on-one interviews were conducted. Of these, 14.5% of participants had relevant lived experience, 65% came from the non-profit sector, and 17.5% came from government agencies. The Indigenous Sister Approach included an additional 30 individuals; 66.6% Knowledge Holders and 33.3% came from Indigenous agencies and communities. Information was collected through ceremony and circle discussion.

The majority of individual and group interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Interviews were coded utilizing qualitative software and analyzed by theme to pinpoint patterns within the data. The core learnings in this report speak to the messy landscape of human trafficking in Calgary. In analyzing the data, we did not find clear answers to the research questions that could easily be presented in a simple format. This report presents community engagement findings with a focus on nuance, sharing the viewpoints and exploring the intersections of trafficking with issues such as domestic violence, of young people and intra community trafficking, of harm reduction and the fight of many service providers to keep their clients safe when they know they are currently being trafficked, and of why efforts can sometimes fail. Our goal in this report is to share these dominant themes, and the complex and layered realities which have ultimately fostered the development of the Calgary Community Action Plan on Human Trafficking.

CORE LEARNINGS ON THE LANDSCAPE AND REALTIES OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Among community participants, there was consensus that sex workers are a group that may be at increased risk for sex trafficking in Calgary. However, within these conversations, a large number of participants felt that it was equally important **to acknowledge the legitimacy of choice-based sex workers in Calgary,** and recognize the increased risks for violence these individuals face due to the current laws in Canada around sex work.

Both domestic violence and human trafficking are human rights violations, and forms of trauma that can have long term impacts on physical, emotional and mental health. Participants in this engagement highlighted the need **to widen the lens of understanding violence and coercion within trafficking relationships beyond typical trafficking narratives.** There is often not an easy out for individuals in these dynamic domestic violence and trafficking situations. In some cases, relationships are not always marred by violence, or possibly even an intention to deceive. Indeed, **episodes of violence and trafficking may be interrupted by periods of calm, child rearing or even love and consent.** Participants in Calgary advocated for an intersectional view of violent behaviour across various landscapes and the life course, where trafficking experiences may be one instance or label for a particular experience or moment in time.

Many front-line service providers described a **spectrum framework for understanding the vulnerability of youth to exploitation.** At one end of the spectrum are youth who become disengaged from school and community life, and experiment with risky behaviours. At the other end are youth living on the margins, including young people who are incarcerated, and disaffected street youth who survive through illicit activities such as gangs and drug trafficking. Participants described these young people as entrenched and the most at risk in Calgary. Root causes were described as childhood trauma, abuse, homelessness, mental health challenges, and addiction. **Self-esteem, looking for love, acceptance and belonging** were also highlighted as critical to understanding vulnerability.

We are only just beginning to **recognize the scale of young people who are being exploited, but who are not being used by traffickers or pimps.** Young people are utilizing social media to sell themselves for sexual services and are not always involved with traffickers. In other cases, young people are trafficking each other; intra-community trafficking was presented as occurring across Calgary, especially with entrenched young people. Drug use was seen to be a major barrier for young people to exit their exploitative relationships and situations, where abstinence was an entry point for service provision.

A number of service providers sounded **the alarm for risk factors related to young people between the ages of 18-24,** where supports diminish, transitions to adulthood entail more responsibility and financial pressures, and Protection of Sexually Exploited Childern's Act (PSECA)-funded supports and options no longer exist.

Within the Indigenous Sister Approach, we learned of **the critical importance of the methodological approach;** indeed, the pathways we take to collect data are as important as the data itself. Honouring Knowledge Holders and oral methodological protocols are key to understanding. Participants spoke of **the atrocities within intergenerational trauma;** the abuses perpetrated within Indigenous communities in subsequent generations, and **the complex nature of shame** that is endemic in families and communities who are living with the consequences of the residential school system. The 'scraping-off' of layers of trauma were highlighted as critical for understanding and healing. Indigenous learnings also included the significance of healing communities, which also include those who have violated, or exploited, or perpetrated violence. We need to understand and acknowledge that **forgiveness of the perpetrator may be part of community healing.**

One of the most critical findings was the underreported, underemphasized, and hidden nature of **human trafficking for individuals with disabilities in Calgary,** and the dire need to take action as a community to protect these individuals and support their healing. The intersections between trauma, disability and domestic violence are complex and **sometimes interwoven over the life course.** The desire **to be respected, to belong, to be loved** is immense, and by marginalizing these individuals in systemic and every day ways, our societies are further exacerbating risks, and allowing abuse and exploitation to continue.

There is near **universal acceptance of the realities of labour exploitation and trafficking** and the risk factors and root causes for its endemic nature in Canada and Calgary. Participants highlighted how the immigration system itself has forced migrant workers into situations where they are unable to leave an abusive employer. While the employer is the abuser, exploiter, or trafficker, the Canadian immigration system stands by, arguably complicit by account of not working to change the system and continuing a status quo where migrant rights are expendable. A growing concern was also the **interconnection of labour and sex trafficking.** In such scenarios, participants reflected that these were not cases where individuals were trafficked into Canada for the purpose of sexual exploitation and trafficking in the sex industry. **Pathways into sex trafficking tended to be more informal, and potentially more insidious.**

BEST PRACTICES FOR PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

Human trafficking is an assault to human dignity and impacts the biological, psychological and the social dimensions of the trafficked individual. The causes and consequences are intricately woven together and easy solutions are not readily available (Sen and Baba, 2017). Although it is difficult to mend the wounds completely, service providers can help to restore dignity, to build new lives, and to advocate and ensure justice for survivors (Maney et al., 2011).

Across the board, the critical importance of **safe shelter, mental health and addiction services** were seen to be either lacking or inappropriate, especially for young people, and male and transgender survivors.

Anti-oppressive practice where survivors **own their own stories** and can determine their services and supports as they are ready. Approaches to care must also be **victim-centred** which stress that **empowering the person, offering choices, and respecting their decisions** is the most effective means of meeting needs and goals.

Building relationships based in **dignity, compassion and care.** Consistently non-judgmental, acknowledgement of a person's story even if the justice system is not or will not be involved.

Numerous participants pointed to harm reduction approaches as a critical tool in building relationships and trust to keeping individuals safe when they are not in a position leave their exploitative relationships or situations. This was true in the case of young people as well, including those under 18 but nearing the age of adulthood when PSECA supports and options for safety decrease.

Those with relevant lived experience highlighted the **important role that peer support programs** could serve for individuals who have experienced trafficking. This was the case for those who had been exploited in labour markets, newcomers to Calgary, male or female, or within experiences of sex trafficking and young people.

Participants highlighted the need for community, law enforcement and providers to understand that lifetime cumulative **trauma occurs on a continuum rather than as isolated incidents. Trauma-informed care must be at the center** of all approaches.

In order to look at both prevention (with a focus on perpetrators and also purchasers of sex), **men and boys need to be engaged as allies.**

Lastly, we need to **look beyond the initial crisis and exiting of individuals** who have been trafficked and acknowledge their long-term challenges in terms of healing and moving forward with their lives. A number of individuals highlighted the lack of long-term support, and the barriers to what life will look like after exiting a trafficking situation or relationship. ■

PHASE I:

Community Engagement

A Report for the Calgary Community Action Plan on Human Trafficking

"We have to take a risk, to be vulnerable ourselves, to put ourselves in these situations to really be able help. Otherwise we're not doing any good"

1.0 Introduction

The Action Coalition on Human Trafficking Alberta Association (ACT Alberta) is a nongovernmental organization mandated to identify and respond to all forms of human trafficking in Alberta. ACT Alberta's programs include coordinating services individuals who have experienced trafficking, providing training to front-line service providers, engaging and educating the public, researching and collecting data on human trafficking, managing a Victims Assistance Fund, helping to develop policy provincially and nationally, and creating community-based responses to human trafficking. In addition, ACT Alberta works collaboratively with government agencies, law enforcement, and NGOs to identify the needs of victims and respond to human trafficking provincially through chapters in Calgary and Edmonton.

In 2016 in response to growing concern over the issue of human trafficking, the City of Calgary's Crime Prevention Investment Plan (CPIP) provided ACT Alberta with funding to develop the Calgary Community Action Plan on Human Trafficking (CCAP). This project was focused on developing a practical, cross-sectoral plan that could address the needs of survivors. The following report is the culmination of two years of work across the city, where we reached out to established stakeholders and built new relationships with individuals across our city who have knowledge of human trafficking or work with populations at risk for trafficking. This report reflects these core learnings. ■

1.1 Defining Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is a crime that represents a consistent and extensive attack on the fundamental human rights of victims (Barrett, 2013). However, both globally and nationally, the definition of human trafficking has been highly controversial. The most commonly used definition, and the one which we use for this project, is found in the *United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children* (the "UN Trafficking Protocol"), adopted in December 2000. This definition frames human trafficking as the sum of three component parts, namely (1) action, (2) means, and (3) purpose. This Protocol defines human trafficking as:

> [T]he recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.

According to this definition; transportation and movement are not required for an incident to be considered trafficking. Human trafficking can occur either internationally (when an individual is trafficked across an international border) or internally (when all stages of the crime occur within the borders of a given country) (Chuang, 2013). Canada was among the first countries to sign and ratify the UN Trafficking Protocol in 2002 and shortly thereafter introduced legislation explicitly criminalizing this activity. In 2002, the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (IRPA) was amended to read, "No person shall knowingly organize the coming into Canada of one or more persons by means of abduction, fraud, deception or use or threat of force or coercion" (Section 118). In 2005, Canada amended the *Canadian Criminal Code* to include provisions against human trafficking. According to Section 279.01: "Every person who recruits, transports, transfers, receives, holds, conceals or harbours a person, or exercises control, direction or influence over the movements of a person, for the purpose of exploiting them or facilitating their exploitation is guilty of an indictable offence." Sections 279.011 (trafficking of a person under the age of eighteen years), 279.02 (material benefit), and 279.03 (withholding or destroying documents) also explicitly address human trafficking offences.

Observers have been critical of the human trafficking provisions in the *Criminal Code*. In particular, the "fear for safety" requirement, which states that the accused must engage in conduct that "could reasonably be expected to cause the other to believe that their safety or the safety of a person known to them would be threatened," has commonly been interpreted by courts as the requirement to prove actual fear. This, according to some observers, raises the bar for convictions to an unduly high level (Kaye and Hastie, 2015). Fortunately, across Canada and in Alberta, crown prosecutors and others have been increasingly making the case that it is important to consider the impact of contextual factors on the level of fear or coercion that victims experience. For example, in 2012 the Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs stated that the fear for safety provision only requires evidence that it would be reasonable for a person with a similar background and in similar circumstances to be fearful for his or her physical, mental, emotional, or psychological well-being. ■

1.2 Addressing Human Trafficking in Canada

Canada has taken several measures to address human trafficking at both the federal and provincial levels. In alignment with internationally accepted best practices as outlined in the UN Protocol, Canadian counter-human trafficking activities are grouped into four core areas: prevention of human trafficking, protection of victims, prosecution of offenders, and building partnerships with stakeholders. This is known as the 4-P approach and was formalized in the National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking, adopted in June 2012. In the same year, Public Safety Canada convened a Human Trafficking National Taskforce to oversee the implementation of the National Action Plan, comprised of key government and law enforcement agencies and departments. The National Action Plan ended in March 2016 and has yet to be renewed or replaced (Ricard-Guay, 2016).

Canadian counter-human trafficking activities are primarily focused on the third "P" – prosecution. For example, as one of the main counter-trafficking activities implemented federally, the RCMP launched the Human Trafficking National Coordination Centre in 2005, which primarily supports prosecutorial efforts by acting as a focal point for law enforcement organizations on human trafficking issues. They work to develop tools, protocols, and guidelines, coordinate national awareness and training, identify and maintain lines of communications and coordination, develop and maintain international partnerships, and coordinate and disseminate human trafficking intelligence across the country.

Canada has devoted what few resources are available almost entirely toward combatting sex trafficking. Two funders – namely the Canadian Women's Foundation and Status of Women Canada – currently offer the bulk of anti-trafficking funding in Canada and are both almost exclusively concerned with the sexual trafficking and exploitation of females (Clancey et al, 2014). This reflects a strong consistent bias both internationally and nationally toward framing human trafficking as being exclusively or predominately for the purposes of sexual exploitation. ■

1.3 Definitions, Misrepresentations and the Scale of the Issue in Canada

It is generally argued that by its very nature, compiling comprehensive and accurate human trafficking statistics is difficult, if not impossible, and we simply do not have an accurate picture of the scale of human trafficking in Canada, or in Calgary. Given the clandestine nature of the crime, challenges in identifying persons affected by it, and the reluctance or inability of trafficked individuals to contact authorities or NGOs, reliable statistics are very difficult to ascertain. The complexity and ambiguity of the various definitions found in the UN Trafficking Protocol, the *Criminal Code*, IRPA, and in the community, has led to inaccuracy, misunderstandings, and arguments between stakeholders. ACT Alberta research has found that issues as broad as workplace bullying, labour standards and contract violations, prostitution, and domestic violence have all been classified as trafficking among community groups, service providers, law enforcement, and government (Wilson & McCrae, 2015; McCrae, 2016). A national system to collect data on the numbers of trafficked people across Canada simply does not exist (Ricard-Guay, 2016). In the most recently reported statistics, between 2009-2016, there were 90 police-reported human trafficking violations in Alberta, 31 of which were reported in Calgary (Ibrahim, 2018). The details of these statistics (whether they are labour, sex, or trafficking of organs, for example) are not reported.

Critical commentators have raised concerns about both the scarcity of evidence on important aspects of human trafficking, and the difficulty of obtaining meaningful data (Yea, 2017). Merry (2011:83) argues that:

> "A key dimension of the power of indicators is their capacity to convert complicated, contextually variable phenomena into unambiguous, clear, and impersonal measures... Indicators submerge local particularities and idiosyncrasies into universal categories, thus generating knowledge that is standardized and comparable across nations and regions."

Not only do few countries collect data on human trafficking, but many statistics are collected through mixed data related to smuggling, illegal migration, migrant abuse, and sex work (Chapkis, 2003; Gozdziak and Collett, 2005). Across discussions of the scale and dimensions of the issue, there remains an overwhelming concern for sex trafficking by both government and non-governmental organizations. This continues, despite evidence that labour trafficking is likely more prevalent globally, and perhaps nationally as well (Feingold, 2005; Polaris, 2017). According to ACT Alberta data, almost half of the referrals of human trafficking to ACT Alberta involve labour exploitation (ACT Alberta Myths vs. Realities, 2017).

Furthermore, it is challenging to combat this disproportionate focus on sexual exploitation when human trafficking is an issue that is so frequently sensationalized and misrepresented. Particular ideas of trafficking are repeatedly articulated and reiterated, not because they are logical or true but rather because of this regularity (Chuang, 2010). The RCMP noted this as a prevalent problem as early as 2010: "the widespread understanding of human trafficking is often clouded by stereotype, bias, and sensational media reports. While an increased awareness among Canadians is evident, the wide-ranging information, and in some cases, misinformation, may cause confusion with respect to human trafficking" (RCMP, 2010:9). A 2012 study on human trafficking in Calgary clearly articulated

the harmful effects of sensational awareness-raising campaigns: "these campaigns reinforce the idea that human trafficking is little more than the sexual exploitation of women and girls who are forcibly confined in brothels. In fact, sensational media reports and awareness raising campaigns have created a stereotyped image of trafficked persons, which restricts law enforcement, service providers, and the general public from accurately identifying and understanding the lived experiences of trafficked persons" (Quarterman et al, 2012).

Dominant discourses and imagery provide a stark reminder of the growing chasm between actual situations of trafficking and the self-perpetuating myths that can come to form the basis of much action in the field. Others have noted with concern the ways political and other agendas have influenced the construction and use of evidence in anti-trafficking efforts. For example, how resources continue to be poured into criminal justice responses targeted at the sex industry, despite growing evidence of the prevalence of trafficking among male labour workers and temporary foreign workers. Lastly, research and advocacy often fail to recognize that individuals who have been trafficked are a heterogeneous group with diverse experiences unique to their own individual and social context. Under the banner of 'trafficked' their identities and life stories are subsumed under a singular label of experience.

The way in which we define an issue underpins our actions: the language and constructs we use and the terms and definitions we deploy foster particular responses. Indeed, there exists a debate on virtually all aspects of the issue of human trafficking, including what constitutes trafficking and how prevalent it is (Sen and Baba, 2017). Kempadoo et al (2005: vii) describes the debate by stating, "there are competing definitions of trafficking; little consensus or agreement among researchers, policy makers, and activists about the scope of the problem; and scant evidence or substantiation about actual trafficking practices." Competing and at times moralistic discourses on trafficking, prostitution, immigration, and their relationship to one another frame trafficked people, particularly women, and their decisions, motivations, needs, and dilemmas in varied ways (Cwikel and Hoban, 2005; Sen and Baba, 2017). Because trafficking frames are sometimes at odds with one another, public discussions as well as coordinated efforts to mitigate the issue become challenging (Barner et al, 2014; Cwikel & Hoban, 2005). In the case of human trafficking and this community engagement in Calgary, it became clear from the outset that the community wanted to reflect on the language of human trafficking, and how the term resonated within their agencies and with the individuals they serve. Reflections on terminology and service provision, and a number of other aspects related to discourse are woven throughout this report. As Indigenous Knowledge Holders taught us about defining human trafficking from an Indigenous world-view, we cannot take for granted global and legal definitions of human trafficking, and what these mean on the ground for communities and individuals. We must be willing to listen. ■

1.4 A Snapshot of the City of Calgary

Calgary is one of the largest and most dynamic cities in Canada. According to the 2016 Alberta Census, the city is currently the largest city in Alberta with a population of 1,237,656. Despite an economic downturn, Calgary's population is projected to continue to grow at between 1.8 – 2.0 percent to 2022, when it is expected to reach 1,760,600 (Calgary Economic Development, 2015a). Alberta has one of the highest levels of net migration in Canada and Calgary is one of the primary destinations for newcomers of any major urban centre across the country. In 2015, the net migration to Calgary was 21,057, with more than 40 percent of these individuals immigrating to Calgary from other countries. The top source countries for permanent residents in 2015 were the Philippines and India followed distantly by Pakistan, Nigeria, and China (Calgary Economic Development, 2015b). In 2011, visible minorities accounted for 28 percent of the population of the Calgary Census Metropolitan Area, with the majority of these individuals identifying as South Asian, Chinese, and Filipino (Stats Can, 2012).

However, immigration into Calgary has slowed recently due to an economic decline. Although Calgary has historically had a large and dynamic economy that has been one of the economic powerhouses of Canada, the economy has been severely hit by the drop in oil revenues. In 2015, the economy shrank by 3.2 percent and the unemployment rate grew from 6.9 percent in October 2015 to 10.2 percent in October 2016. Despite these recent challenges, the Conference Board of Canada is optimistic about Calgary's economic future and expects it to return to a second-place ranking in GDP among 28 major Canadian cities by 2017-2020 (Calgary Economic Development, 2016; CBC, 2016b). Indeed, Calgary's unemployment rate currently sits at 8.2%. The Calgary CMA added nearly 30,000 jobs in the first nine months of 2017, representing an increase of 3.7% from the corresponding period a year earlier. Job growth has been concentrated in the service-producing sector where incomes, on average, are lower compared to positions in the goods-producing sector (Statistic Canada, reported in CMHC, 2017).

The decline in economic activity may have contributed to a spike in police-reported crime in Calgary, which increased by nearly 30 percent in 2015 – the largest increase of any metropolitan area in Canada (Stats Can, 2016). Calgary Police Chief Roger Chaffin attributed this increase to both the struggling economy and the increasing prevalence of highly addictive drugs (Cole, 2016). Between 2015 and 2016, drug seizures increased from 462 to 583, with the largest increases being in seizures of fentanyl and methamphetamines (Calgary Police Service, 2016). While the overall prevalence of drugs has gone down in Calgary over a five-year period (including opiates and cocaine/crack), the incidence of methamphetamine/crystal meth (372%) has spiked dramatically (Centralized Analysis Unit, 2018).

Positively, the homelessness rate in Calgary has been in decline, coinciding with the creation of the Calgary Homeless Foundation and the release of Calgary's 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness. Since 2008, there has been a 19 percent reduction in homelessness per capita (Campbell et al, 2016). In 2018, the Calgary Homeless Foundation counted 2,911 people as homeless in the city. However, individuals who identify as Indigenous made up 20% of those enumerated, despite making up only 3% of the general population of Calgary. In 2012, the Aboriginal Standing Committee on Homelessness created a Plan to End Aboriginal Homelessness in Calgary, working from a holistic approach, across sectors and with Aboriginal guidance and leadership.

Women face particular challenges in Calgary. The gap in employment levels between men and women is one of the largest of 25 cities measured in 2016 – only 66 percent of Calgarian women held a job, compared with 75 percent of men. These women earned only 65 cents for every dollar earned by a man, despite being more likely to have completed high school, college or university. Alberta has the third-highest self-reported rate and the fourth-highest police-reported rate of domestic violence for a Canadian province (Boutilier et al, 2017: a more in-depth discussion of domestic violence follows in section 4). Domestic violence is a chronically underreported crime both across Canada and within Calgary, with only one in five incidents estimated to be reported to law enforcement (McInturff, 2016). Despite this chronic underreporting, Calgary police released statistics in May 2016 indicating a 10 percent increase in domestic violence reports from 2014 to 2015 and a 24 percent increase over the five-year average. Domestic assaults involving weapons increased by 70 per cent over 2014, and approximately four out of every five victims of these domestic conflicts were women. Statistics gathered in the first quarter of 2016 indicate that this trend is not likely to abate in the near future; Calgary police received approximately 40 percent more domestic violence calls during this quarter than is typical (Calgary, 2016).

In terms of human trafficking in Calgary, law enforcement have laid a number of human trafficking charges in jurisdictions across Alberta, including several in Calgary. The first human trafficking charges in Calgary were laid against Linh Quy To in 2009. The 52-year old woman was charged with sex trafficking and several related charges after undercover investigators were offered the opportunity to purchase two young Asian women for $4000 each in a hair salon operating as a bawdy house (CBC, 2009a). Also in 2009, Calgary police charged Codie Toby Cardinal with two counts of trafficking in persons after he recruited females from across Alberta and Saskatchewan to Calgary with offers of modelling contracts. He advertised the girls and young women online and sexually exploited them out of a Calgary hotel (CBC, 2009b). In 2010, Calgary police charged a 25-year old man with human trafficking after an 18-year old woman fled a home where she had been forced into prostitution over a month-long period (Moharib, 2010).

Charges were not reported on in the media again until 2013, when Arjanit Nick Simnica and Avni Gashi were charged with sex trafficking two underage girls (CTV, 2013a). In separate cases that year, Abdullah Amer and Balal Jeha were charged for sex trafficking two young females (Franklin, 2013), and Darlande Levreau and Frederick Maignan were charged for sex trafficking a young woman and a minor (Fletcher, 2013). In 2014, Amanda McGee was charged with sex trafficking after allegedly extorting her 18-year old female roommate into working in the sex trade (CBC, 2014a) and Daniel Erhabor, Cynthia Kindoko, and Ricardo Joseph were charged after a 37-year old woman reported she had been forced to have sex for pay against her will (CBC, 2014b). According to media sources, Calgary police most recently charged a 32-year old Toronto man in 2016, after he allegedly forced his girlfriend into the sex trade (CBC, 2016). In January 2018, Calgary police have charged a woman and three teenagers with human trafficking after a woman reported being held against her will and forced to have sex with strangers for five days in a southwest apartment (CBC, 2018). As of the date of writing, no labour trafficking charges have been laid in Calgary. ■

2.0 Methodology

At the time of this project, there was little published about the landscape and dynamics of human trafficking in Calgary. Community members with relevant lived experience, law enforcement, government and non-government agencies participated in this comprehensive review of the issue, speaking to the context of both sex and labour trafficking, and highlighting issues that were critical to their experiences of the local situation in Calgary.

From the outset of the CCAP project, there were three overarching goals. First, within the first year of community engagement, to gain knowledge and understanding of the landscape of human trafficking in Calgary: the root causes, the nature of human trafficking, and the response and service landscape in the city. Second, to utilize this knowledge and relationships built within the community to work together to create a strategic action plan, where all stakeholders are willing to take responsibility and commit to meaningful actionable items within their everyday work. And third, in phase three, to implement these strategies and work to prevent human trafficking and to support victims through community-identified best practices. The following describes the methodological strategy taken in this project, critical to our planned outcomes and our ability to harness community knowledge and energy around the CCAP project. ■

2.1 Developing a Community-driven Engagement Plan

Underpinning efforts of this work were the principles set out in conventional Community Informed Participatory Research, which include partnership, power, sharing, and benefits to the community (Israel et al, 1998). One of the first tasks for the project was the establishment of a multi-agency group comprising key partners from government and non-government organizations. The aim of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) was to provide a forum for guidance, organization, monitoring and accountability of the project. The following agencies were included in the first year of the project, alongside Reset Society of Calgary who joined the PSC in the second year:

- Action Coalition on Human Trafficking (ACT) Alberta
- Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS)
- Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse (CCASA)
- Calgary Police Service (CPS)
- City of Calgary; City Neighborhoods & Councilor Gian-Carlo Carra
- Elizabeth Fry Society of Calgary (EFry)
- HIV Community Link
- Calgary John Howard Society
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)
- Sagesse
- YW Calgary

Meetings occurred three times per year and ensured that the project team was kept up to date with policy and practice developments, as well as with issues as they arose in the community during the time of the project. During the first year of the project, the Committee worked to formulate the engagement questions based on our proposal to the city and the goal of creating a community action plan. Initial meetings included the formulation of an agreed upon Terms of Reference, a review of the literature on human trafficking, and a community outreach plan. The outreach plan included a list of relevant stakeholders, and categories of agencies in the city who the Committee felt had relevant experiences to share and knowledge on the topic. These included agencies that work with homeless populations, addiction and mental health services, sex workers, women's organizations, immigrant and newcomer populations, youth, law enforcement, and the justice system.

A number of initial contacts were made through the Committee, and the team reached out to others by phone and email with an explanation of the project (Information sheet, appendix A), and an opportunity to answer any further questions that participants had. The vast majority of interviews were held within participant agencies for ease and comfort. Every effort was made by the project manager to be flexible, and a large number of interviews were accommodated over time, as individuals came forward to participate and have their voices heard.

Aside from the engagement plan, the project manager developed a relevant and flexible qualitative data collection tool (appendix B). The interview guide was adapted from Public Safety Canada's *Local Safety Guide: To Prevent Trafficking in Persons and Related Exploitation* (2014), which sets a course for human trafficking prevention responses and was specifically designed to be implemented in urban settings in Canada. The following questions formed the base research questions for this project:

- **What is the knowledge of human trafficking in the community and to what extent does the term resonate with agencies or the individuals they serve who experience trafficking?**
- **What are the root causes/risk factors for human trafficking in various populations across Calgary?**
- **What is the nature of human trafficking on the ground in Calgary?**
- **What do we know about the service landscape and best practices around supporting individuals who have experienced trafficking? (where are the gaps and what services already exist?)**

In order to ensure that the interview guide was fit for purpose, the tool was first shared with the Steering Committee, and then piloted with two different groups. One of the findings of this trial was that we needed to be flexible in our use of the guide, making sure that questions were relevant to the work carried out by each sector. For example, in discussions with newcomer and immigrant-serving agencies, we needed to ask further questions about the immigration system in Canada and the Temporary Foreign Worker Program. For agencies that are mandated to work with children and young people, interviews needed to include the specific role of legislation that pertains to young people and exploitation (see section 6 in this report). Indeed, many of the interviews required further questions, and flexibility allowed us to gain as much relevant knowledge as possible, leaving space for open-ended conversation about the topic of human trafficking, and where participants felt the discussion needed to go.

Individual and group interviews were conducted between June 2017 and December 2017, although we continued to meet with participants as they arose in community discussions until October 2018. All interviews were conducted by the Project Manager at the time, Amy Norman with an additional interview conducted by Cherie Ratte, Project Coordinator. The interview questions were open ended and used as a conversational guide to explore the broad goals of this study, leading to rich discussions across the interviews. ■

2.2 Ethical Considerations and Participation

One of the major strengths of the CCAP project was an embedded ethical strategy, which entailed ongoing levels of review and critical reflexivity. From ACT Alberta staff to the PSC, and ongoing external consultations, numerous individuals were involved at every stage, and adjustments were made over the life course of the project.

First, the team was highly aware that we would potentially be working with populations who are in a socially vulnerable position; that we may be collecting information on sensitive issues or potentially stigmatizing behaviours; and that questions around human trafficking had the potential to cause discomfort or distress. It was critical that the project identified ways to mitigate these risks for participants. The first set of considerations revolved around the participation of individuals with first-hand human trafficking experience. There was much debate about the level of participation warranted by the project goals. On the one hand, a criticism of much work on human trafficking is that research and activism often leave out the very people who need to be consulted and whose voices must be heard (one researcher in Calgary suggested that participation can be empowering, and that it is not up to others to make decisions on behalf of survivors). On the other hand, there exists great potential risk when interviewing individuals who have experienced tremendous trauma and might experience re-traumatization as a result of participation (one experienced trauma counsellor in Calgary warned that no individuals who have been trafficked should be asked to participate due to these risks and the potential for dissociation and setbacks in survivor healing).

Initially, we planned to utilize trusted gatekeepers to ensure the safety and well-being of survivor participation. Gatekeepers with professional experience would be asked to locate individuals who they felt were ready to speak about their experiences. Gatekeepers would be tasked with explaining the project to potential participants and all interviews would take place within the organization that supported the individual, so that they could access any necessary counselling services during or after the interview. Indeed, we did conduct one interview in this capacity. However, in remaining critically reflexive during the project, the researcher and the Committee chose to shift focus from interviewing survivors about their trafficking histories and experiences, to one where individuals with relevant lived experience were approached to share their expertise in navigating social service and legal systems to highlight knowledge of risk factors in their communities, and best practices around supporting survivors. In light of this, we conducted three group interviews with individuals known to be at risk of trafficking in Calgary: male temporary foreign workers, female temporary foreign worker caregivers, and sex workers. Ultimately, many did disclose experiences of abuse, exploitation, and trafficking, and counsellors within agencies were present after interviews to offer support. However, we did not continue to sample individuals who had experienced trafficking (beyond the initial interview), and we did not interview individuals specifically about their trafficking histories.

In terms of interviews with individuals with lived experience, reciprocity was important, and all participants received gift cards to show an appreciation for their time. In one instance when an interview was required to be conducted in the evening, a dinner was shared with the group. All participants received a project information sheet, and all signed consent forms and were offered copies for their own records (Appendix C). ■

2.3 The Indigenous Sister Approach

Within this project, ACT Alberta recognized that despite past efforts, our organization has struggled to make meaningful connections with Indigenous communities on the topic of human trafficking. With the support of our Steering Committee, and in particular Katelyn Lucas, Executive Director of the Elizabeth Fry Society of Calgary, and Sharon Goulet, Indigenous Social Planner at the City of Calgary, we acknowledged a need to alter our approach to one that began with respect, humility and open hearts and minds. This led to what we termed the Indigenous Sister Approach, where we followed the lead of traditional Knowledge Holders Reg and Rose Crowshoe, to direct the best approach to learning and understanding from an Indigenous worldview. We emphasize here that one builds respect and trust from the oral method itself: it is the oral practice that allows for the genuine sharing of information. Building this framework was the most critical aspect of our approach, just as community participatory methodology underpinned our engagement in the general population. Both approaches prioritize the strengths, knowledge, and resources already present in community.

The Sister Approach ultimately entailed three meetings. The first was our introduction to the Knowledge Holders (these included individuals from the following communities: Ojibway, Boreal Forest Cree, Plains Cree, Saulteaux, Anishinaabe, Siksika, Blackfoot, Stoney, Pikani, Tsuu T'ina, Metis). At this meeting, we took a critical first step, questioning our own perceptions, and working together to translate the western definition of human trafficking into one that resonated with Indigenous worldviews and what came to be understood as 'broken boundaries.' The second meeting was a Tea Dance ceremony, where we were able to break into gendered groups with the Knowledge Holders, and through the practice of the oral methodology, share stories and understandings of what they are seeing in their communities in terms of human trafficking. After these two meetings, on the advice of the Knowledge Holders, we developed a Listening document which shared these learnings. Upon gaining confirmation on the contents of the document and being transferred the rights to share this information publicly, we then shared it with a group of Indigenous community leaders and front-line staff who work with Indigenous populations in Calgary. This formulated the basis of moving forward and engaging with these organizations in a Discussion Circles meeting. This meeting was another critical step in learning, as we learned of the unique challenges of these populations, especially as Indigenous people move from reserves into the city. This approach demonstrated why Indigenous knowledge and frameworks must be part of any action plan attempting to prevent or work with survivors of trafficking. Some of these findings are included in this report (see section 7). However, we also acknowledge that this is an ongoing engagement, and by no means complete. We were unable to engage with a large number of Indigenous organizations in Calgary, and so will be continuing this work throughout this project and beyond. The listening will continue. ■

2.4 Participant Engagement Profile

One of the core strengths of this project has been the high level of community involvement. In the general Calgary community engagement, 96 individuals took part in interviews in Calgary. Of these, 16 group interviews took place where two or more individuals were interviewed, and an additional 28 one-on-one interviews were conducted. Overall, 52 different agencies/ organizations are represented in this data, shown in the graphs on the following page. ■

2.5 Data Analysis and Community Confirmation

The majority of individual and group interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. In the few cases where a participant did not consent to having the interview audio-recorded, or due to noise levels in public places where the participant chose to be interviewed, detailed notes were taken and analyzed in lieu of a transcript. In order to maintain the confidentiality of the participants, names, sectors, and occupational positions have all been omitted in this report. All efforts to protect participant identities have been taken. Where personal stories are shared in this report, anonymous names have been utilized.

