

A Snapshot - Sexual Exploitation in Edmonton

Edmonton Police Commission

February 19, 2015



cease

Centre to End All
Sexual Exploitation

Quick Historical Review

- ▶ 1992 - 300 people at a Police Commission Meeting in McCauley say “do something!” about street prostitution. 3700 cars circling McCauley school; 250 children and 750 adults identified by EPS on the streets of core communities
- ▶ 1992 - Police Chief declares “Year of the john”
- ▶ 1992 - 1994 - Mayor & Chief launch Taskforce on Prostitution
- ▶ 1994 - City Bylaws enacted: Massage, Escort, Exotic Dance
- ▶ 1996 - Edmonton initiates the Prostitution Offender Program (“john school”)
- ▶ 1996 - Provincial Taskforce on Children Involved in Prostitution
- ▶ 1999 - PCHIP enacted, later renamed PSECA - Protection of Sexually Exploited Children - support services now extended up to age 24
- ▶ 2004 - Traffic Safety Act amended to provide for vehicle seizure; EPS
- ▶ 2006 - EPS launches “You Cruise, You Lose” campaign, Report-a-john signs



Centre to End All
Sexual Exploitation

Bursaries, Job
Training &
Financial
Literacy

Basic
Needs
Income

Addressing
vulnerabilities
created by poverty

Basic
Needs
Housing

Working in
partnership
& solidarity

Physical & Mental
Health Support

Creating
Awareness
& Advocacy

Community Support
Outreach & Drop-In

Detox &
Addictions
Treatment

Justice
System
Support

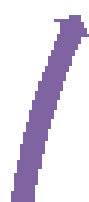
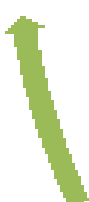
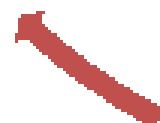
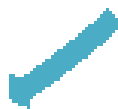
Transition Supports &
Peer Supports

Healing
through counselling

Healing through
Cultural & Community
Connections

Creating
Strategies for
Positive
Change

Edmonton
Circle of Supports
for Persons Impacted by Sexual
Exploitation
& Human Sex Trafficking



What is Sexual Exploitation?

“any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another”

- *UN Secretary-General's Bulletin on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse*

- ✓ A form of violence and abuse of human rights
- ✓ Includes **sex trafficking**, an extreme form of sexual exploitation

Forms of Sexual Exploitation

Non-Commercial

- Clear abuse of power over a child or adult who is vulnerable, or, in vulnerable circumstances;
- Exploited person is not conscious of a “business transaction” even though money, food, shelter is provided by the exploiter
- May be considered sexual assault

Commercial

- Survival sex trade- the buyer exploits a vulnerability or vulnerable circumstance
- Provision of sex services for money, drugs, housing, etc.
- Conscious of negotiating a “business transaction”, but has few other options to meet basic needs

Sex Trafficking

- Recruited, controlled, coerced by a third party to provide sex services
- Forced into a “business transaction” by a third party
 - Human Trafficking (sex, labour) is a crime U.N. Palermo Protocol (2000);
Canadian Criminal Code

Sexual Exploitation is not Sex Work

- ▶ How might Sex Work be defined?

Sex Work: is "the exchange of sexual services, performances, or products for material compensation. It includes activities of direct physical contact between buyers and sellers... as well as indirect sexual stimulation...".
(Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sex_work)

- ▶ Sex Workers have high control and consciousness about: decisions; working conditions and environment; personal safety and protection; money management, and other life and work factors
- ▶ Sex Workers may describe themselves as self-empowered, self-actualized, self-employed and do not see themselves as vulnerable persons or victims of circumstance;
- ▶ Sex Workers may become a victim of assault or any other crime, like anyone else

Legal Framework



Federal Law: *Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons*

Focus is on anyone who receives a material benefit from the exploitation of another

Addresses the power imbalance between buyer and provider; redefines “prostitution”; challenges socialization

Modernizes sections of the Criminal Code; harmonizes with human trafficking sections; \$20 million over 5 years to help people leave prostitution

Provincial Acts

PSECA - Protection of Sexually Exploited Children

Traffic Safety Act - Vehicle Seizure (Updating)

SCAN - Safe Communities & Neighbourhoods

Victims’ Restitution ~ Civil Forfeiture

Criminal Code - Human Trafficking Laws

Sect. 279.01
Trafficking in persons

Sect. 279.02
Material Benefit

Sect. 279.03
Holding I.D.