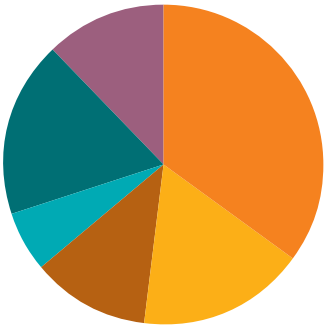
Data analysis centred upon thematic analysis which emphasizes pinpointing, examining and recording patterns within data. Utilizing the qualitative software NVIVO, the material was coded line by line and initial codes were then sorted into broader themes. In total, approximately 110 categories were identified in the initial coding, and the majority of these fell within 15 larger themes. The trustworthiness of the data was evaluated according to credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability of the analysis procedure (Lincoln, 1995). Credibility was established through consistency of responses within the interviews, triangulation (use of existing literature), and peer debriefing (among the PSC and the ACT project team). Further actions were taken at the CCAP project Community Forum held in June 2018, where approximately 50 individuals from across the project, but also within the community, attended a forum where initial findings were presented and discussed. A number of individuals at that forum felt that their voices had not been represented, and these individuals were interviewed in the following months. This is not to say that all will agree with the findings of this report, because as we will further discuss, this topic is contentious and views on some topics vary vastly within the community. However, the results are credible insofar as the collection of data and the analysis of these views were rigorous and followed conventional qualitative research methodologies. The criteria for transferability was met through a sample size consistent with conventional qualitative research and the topic. Dependability was established through the audio recordings and transcripts and how the analysis was undertaken. Confirmability can be judged by the reader in the findings section to ascertain the extent to which the quotations and views of community members support the themes. ■

Figure 1

Total Number of participants engaged by sector.

Non Profit Sector (%)

- Immigrant = 15
- Women = 11
- Youth = 21
- Poverty & Homelessness = 13
- Counseling = 3.33
- Prevention = 3.33
- Sex Worker = 11
- Disability = 6
- Exploited Women & Youth = 13
- Addiction = 3.33



Government Sector (%)

- Law enforcement = 35
- Justice = 17
- Health = 12
- Immigration = 6
- Child and Family = 18
- Labour = 12

Figure 2

Total Number of participants engaged within non-profit and goverment sectors.

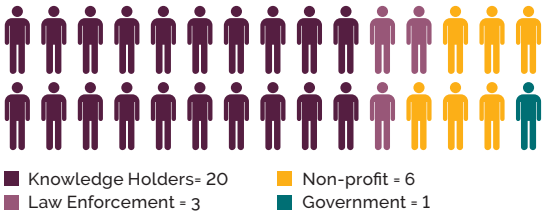


Figure 3

Total Number of participants engaged in the Sister Approach by sector.

2.6 Limitations of the Community Engagement Project

There were a number of limitations to this project that should be noted. First the researcher attempted at various times throughout this project to gain knowledge on the scale of the problem of human trafficking and its statistical dimensions in the City of Calgary. These statistics simply do not exist. As will be discussed, there are many reasons for the lack of credible data on human trafficking, but even without data, the researcher could not ascertain community perception on the scale of the issue in Calgary. Some participants felt sex trafficking was a large problem, especially among young people. Other participants reflected that other dimensions such as domestic violence are far more prevalent, and that likely labour trafficking is the greater challenge in Calgary. We simply do not have a true picture of the scale of human trafficking in Calgary.

Second, the breadth of this project was at times overly ambitious. In most other similar studies within Canadian cities, and using the same research tools, one of sex or labour trafficking are highlighted as of primary concern. Each of these topics are massive in their own right, intersecting with vast literatures, legal questions, and complexities. This project simply cannot do justice to all of the varying angles that are required to offer exhaustive analysis of these topics. However, the goal of this project was not to present an exhaustive investigation of these topics. The goal was to engage community and harness community knowledge in order to inform the City of Calgary as to what individuals are witnessing on the ground, and to provide insight on how we may do better as a city to prevent trafficking and support survivors. Engaging in the topics of both sex and labour trafficking, and bringing individuals from various sectors to the same table, often for the first time, allowed for a great deal of cross-sectoral learning and the creation of new relationships in the City, a critical step in taking action on this issue. Further, labour and sex trafficking are not mutually exclusive topics, and taking both on in this way allowed for learnings of how they intersect.

Third, although an issue ACT Alberta has attempted to research in the past (Ilich, 2014), there continue to be large barriers to examining the role of boys and men in sex trafficking in Calgary. There is a sense from the community that this world is hidden because men who work in the sex industry face intense stigma and shame, and are less likely to visit with providers, and therefore discuss risks and potential realities of sex trafficking. McIntyre's (2010) long research record and advocacy in Calgary supports these claims. One provider who was interviewed for this study was concerned that with the loss of *backpages.com*, his ability to conduct outreach in this community would be even more difficult, and that he may lose touch with very vulnerable individuals. His professional perception was that most men in the industry are working independently online and not using pimps, but we simply do not have the statistics. Most participants reflected that this is likely an issue, but providers worked with very few male individuals and were unable to provide details. This is an issue that clearly requires further investigation, and a continuing conversation in the community.

Lastly, a number of participants, along with the researcher within community discussions, noted that examinations of trafficking rarely investigate the demand side of trafficking. Despite being seen as the driving force of trafficking, the demand to buy sex as well as the demand for cheap, compliant, labour, is less frequently the focus of studies. In terms of sex trafficking, there are a number of anti-trafficking public education campaigns that target men who buy sex as complicit in trafficking, which we are not arguing here. This was far outside the scope of this project, which as discussed,

was already a great undertaking. However, we would argue this topic should be met with further investigation in the near future if we are serious about prevention.

Prevention does not just entail prevention in terms of protective factors for vulnerable people who may be trafficked, but also encompasses protective factors to discourage individuals from becoming traffickers, as well as our insidious ambivalence as a society to witnessing or partaking in the abuse, exploitation and ultimately trafficking of migrants and others within the labour sector. This issue justifies a study of its own. ■

2.7 Structure of the Report

Although human trafficking is an international violation, and rooted in a framework created by international bodies, the manifestation of human trafficking tends to be very local in nature. This project is rooted in the knowledge of trafficking in the city of Calgary, at this specific time in history. As we embarked on this project, engaging community, it became clear that a number of key themes were overly presented in discussions with participants. This report is a story of the messy landscape of human trafficking in Calgary. In analyzing the data, we did not find clear answers to the research questions that could easily be presented in a simple format. Community participants often posed their own questions back to us, carried their own dynamic conversations within the group interviews away from the research questions, and shared their experiences and concerns around the topic of human trafficking, and what they were seeing on the ground. This report presents our community engagement findings with a focus on nuance, sharing the viewpoints and exploring the intersections of trafficking and domestic violence, of young people and intra-community trafficking, of harm reduction and the fight of many service providers to keep their clients safe when they know they are currently being trafficked, of why third-party rescues often do not work. Calgary communities know that exploitation, abuse, violence, and trafficking exist. They have many ideas for how we can take action on the issue, and why these need to be underpinned with anti-oppressive practice and building relationships in dignity and care if we are to be successful. Our goal in this report is to share these dominant themes, and the complex and layered realities which have ultimately fostered the development of the Calgary Community Action Plan on Human Trafficking. ■

Community Engagement Findings

3.0 Sex Work and Sex Trafficking in Calgary

"We hold moral attachments. People take moralistic stances. It's their moral stance on sex, and that's why it's complicated. It's a heated thing, right?"

Despite shared concern over the plight of individuals who experience trafficking, debates continue at the community level in Calgary over whether or not trafficking encompasses voluntary sex work. This debate is reflected in wider debates at international and national levels. There are many who argue that sex work – regardless of how an individual defines their experience – is inherently a form of coercion, violence, and exploitation (Chuang, 2010 offers a critical history of this issue). As Chuang describes, in this view, "choice and consent are not possible because prostitution is an institution of male dominance and results from the absence of meaningful choices. Women who (believe they) choose prostitution suffer from a "false consciousness," the inability to recognize their own oppression." As Barrett (2013:5) describes:

> "It is impossible, to discuss sex trafficking outside of the context of prostitution as all sex trafficking occurs within the commercial sex market and forced prostitution involving fear is, by definition, human trafficking in Canada. Traffickers embed girls and women in prostitution, advertise them in places where prostitution is advertised, and threaten victims with retaliation if they reveal their traffickers. These practices lead to significant challenges in distinguishing between those voluntarily, independently and legally in prostitution with those who are lured, groomed, coerced and forced into selling sex by others. Further, as the consumer demand to purchase sex fuels the market for both sex trafficking and prostitution, (there is a need to discuss this joint demand)."

The following sections highlight some of the dynamics of sex work in Calgary, and the tension over these views, and where there is agreement on how to support individuals however they define their experiences. ■

3.1 Sex Work and Canadian Law

In 2007, three Ontario (prior or current) sex workers initiated a constitutional challenge to provisions of the Criminal Code that prohibited various aspects of adult sex work, arguing that they infringed upon their rights. They also argued that these restrictions put the safety and lives of sex workers at risk, by preventing them from implementing certain safety measures, such as hiring security guards or screening potential clients, that could protect them from violence (Bedford decision, 2013). In 2013, the Supreme Court of Canada sided with the three women, and struck down laws that prohibit brothels, public communication for the purpose of prostitution and living on the profits of prostitution on the basis that they were unconstitutional (Bedford case, 2013). At the time, many advocates viewed this decision as a victory for the human rights of vulnerable members of society but remained cautiously optimistic about the potential for new legislation and the role it could play in the lives and livelihoods of individuals who work in the sex trade.

In 2014, in reaction to the Bedford v. Canada decision, the Conservative government introduced the Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act (PCEPA). When Bill C-36 came into effect, it was opposed by all opposition parties, including the Liberal Party (Ling, 2018). While framed as protecting women from exploitation, the new laws criminalized the purchase of sex while continuing to capture sex workers and third parties through criminal sanctions that limit where and how they work including criminalizing the advertisement of sexual services (Pitts, 2016). In essence, without criminalizing sex work, the laws criminalized numerous activities surrounding the work, making it difficult for sex workers to implement sound safety strategies. A number of researchers in Canada have argued that the purchasing provision has driven sex work further underground due to fear of arrest, and sex workers and their clients are seeking out more isolated and dangerous locations to engage in this work (Pitts, 2016). Here, a participant in this project highlights some of the concerns:

> "I think it's very interesting how we have an extra set of laws in this area. And so we have assault laws, we have trafficking laws, we have all of these things… why does there need to be this extra level? Because it creates all kinds of barriers for folks. It stops purchasers from saying "I ran into this and I don't feel very good about it, can you check it out?" It prevents people from organizing, it prevents community, all of those things bring safety. So when people who are engaging in sex work, they can't live together, they can't talk to one another, they can't be too close together, there's all of these types of things where we are further and further isolating people and we know that when we isolate people violence goes through the roof."

The Canadian Alliance for Sex Work Law Reform (2017), as well as local agencies in Calgary such as HIV Community Link (2016) have argued that PCEPA's conceptualization of sex work as violence against women is as harmful to sex workers as its specific provisions. The PCEPA defines sex work as a form of inherent exploitation and frames all sex workers as automatic victims and all clients and third parties as violent criminals. This moral and ideological premise is not only false but dangerous, as it trivializes actual violence when it does occur. Furthermore, the criminalized nature of the sex industry in Canada has driven a culture of stigma among sex workers that can lead to a cycle of violence, and undermine their health in general; for example, stigma associated with sex work prevents individuals from accessing health care services needed for violence treatment and prevention (Benoit et al, 2017a; Lazarus et al, 2012).

In relation to Canadian sex work laws and the issue of human trafficking, a number of participants in the project expressed concern for how these issues are

portrayed in our communities, and the potential risk of anti-trafficking measures to sex workers, a group many are aware can be vulnerable to sex trafficking:

> "How do we get to and how do we engage with people who are being coerced, who don't have control over what's happening to them in a way that we're not harming people's autonomy for (those) who are choice based, who have control over what they're doing. What is that balance?"

Although anti-trafficking efforts are founded on the desire to support victims, researchers have argued that they sometimes have the potential to exacerbate the very harms they seek to eradicate (Kempadoo et al, 2017). For example, as stated by a participant in the community project:

> ''The criminal code for trafficking is quite similar in its language to the prostitution laws and they can often be used in ways that are criminalizing people who are not actually traffickers or involved in trafficking, like, a third party for example, like an escort agency owner or something, could be charged with trafficking when really, they might be providing a supportive service or protective service or whatever.''

Indeed, there is a growing movement in Canada of organizations who are led by and work with sex workers, who advocate for decriminalization, as such a move would help create transparencies between who is a willful sex worker and who is not, and resources spent on prosecuting consenting adults involved in sex work could be better used to prosecute abuses and trafficking (Benoit et al, 2017b; HIV Community Link, 2016; Kempadoo et al, 2017).

Further exacerbating the complex and precarious legal position of sex workers, in April of 2018, two new anti-sex trafficking laws were passed in the U.S. which have had an unintended impact on Canadian sex workers, and raised fears for their safety (CBC, 2018). The bills, FOSTA (Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act) and SESTA (Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act) were passed with the intention to stop sex trafficking, by holding website publishers accountable for any publication of advertisements meant for sex workers. These bills have led to shutdowns of websites like Backpage.com, a popular page where sex workers could advertise their services, allowing workers to vet and screen potential clients before meeting them. The websites were also used by law enforcement and service providers for outreach and for investigative purposes. In the absence of these websites, advocates are concerned that individuals will be forced back onto the street where safety provisions are more challenging, and sex workers are more vulnerable to violence and exploitation (Ling, 2018; Ramsawakh, 2018). ■

3.2 Sex Work is Not Trafficking: The 'Messiness' of Choice, Consent and Control

A majority of project participants expressed a desire to begin discussions of sex trafficking with a recognition that sex work is a legitimate choice or occupation and separate from sex trafficking.

> "Acknowledging that *some* women are *making a choice*, albeit perhaps a constrained choice, does not mean we can't offer services which may lead them to exit, but it means we don't have that expectation, and we have not decided for them that they are a victim. That is not our purpose. That is a moral judgement that does not lead to support."

Participants contended that when we begin conversations with assumptions about *all* sex work and exploitation, no space remains to recognize and validate choices that women make when

confronted with limited economic opportunities, or other factors which lead women to choose sex work as a viable career (Chuang, 2010). Benoit et al (2017c) have argued that entry into sex work is not typically treated as an occupational choice comparable to entry into other jobs, where initiation is thought to occur through a series of predisposing factors beyond sex workers' control, for example dysfunctional socialization, childhood trauma and neglect, and socioeconomic factors, including poverty. Yet other research shows that people who sell sexual services exercise rational choices not dissimilar from those of other personal service workers seeking to make a living in economies marred by precarious employment (Sanders and Hardy, 2013). The growth of sexual commerce has made the sex industry a viable career option for a number of individuals, for example, students pursuing higher education and the middle classes (Benoit et al, 2017c).

Indeed, participants who work with sex workers in Calgary described many of these scenarios, where individuals navigate the career options available to them in our city, especially within the landscape of the economic downturn over the last few years:

> "so most…have all been very choice based, and in talking about the factors that (brought them to the industry) include things like economy and sense of agency and independence over the work that you do and especially if you feel that you do good work and that you are able to bring something to someone else's lives… and I remember one person who was sort of like you know I was working a minimum wage job, I worked in retail and strongly disliked it and you know I made a very conscious effort to go through different escort agencies in Calgary to sort of ask around for reputation, and that's been a very common theme…especially with the economy, especially for younger people who are struggling to start out."

Researchers have also distinguished between pathways to street-based survival sex (where many sex workers often arrive as runaways) and pathways to indoor work, where entry is gradual and tentative and economic motives predominate (Weitzer, 2007). A number of participants in this project also reflected these complexities: "But that is also another reason why a lot of women, like if we're going to talk about human trafficking and sex trade, there are women who actively do not want to stay in shelters or do not want to recognize that they're homeless, and will use survival sex. And is that exploitation? Some people would argue that it could be because somebody's using sex over another to provide basic needs. And like, what are we doing, we're not providing basic needs… so people are choosing. Well, choosing, but is it really a choice?"

Ultimately, the conflation of sex work, human trafficking and exploitation can lead to overly broad misuse of anti-trafficking initiatives which have the potential to place sex workers at further risk of isolation, marginalization and violence. Many argued that this is why we need to begin with a discussion about the legitimacy of sex work, because if all commercial sex is considered exploitative and violent, then actual instances of violence, coercion and/or trafficking no longer elicit attention and outrage. ■

3.3 The Support Landscape for Sex Workers Who Have Experienced Trafficking

One of the most salient concerns that came out of discussions on sex work and sex trafficking, was around how the community in Calgary supports women who work in the sex trade by choice, but experience trafficking, and then continue to work in the sex trade. For individuals who are working in the sex trade, their journey may not be linear. What was consensual can turn into exploitation and trafficking, and then revert back to choice, even within the same relationship (as will be further discussed in the following section on domestic violence): "some people may be in consensual exchange most of the time, (but) for a whole bunch of different factors they might find themselves being exploited or trafficked, and (so we should be) talking more about where the determinants that create *those* risks and *those* threats for trafficking (come from)."

> "Well I think it's even like, you know the environment is harmful too, right, because you know they're an empowered sex worker and then there's this *one* moment…and there's not a space to talk about that moment and not have that be generalized to the rest of their experience of sex work. So, I think that can really be where the confusion kind of comes in and they don't want to identify that instance as trafficking even if it was because they don't want it to be generalized with everything else."

One participant from a non-profit in the city reflected that agencies have forced individuals to fit into mandates, "rather than us fitting for them." Again, these concerns came back to issues of terminology, definitions, and dominant narratives, and what these mean to the work agencies are able to do for populations such as sex workers. Within these narratives, some participants felt that:

> "We need to have that larger conversation so that there's less shame attached to it. Because I think when we let people identify this was a choice for me and we say no, you were exploited, then all of a sudden, even though we're not meaning to, they're shamed, and blame is put on that."

Participants also made clear that within understandings of choice, there also needs to be recognition that individuals can change their mind about how they define their experiences and life story. It may be that an individual felt they were making a choice to work as a sex worker, but upon reflection at another time in their life, believe they were coerced and exploited. The critical aspect of this discussion is that the ownership of the story and how it gets told is done by the individual, and not by agencies or law enforcement. The following comment synthesizes the critical importance of this issue:

> "But anybody who's encountered violence has lost autonomy and so how in the hell, sorry but do we expect to support people if we're again stripping them of their autonomy? So part of the challenge I think, how… can they access support without necessarily going the legal route? Are our services currently forcing people into situations where maybe they don't want to be, and I'm not saying that pursuing the criminality of it, it's not important, it is, but when we talk about sexual assault alone, we do a really good job for the most part about talking about this is the survivor's choice, it shouldn't limit whether they have access to services or not. I'm not sure we do the same thing very well around trafficking or sex work, any of those things. And it's criminalized, right?"

Participants also reflected mixed perspectives on relationships between sex workers and the police, especially street level workers in Calgary. In some instances, it is felt that a minority of street-based officers are aware of the individuals on the street and offer support when needed. In other cases, the police were seen as untrustworthy, or lacking in empathy. As one individual with lived experience described: "And the police, once they know you're an addict and once they know that you're a prostitute, that's what you are….you're no longer a person." Clearly, law enforcement is needed to protect sex workers, whether they are street-based, or working indoors. Relationships and trust between these agencies and sex workers will build safety and decrease the risk for trafficking. ■

3.4 Conclusion

Among community participants, there was consensus that sex workers are a group that may be at increased risk for sex trafficking in Calgary. However, while this issue remains contentious a large number of participants felt that it was equally important to acknowledge the legitimacy of choice-based sex workers in Calgary and recognize the increased risks for violence these individuals face due to the current laws in Canada around sex work. Participants noted that recent anti-trafficking laws in the US have further exacerbated the risks and fears that sex workers face in Canada as they no longer have online tools to build community, vet clients, or communicate with service providers. As the following participant states, we still have much work to do:

> "But it requires that the community understands that this happens and that it's not necessarily a bad thing. It's so morality based that to get something like that off the ground, I think we're so far away from right now. And we're moving further and further away from it. That's the risk of what *all* exploitation, all trafficking, that is the flip side of what happens is now it's a good and bad, us and them. And so how do you get into those more nuanced conversations of okay people are purchasing sexual services. How do we educate them about if you see this, this is not necessarily a red flag (in and of itself)." ■

4.0 Domestic Violence, Coercive Control, and Human Trafficking

*"It's because trafficking doesn't just, it's not just trafficking, right? It's all of the other things that come along with it. That relationship you have with that person…It gets very messy, especially when other people want to come in and … save that person or … who label it as trafficking… and not hear **their** experience of their lives"*

One of the strongest learnings to emerge from this engagement was around the spectrum of violence, and how human trafficking in Calgary often involves the same dynamics of power and control present in patterns of domestic violence. Human trafficking and domestic violence can occur on a continuum, can co-occur, or can be entries or exits to one another. For example, when an individual is trafficked by an intimate partner, family member, or other member of the household, domestic violence often also occurs. The familial relationship itself may be used to perpetuate an exploitative power imbalance. Additionally, domestic violence at home may become a 'push' or risk factor for increasing vulnerability to trafficking (Cody, 2017). As will be discussed further, there are also intersections between labour trafficking and domestic violence, especially in cases where migrant women have precarious immigration status, creating dependencies and exacerbating vulnerabilities in potentially violent relationships with spouses or family members.

The Calgary Domestic Violence Committee (CDVC) defines domestic violence as: "the attempt, act or intent of someone within a relationship- where the relationship is characterized by intimacy, dependency or trust- to intimidate either by threat or by the use of physical force on another person or property. The purpose of the abuse is to control and or exploit through neglect, intimidation, inducement of fear or by inflicting pain. Abusive behavior can take many forms including: verbal, physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, spiritual, and economic and the violation of rights. All forms of abusive behavior are ways in which one human being is trying to have control and/or exploit or have power over another" (CDVC, 2018). This understanding of domestic violence has been widely accepted in the community of Calgary and recognizes a life span perspective. Domestic violence is often a hidden phenomenon, disproportionately impacting women, where long term negative outcomes include injury, mental health problems, stress-related diseases (such as cardiovascular diseases), extended periods of living in terror, substance use, disability and death (Boutilier et al, 2017).

Despite dominant narratives of strangers being the perpetrators of trafficking, individuals often experience violence and trafficking by those familiar and close to them; traffickers may be family members or intimate partners. Researchers such as Owens Bullard (2012) have challenged the myth

that traffickers are usually someone unknown to the victim and argue that these myths inhibit us from recognizing the intersections of intimate partner violence and trafficking. Within almost all discussions of the nature of sex trafficking in Calgary (and in many cases of labour trafficking), the common thread was the topic of *coercive control*, a core concept for those who work in the domestic violence sector. Coercive control is a pattern of behavior which seeks to take away the individual's liberty or freedom, to *strip away their sense of self*. In this model, violence is used (or not) alongside a range of other tactics- isolation, degradation, mind-games, and the micro-regulation of everyday life (Stark, 2007). These dynamics of personal relationships, love, violence, coercive control and trafficking, create a number of complex challenges for how service providers and law enforcement approach the support of victims and survivors, as the following sections explore. ■

4.1 Early Childhood Trauma, Violence and 'Re-victimization'

There were a number of dynamics related to domestic violence that were addressed during the community engagement. First, many participants pointed to the fact that situations of trafficking must be seen within a wider landscape of violence, abuse and exploitation, and that these experiences of violence often take place over the life course for women who have experienced sex trafficking in Calgary. The trafficking itself is one episode within a life journey, and a wider lens of understanding violence must be recognized in order to better support survivors of trafficking.

For example, Barbara, a woman in her 40s, began her interview with a poignant reflection on where she believed her life changed course: when she was subjected to her first episode of violence and sexual assault as a very young child, at the age of five by a stranger. She went on to describe a childhood permeated by violence, from sexual abuse by her brothers, to other family members, and ultimately her mother's unwillingness to believe her and protect her. It was this painful realization and fear for her safety that led her to flee her home at the age of 14, where she described being given drugs by an older man and being groomed into believing he was her boyfriend and would keep her safe, before he trafficked her within a few days of living on the streets of Calgary. This man, and another man after him (she describes being sold between the two as a teenager) beat her, abused her, and forced her to work the streets across Alberta and British Columbia. However, she also described believing that these men were her boyfriends at the time. For her later boyfriend, their relationship evolved, and they had children together, and there was a small hope that he would potentially change. In describing the time of her life that she lived with him, Barbara felt that, ironically, he was a good father, one whom she trusted to care for their children while she was forced to earn money for their livelihood and drug addictions by selling sex at the street level. He never did, and she described many occasions where he beat her relentlessly, she made multiple trips to the emergency room, and she feared for her life. Ultimately, when asked how she finally did manage to escape, it was the arrest of this man for attempted murder and him subsequently going to jail, that she felt was her only path to escape. In her own view, had that not occurred, she would have likely died by his hands before ever being able to leave.

Barbara's story offers a stark example of childhood trauma and abuse, cycles of violence, coercive control, and how these can manifest in a life journey of horrendous abuse, of which sex trafficking is only one element. Childhood abuse has consistently been shown to be positively associated with domestic violence, often referred to as

"re-victimization," where childhood experiences of violence, especially multiple forms of violence, are carried into adulthood, leading to an increased likelihood of re-exposure to violence (Aakvaag et al, 2017; Sinha, 2013). Many community participants in Calgary described childhood trauma, violence, abuse, assault and neglect as risk factors for later life sex trafficking and domestic violence. Participants also reflected that the personal profiles of perpetrators of human trafficking may themselves also have histories of early childhood trauma and violence, where violence becomes normalized.

Research on the topic reinforces this perception, where children who have directly experienced family violence or have been exposed to it are likelier to become perpetrators of violence later in life (Sinha, 2013). Understanding that domestic violence can be a pathway for perpetrating or becoming a victim of sex trafficking is a step forward in thinking about possible effective models of prevention, and viewing the violence experienced in trafficking through a wider lens of violence over the life course. ■

4.2 Intersections of Domestic Violence and Trafficking in Calgary

The vast majority of participants in this project characterized the nature of sex trafficking within a framework of the intersections of domestic violence, even if this terminology was not specifically used. Dynamics involved in human trafficking were frequently interwoven with those of domestic violence.

Participants highlighted the power and control used by traffickers where violence was seen as a mechanism to groom, coerce, and control women to maintain the sex trafficking dynamic. Common tactics included isolation and restricting movement, physical and emotional violence, sexual abuse and exploitation, financial abuse, threats to family members, use of children to manipulate and control, and withholding of food, sleep and medical care, among others. All of these are also common tactics used by abusers in the domestic violence sphere, where trafficking may not at all be an issue. When traffickers are also domestic violence abusers, the two forms of violence can be difficult to discern. Participants often spoke of the 'messy' nature of disentangling trafficking from an intimate or domestic relationship:

> "I'm just thinking of some of the stories I've heard from clients who have been trafficked, and a lot of it is from partners. So, mostly people saying their boyfriends... It is confusing for a lot of people of how that all went down in terms of like emotional abuse, manipulation, and how, yeah...It's because trafficking doesn't just, it's not just trafficking, right? It's all of the other things that come along with it. That relationship you have with that person...

> it gets very messy, especially when other people want to come in and, you know, save that person or you know who label it as trafficking. Which isn't necessarily a bad thing to label it as trafficking but then you know, label it as trafficking and not hear their experience of their lives? It's not just this bad thing that happened to someone somewhere."

It is important to note that domestic violence also includes violence within trusted family environments. A few cases of familial trafficking were also described, where child abuse, domestic violence, and trafficking were all taking place:

> "She described being groomed for the street by her dad, and so he started, when she was a teenager letting his friends kind of use her in whatever (way) they wanted and coupled that with drugs and I don't remember what he got her going onto. She described it as being groomed for the street, and so by the time I met her she wasn't doing that anymore and had come to Calgary to get away from it. It wasn't an intimate partner but it was still domestic abuse, just in a different way."

Repeatedly, participants described the complex nature of understanding these relationships, and how the label of trafficking, while perhaps of importance to a provider attempting to locate services, may hold another level of stress and difficulty for an individual experiencing violence:

> "The fear of who trafficked them, I think is a big piece to it and I think where they're at with their trafficker is a big thing. Because if the love bond is still strong, then they're not willing to deal with the fact that that's really what's going on, and they don't want to see that person as an exploiter because they *have been only able to cope as a result of being in love with this person.* And so labelling that person with something that is so loaded with evil is just hard in that process."

Service providers in Calgary stressed the importance of recognizing trafficking as potentially one experience in a life, and that those who work on anti-trafficking efforts need to recognize that many individuals experience trafficking within dynamic relationships. Such relationships may at times be healthy or consensual, but can also turn toward violence, and ultimately trafficking, and possibly swing back again.

From a case in this project in Calgary, one provider spoke of a sex worker she was working with who absolutely identified her experience as trafficking. In this case, a woman was being forced to sell herself in the commercial sex trade by her husband. When the provider took her client to the Calgary police to describe the threats, coercion and exploitation that were occurring, the police officer suggested that because it was her husband, it sounded more like a case of domestic violence, and referred her to a different unit. In the case of a same sex married couple, where one was working as a sex worker, but increasingly being coerced and not having access to all of his earnings, an individual shared his experience:

> "Like I mean, I woke up one morning and I said I can't do this anymore. I looked at my husband, I said what do you expect from me. And I said what do you want out of this marriage? like I mean where do you accept my wants, needs, desires and goals in life. His exact words were I don't give a damn. His exact words were, I don't give a flying f--- what you think, you're not leaving me and if you do, you're dead. Now if that isn't a warning sign and 3 days later having to go in and have 26 stitches put into my chest because he sliced me, he was gonna slit my throat….He was found not criminally responsible due to mental illness and the mental illness was brought on by his drug usage. And now he's in Calgary and like I mean I found out last week, he's actually living less than 91 meters from my house. (and do you have a restraining order?) There is one but little good is that when police show up and it's a former gay marriage and they quote unquote and his exact words were "oh it's just gay drama."

Here again, we see how complex these dynamics are. The following story was described by a man who spent time in a male shelter, and became friendly with a younger male roommate, who was extremely vulnerable:

> "This young man that I was sharing the room with, God rest his soul 'cause he finally gave up on life, like I mean he was one- being trafficked and exploited to the worst degree and then because one night he said I can't do it I'm too sick, he had one hell of a cold. He was telling me all about it and I've known this guy for a long time. He ended up having to go in for bone plates and massive surgeries on his wrist because his partner jumped on his wrist over and over. When police were involved, there was shots fired in the house and unfortunately this past March he couldn't cope with it anymore, he ended his life because of everything, like there was no outs for him. Police turned around and said oh your ex is a drug dealer, you're there by your own accord. Where do you go when that's the only home you've got and that's exactly what he said, where do I go? I have no place to go."

As these cases and the above discussion demonstrates, when we treat the issues of domestic violence and human trafficking as entirely separate, we may miss intersections where both are occurring, when understanding violence through a wider lens can be beneficial for all who want to support individuals experiencing either or both acts of violence and coercive control. The following describes why this understanding is so fundamental to landscapes of support and recovery. ■

4.3 Challenging 'Rescue' Narratives: "they're not ready to leave their trafficker"

Underlying dominant discourses of human trafficking lies an assumption that if law enforcement or NGOs could only locate victims of human trafficking, they would be able to rescue them, and save them from their trafficker. However, participants in this project repeatedly spoke about the complexities of these realities on the ground, and how challenging exiting can be. A number of participants made the clear connection between approaching a victim of human trafficking with support in the same way one would in the context of domestic violence:

> "Many of them have left lives that were horrible. So sometimes the devil you know is better than the devil you don't know and they may not even realize initially that they're being trafficked 'cause… they think that's their boyfriend. They think they're in a relationship and they're really not being trafficked out. They've agreed to have sex with other people that are friends of their boyfriends and may not even realize that money's changing hands. So there is a whole, in the domestic violence literature, there's a whole set of changes that they go through. If they're in their pre-contemplative phase and haven't recognized that they're in that phase, then giving them the exit strategies and the resources and connecting them, they're not going to use them because they don't even recognize they're in that. So the strategies that you use to try to get them out really depend on where they're at in that change continuum."

In trafficking dynamics, isolation, violence, and dependence, as well as the difficulty of disclosing abuse by an intimate partner (due to minimizing, guilt, and other possible reactions), make the prospect of leaving a trafficker seem daunting or impossible:

> "It's really tough to break because it's… true, domestic violence and the cycle of abuse, all of those things really do relate because it's not

> necessarily always about physical abuse, it's about the emotional abuse and…some people would rather experience the physical and then it's over with, but emotional abuse is a much longer impact right? And so I think what happens is that when you've been in an emotionally abusive relationship with someone, it's really hard to understand that there is something different and that what they're doing is actually quite harmful … then also the reality is your needs are being met by one person and how do you, how can you like, there's a leap of faith of having to leave and it's like how can they take that leap of faith? It must be so scary… and also there's a sense of identity with that person too right?"

As the above reflection points to, there are also serious considerations for vulnerable women (and men) who are homeless or vulnerable in other ways, and the legitimate protections that a partner and sometimes trafficker can offer:

> "the woman being on the street, that's a whole other dangerous situation in and of itself right, and so if you have someone that's willing to protect you, willing to guard you and kind of be there for you, then some women are more likely to cling onto that, and then by that or with that trafficking and exploitation can begin from there, and sometimes there is that mind set where they're like, yeah, well I'm being protected and it's, yeah I might be getting pimped out, but it's all under his control. Whereas if I was on the street and not being protected, then that kind of stuff could happen to me where I couldn't control it. So yeah, it's being homeless and that is really, just a whole other vulnerability piece to it."

Critical to this process is the trust necessary in the relationship between a service provider, or even law enforcement when they are able to build that relationship with street level women who may be experiencing trafficking:

> "They're so intimidated by the fear of what will happen to them. In many ways, especially if they think they're in a relationship with the person holding them there, their fear of what could happen next is worse. So if I'm not successful and if I don't have the right strategy and I don't have the right supports when I get out, it's going to be way worse than if I stay here. So let's just not do it. So there has to be a certain level of trust and often you're dealing with people that have been multi-traumatized, which is how they got recruited in the first place or how they got taken in the first place…So how do you build that trust up?"

When trust develops, it can be life-saving for an individual experiencing domestic violence alongside sex work and periods of trafficking:

> "So they actually, I was taken up to the ----- shelter for 72 hours just to be able to…. because they recognized, some of the domestic violence team noticed something, noticed more was going on than what they thought. Like I mean, the case worker I had there, she was very, thank God for her and she opened my eyes to "okay you need to start thinking about getting away from this and it's gonna take a few times to do it….(male survivor)"

As the above discussions describe, there is often not an easy out for individuals in these dynamic domestic violence and trafficking situations. Traffickers can be family members or partners, individuals who hold a position of trust. In some cases, relationships were not always marred by violence, or possibly even an intention to deceive. Indeed, episodes of violence and trafficking may be interrupted by periods of calm, or child rearing or even love and consent. This makes it incredibly challenging for providers and law enforcement to navigate. Ultimately, individuals need to be provided resources and supports which allow them to come as they are, otherwise exit programs will not be successful (see section 8 for a discussion of best practices related to these dynamics). ■

4.4 Violence Against Migrant Women, Domestic Violence and Labour Trafficking

An area that has received less attention in this realm is that of violence against women and domestic violence for migrant women in Canada, and the intersection with labour trafficking. Lack of immigration status can leave women isolated, dependent, and vulnerable to abuse. Women without status and with precarious immigration status are often forced to choose between remaining in an abusive relationship, deportation, and living without access to social services or the ability to work. They live under the constant threat of deportation, and are often unable to access help when an incident of domestic violence occurs. Non-status women are particularly vulnerable when experiencing abuse because they are not able to legally work, nor are they able to access income assistance or many other social services if they leave their abusive partners.

In a group interview conducted with Filipina caregivers in Calgary who entered Canada under the Temporary Foreign Worker Program, one woman described an experience which highlighted the intersection of domestic violence and migrant women who may also have experienced labour trafficking. Here is a synopsis of her story:

> "Larema arrived in Canada as a temporary foreign worker almost ten years ago. She went through a number of abusive employers, but remained in her situation because she was desperate to stay in Canada and gain permanent residency. Eventually she met her husband, a Canadian resident. They fell in love, got married, and in her mind, everything was finally going to work out. However, he became abusive and violent, threatening her. "I was like oh my God, this is worse than having an (abusive) employer... And that is what happened to me, and in the end I had my husband who was abusing me and I've got…that Filipino (friend) who reported me to Immigration saying that my marriage was for convenience. So I was blacklisted." At the time this was happening, Larema was working with a kind and decent employer who advised her to find a lawyer, because by this time she did not trust her husband to tell Canadian authorities that it was a real marriage. "What if my husband will not fight for me?" Larema's employers paid for a lawyer to help her. In the end, the advice she received was to stay in the relationship and in the house: "oh my God that was, between like everything, I cannot sleep and then when my husband is mad with me, or you know like you don't know. I think he is bipolar too, so I just like, I phoned my lawyer one time I said I want to get out, and she said no, no, no… don't leave the house. So I just say oh my God, I just always say yes… I lost my identity, I didn't even know myself because I had to go and do whatever he wants me to do… to be very submissive because my lawyer told me to wait because its just like this… I was even going to call 911 but I said oh my God if I call 911 there's gonna be a hassle so I said no I'm not… He says he told me he will kill me if I do that. …. he's mentally ill really, like more than that. He's not just that. Because one time he's so nice. He's so nice. It is a click of a finger, he's an evil… Oh I said I have to survive because I want my PR. Like I already gone this far you know there's no turning back."

Larema's story highlights the complex nature of the immigration system, and how experiences of domestic violence intersect in sometimes dangerous ways. Larema did end up staying with her abuser, obtaining her PR, and divorcing him. She is also now an active member in a community group through one of the newcomer agencies in Calgary. She would love to be of help to other women like her. Because she had a supportive employer, and was incredibly resilient, her story has a happy ending. However, many other women are not as fortunate.

It has been well established through research and social work practice literature that women experiencing domestic violence face numerous, and sometimes insurmountable, barriers in seeking services for their situations (Alaggia et al, 2009). Research on the experiences of migrant women identifies isolation, lack of economic supports (access to housing, child care and financial aid), language barriers, suspicion of state intervention, fear of discriminatory treatment, fear of racism, loss of social supports and cut-offs from extended family and their cultural community as barriers to leaving violent relationships. Women who are sponsored by their spouses to immigrate feel particularly vulnerable when abuse and violence is an unfortunate reality in their relationship. They fear deportation for themselves if they lose their sponsor, deportation of their husbands if criminally charged, and the possibility of losing their children if they come forward to disclose and seek services to deal with their situations (Alaggia et al, 2009).

In April 2017, the Canadian government announced a critical step in combating gender violence when they abolished the family sponsorship immigration condition that required sponsored spouses and partners to live with their sponsor for two years to keep their Canadian immigration status. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada stated the move was taken to tackle concerns that many individuals were choosing to remain in abusive relationships because they were afraid of losing their permanent resident status (IRCC, 2017). However, if a woman is financially dependent on her husband, or experiencing violence and coercive control alongside potential labour trafficking by a partner, the options for escape are limited.

We also want to acknowledge the reality that male migrants may also face, as some participants in Calgary also noted the intersection between domestic violence and male migrants in Canada. One participant highlighted the dependence that male migrants may feel as fathers, who do not want to lose access to their children. They may be forced to work by their partners/wives, but have no control over their earnings, and live with threats and abuse. Children are used as a weapon by their mothers. They may also arrive in Canada via familial sponsorship, and then face abuse when they arrive by family members, and threats of deportation. Because of language barriers, and stigmatization against men who experience abuse, they very often do not come forward. Many of these men develop Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depression and anxiety, and lack access to services, or the courts which are felt not to listen to their struggles. Because migrants to Canada are inherently vulnerable (See section on 8 on labour trafficking), both men and women can face risks for the intersections of domestic violence and trafficking. ■

4.5 Conclusion

Both domestic violence and human trafficking are human rights violations, and forms of trauma that can have long term impacts on physical, emotional and mental health. Participants in this community engagement highlighted the need to widen the lens of understanding violence and coercion within trafficking relationships beyond typical trafficking narratives. We would like to recognize that women who experience domestic violence and women who experience trafficking are a heterogeneous group with diverse experiences unique to their own individual life histories and social contexts. Further, although domestic violence and human trafficking are different forms of victimization, there are similarities and intersections between these types of violence in terms of power and control. Advocates working at domestic violence shelters often encounter individuals who have also experienced trafficking. Frequently, victims are denied access to money and lack the financial resources necessary to leave an abuser/trafficker. The National Network to End Domestic Violence (2017) argues that "domestic violence and human trafficking are dire issues of great importance and deserve their own individual recognition. However, by acknowledging the intersection of domestic violence and human trafficking, we can begin to recognize how complex patterns of abusive behavior create environments that enable and perpetuate violence." Rather than limiting examinations of violence to the domestic/family sphere, participants in Calgary have advocated for an intersectional view of violent behaviour across various landscapes and life courses, where trafficking experiences may be one instance or label for a particular experience or moment in time. ■

5.0 Children and Young People, Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking in Calgary

In contrast to debates surrounding adult sex trafficking and choice-based sex work where the issue of consent is contested, there is broad agreement that consent is generally less relevant in the case of children due to the physical differences between adults and minors, and the incapacity of minors to anticipate the consequences of such acts (Miller-Perrin and Wurtele, 2017). That said, participants in this project expressed concern for balancing how best to promote the rights and agency of young people while ensuring they are safe and protected from risk and exploitation.

For the purposes of this report, youth are defined as falling between the ages of 13 and 24 years old. This range was chosen as it reflects the balance of agency perspectives, for example, under PSECA (Protection of Sexually Exploited Children Act) who are working with children from the age of 13-24 as well as many youth-mandated organizations in Calgary who will work with young people in transition up to the age of 24, and in some cases beyond. This is not meant to be a strict guideline but offers a perspective on the population's participants were speaking of. We make clear here that there is no single youth population in Calgary, and this report highlights the great diversity of this issue and the experiences of young people who intersect with situations of exploitation in the city. While ACT Alberta does not work with individuals who are under the age of 18, it was our aim in this community engagement to better understand the landscape of risk, and thus prevention, for the purpose of informing the action plan. We are not experts in children and youth but our colleagues in other organizations on the front line are. These voices spoke passionately about the immense complexity of this issue, and the legislative landscape that is unique to Alberta.

In terms of these findings, it is critical to note that for ethical reasons, and as this was not a comprehensive examination of this one particular issue, we chose not to interview young people themselves. Thus, we are relying on adult perspectives of the issue, alongside published reports which evaluate and present findings from the voices of young people. Further study of this issue should aim to place the voices of young people at the centre. ■

5.1 The Landscape of Risk and Vulnerability for Young People in Calgary

When examining risk factors for sexual exploitation in children and young people in Calgary, the following viewpoint encapsulates many of these complexities, and the type of landscape most often spoken about:

> "So I think there's kids who experience sexual abuse in their homes…and when they experience those kinds of things then there's a distrust of the adults that are caregivers for them. Sometimes they start to connect those kinds of levels of understanding or ways that they've been engaged with the adults so they sort of think about things like 'my body is only good for sex' or that affection and violence… is related to acts of sexual assault and there's this kind of connection between that's the way that I have to engage with people in the world, right? So then some of those kids certainly make decisions to run away from home. They potentially put themselves at risk with others because …if they're no longer at home and they don't have a caregiver and they're not planning on going back to them, they have the need to live somewhere. So some of those kids gravitate to people who are opportunistic and are taking advantage of the vulnerability of that youth over all kinds of things. So we sorta think…it could be related to how a young person connects around things like affection, exchanging something for affection, exchanging a sexual favor of some sort for cigarettes or alcohol or drugs and so drug use certainly is a factor."

This perspective highlights a number of key issues. First, that child abuse or neglect tend to overlap and the experience of one form of childhood abuse increases the likelihood of experiencing another (Aakvaag et al, 2017; Kessler et al., 2010).

Often related to child abuse and domestic violence is that of housing insecurity and homelessness. Youth homelessness exists within a broad and complex spectrum of circumstances and includes: runaways, who have left home without parental permission; young people who have been forced to leave home by their parents; street youth who have spent at least some time living on the streets; and systems youth — i.e., young people who become homeless after aging out of foster care or exiting the juvenile justice system (Farrow et al. 1992; Toro, Dworsky & Fowler, 2007). Homeless youth include all those who lack permanent housing which includes young people who are precariously housed, couch surfing, sleeping in shelters (adult or youth shelters), sleeping 'rough' (outside), and experiencing episodic and/or chronic homelessness. In a 2008 survey of street-involved youth in Calgary, 71 percent of respondents reported having experienced some form of child abuse or neglect. The same study described street-involved youths' home environments as characterized by dysfunction, violence, family breakdown, and in most cases, child welfare involvement (Worthington et al, 2008). In 2018 during the *'Point In Time Homeless Count'* in Calgary, of the 2,627 homeless individuals counted, 11% of were under the age of 18, and an additional 7% of the total were between 18-24. Participants in this study described shelters in Calgary as inappropriate for vulnerable young people who may be more at risk when staying there. From the perspective of many young people in Calgary, they would rather camp or find alternatives than stay in the current shelters available. When examining risk, this is a huge concern for providers who work with young people.

Indeed, once young people make the transition from home to the street, they enter a new world with its own culture, norms, and rules. In this landscape, children and youth may become vulnerable to sexual exploitation in order to meet their basic needs of food and shelter. The term 'survival sex' describes selling sex as one way to survive being homeless, and this term is useful in conceptualizing the extent to which poverty is an important factor in child and youth involvement in in the sex trade (Alberta Children's Services, 2004). Studies show that up to 25% of street-involved youth have traded sex at some point in their lives (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2006; Weber et al, 2002). Survival or obligatory sex may offer a way for street youth to gain autonomy and independence while on the street. Many youth have left family or child welfare situations in a manner that does not allow their return, and survival or obligatory sex and eventual involvement in the sex trade is a way of establishing some immediate financial independence and autonomy from their former living situations (McIntyre, 1999). In these scenarios there may not be a trafficker, but certainly exploitation is occurring when examined through a lens of the law in Alberta where a child under 18 cannot consent to survival sex.

Homeless youth lacking stable and safe social support mechanisms can also be at great risk for exploitation by traffickers; young people who have run away from home are thought to be one of the most vulnerable groups to trafficking (Bigelsen and Vuotto, 2013; Murphy et al, 2015; Morton et al, 2017). Victimization on the street is extremely common among street-involved youth, and can take the form of theft or robbery, sexual assault, physical assault, and assault with a weapon (Gaetz, 2004). For minority groups like gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth, the level of victimization can nearly double (Whitbeck et al, 2004). In one study in Calgary, 76% of youth indicated they had been a victim of violence on the street, and 62% indicated they had been violent towards others while on the street (Worthington, 2008). Violence is endemic for young people living on the street, and this population was highlighted as extremely at risk for sexual exploitation.

Another issue that was highlighted as a risk factor for sexual exploitation was drug abuse and addiction. Indeed, there are a number of different pathways in which sexually exploited young people become addicted to substances. Some may enter an exploitative situation or relationship already as substance users, while others may be deliberately addicted by exploiters or forced or coerced into exchanging money for drugs. Drugs can also be used as a form of control and intimidation, and for some young people, they are able to survive violence and exploitation by using drugs (de Chesnay, 2013). Most participants in this engagement identified a high incidence of substance use and addiction among young people who are sexually exploited.

> "In terms of our kids… and yeah what comes first right, the chicken or the egg in the addiction and the exploitation? and it's pretty significant. Those early intervention ones where we can get out and do some education before it gets to that point are more successful. Once the addictions start it is much more complicated."

Drug use was seen to be a major barrier for young people to exit their exploitative relationships and situations, where abstinence was an entry point for service provision (and this is the case for adults who also must face these challenges as well). For young people currently on the street, one study in Calgary found that 99% of youth had used some kind of substance within the past two weeks. In terms of specific types of substances used, these include tobacco (93%), marijuana (87%) hash (67%) ecstasy (41%), crack (41%), cocaine (40%), diethylamide (LSD) (32%), crystal meth (24%), heroin (15%), and glue/gas (13%) (Worthington et al, 2008).

The following participant quote highlights the complex nature of drug use and intersections with the community as well. It is not simply leaving drugs behind, which is already incredibly difficult, it is leaving a whole world and community behind:

> "Yeah, the peers. So we have kids that go into confinement, like they're out for 5 days, a week, back in, 10 times in a year or whatever that is. So we have kids that are just so high-risk that we can't manage them in the community and placements can't manage them, parents can't manage them, and the drug use I think is huge. I think that's the biggest draw for a lot of them, to be honest… And I think it's hard, right. If I told you delete all your friends out of your life and go find a whole new friend group, that's huge. And all of our kids are looking for some kinda belonging in their peer groups. So I think that's a big challenge. And then the drugs and just who they hang out with."

The use of drugs is endemic, it represents a method for coping with trauma, and is embedded within communities of street-involved young people in Calgary. When we speak of exploitation or survival sex of young people, drug use and addictions must be part of the conversation. ■

5.2 Looking for Connection, Acceptance and Love in the Wrong Places

"At the end of the day we're all human and we're all wired for connection right, so if somebody isn't experiencing that, they're going to go wherever they get it, just a very human response."

Across demographics for young people in Calgary, participants described the search for love, connection and belonging as a root cause for trafficking.

> "I think the big, and looking for trends and commonalities and things, and I think it's trauma is the number one. And then hand-in-hand with that is self-esteem, and it's those two pieces, those are the two commonalities that I think we see across all of the youth that we work with in terms of sexual exploitation, is that some form of trauma, whatever that might look like, looks different for each youth. And then with that is that lowered self-esteem and looking to fill that open spot that's there from the trauma, and fill that self-esteem and still that pain."

Although not specific to young people, one issue that was repeatedly identified within discussions of this population was that of self-esteem, looking for love, acceptance and belonging. This issue also cuts across youth populations, being highlighted as an issue for immigrant, Indigenous, and LGBTQ2+ young people.

> "but definitely low self-esteem plays a part in that. They need to be loved by somebody 'cause these guys will tell you they'll love you if you're here to next week…. They all just crave that belonging." ■

5.3 Entrenched Young People and the Landscape of Exploitation in Calgary

Within interviews, many front-line service providers described a spectrum framework for understanding the vulnerability of youth to exploitation. At one end of the spectrum are youth who become disengaged from school and community life, and experiment with risky behaviours, lacking supports and supervision, and/or whose basic needs are not always being met. At the other end are youth living on the margins, including young people who are incarcerated, and disaffected street youth who survive through illicit activities such as gangs and drug trafficking. The term 'entrenched' youth was frequently used to describe this end of the spectrum, where a constellation of serious child abuse, involvement in the child welfare system, running away from home or placements, and living in poverty on the streets describes a large proportion of such youth.

> "for sure a blend of kids who start off and they're like 'deer in the headlights,' I've run away from my group home or my home or my foster home or wherever or I'm stayin' at the shelter and I'm meeting people and it's kind of on the lower end of the spectrum still, and I say lower end in terms of non-organized sexual exploitation with the purposes of commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking. But that still doesn't take away from the vulnerability and the impact in terms of trauma on those kids by any means. And then I think there is

> the deeper end of the pool kinds of kids where we may not really 100% know what it is that's going on for them because they're so controlled by the individual that they're associating with and they're taking other kids there to that home and bad, bad things are happening that's for sure."

Researchers have suggested that the coercive nature of exploitative relationships may hide or confuse the picture for practitioners because it may lead young people to display aggressive behaviour that masks their vulnerability. As one participant stated: "these victims may not look compelling." For "hard-core kids, street entrenched," it may look like they are making choices when in reality they are under intense control by another, whether that be another youth or an adult.

Youth who have fled families, group homes and other institutions are also seeking to create communities for support and survival. If youth commit crimes when trying to provide for themselves, they may face detention and end up trapped in quasi-criminal systems. In addition, they are confronted with many different challenges, which may include homelessness, racial discrimination, lack of familial support and mental health challenges.

> "Okay, so I was prosecuting her actively while she was also a victim of trafficking, so it can be obviously complex for those individuals in that position who are vulnerable, but also on the wrong side of the law in other areas of their life. And that wasn't in relation to the act she was engaging in, in the trafficking context, it was completely separate from that, but obviously she was not somebody who's likely to go running to the police because she has other issues of her own that she was dealing with, which obviously complicates things for everybody considerably."

As will be discussed in a further section on intra-community trafficking, these dynamics can be highly complex within communities of young people, especially when they are entrenched or involved with law enforcement and the justice system in other capacities. ■

5.4 Immigrant Young People and Risks for Trafficking in Calgary

There are a number of experiences within exploitation and trafficking that are nearly universal within discussions of young people and risk: childhood trauma, life transitions, family dysfunction, mental health and addiction, and the search for love and connection. However, a number of participants in this project suggested we needed to highlight the unique experiences that may differ for young people in immigrant and newcomer communities in Calgary. This topic was simply not covered in enough depth within our engagement. However, what we were told was immigrant and visible minority youth are more likely to confront barriers related to racism, discrimination and marginalization, compounded by the likelihood that they live in low-income, single-parent households and struggle to access quality education and employment opportunities (United Way, 2011)

Participants spoke about the economic dynamics within newcomer communities, and how these may increase risks for girls to become involved in exploitative relationships:

> "We have had children stay home from school because their parents are working two or three jobs so they have to babysit, or they have to translate (for their parents)…that's the acculturation stuff, the resentment some of our kids have… I don't wanna look after my five brothers and sisters. I don't wanna have to do this. I wanna

> make money. Why can't I have the same clothes as my friends so I'll go out. Someone else is offering this so why not? Let's go do it so. It makes it very vulnerable."

Participants who worked with immigrant youth also spoke about the rise of gangs in their communities, and highlighted the importance of a sense of belonging for young people within these gangs, and thus the risks involved: "they feel like they belong, and are being protected. It's a sense of family."

Participants also spoke of male victims of exploitation within immigrant communities, and the exacerbation of stigmatization that often occurs:

> "Boys will resort to violence more than to admit that they are being exploited; particularly with immigrants. It's easier to become angry and become violent than to admit that they are involved in that. They are seen more as offenders, and this, combined with culture and shame, make it more difficult for them to access services."

This perspective again demonstrates the need to look beyond the surface of situations, to ask more questions, and to move beyond stereotypes. There were also connections made to honour-based violence and shame in families, and how these situations place young people at risk:

> "You know I think on one particular young girl that was getting groomed originally is because she left her house due to nearly (being) honor killed 'cause they wanted her to marry a cousin, she didn't want to. When she went into care this young man that knew about her situation, sort of used her situation against her and sort of made her so dependent on him, making her do all sorts of things, sexually, even though she didn't want to and sort of like a brainwashing. I would speak to this young lady about what he's doing, but to her, he loves her. He tells her all the time. It became where he got physically, well our police officer had to step in 'cause he started physically abusing her as well. But even in the physical abuse, she really believed that he loved her. That's why, 'cause he loved her so much, that's why he hit her. But it's kinda hard."

This issue is extremely complex, and requires further investigation so as not to risk oversimplifying or presenting a single story as representative of any of the diverse populations of young people in Calgary. However, our purpose here was to acknowledge there are particular threats or risks that are unique to newcomer populations in Calgary, and that these need to be recognized, otherwise we risk presenting dominant narratives of often-Canadian born, Caucasian young women as the face of this issue. Alongside universal issues such as belonging and looking for connection, there are increased pressures on newcomer young people, and a need to create spaces for their voices and experiences to be heard:

> "Cause a lot of the youth that we work with, they've come, and the sense of belonging isn't there, you know, they've come from another country, the confusion of everything, the cultural pressures. So it is building that trust and building that sense of belonging because a lot of them do feel socially excluded, and so I think helping them feel included and changing that dynamic will help, because when they're left on the outskirts or they feel left on the outskirts, it just leaves them at higher risk of everything. So like he said, everyone wants to feel a sense of belonging and then so building them up will help I think."

In terms of intervention and prevention, the building of strong social and community networks must be seen as a priority for young people from newcomer and immigrant communities in Calgary. ■

5.5 Are Boys and Young Men Being Trafficked in Calgary?

Prevailing discourse, research, and interventions around child sexual exploitation have focused overwhelmingly on female victims. However, research in Canadian cities of homeless young people for example, has shown that a high number of young men are also at risk. For example, in one study in Calgary, among males, 13% said they had been asked to be involved in prostitution, 10% in recruiting others for prostitution, 54% in spotting (being on the lookout for police), and 16% in pimping (Worthington et al, 2008). In a study of street youth in Vancouver, 8% of male youth reported recent survival sex work involvement (Chettiar et al, 2010). In the U.S, Curtis et al (2008) spoke directly with youth who were engaged in commercial sexual activity and found that over half (54%) of youth engaged in survival sex in New York City were young men, while 42% were young women and 4% were individuals who identified as transgender. These results are consistent with those of study by Dank et al. (2015) which found that young homeless men in New York City were three times more likely to have traded sex for a place to sleep than young women (Dank et al 2015). These findings focus on youth over the age 18, where survival sex is defined in a particular way. We simply do not have statistics for those under the age 18, but we must assume that young boys on the street are also at risk for exploitation, and perhaps even more so. It is extremely difficult to compare these findings to the current landscape of sexual exploitation of young people in Calgary, where for example, 100% of young people in involuntary care through PSECA were female this year. However, participants in Calgary are aware of this reality, and some of the major barriers to locating these individuals. The following is an edited discussion between various providers about whether or not boys and young men are being trafficked:

A: Oftentimes what we've discussed is, just even with some of the stigma and things like that associated with PSECA, they often end up in places like Secure or PChAD (The Protection of Children Abusing Drugs Act) because they're more looking at if there's also volatility involved with them or drug addiction or crime. They'll be maybe more so focusing on those things as opposed to looking at that exploitation of those young people. And we haven't had a boy this year at all, I don't think. It's not because they're not there.

B: And are your other colleagues looking for that now as they learn more of their story?

C: I honestly, and this is my opinion, I feel like when we do end up getting males into the program it's because the issues cannot be ignored. They're pretty severe or they're very public about it. So they're pretty entrenched and we get them because there is no other option. I do think that there are a lot of male recruiters or groomers and yes, I think the majority of them end up at Secure, and it's very rare.

A: Or in CYOC (Calgary Young Offender Centre). They're picked up under other legislation.

C: Even there's that balance of maybe they have a bit of that recruiter side but they also have that victim side themselves, where they've been victimized, then maybe they're treated more though on the recruiter side of things as opposed to the victim of exploitation.

A: And I think that as far as knowledge, like you were saying, do your colleagues have more knowledge of this now? I think that knowledge is interesting because I think there's periods of time where there's a lot of discussion or there's maybe a conference, and maybe Sue McIntyre talks about that, then there's all of a sudden this

> increased awareness. And then it goes un-talked about for a little while and it starts to be less knowledge for people, and then there'll be people who will change and shift into different roles, and then all of a sudden we're back at guys being recruited, what is that about?

This discussion highlights a number of issues. As with the discussion of immigrant male youth, law enforcement and providers may see violence and criminal activity where there exists underlying trauma and victimization. Indeed, stigma can foster these misconceptions about what is really going on and become a major barrier for young men coming forward with their stories:

> "Well and I think too when we do get the males that come in, it's not the same as when we often see the females coming in. So they're often working for themselves, they're often posting it online. I mean, that's what a lot of girls are doing now, but they don't usually have like a pimp that they're working for. It's usually themselves. There's a lot of shame with the males that we work with too and so they don't wanna admit that this is what's happening. I've personally worked with quite a few males over the last two years and there is a lot of shame. They're embarrassed to tell their families or whatever and sometimes their parents don't even wanna admit that this is what's happening to their son or whatever."

Both of these conversations highlight the complex nature of locating young men and boys who are being exploited in Calgary. They may be interfacing with the justice system, they may be recruiters/victims themselves, further entrenched, they may be working on their own, under the age of 18, and without a trafficker, but still being exploited. One participant reflected on the common occurrence of seeing young boys who are living in group homes and clearly experiencing abuse and exploitation. They may become violent, very often with staff, and end up with charges. This participant reflected that we are not digging into these stories to learn of potential victimization, and in ignoring these realities we may be placing boys at further risk. At times, within the city, we have worked harder to locate these individuals, and then at other times, they have been hidden and further marginalized. It is clear again, as with so many of these issues related to exploitation, we are not meeting the needs of potentially vulnerable and exploited individuals in our city. ■

5.6 Intra Community Trafficking and Exploitation 'When There Is No Trafficker'

Discourses on young people and exploitation often portray a fairly straight forward dynamic where an innocent, perhaps naïve young person, is groomed by an older adult (usually male), coerced, perhaps drugged, and then sexually exploited. In this scenario, the young person may be physically trapped somewhere, may be trafficked in a gang situation, and often has family members desperately trying to search for them. In this community engagement, we heard that any young person can be at risk of trafficking. There is no singular path to exploitation, and young people with healthy home lives, loving parents, and economic security, may be lured by a trafficker on the internet, due to low self-esteem, looking for a sense of belonging or simply excitement. However, what we heard most often from providers on the front line, is that the dynamics between 'trafficker' and 'victims of exploitation' are often far more complex, far more grey. First, in a number of cases, participants spoke to the issue of intra-community trafficking, where young people themselves play key roles in the process, especially of recruitment. This is often described as a more informal type of trafficking:

> "I think we've also heard of cases where these other kinda bigger adults or people that are out there are asking the people they already have involved with this, the young people to, hey can you bring your friends, bring a couple friends to a party and then they can get you some drugs that way? And so I think there's potential for youth to start grooming others and recruiting them in that way without even necessarily being able to acknowledge it themselves that that's what they're doing. But that's a lot easier than them having to face the exploitation piece- therefore, I'll get my needs met and I don't have to have sex or exchange but I can just bring a friend to a party. And so to them that seems less hurtful that I'm just bringin' a friend. It's not a big deal."

For entrenched young people, many of whom are living on the street, social networks of peers are referred to as their 'street family'. These close bonding networks represent a positive contribution to vulnerable youth's ability to cope particularly when family supports are not available. However, while such networks are critical, given their homogeneity they may also be places where violence and exploitation can also occur (United Way, 2011). It is important to note that in general, street youth in Calgary experiencing high levels of violence was a common experience. For some young people who have been exploited, the recruitment and exploitation of others may become a part of their reality. As one participant stated, "the trafficker and the trafficked? They are the same person." Indeed:

> "I've seen people who have exploited youth and who have been trafficked themselves or having been exploited themselves and then used that position to gain power in… whatever's going on for them to gain more power. But they also know who are vulnerable…because they already see that in themselves and that's really hard to see. I think people have a hard time understanding if you've been exploited yourself how could you exploit somebody else but it's that I want to gain power again. How do I gain power in my position, how do I make whatever is unbearable right now a little bit bearable?"

Exploitation of young people may be part of a normalized violent landscape of survival, as one participant stated, "that's just normal, yeah. People use and get used."

Beyond intra-community trafficking, there was evidence presented in this engagement that in some cases, young people are taking part in the sex industry when there is no level of peer pressure, recruitment or trafficker behind the scenes.

> "Yeah, and I'd say we're not seeing as many pimps anymore. Kids are kind of doing their own stuff. So they're not going through a pimp, they're going directly online and making their own exchanges and their own deals."

In one case, a participant spoke of a girl under the age of 18 who was using the online website *kijiji.com* to sell babysitting services, but was offering sexual services to the father of the children as he drove her back home. This was not a singular episode, but something she did regularly. When the worker spoke to her of healthy relationships and the risks involved, she expressed that she really felt that this was a positive way for her to make extra money, and refused to see herself being victimized. These cases are incredibly complex to contend with, especially if the young person is approaching 18.

Some researchers and activists have argued that the predicament of older teenagers who sell sex can be misunderstood, and that the need to consider consent to sexual activity within the context of coercion and manipulation is crucial if exploited young people are to be identified. The age of consent in Canada for all forms of sexual activity is 16 years. This means that it is not illegal for an adult to have consensual sex with someone who is 16 or older, as long as the adult is not in a position of trust or authority, the youth is not deemed to be dependent on the person, and the relationship is not exploitive toward the youth. However, for sexual exploitation, the age shifts to 18. Any young person who is 16 or 17 and exchanges sex for material benefit is a victim of sexual exploitation. Some members in the community, although uncomfortable with these dynamics, also noted that these activities may not look the same as the trafficking narratives and activism that many of us believe we are working to change.

> "Again if you think you're living with your boyfriend and just helping him out by agreeing to have sex with people and then somebody swoops in and takes you and puts you into this place, then you're gonna fight to get out. So it's basically almost a form of brainwashing that got you in. Now to get you out, we almost have to do that again. So we have to keep you away from people but it then violates every aspect that we have in resorting control and choice. So it's another system abusing them."

Although this topic is under-researched, Jonsson et al 's (2015) study of young people in the sex trade also found a large number of young people working independently. The informants in this study all had stable social lives in the sense that they had roofs over their heads, food to eat, and no substance-abuse issues. None had a third party who arranged the sexual contacts and none were currently trafficked. Professionals working with young people who sell sex online need to understand the complex web of mixed feelings and emotional needs that can play a role in selling sex. Young people selling sex might need guidance in relationship building as well as help processing traumatic experiences

and ending self-harming behavior (Jonnson et al, 2015). Young people operate in a wide range of personal, geographic and social situations. They may earn money or informally barter for shelter or provisions. They may negotiate in public spaces and/or communicate via various online and mobile devices. They may work in public spaces and/or within the privacy of indoor locations. Some youth sell or trade sex in isolation and independently, some work within the sex industry by concealing their actual age, while others earn money through street economies or other relationships that can sometimes be coercive (Canadian Alliance for Sex Worker Reform, 2017). Within Calgary, stakeholders recognized that we are only just beginning to recognize the scale of young people who are being exploited but not working with traffickers or pimps. Those on the front lines are aware this is happening, but dominant narratives have not yet made space for these activities to be discussed. It is clear that some of these young people, whether they are 17 or 19, still require support, still may have underlying vulnerabilities related to abuse and trauma or addiction. However, their complex needs and situations must be understood if we are to recognize how to intervene and effectively provide support. ■

5.7 Prevention, Intervention and Situating Sexual Exploitation Within the Legislative Context of PSECA

In response to growing concerns about children involved in prostitution, the Alberta Task Force on Children Involved in Prostitution was established in 1997, and a final report made a number of recommendations with respect to education, health, social support and the legal community. One of the core legacies of this task force was the development of the PChIP Act (The Protection of Children Involved in Prostitution Act- later renamed PSECA in 1999- the Protection of Sexually Exploited Children Act) which legislated the provision of a continuum of services for children involved in prostitution, including both voluntary and involuntary programs. This work effectively reconstructed young people's involvement in the sex industry as a child protection matter rather than a concern of the criminal justice system or a question of social welfare. Children were understood to be victims of abuse, rather than criminals or delinquents. Taylor's (2016) research offers a critical historical perspective of this time period of Alberta's history and the political roots of this process and legislation where particular ideologies were elevated, and other voices were left out of the conversation. Initial uptake of involuntary programs was low and the programs were underutilized. At the Calgary facility, for 2002-2003 the occupancy rate was only 20%, a decrease of 33.3% from the year before (Alberta Children's Services, 2004). However, in recent years, the numbers of children served under PSECA programs (voluntary and involuntary) has steadily grown. In 2013/2014, 129 children were served across Alberta, in 2014/15, 146 children, in 2015/16, 167 children, and in 2017/18, 178 children (Human Services Alberta, 2018).

PSECA legislation and resulting programing for young people have been praised in some corners and criticized by others. Some have argued that youth protection laws and procedures frequently do not use a harm reduction perspective and are often focused on detention, forced rehabilitation and institutionalization. Researchers such as Seguin (2008) have argued that the legislation blurs the boundary between child welfare and youth justice and has negative consequences for particular groups of young people, for example Indigenous girls. Furthermore, some have pointed to discomfort around the fact that authorities and community

organizations that have mandates to provide services to PSECA clients can actively seek out suspected victims. According to Saewyc et al. (2013), critics of the law argue that *suspected* victimization is not a reasonable justification to hold someone; moreover, girls are disproportionately targeted, the causes of sexual exploitation are not addressed, and victims often view it as "a form of detention without actually being charged with or convicted of a crime" (Leavitt, 2017: 157). Criticisms also include concerns about the protection of a youth's legal rights (e.g., lack of procedural protections to challenge apprehension orders). Secure care type legislation can also drive youth underground, further from social supports. Although in-depth research on the achievements of PSECA programming is scarce, the following sections of this report offer insights from the front lines, where a number of providers are working within the confines of the legislation to offer young people both voluntary and involuntary programming that offers safety, protection, and a chance to heal and plan for a better life. ■

5.8 Coming Out of the Fog: A 'Break' in Exploitation, a Time to Rest and Heal, and Build Trusting Connections

Participants in Calgary reflected on the diverse levels of programing available to young people in the city who have been sexually exploited. The first area to discuss are those involuntary services, which are funded under PSECA legislation, and where young people under the age of 18 can be apprehended with the work of law enforcement, and with the involvement and professional assessment of Child and Family Services. The goals of locked assessment treatment facilities are to assist youth who are not willing to leave sex work voluntarily but who are a danger to themselves or others. In 1999 the Alberta government tabled amendments to extend the length of the initial confinement period from three days to a maximum of five days. A process to allow access to legal representation was also developed and child welfare authorities could apply for a maximum of two additional confinement periods of up to 21 days each. The rationale for the extended periods was that it would allow, if necessary, greater time to break the cycle of abuse and to stabilize the child.

Although contentious for a number of reasons related to the rights of the child, and whether or not this is the most effective way to support young people who have been victimized, the participants in this community engagement generally agreed that first and foremost, confinement under this programming was a way to interrupt toxic relationships, exploitation, and thus a critical tool for intervention:

> "That's the whole thing …if you don't interrupt the process and allow for the brain to unfog, become clear, and feel safe without coercion around you, if you don't have that opportunity you cannot make a choice to leave it with that age of a brain."

At its most basic level, confinement offered rest, a critical component for healing:

> "To be able to sleep and eat, and be safe, be away from the exploiter that's holding them in that basement, to be able to have some safety."

Some participants argued that 'the break' was critical in a young person's ability to reflect on their own life experience, a possibility that would not exist without involuntary confinement:

> "It's very powerful. It's like taking away that choice for a short amount of time, for an interruption, but then allowing them to have choice…Because do they really have a choice if they don't get an interruption?"

> "I think, from my perspective, I say it's successful. I say it's successful because at least you're interrupting behavior. It's small, but you are interrupting. It's important to look at it in a lens that allows for small successes and interventions to produce a successful result."

Participants also reflected how critical it was for young people, especially those entrenched and precariously housed, to be feel support and care that they may not have experienced before:

> "Even if that person remains within the sex trade after they turn 18, if the way that those institutions are run are from a place of care, at least those girls have experienced care for 21 days at a time. And they're aware that people care about them and there's a good place that they were at one time, whether it be voluntary or forced, that people cared about them."

> "You taught me how to be respectful to others, you showed me what it was like to be cared for, you gave me an environment that made me feel good, perfect, and (if) that's…all they leave with then that's beautiful."

Despite an acknowledgement that a few days or weeks is not enough to completely change an individual's outlook or situation, participants reflected on how staying in confinement allowed for time to begin the process of healing, for deep trauma-informed therapy:

> "Every time that I've thought about my trauma or thought about my sexual abuse or saw the perpetrator, I'd run and use. Now I can't. I'm here and I'm in it and I'm experiencing this emotion and I'm going through my trauma with a safe person, with my therapist, and really doing that work to heal for the first time without numbing that pain… So it's not just the, I'm feeling sadness or pain for the first time, but also, wow, I'm really actually, I'm feeling happy. I've never really felt happy before. I've never really felt safe before. I thought I felt safe with my pimp 'cause he protected me, but then he'd hit me, right? Or then he'd sell me or whichever, right? So really feeling those emotions for the first time in a few years, right?"

This engagement is not an evaluation of these programs. However, a number of perspectives were shared on the nature of this program in Calgary, and perceptions on how effective it is, or the potential of the program in Calgary. One key issue was a perception that the program is underutilized, that it could be used as an *earlier* intervention, more often, and for longer periods of time:

> "But for the young person who's super entrenched and maybe is more connected in a more organized way or with a pimp who's used some tactics, let's say, to keep them in the life, those kids need a longer period of time just to be. You're not gonna change any trajectory of that kid in a short period of time."

> "Some…really view it as punitive because of the ability to confine youth so they can get the requisite education. And I think there are some individuals that work with high risk youth who, I think a little piece of them dies every time a kid has to get confined. And that only serves to…harm the youth because it may perpetuate whatever situation that they're in for a little bit longer until conversations can be had and minds can be changed and things like that. But at the end of the day, we all wanna take the least intrusive method possible and that's the philosophy of child

> protection legislation across the country. Alberta, I think luckily has gone to the next step to offer the ability to intervene and confine if necessary if the least intrusive methods aren't being successful and aren't being effective. Because if one thinks about wanting to let the youth make decisions and use, and I've heard this term coming from the social services world, their voices and choices, using their voices and making their own choices, we wouldn't need this legislation if they were able to make good, healthy choices, right? It's a biological fact that youth don't have the ability to link actions and consequences in their early- to mid-teen years, even into their early 20s perhaps. So it seems absurd to me personally that we're gonna let them make choices that could have life-changing, life-altering impacts when we have the ability to stop them in their tracks and at least try to point them in the right direction through education. And with our ability to confine so that even if they don't actively take part in programming, they're still immersed in the whole concept of education on healthy relationships and what grooming looks like and what recruiting looks like and what pimps look like."

A number of these participants advocated for confinement to occur earlier as a preventative measure, and that the amount of time for confinement should be lengthened in order to give young people an opportunity to make real change. An opposing view which tended to be more widespread was a perception that although confinement can be effective and helpful to young people, it should really only be used as a last resort option:

> "Confinement, yeah, we always wanna try less intrusive first… so confinement would be our last resort when they absolutely cannot follow a safety plan or keep themselves safe."

> "I would consider myself a least intrusive program…But then when that doesn't work at the end of the day, they're somebody's daughter, they're somebody's son, they're somebody's something, and that's where that confinement piece can come into play, right? It's an opportunity even for professionals to regroup and say okay, this is what they're advocating for as a young person? How do we make that happen in a safe way and how do we support them in understanding that the way that they're going about that at this point could have lifelong consequences and probably will?"

Furthermore, a number of participants questioned the nature of confinement as being so restrictive, and that for many young people, it may feel like a punishment for someone who has been victimized:

> "They're youth that actually have been, perhaps in trouble with the law, a lot of times so they're like oh it's just another form of prison and some of them would choose prison over that. And I think it's all about the conversation, some of them might be thankful for the intervention but I'm sure that's not the place that they want to perhaps be for the intervention… I think they do feel very punished and I think that's why when they get out it's not like, oh my goodness thank you for changing my life it's, okay now I'm going to go back to what I was doing, thank you for the interrupting, because they didn't maybe, I don't know if they felt that they needed help or rescue or they didn't feel that at the end coming out of it that they were really helped."

Another element discussed was that of addiction, and how programming supports young people who have been exploited, but who are also using substances:

> "One of their criticisms is, 'cause you have to be clean when you're there too. So you're asking the victims of sexual exploitation to deal with addiction issues and they're often trauma bonded and because it's not their idea to be there, they don't realize at that point that it's a problem, so the work that can be done is ineffective and granted it takes a while and maybe multiple interventions, but to have to deal with all that while detoxing

> and doing rehab and having even more freedom removed from choice because they don't have a choice when they're exploited and they don't have a choice when they're essentially incarcerated either and their routines are very strict and regimented. It's being in prison for being exploited. Yet some people have left and they've been glad that they had that experience and they're able to leave the abuse and the exploitation and yet others again return right away and maybe even more jaded and cynical."

There is not a clear sense in the community on whether confinement should be a first or last resort option, but all agencies who work with young people at risk or with those who have endured exploitation are grateful that there is at least one concrete option for young people under the age of 18 to find safety, even if it is only temporary. And many who work within these agencies make strong attempts to empower young people within their programming. ■

5.9 PSECA Voluntary Services: Outreach, Education and Support

Outside of confinement, PSECA legislation funds a number of voluntary programs in the Calgary area. For McMan Youth Family and Community Services, the priority is reducing the risk of sexual exploitation (McMan, 2018). This is achieved through education in schools as well as in community programs, as well counseling and working with individual clients and families. In 2016-2017, 16 young people were served by McMan. In 2017-2018, 19 young people were served. All young people served were female, with the majority under 18. The goals of the program are to improve safety, permanence, well-being and family and community support.

Where McMan provides voluntary services under the PSECA umbrella, the Boys and Girls Club of Calgary provides voluntary residential transitional community-based programming and shelter support to young people who are at-risk of or involved in sexual exploitation. Both Eleanor's House and Grimmon House provide shelter, and the programs serve both males and females between the ages of 13 and 17 who are at-risk of or who are currently involved in sexual exploitation.

Referrals are made through Calgary Region Child and Family Services. The Grimmon House program model is based on a holistic model of intervention founded on empirically supported approaches and interventions including the three pillars of trauma-informed care, the circle of courage model and the stages of change.

> "We have 5 short years, right? 5 short years, if you think, like 13 to 17 on average, right, to target them and build relationships with them and if they've had trauma all the way up from birth until 13, like 5 years is still a very short window to prevent them from being an adult that's choosing to exploit themselves because they don't know any better and that's what they did, right, or they don't know any different for those 5 years."

In many cases, participants stated that cases were closed after working in voluntary programming. Success entailed early intervention, where young people are no longer engaging in the same activities they were before: "they are not using drugs, education, willing to let their parents monitor their online activity, those kinds of things." ■

5.10 *Challenges for Support: Young People 'In Between' and Nowhere to Go*

A number of service providers sounded the alarm for risk factors related to young people between the ages of 18-24, where supports diminish, transitions to adulthood entail more responsibility and financial pressures, and PSECA funded supports and options are limited.

> "It's difficult after they're 18 'cause there's no legislation around so that we can go and kind of find kids anymore. We can work with youth up to 24 years old, oftentimes though they hit that 18 and they want that independence….we lose that ability to protect and it becomes very voluntary, and we can't get intrusive."

There is a group of young people in the city who are struggling during this transition period; they often lack the basics necessary for well-being now and into the future, including stable housing, access to education and the support of family. They fall into a broad spectrum of vulnerability, encompassing youth who are at-risk of engaging in unhealthy relationships and behaviours as well as those who are already experiencing exclusion, entrenched poverty or violence. For young people living in care facilities or foster care, the transition into independent living can be a particularly vulnerable time. Young people themselves become all too aware of how the service landscape will change for them:

> "The other reality too is lots of times youth are getting to the point where they're about to turn 18 and it really starts to hit them that this program isn't gonna be open to me, it's not gonna be there for me."

For young people, this transition can be a huge shock, and one that is often not supported nearly enough. Some have argued that this lack of support and providing young people with opportunities to empower themselves can set them up for failure:

> "Yeah. Especially when you're an adult and suddenly, you know, you turn 18 and you're supposed to know how to live your life. Well, if your life has been decided for you or even for the last 2 years have been decided for you, suddenly you're supposed to make different choices, but you've never had the experience to do that or learn how to do that. And then you're punished for not knowing. It's really awful."

Voluntary programming under PSECA was seen to hold a lot of promise to build relationships, provide education, and to foster healthy natural supports for young people. Many argued that these programs should be expanded as they are currently limited in their scale and scope in Calgary. ■

5.11 Service Needs: Shelter, Mental Health Services and Addictions Treatment

Across the board, the critical importance of safe shelter was highlighted as lacking for young people in Calgary:

> "For me, when a youth comes to me with an issue and they're actually ready to seek help for a certain thing, one of those helps would be a safe place to be right there at that time…and for me, I find it very difficult and I actually find it very disheartening to be able to find it… they're actually asking for help right now and I find that I'm not able to help provide that immediate, here's a safe place for you to be for at least tonight and with the potential that this place could be longer than just one night. And so then it's basically trying to safety plan with them how can we make sure that you can still stay safe while we wait for the waiting list to get smaller….that's my frustration is the waiting list. I know the resources, I know where I can make phone calls for specific things. But for me it's that immediate "I need a place to stay right now."

A number of participants reflected that shelters that do exist in Calgary are not safe for vulnerable young people and those who have experienced or are experiencing exploitation:

> "And so in my mind having a safe place in the middle of downtown, the Beltline area where lots of this happens, that's not okay. It just doesn't work 'cause a lot of people know where those houses are, where those shelters are. They're not necessarily safe house as we would define it. So to me a safe house is a place where probably agencies don't even know. They have to meet up somewhere and then that staff member of that organization would bring that person, or whatever. It has to be something that is not close to where the youth would have access to leave easily or that they would just have people come to easily."

Mental health services were also highlighted as a critical need:

> "It's affordable/free counseling that someone is able to see at a very regular basis because they can't afford to see a normal or regular counselor, it's very difficult for them and I know us we have counselors but you have so many youth. (there's a waitlist?). Yeah and so for someone who's dealing with a trauma, seeing a counselor probably once every month or once every couple months, that's just not helpful."

> "Yeah and it's not consistent. You don't get the same person. If there was something that happened right now that you needed to go to great, but I think even the mentality that we do have more family counseling opportunities than we do for individuals who don't have a family."

Addiction services specific to young people were also highlighted as an issue in Calgary:

> "We have essentially one detox. Well there's two, but one medically supervised detox. And in Calgary…there's not enough of the detox in my mind, not enough detox beds and there's a lot of addictions resources out there I just find at least our youth they're not necessarily ready to access them and when they are, they have to have detox first. But they can't get a detox…then there's waitlists for the treatment beds too right? So they relapse before their treatment date comes up and there's hoops along the way. If you don't have a treatment medical then you're not going to treatment. So if you don't have a family doctor (which a lot of them don't)."

For young people vulnerable to exploitation, the Calgary community was emphatic that critical basic needs such as safe shelter, mental health and addiction services do not exist at the scale they are currently required in Calgary to prevent exploitation or support survivors. ■

5.12 Best Practices Around Intervention and Supporting Young People

FINDING THE BALANCE BETWEEN OVERPROTECTION AND AGENCY

> "I think that's part of just the work that we do with them in terms of acknowledging that. They probably haven't had a lot of control in their life, so although on the surface level, there's a lot of control that comes with (confinement), we do the best job that we possibly can underneath that to allow for choice, even if it's just small choices of when do you want to shower. That's maybe a choice that they didn't even have being outside of here in terms of how entrenched and their involvement might be. We try to meet them with where they're at in terms of helping them regulate before we're pushing them to do something they're not ready for and if that means that for their first 5 days they just need to sleep, then we just let them sleep…And so in terms of control, I think wherever we can, we try to leave that at the door and really try to offer them some choice… and once they're able to get to that place and how do I want to get better and what's going to be helpful for me and they can choose to engage in a voluntary way with PSECA when they leave, they can choose to engage with an addictions counsellor, they can choose to call us, they have lots of choices in kind of what can happen in the future."

BUILDING CONNECTIONS AND TRUST WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

A recent landmark study in the US explored a variety of demographic and social variables that differentiate trafficked homeless young people and young people who have not experienced trafficking (Chisolm-Straker et al, 2018). The key protective factor among young people who otherwise share similar life experiences was the existence of a supportive adult in their life. Participants in this project also highlighted this importance:

> "And that's where we can see sometimes that if, because connection as we know as humans we're craving connection, and that connection can come from Johns or from exploiters or from programs like ours or professionals, like those can be really genuine connections as well."

> "I would say mentors is definitely a huge thing. People that can build into youth…a different kind of person to invest in them."

How can we build a supportive landscape of caring adults for street-entrenched young people in Calgary?

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

> "Yeah, it could be anything. It could be STI testing. It could be building a relationship. It could be connecting them to community programs or after school programs or you know a fair entry card or the food bank or things that are going to hit those basic needs…so that we can increase their ability to achieve those needs and to get them from healthy places and people and supports, and then in turn increase their natural support network so that they have a sense of community and belonging outside of the professional relationships that they get to kind of build throughout their life span."

YOUNG OFFENDERS SHOULD ALSO BE SUPPORTED

This project also found that we need a better understanding of how we respond to young people who may be both victims and perpetrators of sexual offences. As emerging practice reveals that some young people may be responsible for enticing or encouraging others into exploitative situations; and as we become more aware about the impact of previous abuse on current sexual offenders, we need more sophisticated interventions that see the possibility for both behaviours to be related, interconnected, and addressed:

> "Then there's also people who are on the other end of that who are tryin' to do all this recruitment. But that doesn't make them any less deserving of services and supports. So it's about connecting them with their heart of how that felt and why would they want to do that to somebody else while dealing with their own victimization as well."

> "Well the people that are offenders have their own brokenness and their own traumas and their own things that have happened in their life that has brought them along that journey to make those choices and I think if society just looks at…victims, and tries to protect victims and teach and educate about victims, that's not gonna do anything. And if we have the approach of educating, well there's the perpetrator, there's the groomer, that's also, in my opinion, not a very great approach because it's not that holistic thing. It's not the approach where, well how are we going to teach this girl that's been confined and bein' a PSECA girl who is now over 18 who is now grooming a 13-year-old herself? There's been a process and we need to help them with healing…"

PROVIDING CULTURALLY SENSITIVE PROGRAMMING

For immigrant and newcomer families and young people, culturally sensitive programming is needed, where providers have an understanding of the issues unique to that community and can offer support that is anti-oppressive and empowering, rather than degrading and discriminating:

> "I think being culturally sensitive as well, especially for families. But we, bringing it back to the basics, sometimes we can educate the young people but we need to go back to the families…And like counseling, offering counseling and you know …are you trying to say there's something wrong with our family? So it's just the breaking down of those terms and just being culturally sensitive to what they understand. Even sometimes I find that we can come in as professionals and act so professional that we forget the humanism of the fact that, okay, fair enough, I'm a social worker, I'm a young social worker and I'm telling the mother of seven kids how to raise her kids. How it would come across to a mother that's come and struggled in Iraq to bring her family here and you know, so I just think that we just need to be culturally sensitive when we're raising trafficking, when we're doing, how can we break it down to an understanding where culturally, you know, we can get that understanding when we both…you deliver your message, but they get the understanding that it's not … child's being a prostitute or my child, you know, how do we break that down and having that cultural understanding."

HARM REDUCTION

The topic of harm reduction was unexpected when approaching exploitation with young people. However, as with a following discussion of harm reduction within adult trafficking, this topic was broached numerous times, in particular with those young people who are nearing the age of 18, and the desire of providers to instill as much safety planning as possible into young people before they enter adulthood:

> "I mean confinement is great in that it meets that immediate safety need for kids, but they need to have those skills and that capacity when they get out of how they're gonna keep themselves safe and what does that look like. And not all of them are ready to be perfectly safe and so how do we continue to do that work?"
>
> "And we're always assessing. Like just because we say no to confinement today, doesn't mean that if this kid, if our safety plan and our harm reduction plan doesn't work that it doesn't lead to confinement if needed. But just knowing like I think the parents just want some kind of middle ground really because to them it's like they're so unsupported. They find out confinements kinda like all or nothing, but then we try and say let's meet in the middle and put in some supports."

> "All those different things and so it has to really be assessed individually but I think really as kids get older and closer to that 18, knowing that there are more limited responses really how can we, yeah set them up as best possible to be able to keep them safe regarding what situations that they get themselves into. So you know at 13 it may be a different conversation versus a 17-year-old where we're thinking you know in a number of months you're gonna be 18, if we don't confine you, what is that gonna look like in terms of when you're out there on the street and making choices and different things and how can you, if you are gonna be in situations, how can you keep yourself safe and what does that look like in terms of your phone or other people or yeah all of those different things."
>
> "It's really not realistic to confine kids up until their 18th birthday… Is it really productive because then what happens afterwards right? So we want them to have the skills hopefully before they turn 18."

The core to the above discussion is in the argument for a flexible and aware child-centred practice that is versatile enough to reach out to all children and young people who need support, and which recognizes the policy and programming challenges that exist as children turn 18. Providers are to keep children and young people safe and out of harm's way, but they are also acutely aware of the complex lived realities of young people, and the options and supports that will exist for them when they turn 18. ■

5.13 Conclusion

"I just think of them as being such a resilient group of kids and it's because they really have to be. You gotta live with yourself each day going forward."

Sexual exploitation of children and young people is a vastly complex issue in terminology as well as its individual, systemic, and societal risks and consequences. It is clear that addressing exploitation requires effective interventions that engage youth as early in the cycle of poverty, addiction, and trauma as possible and helps to stabilize them in appropriate, supportive environments where they feel connection, belonging, and loved. ■

6.0 'Broken Boundaries' and Indigenous Learnings on Human Trafficking in Calgary

"the trauma in trafficking is the human trafficking. You have to talk about the human part of it."

Indigenous women and girls are widely identified as being at particular risk of experiencing various forms of gender-based violence in Canada, including human trafficking. This is due in part to the effects of historical and ongoing colonialism, and the legacies of the residential school system, dispossession of identity and culture, violence, racism, and marginalization (Boyer and Kampouris, 2014; Kaye, 2017; Oxman-Martinez, Lacroix, & Hanley, 2005; Louie, 2018; Public Safety Canada, 2012; Roos, 2013; Sethi, 2007; Sikka, 2009).

The Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing and Homelessness in Calgary (2012: 2) provides a critical framework for understanding how complex and overlapping historical issues manifest in present-day social issues. Human trafficking, like homelessness, is *not only an issue of trafficking*, but is "the combination of inter-related issues including history, present day systemic and societal perspectives about Aboriginal people, as well as the cultural losses of Aboriginal people in the areas of physical, emotional, mental and spiritual balance." Louie's (2018) recent work on the exploitation of Indigenous girls and women also provides an in-depth analysis and visualization of the root forces and interconnections between historical processes and the realities of young people and exploitation today.

A base understanding of these processes was critical in forming an awareness as we undertook this learning engagement. In this project, Knowledge Holders, alongside individuals who work with Indigenous communities in the city of Calgary, implored us to begin our understanding with an acknowledgement of these historical processes,

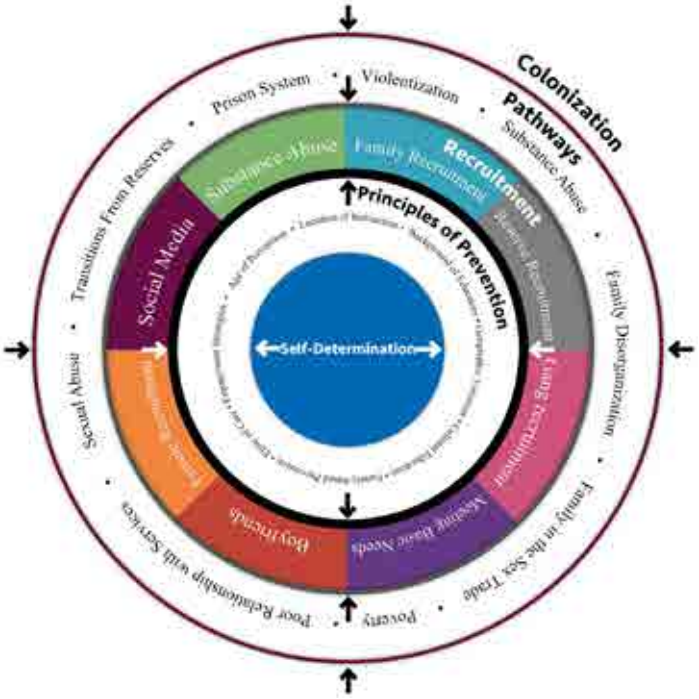


Figure 4

Cycle of Resistance model. Graph from Sexual Exploitation Prevention Education for Indigenous Girls (p. 656) by D. Louie, 2018, The Canadian Journal of Education. 41(2).

and with a recognition of broader systemic factors, where trafficking is only one aspect of ongoing injustices to Indigenous people in Canada, and in Calgary. Human trafficking must be seen within these wider histories and landscapes if we are to make any movement toward change. This section attempts to synthesize some of the learnings gleaned from the Indigenous Sister Approach taken in this project, with an emphasis on using the words of the Knowledge Holders and participants as much as possible. The full Listening Document which is based on the meetings with the Knowledge Holders, is available from ACT Alberta by request. ■

6.1 *The Critical Importance of Oral Methodologies*

"This topic is important to our community, to our children, to all our people, and especially to the missing and murdered woman. We want to give our advice from our creation stories, our belief systems, from who we are. Too many times, solutions are given to us, but they're not our solutions. The mechanism for colonialism happened with residential schools, those systems taught us how to stay silent. Now is our chance to share our knowledge."

The first major learning out of this work was not around particular data or findings, but around the critical importance of the methodological approach; indeed, the pathways we take to collect data *are as important* as the data itself. Despite coming from different communities, the oral practice utilized within the Indigenous Sister Approach provided a common language. The smudge and the circle offered an ethical safe space, a process of protection, and a way to protect the information that was shared. Knowledge Holders were willing to share their experiences and stories because of the foundation created through the practice of the oral methodology. In the context of sharing the complexities and deep pain associated with human trafficking, the approach itself offered hope for empowerment and leadership from the Knowledge Holders.

Over the course of two gatherings, we sat, danced, listened and learned. We observed, we held hands, we shared tears, we drank tea. The Knowledge Holders spoke of being silenced in the past through residential schools and continuing systemic oppression, and we are eternally grateful to those who were willing to share their wisdom and knowledge (these included Knowledge Holders from the following communities: Ojibway, Boreal Forest Cree, Plains Cree, Saulteaux, Anishinaabe, Siksika, Blackfoot, Stoney, Pikani, Tsuu T'ina, Metis). We acknowledge that this report is a western interpretation of the information provided to us through oral tradition within an underpinning of Indigenous worldviews. Our aim here is to honor the wisdom shared, and do justice to the voices who shared their perceptions and experiences of a very complex and often emotionally difficult topic. ■

6.2 Colonialism, Residential Schools and Intergenerational Trauma

"How do we understand broken boundaries within our people? ***Our people are living in broken boundaries.*** *How far back do we have to go?"*

Within the Sister Approach, Knowledge Holders and participants made significant connections between the traumas experienced by Indigenous peoples historically, and the traumas that continue today:

> "We all know when the Europeans came, we had a life where we survived. We survived by workin' for what we needed, the basic needs, clothes, shelter, food, and it was with that one animal that we were able to accomplish everything. Plus the tools we needed, the weapons we needed. We didn't need money. There was prayer, song, dance. There was a way of life and it was disconnected when the Europeans came and took the children away, put them in residential schools…And then these children were in these schools where they never saw their parents until the school year was done and then when they came home, it was different, right, it was different. I went to residential school and the first thing they make you do is, well first of all you're not allowed to speak your language…and then to be disconnected from the other people, not to have a relationship with anybody…they just disconnect you from the human part and that's how they trained you and then every day when you get up in the morning, now you remember you're nothing but a dirty little savage. That's what you are and we're trying to make you human 'cause you're not human."

Participants also spoke of the atrocities within intergenerational trauma; the abuses perpetrated within Indigenous communities in subsequent generations, and the complex nature of shame that is endemic in families and communities who are living with the consequences of the residential school system:

> "And no disrespect to those direct survivors of residential schools, they suffered atrocities that we would never wish on another human being… but for the intergenerational trauma which are the children and the grandchildren and then so on, they didn't have…the luxury of leaving their perpetrators behind when they left the residential school…their perpetrators, most often they call them 'grandfather,' 'uncle,' 'auntie,' and so it's part of a lived experience where there's a lot of shame…that burden of not only carrying personal shame… but within the Indigenous community… once you scrape off that first layer of that that individual standing in front of you, *just understand that you're scraping off another generation, another generation, another generation.* So as far as trafficking and those kinds of things I really like the word *abuse*. That's a part of this as well because for a lot of Indigenous communities the abuse starts when you're a child and it doesn't end up until you're actually in your own casket. That's how long this lived experience is and that's how long this burden of keeping those family secrets on top of your own."

Human trafficking was framed within and alongside long histories of abuse and trauma within families, generations, and communities. Trafficking experiences cannot be isolated from these wider landscapes. ■

6.3 Indigenous Young People, Family Disconnection, Cultural Loss and Risk

Indigenous youth are also affected by ongoing colonialism, including forced displacement and relocation, inequality and racism. Participants repeatedly raised concerns for Indigenous young people as they were seen to be particularly vulnerable and at risk of exploitation. One of the underlying root causes was seen to be a loss of culture and a disconnect with family and community. These disconnects were often tied to the realities of family dysfunction and abuse, but also the overzealous and damaging history of involvement of Child and Family Services:

> "It's this disconnect when you don't have cultural components in your life, when you don't have the language, when you don't have the grandparents to show you the way, to make you feel proud of who you are, you're lost. You don't know who you are. You don't know where you belong and even with our children being taken from their homes because somebody thinks that they have a better place for them, who are you to say that? Maybe this child, it might not be the cleanest house. Maybe the parents drink or maybe the parents fight but this child is loved. This child is loved, which is the most important thing and when you take that child out and put them into a stranger's home, do you think that child is loved? No."

> "What I notice a lot with our Children Services workers that work with the families that I have is that they take away the power with the parents having relationship with their youth or they keep such high biases against the parents that it's hard for the parents to take the processes necessary to have their kids come back home or to be able to engage with their children."

> "The same thing's happening to the youth today. I'm getting at the Child Welfare for instance, I have seen this happen so many times, we voiced our opinion, nothing's happening yet. The children, when they are apprehended, that worker, the first thing the problem that I see is this. Instead of giving that family a chance to reunite with their children, right away they place them way over there, next thing you know, she's getting money and the home visit. They never do that thing and the child is raised up by non-First Nation members and they're offended, they never bring them back or home to our reserve, to their families. They grow up with hate."

According to the National Household Survey (2011), Indigenous children make up approximately 10% of the child population (ages 0-19) in Alberta, yet in 2017, 61% of children and youth receiving Child Intervention services were Indigenous, and 69% of children and youth receiving services in care were Indigenous (Alberta Human Services, 2018). There are serious concerns for young people who are lacking in supportive and healthy family environments, and particularly for children and young people who are living in residential care homes, where vulnerability to exploitation is seen to be a great risk.

Another emerging issue out of this work was the influence of gangs in the lives of young people both on reserve and off, and the intersection of trafficking and exploitation. In Grekul and LaBoucane-Benson's (2006) study of Indigenous youth gangs, the researchers found that youth become involved with gangs when they feel they have nothing to live for. The lives of young people have been disrupted by dysfunctional families, lack of educational and work opportunities, and negative peer associations, all of which are compounded by systemic discrimination and labeling. In the context of such despair, Indigenous gangs attempt to fill the gap for marginalized young people.

> "I worked with a client last year, and this young girl was probably 13 or 14 and she was involved in a gang. And I had a conversation with her, I asked her, I said you know "do you like being a part of this, like do you feel safe?" And she said no…she just said I don't feel safe at home, I feel safer when I'm with them, but I don't feel safe when I'm with them." So going back to the whole survival thing, a lotta these youth and young people they come from homes where there wasn't that love and that comfort because the parents lacked parenting skills from not being shown that in the schools and all those other injustices. So they kinda seek that out in gangs 'cause they have kinda like that brotherhood and that sisterhood there, even though they might not genuinely feel that way it's just something that they're a part of right."

For many gang members, these relationships may be the first time anyone has cared about them: the common thread of gang membership is often a lack of a role model and support at home. The function the gang ends up playing, for better or worse, is to give them a sense of identity and belonging (Henton, 2011). Elder Knowledge Holders spoke clearly of their fears that young people were filling the void of cultural connection and community with unhealthy, high risk relationships. The following describes these connections to drug use and addiction, and the power these have, as well, in placing individuals at risk for exploitation. ■

6.4 Vulnerability, Addiction, Domestic Violence and Sexual Exploitation

"…If I dare say human, human trafficking means you live, a lot of those girls don't live."

Participants spoke of core vulnerabilities related to poverty and economic opportunities which can place individuals at risk:

> "We need to think about what makes us vulnerable. We are vulnerable when we are in need. It starts with poverty, misunderstanding, and the hardship. And if it makes that young girl feel good and important about herself having sexual favors with this man and she's gonna get the five pills she's looking for? Our kids come into the city for a better life, and other people take advantage of them. And they don't say anything. Some are survivors and make it back home, and some never come back home."

Vulnerability due to isolation when individuals move from reserves to cities, was seen to place individuals at risk for 'trusting the untrustworthy' and being groomed by opportunistic individuals:

> "They get our people onto these drugs and they start using them, especially I know some young people from our reserve came into the city to go to school and there's a lotta people that walk around in the mall. So they end up going to the mall every day and finally those guys get them to start takin' (drugs) and then they pull the girls into the sex trade and they just keep them on drugs and controlling them. It's about trusting the unworthy when you are vulnerable. You don't know whether to trust or not trust. One party has a malicious intention. *Hamaga* means action.

> "Let's go, let's start something… I was so vulnerable, I didn't think of the action of what could happen. I need a friend, I need money, I need food."

As with our general community engagement, participants within the Sister Approach also highlighted the critical intersection between domestic violence and trafficking:

> "Most often the women are in survival mode with their children and there's a huge balance of power, and what are they running away from? If you're going to get to grassroot conversations, they're most often fleeing from domestic violence."

> "The time of vulnerability seems to be for new arrivals…they're often fleeing situations that are worse than the situations are on the surface here right? One of the things that we see quite often is that even… the people we're encountering don't frame the behaviors they're involved in that we would label as trafficking or exploitation as in fact trafficking and exploitation. And I think when people have been powerless in home situations, the fact that there's actually an exchange of goods or a way of contributing that's valued or that it makes it hard to acknowledge that as an exploitive process for themselves right, that language isn't there. So even if we ask those explicit questions or they're exposed to those explicit ideas they don't recognize it, so I do think that not only is it happening, it's happening in ways that the people experiencing it aren't even recognizing as part of this process that we're concerned about."

The need for belonging, for affection, for love, as we have learned, is universal, and for individuals who have lacked healthy relationships and experienced trauma and abuse, they can be drawn to toxic relationships and be at risk for trafficking. The complexities of these dynamics and relationships also makes it extremely difficult for 'rescues' and exiting:

> "What I've noticed with my other ladies that are involved with exploitation or at risk of it is that they're really (just) craving that sense of belonging, that affection. And for them it's more about being able to obtain that, and the drugs, the alcohol, partying lifestyle those things are just bonuses. More than anything else they're aligning with their perpetrators and really feeling like this person genuinely cares for me. I'm not getting that connection at home, I'm not getting it from anyone else, but this person is going to do things for me, they'll keep me safe. And I found that to be most transparent with one of my kids who was in trafficking and who genuinely believed that the individual who was selling her was doing it out of care for her and was just trying to meet her needs, and she consistently went back to him because of these beliefs that she held. And even with the other girls that I've spoken to who are at risk, they always feel like these people first are bonding with them and building a relationship before they do anything else, and it's so much harder to break it because it's not even a question of you know well he's giving you drugs for sex. No he's giving me much, much more than that and we don't know how to replace that, or to start conversation around how this is not healthy and it's not supporting their needs overall." ■

6.5 Community Pain, Acknowledging the Perpetrators, and the Importance of Forgiveness

"And then it goes back to the whole idea of restorative (justice)... when these things happen they don't only affect the victim, the perpetrator, but they affect the community as a whole, the balance is off. So we need to find a solution. If we keep pointing the finger and blaming, and hating we're just gonna keep going around in this toxic cycle, so we need to find a solution."

Although discussed at the community level, the issue of acknowledging the humanity behind perpetrators of exploitation and trafficking was unique to the engagement with Indigenous communities.

> "We've talked about the victims, but we don't talk about the perpetrators and they too at one point were victims. I look at it this way, at some point in their life something very, very bad happened for them to become that perpetrator, that man or that woman that victimizes and traffics the other people, the victims... Even though they have done something horrific that has damaged somebody or a group of individuals, they are just as broken as that victim or that group of victims. So if we're truly going to get to the root of this, it's more than just the victims. We need to be able to be OK with working with that person and setting aside their crime.... We all have to do this and if it's in your own circle that you have a perpetrator we need to work harder to get to the root of that. Why is it happening? And it can be done, but we have to absolutely take care of the victims. We have to take care of them so they're survivors so this stops, but we also have to take care of the predators in this and the perpetrators."

> "I was given the tools to separate the human being from the bad behavior because they're two separate things...So how does one come to terms when you talk about love, how does one come to terms with those kinds of things, and how can you love something that's not good? How can you love, separating the behavior from the human being because that's part of our Indigenous world view and our Indigenous ways is we know there's good spirits and we know there's bad spirits, there was just a bad spirit that was around the house, there was a bad spirit around him."

The healing of individuals was seen to be connected to the healing of communities, which include those who have violated, or exploited, or perpetrated violence. However, these discussions were complex and did not provide easy answers. Within discussions of forgiveness, there was also seen a necessity to hold space for victims who may not be ready to forgive:

> "But the question is how can we honor victims and where they're at with their experiences and their perpetrators, because I think while as a community we can (forgive)... how do we hold space for victims who are not ready to move forward?" ■

6.6 Where Do We Go From Here? Best Practices and Service Needs in Calgary

The following represent some of the critical strategies that were highlighted as ways of preventing exploitation and supporting survivors through building resiliency in young people, strengthening cultural awareness and belonging, and bringing back cultural protocols around respect and honour. From the perspective of the Knowledge Holders, the return of cultural protocols and ways of educating were seen as critical for prevention:

> "I think listening to the old-timer, what we had was age-grade societies. So the younger kids have their societies, the teenagers have their ways, and then the young adults had their ways, and then the adults and the Knowledge Holders. Everybody was structured through a system, but you honour the next group. In recent times, there'll be a 40 year old stickin' around with a 12 year old, or about three 12-year-old girls or boys, and they are selling drugs at the school. If we see that historically in our society, a young man doing that, the rest of the community are gonna shun that person and say ''look what you did, you're not supposed to be like that.'' So we had those controls but we don't understand our culture anymore."

An understanding of culture and connection were seen as building resiliency in young people, and also offering ways for healing and moving forward:

> "It is so important to give to our young people traditional knowledge. So that's what I'm thinking. We need to accommodate these circles, this smudge …If we don't provide these safe places for young people, where can they talk? If we had more circles on the reserve, I think that it would get people thinking about what's going on in our communities, and it would help the young people from suffering so much. Give people a chance to actually talk."

> "I'm not gonna ask a young person, ''what's happening to you?'' I just tell them ''come. I'm not important but the pipe is important, the smudge is important, the songs are important.'' You guys are gifted to sing….The pipe is the third party. Even though it's not a human, it's there and that's what we use to help. That's what I use to help the young people. ''Come, I'll put you to work and I'll purify you and that way you can start fresh, start trying to take part again'' and then you have something to go to…Young people also need to see positive role models. Its about pride, that pride in yourself…our kids need to see heroes so we can bring our spirits up."

There was a need to recognize this importance to healing and to embed this understanding and cultural awareness within western frameworks for funding and evaluation:

> "When an individual is exposed to culture and Elders, that they are on a road to wellness, that the road to wellness is accelerated because they have pride, they have cultural identity, they have a sense of belonging and they're not necessarily perceiving that they're in isolation necessarily anymore. I understand what the song means, this active drum further puts me in touch with that Elder and that traditional knowledge to empower again that self-identity piece. Speaking funder language, there's a set time that doesn't necessarily acknowledge on this road to self-identity that culture plays a big part of this as well and even the evaluation, the evaluation process is most often a systems-based evaluative process that excludes the change in behaviour, a change in outlook, the sense of purpose and identity. It doesn't necessarily include those or factor in that exposure to culture, help this individual do these particular things, and that's a longer process and we know that."

Alongside a return to culture, participants spoke of the need to support families to keep their children and to reintegrate young people who have been taken away from their families:

> "Children Services when I see how they work with my clients and how they create additional barriers. And I understand their perspectives around safety and liability and meeting a mandate and following through, but the barriers that they create for children and families, (they) need to work with communities to…make space for the kids to come home and to be able to integrate back rather than putting them into more environments that are putting them at higher risk."

Indeed, these fears may mean that individuals will not attempt to access support for fears of systems that have historically been discriminatory:

> "There's a lot of unwillingness in the folks that we work with to actually ask for help because they do not wanna be system involved. So they've either been system involved in the past and it hasn't gone well or they're actively avoiding systems that will interfere with their family life or their freedoms and so certainly we see that and it's a paradox in the community because the mainstream community thinks their services are overrepresented by Indigenous people but we know of the Indigenous people that it's actually underrepresented of all the Indigenous people that need help and so I think that conversation of how we set up help-seeking in ways that make it easier for people to overcome their fear of systems and their contemporary histories."

Within the service landscape, issues as simple as lacking IDs were seen to be major challenges to accessing support:

> "A lot of my clients don't have ID or the supports available, and without ID, you're literally trapped. And I know that there's a couple organizations in the city here who have circumvented a little bit and found a way to get some kind of ID but it's still, without money, you can't get your ID so you're kinda stuck in that whirlwind. That's what I'm finding is no ID is the hugest barrier and then money to go to support it."

Intake procedures and screening were seen to be disengaged from the realities of Indigenous people and not trauma-informed:

> "Screening processes are not trauma informed, and there's that degree of insensitivity with intergenerational and residential school survivors and if there's no dignity and respect as a human being afforded at that very initial screening process…"

Supports need to be based in dignity and compassion, and an awareness of the complex nature of relationships and intersections of domestic violence and exploitation:

> "Nonjudgmental supports where they can freely go to. So that is huge, my experience I found that they need those supports, mental health, medication just to address all of their components of them as a human, mental, emotional, physical, spiritual. So I think without the proper supports we're just perpetuating it and we need to be real about that, and put action to that."

> "Because we don't always look at that holistic view of people's lives and yet they come to us holistically. They come to us as whole people, right, and then we keep saying yeah here's our sliver of mandate or here's what we can do or what we can't do or you know these are the hoops and sometimes they're measurement hoops or sometimes they're characteristic hoops or whatever and so that's *the piece that's missing is human beings interacting with human beings* in a way that makes sense because yes, he's my abuser but he's also my children's father. And you know there's that complexity that we have simple solutions for complex situations. And so I think

> that's what's needed is we need to mature our systems a little bit so that we recognize not just you know we're getting better at talking about things like one-stop shop…it's not just so that's it's easier, it's because they actually need to come in one door 'cause they're only one person. And they may have a whole lot of needs, but we need to recognize them, the multifaceted aspects of their needs and try to serve them in those ways as opposed to in sector specific ways."

For young people specifically, there was a perception that services need to recognize the specific histories of young Indigenous people within their communities and within systems, and why it is so critically important to allow young people to have agency:

> "There was one of these (situations) that I can think of where we had quite a few conversations about power and she felt that this was something that she was in control of and for the first time in her life she had power to negotiate and get something that she felt to be in control of. And when I think of over representation of Indigenous children in the Child Welfare system these are all kids that have been stripped of that ability to make decisions for themselves or to be involved in decision-making throughout their life. And so we see them get to an age of 13, 14 where now this is something that, and I mean the idea of them having the power in this situation doesn't make sense to be .. … .. but coming from her perspective I can see how what she was involved in with she felt was empowering. Because when we talk about how do we replace that, how do we find a relationship to, when we're taking it away from what they're seeking out of their pimp or their john, replace it. And how do we find ways for young people to feel that they have a sense of power and control in their lives and they're not needing to use their bodies as a way to get what they want or feel that they're empowered to make decisions on their own."

Participants suggested that there is a need in Calgary for safe houses for young people that are not tied to PSECA legislation so that they are seen as more about 'just safety' rather than 'treatment.' In these situations, young people may feel safer and more willing to connect voluntarily. ■

6.7 Weaving It Back Together: A Conclusion to an Ongoing Learning Process

"We need to find the parallels and open the windows…."

Indigenous Knowledge Holders as well as participants who work closely with Indigenous communities in the Calgary area are in pain. They have seen their young people lost and without culture and support, community members affected by abuse and addiction, and their people exploited and used by other individuals, both from within their communities and outside.

We have attempted here to highlight many of the points of discussion brought up within our Sister Approach, bringing to the forefront that there are young Indigenous people and individuals in our communities living every day in situations that make them vulnerable to being trafficked. There are survivors of trafficking that have made their way back home after getting out of horrific situations, but are facing a lack of sufficient and appropriate support services that they need in order to heal. There are Knowledge Holders and adults, who because of their own trauma and histories in the residential schools, need resources and the ability to be empowered to share their traditional knowledge to help those in their communities. Throughout this process, we have learned that there is a critical need to mitigate cross-cultural concepts, to cross-validate our language so that we have a common understanding. We have learned that culture and spirituality are at the core of learning, and these learnings are critical to the healing force behind whatever action is taken within the city of Calgary. Strategies can be supported in parallel, but are not to be led by western organizations. We will leave this section with the following quote that is a reminder to all of us who care about these issues and want to make a difference: in the grand scheme of everything, they're gonna say ''well life is beautiful'' and no matter where we live or what we do, it comes from us, this life force inside of us. We share it with everybody, and that's what prevents human trafficking. That's what helps people to see their way out of it." For the Knowledge Holders, it starts with love. ■

7.0 Disability, Marginalization, Violence, and Human Trafficking

Within this community engagement, one of the most critical findings was the underreported, underemphasized, and hidden nature of human trafficking for individuals with disabilities in Calgary, and the dire need to take action as a community to protect these individuals and support their healing. First, we acknowledge that frameworks for describing disability have changed dramatically over the last few decades, where conventional definitions of disability placed emphasis on an individual's deviation from a standard of 'normality' (DAWN, 2011). Disability activists have noted that it is not an individual's 'lacking' characteristic that is at issue, but the limitations or lack of accommodation that societies impose that limit advantage and access to full participation in society (DAWN, 2011). Feminist disability advocates have also argued that women with disabilities are in a position of double vulnerability, as they live in a society that is once disablist and also patriarchal (Curry et al., 2001). Indeed, these levels of oppression also intersect with other identities that can increase vulnerability to exploitation and also the ways in which society limits the supports an individual can receive (Chenoweth, 1996). While recognizing these complexities and intesectionalities, we use the term 'disability' within a framework which advocates for a focus on areas where social systems and services work to better meet the diverse needs of all members of our communities, rather than the individual.

Sobsey (1994) has used the term *silent acceptance* to describe the general state of violence and abuse against people with intellectual disabilities. Within advocacy for human trafficking, as well as research and policy making, individuals with disabilities and their experiences of exploitation have largely been ignored. The participants in this project also spoke of the silence that surrounds this issue in Calgary, and the uncertainty of service providers in how they can work to do better for these vulnerable members of our communities. Sex trafficking, like sexual assault, is a highly gendered phenomenon, and the intersection of inequality based on gender and on disability justify looking at women with mental disabilities as a group particularly vulnerable to sexual violence (Benedet and Grant, 2014). The purpose of this section is to highlight the dynamics related to violence and exploitation and disability in Calgary, and hopefully challenge further work for this vulnerable population in our city. ■

7.1 The Scale of the Issue: A Silent Epidemic

> "When I think of… my most vulnerable clients, the ones with the PDD diagnosis, FASD diagnosis, they're the ones that have been in probably the most unhealthy situations where one was being trafficked and was beaten within an inch of her life and she didn't have the cognitive functioning to understand what was going on for her. And then I can think of three others off the top of my head that get into these situations where one has been sold for drugs, two have been sold for drugs and then a third is constantly being used for money… they're probably some of the most vulnerable people that show up here."

That there is an alarmingly high incidence of violence and abuse in the lives of people with disabilities has been well documented, both in the research literature and in more general public forums, and is confirmed by many in this community engagement. Chappell (2003:12) concluded that "women with disabilities face an epidemic of monumental proportions." Abuse often starts in childhood; four in ten Canadians with a disability were physically and/or sexually abused during their childhood, compared to about one-quarter (27%) of those who did not have a disability (Cotter, 2018). This abuse can often continue into adulthood, or be experienced by other perpetrators; according to the 2014 General Social Survey on Victimization in Canada, women with a disability were twice as likely as women who did not have a disability to have been the victim of violent crime (Cotter, 2018). Few researchers have examined the specific issue of sex trafficking of individuals with intellectual disabilities. However, one recent study which looked specifically at young people, revealed a disproportionate risk for exploitation for girls with intellectual disabilities, emphasizing that in these situations, vulnerabilities are exacerbated, and perpetrator-victim dynamics are highly complex and cause specific challenges for prevention and intervention (Reid, 20168. In the case of individuals with disabilities, the potential for trafficking often occurs within the bounds of intimate partner relationships, and such dynamics were highlighted by participants in Calgary. That said, because family members, social workers, health care service providers and residential staff work intimately with individuals, and hold immense power and trust, there is also the potential for exploitation from these individuals, as is seen too often in other contexts of abuse (Odette and Rajan, 2013).

In this project, respondents highlighted the pervasive nature of exploitation and abuse of individuals with disabilities, in particular 'invisible' intellectual disabilities, such as mental health (or psychiatric) disabilities, along with conditions such as FASD (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder) which were described as often falling under the radar because they can go undetected by those in social services and in the general public.

> "(individuals with) personal developmental delays… are being targeted, and so they end up in this relationship and then it's, oh, well he pimped me out for whatever and then, oh, he sold me to his friends so that we could have more money, and, oh, we ran out of my AISH money, so I'm selling myself to support him. And it's like, is this what you want? And the answer is, well it's what he wants. So we see that a fair amount."

As with discussions of trafficking and domestic violence, participants in this project highlighted that traffickers were most often intimate partners, where methods of grooming are utilized to gain trust and control over time.

> "Yeah, and it's really hard for us to support and reintegrate safety when the understanding isn't there, and they're not getting what they need out of our programs because their cognitive levels are too low… seeing that they're being victimized or vulnerable, this is just what happens… Or it's

> their boyfriend. They don't understand, they're so in love because these guys build up the girls and say you're more mature than anybody I've ever met, and you're so pretty, and you're so great, and you're not like the other girls. So that's a pretty common thing, is for these girls to have lower self-esteem and somebody builds it up, these exploiters, they know who to look for."

Research has shown that having a boyfriend may be seen as a highly desired status by women who have often been systematically excluded from typical social relationships, and where "the contours of a non-exploitative intimate relationship may be largely unfamiliar to many women with mental disabilities" (Benedet and Grant, 2014: 139). This reality was reflected in this project, where one participant stated that in the agency she works, they often hear among the women they work with that "any boyfriend is better than no boyfriend," and clients are too often willing to maintain ties to extreme abuse when the alternative is to be alone. These dynamics also make it extremely difficult to leave the relationship, as will be described further in this discussion. ■

7.2 'Invisible' Disabilities and Increased Risk for Violence and Trafficking of Women and Girls

Within discussions of exploitation and trafficking in Calgary, participants focused on women and girls with disabilities, and a number of factors were seen to increase risks. We are not suggesting here that there is no risk of exploitation for young men and boys with disabilities, and we compel community members and academics to undertake an in-depth investigation of this issue in Calgary, where gender and ethnicity for example, can be explored. For example, the victimization of Indigenous people with disabilities has been increasingly recognized as a concern (Federal Task Force on Disability Issues, 1996), yet little research is available on the topic. One study indicated that Indigenous people have a disability rate that is double the national rate for adults and three times the national rate for people aged 15 to 34, and where conditions such as FASD are serious concerns (Human Resources and Development Canada, 2002). For this report, we present findings through the lens of community perspective, which focused entirely on women and girls with disabilities, and did not explicitly examine the issue with enough detail to warrant a comprehensive discussion on these complexities and intersectionalities.

Women with disabilities typically occupy spaces of extreme marginalization and exclusion that make them more vulnerable to violence and abuse than other women (Chenowth, 1996). Practices such as overprotection, segregation, the training of women with disabilities to comply with requests from staff, and a prevailing view that women with disabilities are simultaneously asexual and promiscuous all increase the incidence of abuse and violence rather than prevent it (Chenoweth, 1996, Shah et al, 2016). As Chenoweth (1996:403) has pointed out, the overprotection of women with disabilities has actually made them more vulnerable targets of sexual violence:

> In both structured and implicit ways, the experiences of violence for women with disabilities have been neither voiced nor heard. The ways in which this has happened are extremely complex but rest on the control and oppression of such women into places in our society where they may not be known by persons other than human service staff members. They may have all aspects of their lives controlled by others, and they may miss out on experiences of ordinary relationships – good

> and bad. There are inherent social practices shaping and silencing these experiences. These practices are paradoxical in that they actually increase vulnerability rather than protect women (Chenoweth 1996: 403).

Womendez and Schneiderman (1991) point out that individuals with disabilities have historically lacked opportunities to learn the differences between appropriate and inappropriate sexual behavior. As expressed within this community engagement:

> "I think one of the differences is generally they're not viewed as sexual beings, (even though) sexuality is something that occurs across the human lifespan no matter ability or disability. So they're not necessarily informed the same way typical populations are about sexuality and healthy relationships and what these things look like."

> "It's like a person that has the understanding of an 8-year-old. So talking about healthy relationships and talking about what love really is or what a healthy relationship looks like… sometimes it sinks in but, it's often times, it's just like, yeah, I have that. 'Cause there's no real understanding of what healthy looks like."

One participant shared the following horrific realization when counselling a woman with disabilities: "I asked her, when did you learn about sex?…. And her answer: the first time my dad raped me." For many women, living in a state of powerlessness and heightened vulnerability means that others make decisions for them and control much of their lives, including their sexuality (Chenoweth, 1996).

The dependent status of disabled women also reinforces the notion that they are incompetent and powerless to resist or report perpetrators' advances, making women more likely to be victimized than a non-disabled woman (Shah et al, 2016: 1193). Indeed, women with intellectual disabilities may feel powerless to reject the sexual demands of their caregivers, or be unaware that they can say no to someone who expects and enforces compliance in other contexts. As discussed above, they may comply with demands for sexual activity without understanding what sexual acts are to be engaged in. They may be induced by offers of compensation, companionship or simply social acceptance (Benedet and Grant, 2014: 132).

As with other populations across Calgary, trauma was recognized to be a risk factor for trafficking. In the case of individuals with disabilities, trauma in childhood was highlighted to be particularly egregious, and often enduring throughout the life course.

> "They often have like these terrible histories of trauma and feeling unwanted and unloved and not having family and not having support and so they see this person who wants to give them all of that and they're like, okay, this is my chance and they're so hopeful and you don't want to break that 'cause they've been broken their whole life."

In particular, one provider spoke at length about unhealthy family dynamics, abuse in childhood, and the normalization of violence. This provider described abusive situations from foster parents, step-parents, and biological family members. She questioned the fundamental assumption within the disability world that a family member is a healthy place for individuals with disabilities, and argued that often times, guardians are not healthy supports, with abuses ranging from financial abuse, threats to take children away if women are mothers, to enduring physical, sexual and emotional violence. In one case the provider described a gang rape perpetrated by a father and his friends of a woman with disabilities currently living in Calgary. These stories were not singular, but were described as endemic. Research supports these claims, where we know that children with disabilities are abused at a rate that is 1.7 to 3.4 times that of non-disabled children. (Sullivan and Knutson, 2000; Westat, 1993).

Of note is also the high percentage of individuals who experience a disability or delay as a direct result of violence and trauma in early childhood or later in life. Another issue which was broached by one participant but which required far more research, is the relationship between domestic violence and traumatic brain injuries (TBI). In one study, women with TBI as a result of domestic violence exhibited reduced capacity to make informed, consistent choices about whether to leave or return to the perpetrating partner, and their ability to plan and to respond appropriately to safety, health, child care, and parenting (Monahan and O'Leary, 1999). This increases the likelihood that they will remain in a violent relationship and the risk of sustaining additional injuries. There are also a number of reasons that victims of domestic violence who experienced traumatic brain injuries due to violence may not come forward with their abuse. First, individuals with TBI are more likely to be dependent on a perpetrator for financial support and physical care. Second, communication problems associated with TBI may make it difficult for victims to report victimization. Third, the perpetrator may claim that the victim should not be taken seriously because of their TBI-related cognitive problems. Finally, victims may not be willing to admit that they have had a TBI because of the fear of negative consequences such as losing custody of their children (Langlois, 2008). The impacts of such trauma and the normalization of violence cannot be overlooked when examining the risk factors of trafficking within these populations. ■

7.3 Exiting Trafficking and Magnified Barriers and Challenges for Women Living with Disabilities

As with other situations where domestic violence and trafficking intersect, for women with disabilities, the ability to exit an abusive, exploitative, or trafficking situation is exacerbated and may seem entirely insurmountable. Some women may lack the physical ability to escape due to their disability. Some are reluctant to report abuse due to their dependency on the abusers for their daily life; leaving may not represent a move toward greater independence as it does for non-disabled women but rather a move towards institutionalized care if the abuser has also been providing them support for their daily living. (Curry et al, 2001). This might entail help with primary care (eating, bathing, going to the bathroom), taking medication, grocery shopping, banking, and going to health appointments. Women often have no other option, therefore they endure abuse in order to keep on living day to day (DAWN, 2011).

For other women and girls, they may not have the cognitive ability to understand they are experiencing abuse, especially if abuse has been a constant in their lives, and they also experience issues with mental health. It may also be that women and girls would absolutely have the cognitive ability, but because of control and a lack of education, they have not been taught healthy relationships and consent during their lives. As one participant shared, even after years of counselling and support, it may take an individual years to name their abuser, if they ever do. Often times, individuals will minimize the abuse to providers, for fear it will mean an intervention and loss of that partner, even if they are abusive. In one case, a provider spoke of an ongoing situation of abuse, exploitation and trafficking where a woman stated she would stay with her abuser 'forever,' despite forcing her to have sex with his friends, and repeated abuse within their home. For many complex reasons, leaving an exploitative relationship or trafficker is difficult and intensified for women with disabilities. ■

7.4 Responding to Exploitation and Violence: The Supportive Landscape in Calgary

"you can wrap that person in so much red tape, they can't even pick out their clothes."

One of the most salient points that providers made (and did across the issue of trafficking for all populations in Calgary) was the need for empowering individual choice and the regaining of control for individuals who have been exploited and had control of their life taken away by a trafficker. For individuals with disabilities, there are further complexities, as some individuals may be under private or public guardianship if they have been deemed without the capacity to make their own decisions:

> "But also you don't want to remove choice from them too because there is a lot of people who have been under guardianship who feel like they don't have their own choice … And it's like where is this fine balance?"

One way to mitigate these concerns, was to build strong relationships with individuals, based in trust and respect, and in some cases:

> "But helping manage that and… just frequent check ins to say, hey how are you doing, what's going on? Letting them know that, well, we may be staff… and it's different, (but) we're here and we love you and we'll support you, and if you need anything please come find us."

Despite knowledge of cognitive delays and intellectual disabilities for some clients, a number of providers spoke of the need to take a harm reduction approach:

> "You continue to support them the best that you can. A lot of them have guardians so, keep the guardian in the loop. We managed to get one girl who had ended up being sold and severely beaten within an inch of her life, we managed to get her out of the city because the guardian and myself are so connected. So just staying in touch and keeping them in the loop about what's going on and then setting up the best exit plan for them to get them out of the situations. So that girl is out of the city, nobody knows where she is, and apparently is doing really well."

As one participant asked within a discussion of harm reduction, "can we honour this person who wants to live a high-risk life?" Do individuals with disabilities have the right to make mistakes? The following describes the balance between overprotection and wanting to honour the agency of individuals:

> "But I think that it comes back again to having that relationship with people and having those frank conversations and reframing things to meet their understanding. Because it's also, somebody with a cognitive delay has been stigmatized for so long that they want to also have their own agency, right? And so how do you balance that fine line of knowing that if they believe that this is their choice, how can you argue that, right? You can't. That is something that they're gonna continue to believe. It may not align with your values and morals, and I think this is also really reflective in any type of social services."

A number of clear service needs were articulated by participants, many of which are supported within current research by disability advocates (DAWN, 2011). First and foremost, like all populations who experience trafficking, there is a dire need in Calgary for more trauma-informed counselors, and particularly counsellors who are highly skilled, have a strong understanding of the unique barriers women with disabilities experience, are non-

judgmental, gentle and compassionate. Indeed, as one participant suggested, providers may be better placed to support the existing relationship, offering counselling to both partners, and improving the relationship, alongside safety planning, rather than intervention. This may be especially critical when perpetrators also have cognitive delays or disabilities, and have potentially also been victims of abuse and neglect in their life time. This again, goes against rescue discourses, but is rooted in the realities and challenges that social services are working in on the ground. Peer-women-counsellors have also been highlighted as inherently well-placed to provide sensitivity and understanding (DAWN, 2011).

In general, there is a dire need to build an integrated community in Calgary where health and social services from across sectors (disability, homelessness, sexual health, medical, etc) can work together with women with disabilities to create a safe and supportive community for them to live in, and to build capacity within agencies for the ability to respond appropriately when agencies uncover risks for, or situations of exploitation and trafficking. A key concern for many members of the community engagement was the perception that there were no safe, appropriate shelter options for women and girls with disabilities. In terms of prevention, participants highlighted the critical need for appropriate, informed education for young people with disabilities. As one participant stated, "education is power: we need to be honest, respectful, and do the hard messaging." ■

7.5 Conclusion: We Need To Do Better

Exploitation and trafficking are forms of gender-based violence which often intersect with discrimination based on disability. The intersections between trauma, disability and violence are complex and sometimes interwoven over the life course. A large number of the women and girl with disabilities who are trafficked in Canada are not showing up in any data sets that will lend themselves to the policy reforms that could lead to change. Women with mostly invisible disabilities (traumatic brain injury, intellectual or psychosocial disabilities) are the most vulnerable to sex trafficking.

Responding to violence in the lives of women with disabilities is a challenge that requires working at a number of levels to achieve change. Breaking the silences that surround these issues is crucial. Women must have a voice; we need to shift the position of women from one of marginalization to one of inclusion (Chenoweth, 1996). The desire to be respected, to belong, to be loved is immense, and by marginalizing these individuals in systemic and every day ways, our societies are further exacerbating risks, and allowing abuse and exploitation to continue. Participants spoke so often in this engagement of the immense resiliency of this population, but we cannot depend on these individuals to support themselves. As a city, we absolutely must do better. ■

8.0 The Tip of the Iceberg: Labour Trafficking in Calgary

"...it's hard to talk about individual experiences if we're not actually talking about the systems in which they're under. And what we do and what other agencies do to dismantle some of that. Because that's actually what creates the environments where people are being trafficked and exploited."

As has been discussed across this report, issues surrounding what constitutes sex trafficking, and how these frameworks and interventions affect risk and vulnerability are highly contentious, reflecting debates at the global level. However, as will be seen in this section of the report, there is near universal acceptance of the realities of labour exploitation and trafficking and the risk factors and root causes for its endemic nature in Canada, and why a spectrum of exploitation framework may be helpful in locating this issue in Calgary.

Given that the exploitation of a person's labour is the central motive for trafficking, it constitutes a serious human rights violation (Hanely et al, 2006). While the trafficking definition is meant to apply to all labour sites, trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation has overwhelmingly been the main focus and target of anti-trafficking laws, policies, interventions, and campaigns by both state governments and NGOs at the global and national level. As a consequence, until very recently, trafficking within other labour sites (the agricultural sector, factory work, the construction industry, domestic service, etc.) has often been ignored or sidelined. Some scholars have argued that this focus has conveniently helped to eclipse what is often considered to be the more mundane or economically justifiable "state-sponsored exploitation of migrant people" based on the logic of labour market flexibility (Lepp, 2013). While Barrett (2012) calls labour trafficking, "the great unknown" because of a lack of reliable evidence and statistics, it was clear in this engagement that what is known is likely only the tip of the iceberg.

Numerous studies have found that migrants and newcomers are at heightened risk of trafficking in Canada. In particular, the low-wage stream of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) has been identified by many authors to be the most common method by which labour trafficking occurs in Canada (see for example, Faraday, 2014; McCrae, 2016; Oxman-Martinez et al, 2006; Ricard-Guay and Hanley, 2014; Sikka, 2013). The TFWP describes a collection of programs through which international migrants are granted permission to come to Canada to work for a set period of time. Individuals can apply for temporary entry to Canada as (1) a visitor, (2) a student, or (3) a worker. As of 2014, temporary workers can enter Canada through either the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) or the International Mobility Program.[1] The

1 *This program is primary intended to advance Canada's economic and cultural interests rather than filling particular jobs and gaps in the labour market. Workers under this program enter Canada through bi/multilateral agreements with other countries and are not subject to Labour Market Impact Assessments.*

federal government created the TFWP with the oft-reiterated intention of it being a last resort for employers who require foreign workers to fill jobs on a temporary basis when there are no qualified Canadians available (ESDC, 2014). The program has been modified, updated, and expanded since it was first created in 1973 and has arguably been sewn into the fabric of the Canadian labour market, particularly as a means to fill low-wage positions in the food service, caregiving, hospitality, and tourism industries (CCR et al, 2016; Faraday, 2014; Foster, 2012; Kaye, 2013).

The TFWP is legislated through the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* and *Regulations* and is jointly administered by Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC),[2] Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), and Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA). Under the TFWP, foreign workers enter Canada at the request of employers and upon approval of a Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA), except for those entering under the International Mobility Program (IMP). The main purpose of an LMIA is to verify that there is a need for a temporary worker and that no Canadians are available to fill the position. Work permits are highly restrictive and authorize the temporary foreign worker to work exclusively for the employer listed on the work permit, doing the specific job listed, and only at the designated location. If the temporary foreign worker wishes to change jobs, he or she must find an employer willing to apply for and receive an LMIA and then apply for and receive another work permit.

Sassen (2002) has described the push and pull factors related to international migration. On the push side, trade liberalization and structural-adjustment policies have limited the job opportunities and social services available in poorer countries. On the pull side, destination countries' unrelenting demand for cheap migrant labor, combined with greater access to information technology, has fed the expectation that jobs abroad for poor, unskilled laborers are plentiful. Historically, Alberta has been a key site for these global dynamics of migration, particularly during the oil boom of the last decade. Between 2005 and 2008, the number of temporary foreign workers in Alberta nearly quadrupled, from under 6,000 to approximately 20,500, reaching peak numbers of 56,361 in 2013. However, due to the economic recession in Alberta, these numbers have been massively scaled back. In 2017, only 9,419 temporary foreign workers arrived in Alberta. Of these, 2,094 arrived in Calgary (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2018).

The Temporary Foreign Worker Program has been widely criticized as contributing to systemic abuse and exploitation of migrant workers; the program fails to protect the rights of migrant workers who can easily be controlled by employees and recruiters through deceit, monitoring, isolation, and fear. (McCrae, 2016). Advocates, academics, and labour groups draw attention to the tied-work permits, which require workers to remain with a single employer, creating a severely imbalanced power relationship between employer and worker. They highlight the lack of protections in place by federal and provincial governments, and advocate for improved access to permanent residency for program participants, arguing that deep structural changes are necessary to support concrete protections of workers. These advocates are part of a larger community of activists, including unions, community organizations, and researchers engaging with and supporting workers under the TFWP. In the past decade, they have been working to draw attention to the pervasive exploitation of TFWs, and agitating for policy changes to improve the protection of their rights and interests in Canada.

Despite this, little concrete action has been taken to mitigate what are seen as fundamentally problematic aspects of the TFWPs' regulatory

2 *Also known as Service Canada.*

structure and operation. Hastie (2015) has argued that the design and evolution of the TFWP has been based on a pure and abstracted economic and labour market analysis, devoid of the human dimension of migration and of workers who participate under the programs. Many of these workers are distributed into industries which typically provide jobs of low pay and low skill level, and require a large number of flexible, seasonal workers, such as agriculture, domestic work, construction, hospitality and service work, and other low skill jobs. In Alberta, migrant workers are able to access some limited supports through the Temporary Foreign Worker Advisory Office (TFWAO), mandated to support migrant workers who are in situations involving unfair, unsafe or unhealthy working conditions as well as a number of programs within immigrant-serving agencies, for example, Calgary Catholic Immigration Society which has a Community Support Services Program for TFWs and international students, served 559 individuals between April 1 and September 30 2018 (CCIS correspondence, 2018).

The main measure of protection for victims of human trafficking mandated by the federal government is the specialized Temporary Resident Permit for victims with precarious status, which Citizenship and Immigration Canada began issuing in 2005. The purpose of these permits is to provide trafficked individuals with a reflection period to consider their options, begin to recover from physical or mental trauma, and potentially (but not necessarily) participate in any ongoing law enforcement investigations. Holders of the permit have legal status in Canada for short-term (up to 180 days) or long term (up to three year) periods, with the possibility of renewal. During this time, victims of human trafficking are eligible to access Interim Federal Health coverage – including trauma counselling – and are eligible to apply for fee-exempt open work permits (CIC, 2016). In Alberta, holders of these permits are also eligible to receive income support through Alberta Works for the duration of their permit, as of 2008 (Alberta Human Services, 2014).

However, Canada has come under sharp criticism, both internally and abroad, for perceived shortfalls in the response to human trafficking. For example, the Temporary Resident Permit for victims of human trafficking – the main measure of federal protection offered to victims of trafficking with precarious status – is documented to be of limited use. As was reported in 2016, "getting a TRP can be an arduous process with uncertain outcomes" (McCrae, 2016) due to the discretionary nature of the permit issuance process, an unspoken requirement for the existence of an open criminal investigation, lengthy application processes, stressful interviews, and lack of knowledge of human trafficking among IRCC officers (see also Ricard-Guay & Hanley, 2014). Furthermore, government funding for specialized non-governmental services is reportedly grossly inadequate, leaving victim support and interagency coordination spotty across the country (Barrett, 2012; Ricard-Guay, 2016; McCrae, 2016; US Department of State, 2016). ■

8.1 Recruiters, Consultants and Intra-community Trafficking

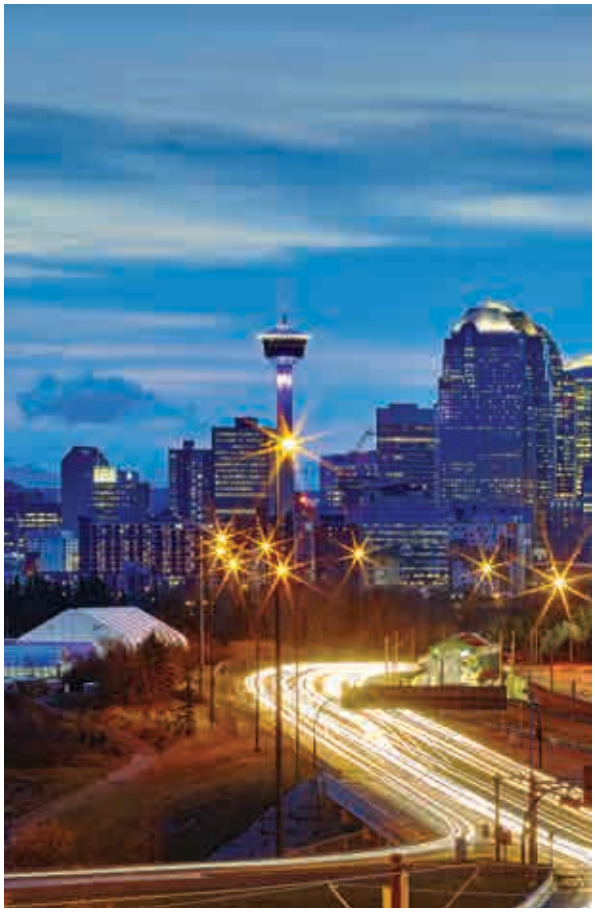
"But for us, this is our entire life, our entire future, the future of our family and these people are taking advantage of us."

While illegal, one of the findings in this engagement was that the payment of fees in order to obtain permits and work positions is a pervasive reality. As temporary labour migration has exploded, an industry of third-party, for-profit labour recruiters has emerged to match migrant workers with employers in Canada and facilitate workers' movement across national borders (Faraday, 2014). As researchers such as Faraday (2014) have reported, there exists widespread abuse of migrant workers by disreputable recruiters who charge workers oppressive "recruitment fees" for jobs — including fees for non-existent jobs and jobs significantly different than promised. These abuses continue to be documented on an ongoing basis, including in Calgary (Dharssi, 2016).

Participants with lived experience reported that generally, fees are paid within home countries, which makes it difficult to track or respond to legally when in Canada. In some cases, individuals also pay recruitment fees while in Canada in order to change jobs. Most individuals who have paid fees accept it as part of the process of obtaining work. However, it must be recognized as a risk factor in that individuals need to pay back this debt and are therefore more willing to stay in exploitative and trafficking situations.

> "Yeah because the thing is there is an agency in the Philippines and the agency here is different, too. So whatever you agreed in the Philippines is in the Philippines. So if you are here in Canada and you say like, oh I paid. Canada has no way of tracing it because it's a different agency."

> "'This girl who contacted us to tell us about her situation and wanted help saying "I can't pay this guy, he's constantly on us to pay." What do we do? I mean this is a clear case of human trafficking and who knows what threats they're going through because a lot of them won't speak up. People are paying to come, they are paying people to come here and they are coming in legitimately as apparently sponsored individuals, but they are working to pay someone who has brought them to Canada."



We did not collect quantitative data on the ethnic origins of individuals who exploit or become traffickers in Calgary. This data also does not exist in any comprehensive format in Canada. However, in terms of exploitation and trafficking, participants with lived experience, as well as service providers, reported that it is often members within the same ethnic communities who exploit and traffic others in their communities:

> "Actually, people from the same community are the ones that are abusing them too because if you are coming from a certain place, it's the same people in the community that you trust are actually the ones that are abusing them too…these are the people that you put your trust in because you have no one here except them and then these are the same people that would do the same. At least in our experience, that happened so many times and in fact, the human trafficking cases or the elements, the cases with elements of human trafficking, the employers or the recruiters are coming from the same country, from the same community."

Participants reflected that at times, exploiters would say that it is simply part of the process of coming to Canada and being able to stay; exploitation may be something they also experienced, and was then communicated as something they would have to endure as well. This level of intra-community trafficking became normalized, and thus less questioned. ■

8.2 Power, Control, and the Systemic Nature of Exploitation Within the Canadian Immigration System

> "…these false promises people are brought to Calgary to work under terms and conditions that aren't fulfilled. And I think that it is a matter of people who are wanting to live the dream, wanting to eventually immigrate to Canada, wanting to work; they pursue an opportunity that looks good on paper that when they get there, they are shocked that it is not what they had agreed upon and once they are shocked they don't even know what is legal and what is not. They know it's not what they were told but whatever threats accompany the new terms or whatever conditions that are imposed on them once they are here, they kind of feel trapped; they don't know what is right, what is not right, they don't know how to access help. And fear I think is a big one, it limits their ability to communicate about what is wrong or what they think is different… they are perceived to be easy victims."

As Faraday (2014) argues, patterns of exploitation in Canada are systemic, routine in nature and occurring within the *regular, entirely legal* channels that the Canadian government has created for temporary labour migration, rather than within illegal channels of human smuggling and trafficking. In this engagement, it was found that the immigration system, in particular the temporary worker program itself, is *the primary risk factor*, the tool used to control individuals, and what keeps individuals from leaving their abusive working situations. Indeed, Faraday (2014: 11) argues that these practices are not aberrant "but are in fact core to the business model that some recruiters adopt while operating within legal migration streams." From participants:

> "I feel the economic factor back home (is the root cause) because that's the reason why they're here is because of the economic factor and so they will tend to be exploited simply because if they are dependent on this very thing that provides income for them, if it will take it away, then the tendency is for them to endure the abuse because this is something that they have worked for to support their family back home, and they

> have borrowed so much money for that and if it's take it away, then they will either endure that abuse."
>
> "Yeah because first and foremost what's in your mind is that your status is at stake (individual with lived experience)."

Being far from home, away from social systems and social supports was seen as an important factor in individuals' vulnerability to coercion and exploitation (Hanley et al, 2006). Indeed, the pressure on individuals here in Canada to 'hold it together' for those back in home countries was also seen to be a reason they are unable to leave their situations:

> "The struggle, being alone, and dealing with all this, and thinking about your family. It's like I'd sacrifice not eating as long as I can send money to my kids. Stuff like that it just drives someone crazy (individual with lived experience)."
>
> "they're willing to suffer because of the family. It becomes a risk because they're working here and then they're trying to provide for themselves and then they also have to provide for their family back home and so the family back home doesn't know what's happening to them. They're happy, they're content with life because they're well provided for, but then the person that is here working for that, suffers a lot and he doesn't want to show that he's suffering."

Tied work permits were universally highlighted to create a prime source of insecurity that employers are able to exploit. Work permits issued through the TFWP tie a worker to a single employer. They only allow a migrant worker to work for the specific employer named on the permit, in the location named on the permit, in the job named on the permit, for the period named on the permit. If the migrant worker performs work that is inconsistent with those restrictions, the worker is working "without status" — contrary to the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (Faraday, 2014: 38). If temporary foreign workers desire to change jobs, they are entitled to look for other work but can only work for an employer with a positive Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA).

> "...because of the temporary nature of the program, there is a power imbalance between the employer and the foreign worker... I feel that contributes to their vulnerability."

Another vulnerability to being lured into exploitative labour situations that low-wage temporary foreign workers encounter is the lack of routes to permanent residency that are not employer dependent. In fact, for low-wage temporary foreign workers (excluding caregivers), the *only* route to permanent residence status is through the severely strained and restrictive Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program (AINP), which has remained capped at 5,500 annual nominees for both high- and low-wage applicants for over five years. AINP applications can be jeopardized or even cancelled if there is a conflict with the employer, and nominees must continue to work for the employer throughout the duration of the processing time, which, even when applications are successful, can stretch for years. As a result of this situation, migrant workers, trafficked or not, will often refuse to complain about mistreatment because they do not want to risk any possible chances of receiving permanent residence status (McCrae, 2015)

> "I said I have to survive because I want my PR... I have already gone this far you know? There's no turning back (individual with lived experience)."
>
> "I think it blurs the lines for people about wanting to say something or how long they'll stay in a situation because that's everything to them and that's the main piece that gets exploited, that desire to be here."

The following perspective highlights the dynamics of coercion of control. Individuals may live in fear not only for themselves, but possibly for their families back home, and for their coworkers here. The ability to exit an abusive situation, or even extreme trafficking, is often insurmountable when supported by a system of tied-work permits, lack of mobility in employment, and the absolute priority of attaining permanent residency:

> "I think there is a lot of fear, fear of losing quote on quote "privileges,: fear of losing status, fear of losing employment…fear to their family back home and to their coworkers here so it's like if you open your mouth or tell anybody about this that money going home to your sister and her family, That is going to stop. And you know what? I know about your sister and her family so I can have them taken care of too and your other friends right over there, we can let them know they are losing their families so how do you feel about that?" ■

8.3 The Spectrum of Exploitation and the Nature of Labour Trafficking on the Ground

In one study of community services for human trafficking, providers confirmed that the number of people fitting the *exact* definition of trafficking was small. Rather, these groups reported working with a whole range of "irregular" economic migrants who ended up in difficult, exploitative situations due to a combination of factors, including migrants' own assessment that they were better off "accepting" exploitative work in the short term in the hope of a better scenario in the future (Hanley et al, 2006).

Out of this engagement, we found that on the ground, service providers are working within a framework of understanding labour trafficking on a spectrum and all of the shades of exploitation that precede it. A very common place where this spectrum of exploitation is present, is for female domestic caregivers in Calgary who arrive through the TFWP. For example, these women may find that upon arrival in Canada, they are not working for the employer named on their visa; the family they work for may pay them below the minimum wage; may not pay them overtime; may have them take on a number of tasks outside of their contract; may not give them vacation days or daily breaks; in addition to possibly mistreating them psychologically, physically, or sexually (Hanley et al, 2006).

From a participant in this project:

> "I (have) worked (with) a lot with caregivers, and I still do, and I have heard stories of women who definitely were being taken advantage of by their employer. From their time, it's like the contract says you're supposed to do this, but they were clearly not doing that, like you can't tell your live-in caregiver to go live with your brother for a weekend and clean his house, stuff like that."
>
> "Unfortunately, there's everything from sexual slavery all the way to "I'm not paying you overtime," and everything in between really."
>
> "Yeah, like this is my nanny and I will share her with you and I was like how is this different than slavery? Like really, I will have my person come over and pick cotton in your field but you will pay *me* because I am renting out my property to you and I was like this is so wrong."

Within these discussions of exploitation, there was a universal frustration over a lack of oversight:

> "Another problem that we have is that the monitoring of the conditions of employment is lacking, even some of the employees that

> I have spoken to don't necessarily know what is happening to them is wrong…. it's almost like the accountability is really minimal…It's a 24/7 around the clock bed share for three of them, or its getting paid this this and this, but they are being deducted, so the amount of money they are getting is like a third of what they were promised, or they are being charged for uniform fees or like indoor house shoes fee or whatever additional fees that are hidden so I don't know…they have to shut up and put up for the two years (and also) the internalized "we all go through this so just do it."

Labour exploitation and trafficking often contain the following dynamics:

- Inhumane living conditions
- Unreasonable working conditions (excessive hours, dangerous)
- Underpaid for the hours of work (illegal deductions)
- Job is not as described (if they have seen a contract)
- Health issues as a result of working conditions (especially in factories, agricultural sector)
- Dependence on employer for accommodation, food, transportation
- Isolated from the community and social services (often arrive with little social capital)
- Evidence that when workers attempt to assert their rights, subtle control mechanisms like retaliation through decreasing working hours or threats to cancel their work permit entirely.
- Live-in caregivers often work overtime without pay, and report doing work well outside their contract (overnight work, taking care of other aging or ill family members).

A migrant from Mexico, Juan's story of working in a hotel in Calgary is likely typical; here he synthesizes some of the dynamics of abuse and coercion that can occur:

> "There is only a certain amount of time you can get your permanent residency…so basically you are tied by him …you are not allowed to get sick… sometimes you need to work 6 days a week, you don't have 2 days off…so it was really difficult and (if you) go to Worker's Compensation because they say I hurt my back, I injured myself and the employer says, you need to tell your doctor you didn't get hurt here, you need to tell that to your doctor otherwise I'm gonna cancel your application for permanent residency.
> So people were injured and they were still doing the job because they want to get the permanent residency and that's what happened to me…I went and then I put my medical leave and he tried to find every single thing… then when he fired me it was some other people that he also fired and he was like you need to come here because the police is waiting for you, they're gonna put you back to Mexico. I never answered the phone call because I was so scared… I was on medical leave and at the time I was like I'm gonna receive my permanent residency probably, I can apply for another work permit or things like that but this guy was harassing me over the phone and I never answer, but what he did was he put on my letter when he fired me, he said that I was stealing milk and cereal."

Juan's story typifies the fear of migrant workers, and the power that employers have over them. Not just their day to day working environment, but also the power they hold over their entire immigration process. In his case, the employer was able to threaten and make a fraudulent claim. Further, as another male shared with us, migrants are often totally dependent on their employers when they arrive in Canada:

> "When I first came here, I didn't know anything yet. I just trust them, wait for them to tell me what to do. My first job is a good company, very big company but the only thing is people is crying there. They're going to force you to do the job

> even you have sore, you get hurt, you have the duty until you cannot do the job and then they're just going to bring you to clinic, that's it." (Male, lived experience)."

In this case, this migrant from the Philippines worked at a meat-processing plant, and sustained permanent physical damage. Today, he has overstayed his visa but is hoping to be able to remain in Canada under humanitarian and compassionate grounds, a hope that many who have been abused or exploited share. Ultimately, individuals who arrive in Canada with precarious immigration status are fighting an uphill battle simply to be treated with respect, dignity, and fair labour conditions. Our engagement discussions were rife with exploitation and elements of labour trafficking, which often existed on a spectrum. For many, the system itself has forced them into situations where they are unable to leave an abusive employer. While the employer is the abuser, exploiter, or trafficker, the Canadian immigration system stands by, arguably complicit by account of not working to change the system, and continuing a status quo where migrant rights are expendable. ■

8.4 The Extreme Vulnerability of Those Without Status in Calgary

One of the resounding issues that was broached in Calgary is of the extreme vulnerability of individuals living without legal immigration status. Participants shared that this population and the risks for exploitation and trafficking are particularly worrisome, and are largely ignored by advocates and government officials. As discussed above within Alberta's migrant history, over the last ten years, tens of thousands of individuals have gained entry into Alberta as temporary foreign workers, and through other visa programs, such as students and international visitors. Although these numbers have decreased, we know that Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) does not track nor publish data on the number of foreign workers who do not return to their home countries. Our community engagement found that many individuals who work with newcomers and immigrants in Alberta believe that there are potentially thousands of individuals who have overstayed their visas in a desperate bid to stay in Canada. These individuals have been highlighted as being especially vulnerable to exploitation and abuse, as the following participant describes:

> "I didn't have the paper and then I met those people, hiring people … You can't do anything, you can't complain because you don't have a paper, you don't have a status. You can't go to police and then report them, and you need to live, so they are taking advantage (individual with lived experience)."

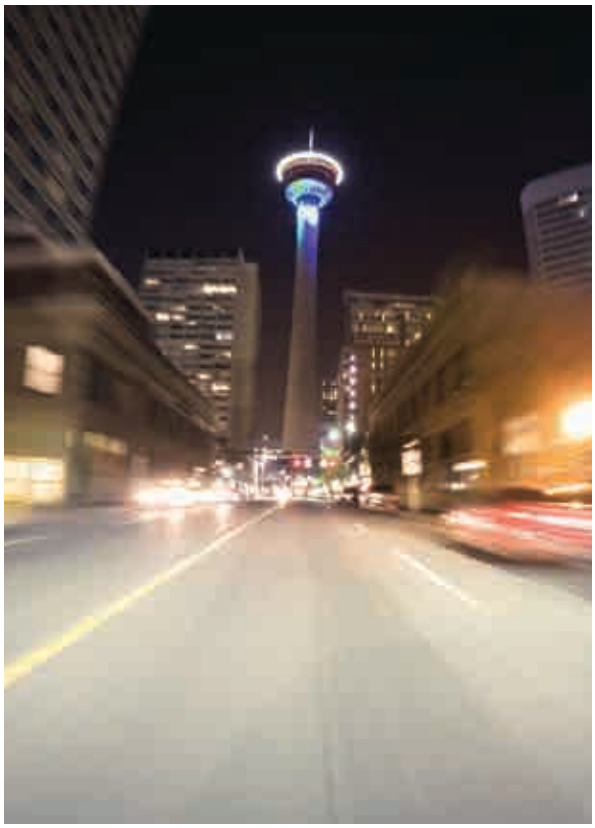
Because individuals are not legal to work in Canada, they are repeatedly taken advantage of by employers, especially in the informal economy. In such instances, even extreme abuse goes unreported, for fears of what will happen if they make a complaint:

> "All they told me was you can't do anything because if you report them, Immigration will tell you "why did you work without proper documents?" So you will be sent home and I don't want that. What's the worst that can happen to that employer? They will be fined. That's it or they cannot hire a caregiver anymore or a nanny anymore, right? But us, this is our entire life, our entire future, the future of our family and these people are taking advantage of us and I didn't know who to call or to talk to, I'm so scared."

While some providers are able to work with undocumented clients, many are not mandated to offer support. However, even for those who are able to work with these populations, they are acutely aware of how impoverished many are, living in homeless shelters, and living precariously without access to health or other basic services:

> "Because they've been out of status for so long. And… you can see they have no money. They've lived, I'm not sure, under a bridge somewhere. Some of them, you know, haven't washed and you know… and we have no means to get them (help)."

While not a topic of great examination in this project, it must be highlighted that going forward, increased focus and resources are placed within understanding the scale of this issue, and how services can best work with these populations. It will become increasingly important that at a bare minimum, organizations who can work with undocumented migrants are known within the community. ■



8.5 The Intersection Between Labour and Sex Trafficking in Calgary

A growing concern within this engagement was also the interconnection of labour and sex trafficking. In such scenarios, participants reflected that these were not cases where individuals were trafficked into Canada for the purpose of sexual exploitation and trafficking in the sex industry. Pathways into sex trafficking tended to be more informal, and potentially more insidious:

> "From what we've heard it is someone is coming to the nail salon or someone is coming to be a masseur or somebody is coming to do a job. Once they get here they start doing their job until boss says "hey wouldn't it be nice to make a little extra money? So and so do a little extra work for me and make a lot more money, would you be interested?" And then it gets presented as "you're my special chosen one and can make extra money" and then it gets presented as "oh no you don't want to? (then) I'm going to deport you or you (will) lose these privileges so whether it's a complying act because of the extra money and not really realizing what they are getting into, or whether it comes as a threat... From my understanding, they are not brought here by the guys who are going to perform fellatio on a daily bias. Its usually they are coming to do nails and there is a back room for eyebrows, which now becomes the back room for fellatio, so that's kind of my understanding of how (it goes) ... it's a gradual."

In such cases, if women are coerced into sex work, it is often through grooming, in very similar ways to conventional sex trafficking. And then once they have complied, there are threats and continuous coercion and control mechanisms used to keep them in this cycle, where they are "paralyzed by fear and just having to keep doing it."

In another example, a participant shared a story where a young woman arrived in Canada to work as a health care aide, and then faced the potential of sexual assault:

> "The first case I heard about was a woman who had been brought in to care for an aging husband. Her husband had sexual needs so she was trying to explain to the care provider that you need to masturbate my husband because I am not doing that anymore and I'm paying you to do that. And she was like I can't do it I am married back home and my husband and I are going to have a family and my belief is its wrong and it was basically like "you will never get your documents back you will never see your husband again unless you do this."

In this situation, the woman was not being trafficked by an individual who was selling her for sex, but the tactics of coercion and control were ultimately the same. The employer felt a right to demand sexual services for her husband, and used threats over her precarious immigration status. In this story, the woman ultimately sought out help and was able to avoid doing this work. However, likely there are many scenarios where labour and sex trafficking intersect in Calgary and go unreported. ■

8.6 The Responsive Landscape: Prevention and Intervention

First and foremost, participants felt that the exploitation of migrant workers in Calgary has become normalized, and that average Calgarians are either not aware of the extent to which it is occurring, or these abuses are simply ignored. Participants felt that we must first bring to light the spectrum of exploitation that is occurring in our cities, and make people aware of where they may be complicit themselves in the mistreatment of migrants in Calgary. The following impassioned plea really exemplifies the frustration of those working on the front lines with migrants:

> "We always talk about (in Calgary), "we need tougher rules, people are abusing welfare, we need drug testing because people are taking advantage." So I think what needs to happen is we need to check in on workers that are here in *our* country doing work for *us* Canadians to make sure that one, they are doing the jobs they were brought here to do, and two, that they are being treated humanely, ethically, and responsibly and being paid fairly because that is our responsibility. Like we would have no problems firing off our mouth about "these immigrants taking our jobs and stealing our money" and all these other ridiculous beliefs that exist out there, but to find out they are being taken advantage of not being treated fairly, not being compensated fairly? people don't give a shit and it's so sad. Nobody is doing those jobs, nobody is sweeping up the blood and guts on the floor at (the butcher plants), we have a hard-working individual who's been brought here on an LMIA to do that job because nobody else wanted it. We need to make sure they are being treated fairly and we need to be sure they are being compensated fairly."

In terms of prevention, a number of recommendations were made by participants. First and foremost, an immediate change to the TFW program to a system of open work permits that are not tied to a specific employer. This was seen to be the simplest and most direct way of balancing the inherent power imbalance that currently exists between employees and employers and allows for 'easy' exploitation. Secondly, a number of individuals also called for a clear method for dissemination of worker rights upon arrival in Canada. As one participants pointed out:

> "It seems like their orientation or their rights comes from the person that brings them into the country, so the risk is if that person has a plan to exploit them, he's the gatekeeper of how much I want that person to know and how much I want that person out in the community."

Participants were aware of the logistical challenges to such a system, however, without it, they felt the government was simply not doing enough to prevent exploitation and abuse:

> "When they come in through Border Services, IRCC, make sure that they have to have a sit down for at least half an hour, someone tells them from Employment Standards what your rights and responsibilities are as a temporary foreign worker. Just so they know and it's that simple. I'm sure they are overworked at the border and the port of entries, they're IRCC officers number one, they're not social workers and they don't work for Employment Standards but at least give them the information, and maybe in their own language. Giving them a piece of paper is not going to be the same thing."

An individual with lived experience explained that it's not just so that the worker knows their rights, its so the *employer knows* that the workers have been *told* of their rights. This one act has the ability to shift the power imbalance. Furthermore,

participants called for increased oversight by government agencies, proactive (surprise) inspections, and increased bystander engagement with the public.

In terms of direct service provision, the following describes some of the immediate needs required when a person has been trafficked, and first meets with a service provider:

> "Their immediate need is "I need help," and then we have to figure out what that help is. Usually it's financial, right away, it's financial help and usually by the time they come to us, like a roof over their head, food in the belly has been met somewhere else (because) they've been referred to us. If they are still employed and they are coming to us, they're usually planning their exit but they still have food in their belly and roof over their head so usually their more immediate need is money…Because there is always that fear of deportation….and their secondary concerns are like "how do I get my documents back" if they were keeping their documents. How do I find another job? Am I able to find another job?…So the next one is usually information, it's like they need to talk through their rights and what else they can do, who else they can get referred to. If they haven't been somewhere else and they first come here we usually ask are "you in a safe place?" Like are you safe, is everything okay? And the (last thing), it's reassurance. Like they almost want that reassurance again like they'll call back a few times not just to check up where their money status is or if we've received a decision but hi, just checking, "but I can't get deported right? I'm allowed to take the job right?" Like it's reassurance."

The following outlines some of the other critical services needed to support individuals who have experienced abuses along the spectrum of exploitation and trafficking:

- Comprehensive, judgement-free immigration advice
- Ability to obtain an open work permit, not interrupt the process of gaining permanent residency
- Support in finding another job in Canada
- Safe and appropriate shelter (this is a huge gap)
- Mental health services to support healing (short and long term)
- Community support services (these are excellent across the city but people need to know about them)
- Services for individuals without status
- Support in getting people back to their home countries if that is their choice
- Support services around the justice system which can take a really long time to come through the courts
- Individuals who have experienced exploitation want to help others from their communities. They are incredibly resilient and we should make space for them to support others.

8.7 Conclusion

Migrant workers in Calgary with temporary status are performing core jobs under conditions of extreme precariousness. Yet, this vulnerability is not inherent or inevitable. "Their disempowerment and marginalization are the products of active choices governments have made in building the laws and policies that govern transnational labour migration" (Faraday, 2014: 12). The control mechanisms used by those who exploit or traffick migrants are more coercive when exerted in the context of precarious financial and immigration status. When workers are fully empowered to exercise their rights, these control tactics will not hold the same weight (McCrae, 2015). This section has demonstrated that our knowledge of the spectrum and diversity of exploitation is likely the tip of the iceberg. ■

9.0 Recommended Practices and the Support Landscape in Calgary

"So if I told you that the road to solving any of these crises is bumpy and dimly lit and very narrow, and it is, at least you know you're on the right road… there's never a clear, straight line from dot A to dot B."

"They have to be able to push through the ugly that they'll find once they sit still long enough."

This section provides an overview of some of the major themes related to best practices around supporting survivors of trafficking. The following action plan will go into greater detail on how particular best practices and this research fostered activities which will be taken up by the community around prevention and supporting survivors. ■

9.1 Anti-oppressive Practice and Human Trafficking

Sen and Baba (2017) offer a critical practice framework for social service provision that is more holistic, more social justice oriented, and keeps the trafficked individual at the center of the problem-solving process. The following from a participant in this study offers a definition of their own understanding of this work in Calgary:

> "An individual's experience is their own and there are different interplays of power and oppression that occur systemically and on the individual level and in order to return power back to the individual that's seeking service, it's really what they identify has been their experience, you use the words that they use and the terms that they use and you wouldn't necessarily tell them that what you've experienced is domestic violence or what you've experienced is trafficking, they would wait for them to come to that realization on their own, if they ever came to that realization."

Anti-oppressive practice would include three main areas a) being aware of the historical and geopolitical context, b) being aware of the practitioner's own social identity and how values affect the work they do (self-reflection), and c) engaging in respectful partnership with clients. When intervening from such a framework one does not view all trafficked individuals as a monolithic group, but recognizes the complexities of a personhood created by the intersectionality of race, class, gender, sexual orientation etc. (Adams et al, 2002; Sen and Baba, 2017). Here again, trafficking must be viewed as one aspect of a life story, only to be understood and shared by the impacted individual as they see fit. ■

9.2 Victim-centred Approaches to Care

> "… so, my definition is that you are a person, and you've been trafficked, meaning that you were exploited, your choices were not your choices, your life has been kind of taken over. And so come to us, we're going to make your choices for you, we're going to tell you how to live now and it will be different and its better because we have government funding. And so then they're unsuccessful in these programs, and they wonder why? And they blame it on that individual."

> "If the only goal is to pull somebody out of that situation and not necessarily address all of what is going on in that person's life, what went on in that person's life before they experienced trafficking or were trafficked, I'm not sure long term how successful that's going be or how well we're actually supporting that person… and so when the goal is to just rip people out of there, that leaves somebody pretty empty and pretty exposed and I think as service providers we'd like to think we have all the things we need to help support someone in that situation but I think that looks different on the ground."

Within this community engagement, alongside discussions of the complex realities of human trafficking, many providers advocated for victim-centered approaches which stress that empowering the person, offering choices, and respecting their decisions is the most effective means of meeting needs and goals. For an individual who has experienced trafficking to have success and begin to heal, they need to be able determine and own their *own* story:

"And they want a voice and they want to use their own language and their own terminology which is why I would never use it. I would say what do *you* call it? And right? What do you call your boyfriend taking you to do this? That's how I would say it. And then whatever word they'd use, because there's certain aspects are not, that are not translatable."

A critical aspect of this discussion centred upon definitions and labels, and who gets to decide how a situation, a person is defined by a specific experience in their life? Many felt that the label needs to come from the person you are working with, and it may shift and alter through the course of the healing journey. Indeed, allowing the community, the individual, to define their own terms was seen as a crucial first step in recovery: "It's giving the power back."

> "And I think that yeah, they're just afraid that if I say yes, what are you all gonna go do on my behalf today and I think that that's why, for us, we want to give them a voice in that process because so often things have been, every decision has been made for them, even on the helping profession that they don't have that voice to say, okay, this is, yes, this is my label, but here is how I get to hold it. And so I think that when the label comes with the response on behalf of the community that they don't choose, then yeah, no, they're gonna reject that label. So I think it's so different, but every client, we really have to feel out. Like, the language piece is such, it's probably different with every client, the language we use to define their story."

> "People are not choosing to have violent experiences in their life. And so for us everything is about autonomy, everything is about choice. How do we engage with people in a way that they're choosing what their journey looks like for them?" ■

9.3 Harm Reduction

Perhaps one of the most critical findings around support was around harm reduction and trafficking, a lens not usually applied within trafficking narratives.

> "But it makes so much sense that we're trying to reduce the harms that we know put people at risk for exploitation trafficking, so that's on one side but also…it's realizing that it's not exactly realistic to be able to pluck you out of the situation and set you up for success on day one."

> "So like not all trafficking cases look like, "I need to get out tonight", but they're just kind of this ongoing process with their trafficker or whatever their experience is. And so knowing that, yeah, they might still engage in some of this, right. But they should still be allowed in these spaces and in these programs."

A number of providers and members of law enforcement expressed discomfort with the realities of harm reduction, but also felt it was necessary to work from this standpoint, to build relationships, to safety plan, and to be there for when a person is ready, willing, and able to come forward for help.

> "You know, of course, it's hard, it's challenging but I do think that there has to be more services specific to that continuum to allow people to come as they are and identify how they identify, whether that's something that they chose or something that they were exploited from, and have that larger conversation so that there's less shame attached to it. 'Cause I think when we let people identify this was a choice for me and we say no you were exploited then all of a sudden even though we're not meaning to they're shamed and blame that's put onto that. And so just having services that speak to that whole continuum I think is important."

> "I would say the people that we're seeing are kind of caught in that state where it's like I'm not ready to leave my situation, I'm not ready to get help. But at the same time, I'm not really safe, and I identify that, but what are my options? I'm kind of stuck between a rock and a hard place because yeah I maybe wanna keep doing the work, or I'm not ready to tackle my addiction just yet. But yeah there's just really no place for me to be safe. So I'm just gonna stay in the situation that I'm in because you know I'm not quite there yet."

> "But we really want them to live a different life, the life that they actually say they want to live… They want to live yeah, and it is hard to make that switch to supporting somebody while they're still working, and to be honest, I just hoped and prayed that they were going to be safe. Give them condoms, give them whatever else and talk to them about their bad dates and…. Try to give them hope."

> "…because the resources don't exist, .. … .. or they're not great, or that person may not be ready for that, who knows? So it's sort of like what can we do in the meantime to keep you safe and like start on a path or have a, you know, should the worst happen what are we gonna do?"

> "Unconditional. So one of the things that I'm not getting is okay you're gonna take somebody off the street who's addicted and who's been abused sexually by all these men and then you're gonna say but if you do this, or this, or this, you're gone. Well you're not helping that person because the most natural thing for an addict or an alcoholic to do, or a prostitute, is to drink, use, or prostitute. That's the most natural thing for them to do. Until they're taught, not just taught but until they feel good about themselves, until they feel like they can contribute somehow that doesn't include working the streets, using needles or you know (female survivor)."

Harm reduction was also described as relevant to the justice system landscape, where there was a perception that you can't have a successful prosecution if an individual is not ready to disentangle the exploitative relationship and come forward and provide evidence and testimony to the police. Again, although many participants described a desire to 'rescue' individuals, there was a realization that keeping individuals safe, building relationships and trust, and allowing individuals to come forward for help when they are ready, was seen to be more realistic and also rooted in victim-centred practices. ■

9.4 Building Relationships Based in Dignity and Compassion

Repeatedly, participants spoke to the importance of building connection to individuals who are going from "looking for love and connection in unhealthy places to looking for support and love from healthy places." Participants described that programming needed to allow for people to change their minds, to make mistakes. The following describe these points of view:

> "It's consistently nonjudgmental, even if your choice is yeah, you're gonna go back with a trafficker, it doesn't matter actually, you're always going to get support here."
>
> "…How can you get compassionate human beings who feel comfortable in the messiness of what it's gonna b like? Because if there's an agenda… of like "first you're gonna do this, then you're gonna do this,…" (it won't work). You just need people who…are able to be compassionate and treat other people with *humanity* in any circumstance. And I think that's what makes the big difference."
>
> "We are humanizing it, they're not stats, they're human beings who have been wronged. And the hospitals, the Remand Centres, the CPS have wronged them as well, and that's my job. The biggest part of my job is to educate them to treat these women with respect that they are due. And in the medical field, nurses, the doctors, when the women go in there and they've got addictions or their lifestyle, they're judged like that."
>
> "Acknowledgement is really important. It's likewise with a victim of, I believe you. I believe this happened, even if nothing can be done legally or in any other way, but just acknowledging, yeah."
>
> "I laughed, do you know all the people I've run into here and ------ was the most, she was like when you're ready to do what you need to do. She says just come and talk to me…you don't even need to make an appointment, she said just come and talk to me, let me know. From there we'll figure it out, and 5 years ago I was still married and trying to figure out how to get away 'cause .. … .. you recognize a lot of things over the years. You don't hit my age and not start recognizing a lot of what's going on (male survivor)." ■

9.5 The Potential Power of Peer-support Models

A number of participants, especially those with lived experience, highlighted the important role that peer support programs could serve for individuals who have experienced trafficking. This was the case for those who had been exploited in labour markets, newcomers to Calgary, male or female, or within experiences of sex trafficking. As one female who had been trafficked describes:

> "The thing is, we need time to heal…. I don't want to talk to someone who's gone to school, but someone who had that life experience. Like a sponsor. Someone who had been there in life, its meaning more."

Peers in service delivery as well as flexible women-centered approaches have consistently shown to be highly effective in engaging women and to be helpful in acting as a low threshold entry point for harm reduction, violence support, and access to support social and medical services (Ouspenski, 2014).

> "And like… that unconditional support, and maybe even, you know, a space for the clients themselves where it's not regimented and they get support from professionals and each other. (so that peer to peer connection?). Yes, I think that… to an extent, happens in some programs, I think. But because it's very regimented and they have to say these specific things to be part of those programs, it doesn't get to be authentic as it could be or should be I think."
>
> "Just to be with people who get it…It does a lot to them ….the pain, the joy, the whatever but you don't have to constantly talk about it like you may do with a professional 'cause you're going to see them about this issue. And with a peer you can just kinda hang out and have this understanding without saying it, that you understand what's going on and what you've been through." ■

9.6 Trauma-informed Care

A lifetime history of trauma is not uncommon for survivors of trafficking. Participants highlighted the need for community, law enforcement and providers to understand that lifetime cumulative trauma occurs on a continuum rather than as isolated incidents:

> "If you look at trafficking and anything that's based out of trauma, that's your pebble right, here's your pebble. You have a trauma and you throw that pebble in the water and you see the rings right? Well sometimes we're really focused on the rings and the rings really are the prostitution, the drugs, the mental health and all that, it's not the central issue, it's really kind of a symptom of something else which is the trauma, which is the sexual abuse when they were younger or it was the domestic violence… it's something bigger. So sometimes you have to kind of take care of some of those rings first before you can get into that centre… you have to kind of peel away slowly before you really land on that."

In a formative article on the development of a trauma-informed service system, Harris and Fallot (2001) propose that such a system is one in which administrators and staff understand how traumatic experiences negatively affect behavioural health in multiple ways, and are committed to responding to those needs through universal trauma screening, staff education and training regarding trauma and its effects, and willingness to review and change policies and procedures to prevent the (re)traumatization of clients. In Wilson

(2015) et al's qualitative study of trauma-informed approaches at domestic violence shelters, the authors identified six principles:

1. Establishing emotional safety;
2. Restoring choice and control;
3. Facilitating connection;
4. Supporting coping;
5. Responding to identity and context; and
6. Building strengths.

Taken together, these principles reflect the shift at the heart of the trauma-informed approach: the movement from, "What is wrong with you?" to "What happened to you?" This places emphasis on identity, strengths, and context, suggesting that programs remain engaged with the wide range of experiences, systems, and histories that shape a person's experience with violence.

> "If you're not able to move out of that lens of things, where is the victim to be able to grow and realize that you don't just have to be a victim, and that's not who you are, it's one small piece of who you are, and something that's happened to you…" ■

9.7 Collaboration between service providers

From a logistical perspective, participants spoke of the importance of working in collaboration with one another:

> "And I think we all have the silos that we work in. We strive towards collaboration and it can be challenging in terms of knowing all the services available and who to refer whom to. It was like an undercurrent of competition for service in a lot of sectors."

> "Well no one agency can do everything so now it's when people meet at inter-agency meetings … and you're telling people what else you do and how you can best collaborate, everybody knows the services that are available so I am finding more and more workers are referring oh maybe you should go here they'll be able to help you…I'd have no hesitations to say I don't think we're a good fit for this person but I think you're better than we are so here I'll give you this, I'll get consent, I'll give you this referral so it was so much easier….all of this working together and not being competitive, realizing where your services end and someone else's can begin."

Some participants highlighted that collaboration may sometimes be unsuccessful, not because of competition between service providers, but because there is a mistrust on how other providers will work with vulnerable populations:

> "I don't think so much as like it's competition for referring out, I think and it's really bad, I think we just have ownership of our people. These people can be so complex and they're so beautiful and wonderful and they create these families and they create these support networks and they include the staff in that so…Wanting to protect them and . . . I don't know if they go to that program, if it's going be good. If one client comes back or five clients will come back and say, "oh this did not go well for me" and then you get the sixth client, and you're like, ah do I want to put them through this? Is it worth their mental health to put them through this? And then like you have to go back to square one and have to rebuild all of these stepping stones to get them back to a healthy place where they're willing to move on again. So I don't think it's competition in, or funding, I think, it's…wanting to protect them because they've already been knocked down so many times in their life. Like you just want to keep them up as long as you can."

These comments highlight the need for increased opportunities for intra-agency meetings and discussion forums, where there are opportunities to share service mandates and build trust with one another.

> "I think getting people together is such a big thing that we don't do a ton of, whether it's through conferences or workshops or education or professional forums of some kind. I find my biggest strength is knowing who's working in what agency so that when I get my youth to call, they have a connection person that I know or that they know. And so to have a space or an opportunity, I don't know, once a year or whatever, for people to come and connect… But even bigger scale because it's nice to put a name to a face and to understand what agencies are doing and where we can reach out because there's probably a lot of little things that are happening that we don't know about because people either aren't talking about them or we're not connecting to them." ■

9.8 Long term support and life after exiting

Lastly, although not an element for best practice, it was a critical challenge that many participants and individuals with lived experience addressed in terms of healing and moving forward with their lives. A number of individuals highlighted the lack of long term support, and what life will look like after 'exiting' a trafficking situation or relationship.

> "I think the biggest thing for them would be what do I do from here, and am I prepared to be housed by myself, and manage my bills, and write a resume, and find a job, and you know have a new support system. It's I think really difficult for people that, they live in that chaos and they are used to it and that's just how it's been from a long time. And when things kind of calm down and they're getting all of this help it's still like what am I even going do after this. So and I mean some people do really well, and they've got lots of support, and they thrive, and they find something else. But it's just so many things to deal with right?"

The ability to move on from 'trafficking' is not just the trafficking, its everything else that surrounded that world:

> "Because it's not just, getting out means getting clean at the same time so like you're leaving the environment that you've lived in probably your entire life, you're quitting doing drugs, you're going to a treatment centre, you're thinking about what your next steps are going to be, you're making five life changes all at the same time. So it takes a number of times for them to get to the point where they're actually prepared and have the tools to go to do that I think."

And even if you are able to find a pathway to moving forward, there are gaps in services to address these long term challenges:

> "And when you, like after that, for me I've been trying to finance going to school for a year now, but I'm on welfare so I can only go to school part time. If I go full time, they cut me off. I was gonna apply to -----because they have an education fund, but you have to have been part of an exit program. There's all these barriers. How do you navigate that field to get what I need in order to educate myself, like I got a Grade 6 education, you know what I mean? (male survivor)"

As a community, or a city that wants to support individuals who have experienced trafficking, whether that is through labour or sexual exploitation, we can not only address the immediate needs of that individual. Supports need to exist for the very long term.

> "Especially with service providers and we have all kinds of issues with funding and so it's often about how quickly can we get through this? And how quickly can we make a difference? And people aren't like that, I'm not like that, most people I know are not like that, it's a longer term process."

> "...help support someone in that situation but I think that looks different on the ground. And so, especially in Calgary, I think there's limited support I think in this area to begin with and limited ways of entering into that kind of support, and very limited ways of kind of ongoing, full, wraparound stuff." ■

9.9 Engaging men and boys

Although this was not a topic that was deeply explored, a number of participants felt that in order to look at both prevention (with a focus on perpetrators and also of purchasers), men and boys need to be engaged as allies. When looking at domestic violence prevention programs, Wells et al (2013) discuss the rationale for involving men and boys: while the majority of men do not use violence, nor condone it: "domestic violence is still largely perpetrated by men; constructions of male identity and masculinity play a crucial role in shaping some men's perpetration of physical and sexual assault; men have a positive role to play in helping to end men's violence"; men and boys shape and, "send powerful messages about relationships, violence, and power."

Indeed, in this community engagement, misogyny and toxic masculinity were highlighted as a root cause for how trafficking continues to occur, and also as an issue to address in order to prevent trafficking.

> "Between the high rate of people working in trades, oil and gas, (over talk) yeah, I think out of all the provinces the biggest in terms of patriarchy and conservative political and personal beliefs that I think leads to a greater imbalance in terms of power, control, and gender issues and it's a very transient community too, so it's these industries attracting people from all over Canada that come in, don't necessarily have personal or family ties but they're here for those specific industries or they're here to run the companies that run these industries. It is totally stereotyping but those positions and those industries attract folks with certain views of masculinity, power, and control in order to be successful in those fields. So we just have a larger hotbed of those kinds of attitudes and beliefs here."

> "The toxic masculinity is what we define as this is what it means to be a man, be tough, and if somebody says no, you're a man so you gotta make this happen type thing, but that's like the toxic masculinity thing. And I think we do see that a lot in Alberta…and we're economically volatile as well, so when things are doing well on the grander economic scale, things are doing really well and people are typically happy, but when it's not good it's really not good, and I think there's an uptick."

> "But it's education as a society to every adult male to change sort of that place where as males are generally, males in society attend males' clubs and stripper clubs and bachelor parties and that sort of .. . massage parlors."

> "And so if you start to educate our brothers and our husbands and our friends and our neighbors and our coworkers around: are you aware that the girl who looks like she's 22 at the massage parlor actually doesn't like her job and she isn't 22, she's 17? And you start to have those very real conversations about what happens if she doesn't engage in sex with you. That's a starting point, right, for some change around men having that conversation among themselves."

There was a strong belief among many participants that we exert a lot of energy speaking about and preparing programs for (mostly female) survivors, and for discussions of how to prevent exploitation on the side of young women and education in schools, but not enough on prevention activities for boys and men who may become traffickers, or for men who may purchase sex who could be on the front line of intervention in trafficking. In these areas, there is much work to do. ■

9.10 Caring for the carers

"Because they're exhausted, no one's caring for the caregivers, so that's a whole other level of who cares for the people caring, right?"

We would be remiss not to mention the extraordinary work that is being done in Calgary to support individuals who are at risk for or have experienced trafficking. Self-care and caring for the carers was broached a number of times, and the importance of this issue when we reflect on best practice and best service for these individuals:

> "There's very little. I observe a lot of burnout. I'm thankful that our organization speaks about self-care a lot and encourages self-care and not that staff necessarily take that on and do those kind of intentional things to make sure that they're filling their own cup. But I see a lot of jadedness and burnout, and a lot of turnover in the agency which is a barrier for youth because it's relationship and if you start a relationship with somebody and then suddenly they leave, it just becomes a continual well now I have to tell my story again. It's almost like a re-trauma or it kinda feeds into that instability piece of attachment disorders. But no it's not talked about very much or there's employers have high demands for high stress jobs."

> "with that young girl I'm talking about? She lost her family and her family told her they didn't want to be part of her life again and so it felt like she put a lot on me in a sense of you're the only one I can depend on and I took on that role, call me at any time and trust me she did. When she's stressed, when she's depressed, and I think the tipping point was when we lost two youths last year you know and one of them was directly my youth, one young boy. So I burned out, I couldn't, and it was like about the self-care 'cause what if you weren't there, who would she contact in an emergency, the police. And you know those are the things that you have to build them up with that you can't just rely on me, these are the services, if you are in crisis call this number, blah, blah, blah. So I had to slowly pull myself off of that because I thought to myself I'm burning out and I'm not giving myself enough care and now I do a lot. But yeah when I first started, I was the hero, you always want to try to save the day and it doesn't help you. The helper needs help, you know so it's human too so."

PHASE II:

Community Confirmation & Plans for Action

To ensure the effectiveness of the Calgary Community Action Plan and to continue being accountable to the community, this project Steering Committee aligned with the following guiding principles:

SAFETY FIRST

Given the inherent association of harm towards trafficked individuals, prioritizing their safety, privacy and well-being must remain paramount. Likewise, we must be proactive in working to protect those working with at risk populations.

TRAUMA-INFORMED

Our engagement reinforced the need to become competent in the complexities of trauma and the many pathways to recovery from traumatic experiences. We acknowledge that trauma is nuanced and manifests in variety of ways. It is incumbent on us to embed trauma-informed practices into the workplace policies and practices, and within community support touch points.

VICTIM-CENTRED

We strive to ensure the rights and voices of trafficked individuals are at the forefront of this work. A trafficked individual's autonomy and authority over decisions that impact their wellbeing must be upheld and advocated for.

COMPASSION & DIGNITY

Continue to engage with trafficked individuals from a place rooted in compassion, dignity and respect.

GENDER LENS

Human trafficking is a gendered issue and it is important to employ a gender-based analysis when examining the complexities of human trafficking and impacts.

EVIDENCE-BASED

We will only distribute data and research on human trafficked that is based on creditable research, data and credited sources.

COOPERATION; AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

Only through continued broad participation can the nuances of human trafficking in Calgary be resolved.

The strength and success of this action plan lies in its on-going participation from its collaborators. In order to implement a sustainable action plan it is essential that it reflects the wisdom and experience of those who contributed.

Although we attempted to consult as widely as possible, inevitably some voices remain absent – we will attempt to address this by continuing to strengthen the potential for collaboration with identified marginalized groups during the implementation phase.

ACCESS TO SERVICES

Offer and advocate access to all services for trafficked individuals regardless of valid ID, immigration status, gender, sexual orientation, race, age, religion and ability.

10.0 Community Identified Priorities

To remain transparent and collaborative, we hosted two community forums in 2018 to share the findings of our community engagement and co-create tangible steps forward. As a result, the community identified a number of initiatives that must be addressed in order to move the needle on human trafficking in Calgary.

The following sections are the priority initiatives identified by people with lived experience, key informants, service providers, law enforcement and government officials that were interviewed in our 2018 community engagement efforts. These initiatives are recommendations that pertain to specific service areas and populations within the context of preventing or responding to human trafficking.

Please note: Whereas some initiatives are accompanied by suggested strategies, the goal was not to create specific strategies but rather highlight initiatives that act as starting points to further action.

The following information was collected during the 2018 community engagement portion of the Calgary Action Plan on Human Trafficking. This information does not reflect the opinions of ACT Alberta but rather captures the comments & sentiments of participants.

COMPASSION & DIGNITY IN CARE

Overwhelmingly, our participants stressed the need to be rooted in compassion and dignity when working with those who have been trafficked. Allowing clients to make mistakes and take ownership over their service delivery is critical to building trust and mutual respect. Recognizing one's humanity goes a long way in acknowledging their experiences and not trying to fix or judge them.

Table 1 *Priority initiatives for compassion & dignity in care*

Initiatives & Recommendations	Suggested Actions/ Strategies
Compassion first	Work from compassion and treat people with humanity in any situation
Use the language and titles directed to you by the client. Don't get hung up on labels	Use the client's language and labels
	Provide support in people's native languages
Form meaningful relationships with HT clients and get to know them	Prioritize work time to connect to these clients
	Reduce the size of caseloads
Ensure a client has autonomy over their service delivery	Create internal policies to safe guard a client's autonomy over their service delivery
Listen to the community first	
Believe a client's story	
Create an open, safe and welcoming environment for youth to express themselves	Speak to youth like adults, don't shy away from difficult subject matter
Form meaningful relationships with youth and build trust	

Table 1 *Priority initiatives for compassion & dignity in care continued*

Initiatives & Recommendations	Suggested Actions/ Strategies
Acknowledge and end the racism towards Indigenous people in Calgary	
Encourage Indigenous ways of knowing and doing	
Acknowledge the impacts of colonialism and residential schools on Indigenous people	
Recognize that people with physical and developmental disabilities are sexual beings too	
Practice dignity for all	Work with constant non-judgement; end client shaming and labelling. End moral judgment
	Stop trying to 'fix' women, listen first
	Have your agency adopt dignity as a core value and plan how to enact this

ACCESS TO SERVICES & NAVIGATION

The majority of project participants agreed that access to services to all regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, valid ID, or legal status was a priority moving forward. Accompanying this idea is the creation of more community referral points and improved system navigation. Simply having services was not enough, access and navigation is paramount to a client recovery.

Table 2 *Priority initiatives for access to services & navigation*

Initiatives	Suggested Actions/ Strategies
Create more avenues for referral points for service access	When referring people, connect them with other services directly, people to people, do not refer them to systems
Provide services to all people regardless of valid ID, legal status in Canada	Creation of policies around access without fear
To support parents in gaining access to all services for their children & system navigation	Have programs go to the community
Support women with services regardless of how they identify or their occupation	Adopt a harm reduction approach
Provide more services along the continuum of the sex work experience	
Employ a gender lens when looking at access to services	Create a gender-based analysis lens policy at your agency

COLLABORATION BETWEEN SERVICE PROVIDERS

Participants highlighted the need for increased opportunities for inter-agency meetings and discussion forums, where there are opportunities to share service mandates and build trust with one another. There was a strong emphasis in acknowledging service limitations and collaboration vs. territoriality and siloed work to best support the same clientele.

Table 3 *Priority initiatives for collaboration between service providers*

Initiatives	Suggested Actions/ Strategies
Stop organizational territoriality & inter-agency competition over clients. Understand how to collaborate to support the same clients.	Work from a victim-centered lens Recognize your agency's service limitations & accept them
Stop working in silos. Collaborate to stay connected with the community & prevent service duplication.	Encourage staff to connect with other agencies for services and form work relationships/ key contacts Learn the scope, practice, and limitations of other agencies Attend & participate in sector-related conferences & committees Focus on what your agency does best and refer out for additional support Continue to share information across agencies in an effort to best support your clients
Clearer understanding in what services organizations provide	
Universal protocol to support HT victims	
Universal protocol to support clients with high needs	
Common language among service providers; terminology	
Increased collaboration & relationship between non-government and government agencies	
More inter-sectoral collaboration across the province	

HARM REDUCTION

Although the practice of using harm reduction techniques was not agreed upon by all participants, nearly all did agree that it was necessary to work from this standpoint to build relationships, safety plan, and to be there for when a person is ready, willing, and able to come forward for help.

Table 4 *Priority initiatives for harm reduction*

Initiatives	Suggested Actions/ Strategies
An ability to work with people regardless of their situation or life choices	Create safety plans, expect and accept risky behavior
Empower clients to make their own decisions	Employ trauma-informed practices
Have an open-door policy for on-going support; this allows the client to self-determine readiness	
Acknowledge the continuum of sexual experiences and exchanges	
An ability to have a youth direct the services they need despite provider's personal values and morals	
Return power to the people and communities that you work with	Have people and communities define their own experiences
	Have people and communities define the terminology you use with them

EFFECTIVE PROGRAM & PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS: GENERAL

Across all sectors, CCAP participants spoke of the need for more prevention programs aimed at youth, more wrap around and long-term services and education for those most vulnerable to being trafficked.

Trauma-informed and victim-centered approaches were both mentioned time and time again as needing to be adopted widely by the service community and law enforcement. Participants highlighted the need for community, law enforcement and service providers to understand that lifetime cumulative trauma occurs on a continuum rather than as isolated incidents and that a wide range of experiences, systems, and histories shapes both a person's response to violence and their recovery.

Victim-centered approaches stress that empowering the person, offering choices, and respecting their decisions is the most effective means of meeting their needs and goals. A client's autonomy is of utmost importance and this includes the language and labels they choose to use, use of cultural practices and the choice to engage in risky behavior.

Table 5 *Priority initiatives for effective programming (general)*

Initiatives	Suggested Actions/ Strategies
Create barriers to grooming in malls and at C-Trains stations (eg. Marlborough Mall)	Create partnerships with mall and C-train security companies

Table 5 *Priority initiatives for effective programming (general)* *continued*

Initiatives	Suggested Actions/ Strategies
Create programs aimed at tackling the demand side of the sex industry	
Use plain language and avoid jargon	
More available onsite walk-in services such as counselling, addiction supports, etc.	
Programs and services specific to the needs of transgendered individuals	
Secure and available temporary housing for victims escaping violence	
Create appropriate sex and healthy relationship education for people with cognitive and physical disabilities	
Accessible long-term wrap-around services	
More appropriate long-term housing options	
More outreach services for people living on the streets	
Appropriate & purposeful resources for people who have been trafficked	
Provide free sex education	
Increase community outreach and depth of reach	
Trauma-informed approaches	
Additional supports for single mothers in the child welfare system	
Create a women-only homeless shelter	
Adopt victim-centred responses	More in-person supports such as court support and peer to peer supports
Safety as priority	More partnerships with travel services to provide free/ discount fares across Canada
	Create safety plans with clients
	Ensure your building has strong safety measures and it is not open to the public
Education on relationship violence and healthy relationships	

EFFECTIVE PROGRAM & PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS: SEX WORKERS

Participants stressed the importance of working from an anti-oppressive framework in which the service providers is acutely aware of personal biases and how these values impact the work with a sex worker. Likewise, service providers acknowledge a sex worker as a whole person, with a complex identity and personalized needs. Here too moral judgment is abandoned and replaced with client self-determination.

Participants also spoke about the need for additional emergency and long-term supports and housing aimed at enabling people's independence.

Table 6 *Priority initiatives for effective programming & best practices (sex workers)*

Initiatives	Suggested Actions/ Strategies
Non-moral, non-rescue-based programming	
Programs that encourage self-determination	
Revisit the decriminalize laws	
Unlimited counselling sessions	
Additional life skills training	
More supports, programs and housing for male sex workers and those exiting	
24 hr services, especially emergency housing	
Additional education and career-focused training	
Peer support groups	
More support and funding for harm reduction programs	
Anti-oppressive practice	
Programs that extend through the continuum of care; long term focuses after exiting	

EFFECTIVE PROGRAM & PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS: INDIGENOUS

With a focus on prevention nearly all Indigenous participants spoke about educating their youth in two primary areas: the risks factors associated with human trafficking and the history and culture of their people. Reconnecting with Indigenous cultural and honoring Indigenous ways of healing were stated as being critical to the recovery process. In addition, adopting The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's recommendations is seen a step both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities can take to support the healing of communities.

Table 7 *Priority initiatives for effective programming & best practices (Indigenous)*

Initiatives	Suggested Actions/ Strategies
More supports for families in order to keep their children. Apprehension as a last resort	
Educate Indigenous youth on the signs of grooming and risk factors associated with being new to the city	
Encourage programs that introduce youth to Indigenous practices and ways of knowing	
Educate Indigenous youth on the missing and murdered women	
Decolonize organizations, government and non-government	Encourage traditional hereditary systems of governance
Honour the role of Elders and Knowledge Holders in community in transferring knowledge to the following generations	
Acknowledge and allow traditional way of healing and importance of practice and ceremony	
Adopt Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada recommendations	
Address internalized oppression and shame within the healing process	

EFFECTIVE PROGRAM & PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS: YOUTH

Nearly all recommendations from CCAP Participants concerning youth were through the lens of prevention. Education, safety and supporting the foundations that create healthy families are recognized as the pillars in reducing the risks associated with youth trafficking. With regards to supporting youth 18-24 years old, providing more basic services such as housing, are seen as creating safer pathways into adulthood and preventing the risks associated with exploitation.

Table 8 *Priority initiatives for effective programming & best practices (youth)*

Initiatives	Suggested Actions/ Strategies
Social media awareness and internet safety programs for youth and parents with a focus on grooming for the purpose of sexual exploitation	
Increasing the security measures in group homes to reduce further recruitment and exploitation of youth	
Safe and compassionate 24 hr housing options for children and youth in care	
Create a universal screening tool that highlights a youth's risk of being trafficked / exploited and use this tool at multiple service entry points	Create a model based off the World Health Organization's social ecological framework for violence prevention
Provide opportunities to empower youth	Create programs that allow youth to be positive mentors for other youth
Provide opportunities for youth to have strong male and female role models and mentors	
Build a youth's resiliency to trauma from a young age	Create more supports for vulnerable families and children such as free counselling and education on good parenting Assist youth in creating positive self-esteem for themselves
Reduce the amount of stress in at-risk homes	Create more affordable housing Surround the family with accessible supports: counselling, education, basic needs, community resources
Shelter for youth 18-24	
More services, programming & basic needs for youth 18-24	Create more spaces that offer centralized services
More supports for youth released from PSECA confinement and/or secure treatment to prevent re-victimization	
Re-evaluate PSECA programs in terms of harm reduction	
Education on drug awareness and use	

EFFECTIVE PROGRAM & PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS: NEWCOMERS

Participants commented frequently about the need for increased education and information to Temporary Foreign Workers (TFWs) upon arrival, paired with support in service navigation. Improvements to the TFWP was seen as key as reducing the risk of exploitation to newcomers and TFWs, these recommendations range from a stricter LMIA employer requirements to providing more pathways to permanent resident status.

Table 9 *Priority initiatives for effective programming & best practices (newcomers)*

Initiatives	Suggested Actions/ Strategies
Educate TFW on their Rights and Responsibilities upon arrival in Calgary AND ensure their employers know that they are knowledgeable in this area	Have CBSA agents present TFWs information (in their own language) from Employment Standards at the airport
More parenting support for TFWs with children in Canada	
Upon arrival provide information on all services specific to immigrants	
Thorough vetting of employers who apply for LMIAs OR stricter requirement on part of the employer in order to obtain an LMIA	
Create other avenues for people to obtain permanent resident status	
Changes to the TFW Programs need to be communicated in a timely and clear manner	
Free English classes to all those TFWs in the low skill category	
Provide follow-up to TFWs after the LMIA approval	
More services providing supports for basic needs	
Provide opportunities for newcomers to gain social capital and build community	
Provide support with system navigation especially with government programs and services	

10.1 Roots Causes and Discourse

Two additional, equally important, documents were also created based on the information collected within the CCAP project. Specific to the context of human trafficking in Calgary several participants highlighted the same roots causes as being push and pull factors leading individuals becoming exploited. Although most of these root causes are well known and globally accepted as pathways to exploitation, some roots cause are more specific to the Alberta and or Canadian Indigenous or newcomer experience. See Appendix E.

Likewise, participants emphasized the importance of capturing how we are communicating the nuances of human trafficking in Calgary. Many were concerned with the risk of over sensationalizing the issue and or misrepresenting victims' realities with inaccurate anecdotes, rather than using facts and evidence. A section was also added as a best practice guide around the use of terminology. As previously mentioned in this report, the term human trafficking and discourse on its uses, or rejection of its use, is contested. This section aims to support service providers regardless of the language they use and is to act as a tool to support collaboration. See Appendix E. ■

10.2 A Call for Action

This document serves as a call to collaborative action. The planning and implementation of these community recommendations is not ACT Alberta's responsibility alone. The solutions and strategies endorsed in this project are complex and require the expertise only achieved through cooperation.

Upon sharing our community initiatives with our project participants many identified the need to form targeted working groups to further distill these initiatives down as they relate to specific populations, such as harm reduction. Likewise, the need for an increase in knowledge around local resources, trauma-informed practices and Indigenous history and resources was felt as top priority. The role of the ACT Alberta is to build on the existing momentum and enable the community to take action on the chosen initiatives they identified within this project. This includes both continuing to connect with those engaged in this project and those identified as needing to be included in the conversation. Our priority in the next phase of the CCAP project is to transform this document into tangible outcomes that improve our existing support systems for our most vulnerable victims of crime; trafficked individuals. ■

Conclusion

This project was an effort to capture the current causes and trends related to human trafficking in Calgary, and the supports available to those affected by it. Although much of the information in this report was already well known by those in the anti-trafficking community, the value of this document lies in its ability to surface the complex and conflicted nuances and intersections of this crime within other societal issues. Be it the relationship between intimate partner violence and sex trafficking or the conflicting opinions on how to treat youth at risk, this report touched on many aspects of human trafficking experiences in Calgary that are lesser known or discussed within the larger community. These dynamics and conflicts were critical to capture within this report and share widely as they highlight both the complexity of this issue and where improvements in support services are required, often through multi-disciplinary collaboration across sectors.

This latest body of knowledge aims to offer direction to the Calgary community. This report has provided the Calgary anti-trafficking community with the evidence needed to make concise and targeted program and policy changes that greatly improve the quality and access to services needed for people who have been or are at risk of being trafficked. Through its recommendations on effective programming and best practices, addressing gaps in services, terminology and discourse and its identification of underrepresented voices within this field, our community can plot an effective course of action.

We look forward to working with partners to begin implementing the community recommendations of the Calgary Community Action Plan. Participants in our engagement were insightful, knowledgeable and creative and we are confident that their suggestions will result in exciting initiatives that will be effective in addressing the trafficking of men, women and youth in Calgary. Only together we can create a safer and more equitable future for our community.

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APPENDIX A

Participant Information Sheet

ACT ALBERTA

Action Coalition
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Invitation to Participate in CCAP Focus Group

Title of Program: Calgary Community Action Plan on Human Trafficking

Project Manager: Amy Norman, PhD
Action Coalition on Human Trafficking (ACT) Alberta
Email: amynorman@actalberta.org

ACT Alberta is a not-for-profit agency that aims to increase knowledge and awareness of human trafficking, advocate for effective rights-based responses, build capacity of all involved stakeholders, and lead and foster collaboration for joint action against human trafficking.

Invitation to Participate:
You are invited to partake in the community engagement portion of the Calgary Community Action Plan on Human Trafficking (CCAP) Project.

Purpose of the Study:
Funded through the City of Calgary Crime Prevention Investment Plan Fund, the purpose of the CCAP Project is to identify the causes of sex and labour trafficking and best practices in working with trafficked individuals to develop a Community Action Plan aimed at preventing this crime in Calgary.

What will you be asked to do?
If you agree to take part in the focus group, it will be about 90 minutes long and will be held in a location that is easy to get to. During the focus group you will be asked to share your ideas with other service provides about your understandings of human trafficking in Calgary and how it can be addressed. For example, you will be asked about causes of sex and labour trafficking, what supports are beneficial for trafficked individuals, and what needs to change to address sex and labour trafficking in Calgary. The focus group will be recorded on a digital audio recorder.

Possible Benefits:
Your ideas will help develop a Community Action Plan that will address sex and labour trafficking of individuals in Calgary. What is unique about this study is that it is not just about asking questions, it is about implementing the suggested initiatives and actions that arise from the community. The Community Action Plan will be shared with law enforcement, government ministries, non-governmental agencies and advocacy groups to help to inform and create policies and services to address human trafficking in Calgary. Also, by taking part in the focus group you will likely learn more about sex and labour trafficking and what can be done to address it in your community.

Possible Risks:
We do not anticipate any risks involved with the focus group. However, it is possible that during the focus group you or another participant may talk about issues/problems that you find sensitive or upsetting, at this time feel free to exit the focus group if needed.

Confidentiality:
Your name will be replaced with a false name so that nobody, other than the project team, can tell what you said. Your name will never be used in any reports, presentations or papers about this study. You will not have access to your individual responses from the focus group nor will any other participants have access to this information. At the beginning of the focus groups, we will explain and stress the importance of confidentiality to all participants. However, we cannot guarantee that the other participants in the focus group will maintain confidentiality related to the content of the focus groups.

The information gathered for this study may be looked at again in the future to help ACT Alberta answer other service and policy questions.

Can you quit?
Yes, you can change your mind and stop participating at any time. If you do not feel comfortable answering any questions, you are free to pass, and the project team will respect your choice to pass.

Compensation: Refreshments will be provided to show our appreciation for your time.

Do you have more questions?
If you have any more questions or would like more information, you can ask me, Amy Norman, about anything you don't understand or would like help with (i.e. arranging transportation). My contact information is provided below.

Thank you

Amy Norman, Project Manager
Action Coalition on Human Trafficking (ACT) Alberta

APPENDIX B

Interview Guides: Focus Group & Key Newcomer Informants

Focus Group Interview Guide

Research Questions	Focus Group Questions
1. What are the root causes of human trafficking in Calgary? **2.** What is the nature of the human trafficking experience?	**Introduction** **<u>Primary and Clarifying Questions</u>** 1a. How would you rate your organization's understanding of human trafficking? (what tools, if any, are you using to access HT cases?) 1b. What do you see as the risk factors or conditions that lead to human trafficking? Who is at risk of being trafficked within the population you serve? Why? 1c. In thinking through these risk factors, what policies and programs have the potential to prevent human trafficking in the first place? 2a. In your experience, what does the recruitment process in human trafficking look like? (Is technology playing a role?) 2b. How would you characterize the relationships between victims and traffickers? 2c. What is the nature of the human trafficking experience? What does trafficking look like? 2c. How would your clients characterize the term 'human trafficking'? Does the term have meaning in relation to their lived experience?

3. What do we know about access to services and best practices for this population?	3a. In the case of a trafficked individual, what are their short and long-term needs or services required? 3b. What are the entry points and barriers for a victim to access these services? Who can provide these in the community right now? What are the constraints? 3c. Knowing that this project is about community action, and while we can't change entire systems of oppression, what are some recommendations for things we can do to protect or support individuals who have been trafficked? Concluding Question: This city-wide consultation is focused on understanding both the nature of human trafficking and how we can better respond, is there anything else you would like to share with this group?

This is interview guide is an example of how questions were adapted for different project participant groups.

Key Newcomer Informant Interview Guide

Research Questions	Key Newcomer Informant Questions
1. What are the root causes of human trafficking in Calgary? **2.** What is the nature of the human trafficking experience?	**1a**. The first thing I want to talk about is what brought you here to Canada. How did you learn about the possibility of immigrating and who helped you with the paperwork of coming to Canada? (a recruiter, family member) **1b**. Had you ever worked in another country? What did you know about Canada before you arrived? **1c.** What did the Canadian agents tell you at the border when you arrived? **1d.** Did they tell you about your rights if you are mistreated by your employer? **2a.** What type of work do you do, and do you think you are treated fairly? (Paid fairly for work, working conditions and duties are within your contract, you are treated respectfully). **2b.** Have you heard of anyone in your community who feels they are being abused or mistreated? (Asked to work too many hours or in poor conditions, with less pay?) **2c.** If you were being mistreated at work (example, living in poor conditions in a house working 15 hours per day, making less money than promised, pressured to stay because of work permit), but you only had to endure 6 more months in order to receive permanent residency, would you stay in your situation or

This is interview guide is an example of how questions were adapted for different project participant groups.

	reach out for help? **3a.** How did you first come to this organization? **3b.** What kind of things or services have they helped you with?
3. What do we know about how trafficked individuals access support services and the nature of this work?	**3.c**. Have you ever used any other services in Calgary or places you have visited for information or guidance? **3d**. If you discovered someone in your community was being forced to work long hours, underpaid, or forced to stay because they were being threatened that they would have to lave Canada, what would you do?
4. What are the best practices for supporting trafficked individuals?	**4a.** How do you think people in your community could be better supported so that they know their rights and can be fairly treated in the workplace? **4b**. We are trying to understand the reasons people come to Canada to work, and what happens if they are abused or exploited, and how we can better support them. Is there anything else you would like to share with me today?

APPENDIX C

Consent Form

ACT ALBERTA

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Consent Form for Interview Participants

Title of Program: Calgary Community Action Plan on Human Trafficking

I volunteer to participate in a research project conducted by Dr. Amy Norman on behalf of the Action Coalition on Human Trafficking (ACT) Alberta. I understand that the project is designed to gather information about the nature of human trafficking in Calgary, and how we can best respond as a community.

1. My participation in this project is voluntary. I understand that I will not be paid for my participation. I may withdraw and discontinue participation at any time without penalty.

2. I understand that most participants will find the discussion interesting and thought-provoking. If, however, I feel uncomfortable in any way during the interview session, I have the right to decline to answer any question or to end the interview.

3. Participation involves taking part in an interview with ACT Alberta staff and will last approximately 60 minutes. If necessary, I can be contacted for follow up questions. Notes will be written during the focus group, and an audio recording will be made.

4. I understand that the researcher will not identify me by name in any reports using information obtained from this interview, and that my confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure. Subsequent uses of records and data will be subject to standard data use policies which protect the anonymity of individuals and institutions.

5. I have read and understand the explanation provided to me. I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

6. I have been given a copy of this consent form.

_____ My Signature Date _____

_____ My Printed Name

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APPENDIX D

Listening Document

''the trauma in trafficking is the human trafficking.
You have to talk about the human part of it''

Listening to the Knowledge Holders: A learning document on human trafficking and Indigenous people in the Calgary area

Amy Norman, Action Coalition on Human Trafficking (ACT Alberta)
April 1st 2018

We haven't sat down in a circle like this to discuss this. We're all individual, that's the problem, we don't wanna bring it out, but these circles like this…. it's time.

The tea ceremony is a discussion ceremony… it gives us the blessing to talk in a safe place. If we don't provide these safe places for young people, where can they talk?

This topic is important to our community, to our children, to all our people, and especially to the missing and murdered woman. We want to give our advice from our creation stories, our belief systems, from who we are. Too many times, solutions are given to us, but they're not our solutions. The mechanism for colonialism happened with residential schools, those systems taught us how to stay silent. Now is our chance to share our knowledge.

What is the government doin' about this human trafficking? You know, that's really, it's a touchy subject. People don't wanna talk about it but it's a reality. Our young girls are the ones that are the main victim… They're right there. We gotta do something about it and I think by talkin' about and saying well what can we do?

Introduction and the Critical Importance of Oral Methodologies

In January 2017, ACT Alberta received funding from the City of Calgary to undertake the creation of a community action plan on human trafficking (the CAP Project). The aim of the first year of the project was to explore the root causes of human trafficking, the nature of this crime on the ground in Calgary, and best practices around supporting survivors. Within this project, ACT Alberta recognized that despite past efforts, our organization struggled to make meaningful connections with Indigenous communities on the topic of human trafficking. With the support of our Steering Committee, and in particular Katelyn Lucas, Executive Director of the Elizabeth Fry Society of Calgary, and Sharon Goulet, Indigenous Social Planner at the City of Calgary, we acknowledged a need to alter our approach to one that began with respect, humility and open hearts and minds.

This led to what we have called the Indigenous Sister Approach, where we followed the lead of our Elder guides to direct the best approach to learning and understanding from an Indigenous worldview. We emphasize here that one builds respect and trust from the oral method itself: it is the oral practice that allows for the genuine sharing of information. Building this framework was the most critical aspect of our approach, and one we hope other organizations will carry forward in their own engagements and learning.

For Indigenous Knowledge Holders, oral systems or oral ways, are utilized to validate traditional knowledge and data. Despite coming from different communities, the oral practice provided a common language. The smudge and the circle offered a process of protection; a way to protect the information that was shared and move forward in trust; a community forum, an ethical safe space. Knowledge Holders were willing to share their experiences and stories over the course of two days because of the foundation created through the practice of the oral methodology. Indeed, this approach can give individuals hope to handle challenges themselves. The process of speaking and sharing, and being acknowledged, is empowering, and builds capacity to solve problems. In the context of sharing the challenges around human trafficking, the approach offered hope for opportunities for change from the Knowledge Holders, as leaders in their communities.

Over the course of two gatherings, we sat, danced, listened and learned. We observed, we held hands, we shared tears, we drank tea. All of these moments were part of our learning, and cannot be described in this written document. However, with the encouragement of the Knowledge Holders, Reg and Rose Crowshoe of the Blackfoot Nation, the following document represents our effort to capture these learnings and bear witness to the voices of the Knowledge Holders in our community. The Knowledge Holders spoke of being silenced in the past through residential schools and continuing systemic oppression, and we are eternally grateful to those who were willing to share their wisdom and knowledge (these included Knowledge Holders from the following communities: Ojibway, Boreal Forest Cree, Plains Cree, Saulteaux, Anishinaabe, Siksika, Blackfoot, Stoney, Pikani, Tsuu T'ina, Metis). This process was for us, a first step forward in our learning as an organization, but we also hope that this document represents a piece of work that can be shared in our communities to increase knowledge for all of those who are also willing to listen.

We also acknowledge that this document is a western interpretation of the information provided to us from an Indigenous worldview through oral tradition. The purpose here is to honor the wisdom shared, with the ability to return to the Knowledge Holders to clarify that the written version reflects their oral experience. Therefore, the document will be reviewed and agreed upon by the Knowledge Holders before moving forward. Here, we also include the full transcripts of all of the discussions held during two

Elder gatherings, anonymized to protect the confidentiality of participants. We recognize a core principle of this approach is that the community not only has access to our analysis, but owns the information collectively and can hold the data for future purposes as they see fit. We also hope that by including these transcripts, we offer transparency in our analysis and open the door to further discussions about where we may have missed critical perspectives or stories. In the following sections, we have aimed to use the direct words of the Knowledge Holders as much as possible.

Colonialism, residential schools and broken boundaries

How do we understand broken boundaries within our people? *Our people are living in broken boundaries*. How far back to we have to go?

I was going way, way back to when the explorers came, they wanted to go out west. They used our Indigenous woman, they married them, they used them to guide them through and navigate them through the territory. So it was already broken boundaries at that time.

One morning our Chief woke up in our camp and he saw the noise on the top of the hills around his camp and then he realized it was all the North West Mounted Police with canons all pointed to his people in the camp and the leader came down and said ''September the 22nd, Black Foot Crossing, your presence is requested to sign Treaty Number 7 and if you don't show, these canons are gonna come back to these hills and blow this camp out of the valley.'' What about his traditional boundary? What about Crowlodge Creek, what about the Old Man River, what about Porcupine Hill? So I think it's even from those times, how do we understand broken promises or broken boundaries, especially when we live in them, you know?

I think back in the day, we were all equal but the boundaries were respect. Respect and honour were the boundary, but when Indian Affairs said ''this is a reserve'' and they fenced it off with barb wire and they put 'Do not Enter or No Trespassing.' We didn't put those there, it was the Western documents that put it there and then Western boundaries became physical where our boundaries were to honor and respect each other.

And I'm thinking too about the Indian Agent and the role that the Indian Agent had, so when families were suffering and often women had to show favor in order to help their family survive. And so I don't know if that's part of that intergenerational piece the people aren't talking about and obviously that hit home with me as someone tryin' to take care of your family and what your mother might do to help you survive so that might be something you might wanna consider too… it seems to me that the intergenerational piece that you're talking about, even beyond residential schools, how that still percolates.

We all know when the Europeans came, we had a life where we survived. We survived by workin' for what we needed, the basic needs, clothes, shelter, food, and it was with that one animal that we were able to accomplish everything. Plus the tools we needed, the weapons we needed. We didn't need money. There was prayer, song, dance. There was a way of life and it was disconnected when the Europeans came and took the children away, put them in residential schools. The grandmothers, the grandfathers were the teachers of these children. Now all of a sudden, they had no more children. So a lot of grandparents died of broken hearts and then the parents who all of a sudden now their children are gone and they couldn't get their children back, they started drinking because that's when whiskey

came. And then these children were in these schools where they never saw their parents until the school year was done and then when they came home, it was different, right, it was different.

I went to residential school and the first thing they make you do is, well first of all you're not allowed to speak your language. So that's a problem when you've never spoken English, which was in my case. And then to be disconnected from the other people, not to have a relationship with anybody. So you don't speak to anybody. You don't associate with anybody. You don't play with anybody. They just disconnect you from the human part and that's how they trained you and then every day when you get up in the mornin, now you remember you're nothing but a dirty little savage. That's what you are and we're trying to make you human 'cause you're not human.

You need to understand that, that trauma, we are living that and even though I didn't go to residential schools, there's behaviors that I still carry on for my children. So for example, showing lots of emotion and hugging them. I'm getting better at it but that was not something that was safe to show in public for your kids. I kinda have tears right now but that's healing and even to talk about this, that's something that you need to make a place safe for people to talk about.

The same thing's happening to the youth today. I'm getting at the Child Welfare for instance, I have seen this happen so many times, we voiced our opinion, nothing's happening yet. The children, when they are apprehended, that worker, the first thing the problem that I see is this. Instead of giving that family a chance to reunite with their children, right away they place them way over there, next thing you know, she's getting money and the home visit. They never do that thing and the child is raised up by non-First Nation members and they're offended, they never bring them back or home to our reserve, to their families. They grow up with hate.

And today we're still struggling with broken boundaries in the context that the TRC gave us the concept of reconciliation and through its 94 calls to action. But yet, management that are so safe in their organizational structures, in their offices, are not stepping out to be creative, to have understand. So when one organization, and you know I respect all organizations, but when one organization came up and said ''in our CFO policies, we don't buy tobacco, we don't buy blankets and we can't pay anybody without any kind of certification, even if you call them Elder.'' So how do we use our smudge, and our circles, and our pipes and tobacco? Those are protocols that protect our practice of decision-making, our validation.

Vulnerability, addiction, 'trusting the unworthy,' and exploitation

Certain communities are more at risk for human trafficking because there's young girls that, actually I'm not even sure if it even gets to that level, *if I dare say human, human trafficking means you live, a lot of those girls don't live*. They get involved with whoever and they think that's part of the normal culture, and they come from a place where maybe there's no hope, then they go off the Reserve with hope, and then they fall into the drug culture, and then there's no hope, and then unfortunately they die.

I wasn't gonna say anything but sitting here as an Elder, poverty is one of the worst thing that afflict all of our children because the minute there's poverty, if somebody offers you a pill and that pill made you feel better, you'll have another and another and you will find the money and you won't spend the money on what you really need.

I know in our community, we're hearing a lot of the human trafficking, for the young girls, they will sell themselves to the older men for pills, not for money but to get pills, and they'll use the sex to get these pills, that's how desperate they are with the prescription abuse. And I just find that really sad because it's the older men that makes it really sad 'cause they should know better…. they buy the pills, and then they offer it to the girls.

They get our people onto these drugs and they start using them, especially I know some young people from our reserve came into the city to go to school and there's a lotta people that walk around in the mall. So they end up going to the mall everyday and finally those guys get 'em to start takin' and then they pull the girls into the sex trade and they just keep them on drugs and controlling them.

Its about trusting the unworthy when you are vulnerable. You don't know whether to trust or not trust. One party has a malicious intention. *Hamaga* means action. "Let's go, let's start something… I was so vulnerable, I didn't think of the action of what could happen. I need a friend, I need money, I need food."

We need to think about what makes us vulnerable. We are vulnerable when we are in need. It starts with poverty, misunderstanding, and the hardship. And if it makes that young girl feel good and important about herself having sexual favors with this man and she's gonna get the five pills she's looking for? Our kids come into the city for a better life, and other people take advantage of them. And they don't say anything. Some are survivors and make it back home, and some never come back home.

Cultural disconnect, risk, and young people

I always look at being in a vulnerable place because on one side there's an oral understanding from a traditional knowledge of understanding. Then there's a Western knowledge of understanding and if you're caught in the middle, you're so vulnerable. The young people, they're easily victims because they're not culturally aware.

It's this disconnect when you don't have cultural components in your life, when you don't have the language, when you don't have the grandparents to show you the way, to make you feel proud of who you are, you're lost. You don't know who you are. You don't know where you belong and even with our children being taken from their homes because somebody thinks that they have a better place for them, who are you to say that? Maybe this child, it might not be the cleanest house. Maybe the parents drink or maybe the parents fight but this child is loved. This child is loved, which is the most important thing and when you take that child out and put them into a stranger's home, do you think that child is loved? No.

In our community, our traditional leadership has protocols and regulations. In First Nation communities, you're an adult after you're 30. I see a lot of people who are in their 40s who are living with girls who are barely of age. Some just 17. They're workers in the community, citizens, counselors. But the young girls are so at risk in the community. They don't have services. No awareness of what we're talking about. No one to give them cultural awareness. And they're looking for anything to get them out of the reserve. And they'll grab at whatever. And those guys will take advantage.

Today, with our broken boundaries with respect and honour and our oral ways, when those boundaries are broken, the woman doesn't know and how am I gonna feed my family? So that's why I say we're

living in those boundaries and our own people are becoming those Indian agents that are pushing the policies to abuse our people. And that's a hard thing and that's what we were talking about with leadership doing the human exploitation just as much because our people still hope and believe in their respectable boundaries and the traditional. You can go into that community and feel totally safe, you don't have to worry about your kids. The truth of saying a child is raised by that community is so true because that community's laws protect that child and he grows up and he plays in that community, he wants to, but today you can't let that child into that community. They're so vulnerable that child could be loaned out for money. So those are, I would look at the understanding of our cultural ways.

So broken promises, how can the people trust the chief that's making these broken promises? Where is the trust? And if there's no trust, then you're vulnerable. So I think those are some of the basic problems that we run into as a community as a whole and when our kids are brought up from that kind of broken boundaries community and they wander into the city for a better life and these other people take advantage of them. There's such a risk and they don't say nothing and yet some of them are survivors, they make it back home. Others never come back home and we don't even know where they're at. So to me, when we talk about human trafficking, that's an area that's where we come from, as our First Nation community and when you look at the city as a whole, that's why the Knowledge Holders are saying we need to teach our kids what you are saying. We have to teach them. We're glad you came out with this, now let's teach our young people and give them something, but that's the something that we're working on.

Where do we go from here? Strategies for action

The following represent some of the critical strategies that the Knowledge Holders highlighted as ways of preventing exploitation and supporting survivors through building resiliency in young people, strengthening cultural awareness and belonging, and bringing back cultural protocols around respect and honour.

In our communities, we need to create an awareness. In our community, a group of young girls, they're all standing there, and they're asking, ''where are they taking these missing women?'' So we need to give them an educated overview of what they're hearing in the news. And these are 12-year olds.

Even you look at when we were taught in the circle, we weren't told the rules, we weren't scolded by our role model, what the old people tell us, ''OK, this is a nest and when you're walkin' in the forest and you see the tree, if a bird falls out, the coyote's gonna have good meal. So when you're in that nest you can't be running around or you're gonna fall off of the nest.'' But when you're in the classroom ''sit down or you're gonna get detention or you do this or else.'' But with us it wasn't that way, we used natural laws to recognize how we can work with our self, and I think that's where that marginalizing happens with the dominant society not understanding our ways.

I think listening to the old-timer, what we had was age-grade societies. So the younger kids have their societies, the teenagers have their ways, and then the young adults had their ways, and then the adults and the Knowledge Holders. Everybody was structured through a system, but you honour the next group. In recent times, there'll be a 40 year old stickin' around with a 12 year old, or about three 12-year-old girls or boys, and they are selling drugs at the school. If we see that historically in our society, a young man doing that, the rest of the community are gonna shun that person and say ''look what you

did, you're not supposed to be like that.'' So we had those controls but we don't understand our culture anymore.

Years ago how we dealt with it was we had Elder circles where they would come, and we would do our own justice or dealt our own punishment sometimes. It is being done nowadays at different reserves where they have Knowledge Holders and they make a decision if that individual should stay in within that community or just be told to leave and to take all those ugly things away.

When you look at the age of some of the children involved with human sexual and I think when we come around the term of boundary, some of those children have yet to understand what the true meaning of those boundaries are, they have yet to develop their own boundaries as individuals and it's about how the community can build the resilience in that child to build those own personal boundaries to essentially protect them from that action, right? And the starting of that relationship down that road and maybe how we distinguish is how we define boundaries for certain age cohorts within our community and this will help define some of the avenues that we go to 'cause I know there's some programs in the community that do that very, very well. They connect with youth, they connect with young women, men as well and it would be helpful to look at that as well.

We don't have a debriefing system and we don't have someone in our families that we can debrief with if some kind of traumatic moment comes up. The one thing I learned taking one class recently was, it actually made me understand my dad's generation, my grandfather, and my mother, there's a real huge gap there. The one thing I did learn is a term called Protestant Work Ethic, that is the work ethic that pretty much you guys grew up with, ''soldier on, just tough it out'', and that's the whole thing. And that's where a lot of our people that have repressed these traumas they dealt with, they don't know how to tell people, or too chauvinistic to say it, but to show that this happened. Then it goes back to this whole idea of getting exploited, that's how they're easily exploited, because they don't wanna go to the cops, they don't wanna tell anybody 'cause we have bad history with police.

It is so important to give to our young people traditional knowledge. So that's what I'm thinking. We need to accommodate these circles, these smudge, this tea ceremony, get together. The tea ceremony is a discussion ceremony. It's not really a sacred one but it gives us the blessing to talk in the safe place. If we don't provide these safe places for young people, where can they talk? If we had more circles on the reserve, I think that it would get people thinking about what's going on in our communities, and it would help the young people from suffering so much. Give people a chance to actually talk. If we start talking in our communities, I think that would really be a big factor in helping.

I'm not gonna ask a young person, ''what's happening to you?'' I just tell them ''come. I'm not important but the pipe is important, the smudge is important, the songs are important.'' You guys are gifted to sing…. The pipe is the third party. Even though it's not a human, it's there and that's what we use to help. That's what I use to help the young people. ''Come, I'll put you to work and I'll purify you and that way you can start fresh, start trying to take part again'' and then you have something to go to.

Young people also need to see positive role models. Its about pride, that pride in yourself. I went to the reserve last summer and I seen a picture of one of our potential hockey, might make it to the NHL, they got him on a big billboard, I'm like right on, that's what we need, our kids need to see hero's so we can bring our spirits up.

Weaving it back together: Finding the parallels and opening the windows to change

> And when I was dancin', I really prayed to the Creator because he's the one that's gonna help us, well everybody here, the communities we come from, the city, all over the world because he's the one that has that power. But by talking about it and the more we talk about it the more you get educated for the communities.

Indigenous Knowledge Holders in the Calgary area are in pain, they have seen their young people lost and without culture and support, community members affected by abuse and addiction, and their people exploited and used by other individuals, both from within their communities and outside. As one Elder put it so clearly, ''if we're not gonna talk about the human part of it, we're not gonna get anywhere and I think the trauma in trafficking is the human trafficking. You have to talk about the human part of it.''

We have attempted here to highlight many of the points of discussion brought up over two days with the Knowledge Holders, bringing to the forefront that there are young Indigenous people and individuals in our communities living every day in situations that make them vulnerable to being trafficked. There are survivors of trafficking that have made their way back home after getting out of horrific situations, but are facing a lack of sufficient and appropriate support services that they need in order to heal. There are Knowledge Holders and adults, who because of their own trauma and histories in the residential schools, need resources and the ability to be empowered to share their traditional knowledge to help those in their communities.

Throughout the beginning of this process, we have learned that everyone has a role to play in preventing trafficking and supporting survivors. The first step at the greater community level, is the need to mitigate cross-cultural concepts; to cross-validate what we are all saying so that we have a common understanding. Part of this process is the creation of safe spaces where we can come together. Transition can be so humongous and scary. *We need to find the parallels and open the windows*, and try to achieve the goals of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. But the practices, these need to be done parallel, with a common understanding. You need to bring the Knowledge Holders, the circle and the smudge, and have the oral stories or the oral knowledge be a part of building this strategy, so that we can develop culturally safe and ethical spaces to have these kind of discussions. We have learned that culture and spirituality are at the core of making any sort of changes, and will be the healing force behind whatever we do, reintegrating people back to the culture to a way that they have a better journey in life and will not to be exploited by other people and other cultures. These strategies can be supported in parallel, but are not be to be led by Western organizations. But Western organizations must learn these lessons if we are to be effective. We will leave this document with the following quote that is a reminder to all of us who care about these issues and want to make a difference: in the grand scheme of everything, they're gonna say ''well life is beautiful'' and no matter where we live or what we do, it comes from us, this life force inside of us. We share it with everybody, and that's what prevents human trafficking. That's what helps people to see their way out of it. For the Knowledge Holders, it starts with love.

APPENDIX E

Root Causes & Discourse

Root Causes of Human Trafficking

Racism	Indigenous	Racism towards Indigenous people in Calgary
		The sexualization of Indigenous women and girls
	Newcomers	The inherent power imbalance and racism in the Temporary Foreign Worker Program
Colonialism	Indigenous	The role that colonialism has played in exploiting and trafficking Indigenous people
		Northern Affairs Canada as a tool for colonialism
Sexism	Indigenous	Undermining Indigenous femininity and traditional matriarchal communities
	Women	The circumstances where sex is used as a currency for such items as transportation, safety, drugs, housing and basic needs
		The normalization of violence towards women
		The shaming of women who work in sex-related industries
Poverty	All	Lack of basic needs such as food, shelter, affection, clothing and economic stability
Patriarchy	All	The prevailing definition of masculinity
	Women	The demand side of sex trafficking and sexual exploitation
Capitalism	All	People's demand for more resources at lower costs
		Capitalism recognizes that anything has a monetary value, even humans
	Newcomers	Alberta's demand for cheap labour and services has led to putting temporary foreign workers at great risk of labour and sexual exploitation
Human Nature	All	All humans are wired for love, leaving many vulnerable to exploitation
System Failure	All	Many of our government and support service systems are oppressive

The following information was collected during the 2018 community engagement portion of the Calgary Action Plan on Human Trafficking. This information does not reflect the opinions of ACT Alberta but rather captures the comments & sentiments of participants.

Discourse on Human Trafficking

Communicating the scope & realities of the situation in Calgary	Demand	Acknowledge that both males and females have been charged with trafficking offences
	Exploited & Trafficked Women	Data must be evidence-based
		Acknowledge that co-ed shelters and group homes place children and youth at risk of sexual exploitation
	Poverty Sector	Acknowledge that a lack of basic needs puts both men and women at risk for sex and labour trafficking
		Acknowledge the complexities within victimology; race, gender, victim as trafficker, socio-economics, sexual orientation, age, legal status
	Indigenous	Acknowledge the sexualization and objectification of Indigenous women and girls
		Acknowledge the long-term impacts of residential schools on individuals and communities
		Acknowledge the role that colonialism has played in exploiting and trafficking Indigenous people
	Newcomers	Acknowledge that the Temporary Foreign Worker Program is flawed and is a gateway for exploitation
	Youth	Acknowledge the relationship between early child trauma, social determinants of health and sex trafficking
	Women	Acknowledge the relationship between intimate partner violence, exploitation, and sex trafficking
	Disability	Acknowledge that people with disabilities are at a higher risk for exploitation
	Sex Workers	Acknowledge that there are male sex workers
		Acknowledge that most consensual sex work is being negotiated on the internet not on the streets
		Acknowledge that decriminalizing sex work has created barriers around safety for both the sex worker and the purchaser
		Acknowledge that sex workers have experiences within a spectrum of sexual experiences; consensual and otherwise
The Terminology of Human Trafficking	All	Identify clients with their own words and labels, mirror their language
		Be clear on which terminology you OR other organizations use internally (eg. human trafficking, sex work, exploitation), how that impacts access to services and why such terminology is used
		Sector wide understanding of consent and constrained choice

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