Sect. 279.04
Exploitation

Immigration and Refugee
Protection Act (IRPA)

Transporting people into
Canada

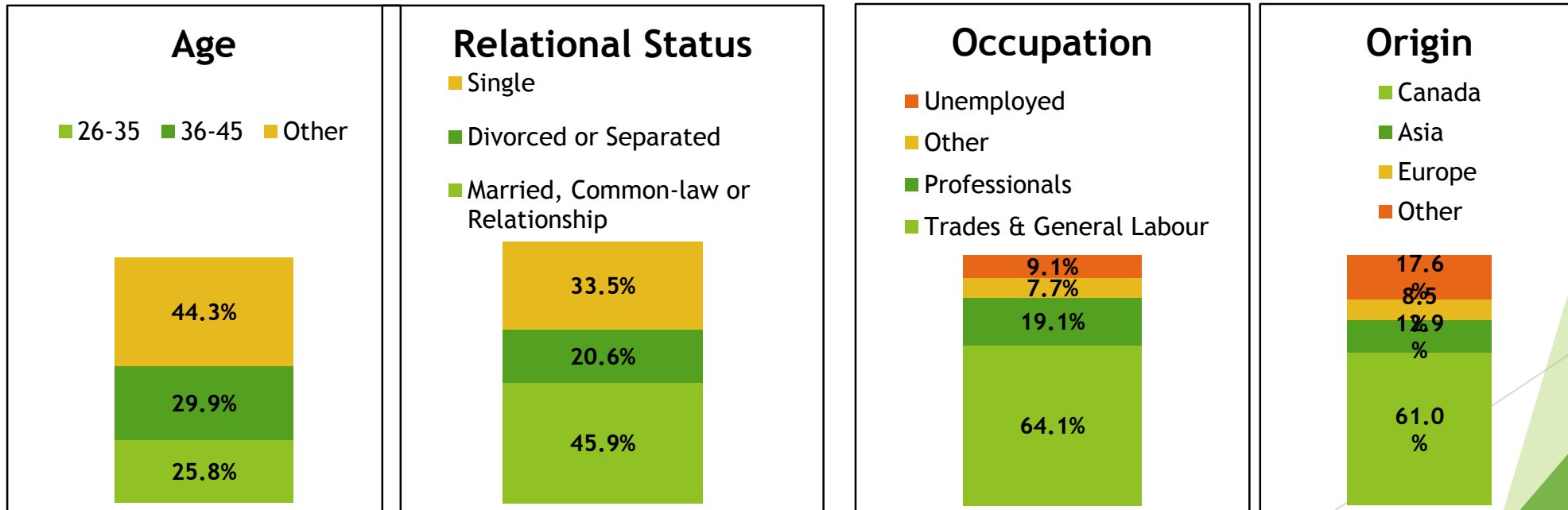
City of Edmonton Municipal Bylaws

Body Rub; Escorting, Exotic Dancing

Buyers of Sexual Services

“john” “trick”, “sex consumer”, “hobbyist”

An individual of any age, ethnicity, or income who provides money, drugs or any other advantage for sexual services.



Source: Edmonton's Prostitution Offender Program ("john school") statistics on offender profiles, based on surveys from 2012 and 2013 (148 men)

Who is vulnerable to sexual exploitation?

- ▶ Primarily girls and women, though males, transgender persons, as well
- ▶ Average age of visible exploitation in Alberta is 14-15
- ▶ AGE range 18 - 50+
- ▶ Young, students
- ▶ Solo parents
- ▶ Vulnerabilities or Vulnerable Circumstances

“Over 75 percent of people working in the sex trade in Canada began as a child.”

- *Strolling Away*, Susan McIntyre, PhD

- **Socio-Economic:** Living in poverty, homeless, lack of education, debt
- **Racism:** Overrepresented Indigenous population
- **Trauma:** over 80% experienced abuse and/or neglect during childhood or adolescence
- **Addiction due to traumas**
- **Fleeing domestic violence**
- **Health conditions:** mental illness, FASD, injury

Commercial Sexual Exploitation

“INDOOR” SEXUAL SERVICES

80% of the Sex Industry

Advertised on buy-sell websites, escort review websites, cell phone apps, chat-lines, dating websites and social media.

Venues:

- Body Rub Centres (“Massage Studios”)
- Escort Agencies or Independents
- Bathhouses
- Unlicensed Indoor Operations (“Trick Pads” or “Micros”)

“OUTDOOR” SEXUAL SERVICES

20% of the Sex Industry

Advertised on the street and through cell phones apps.

Venues:

- Street, primarily in these areas
 - 118 Ave from 33 St. to 95 St.
 - 95 St. from 118 Ave to 107 Ave
 - 107 Ave from 101 St. to 116 St.
 - Stony Plain Rd. (West End)

Some Positive Initiatives in Edmonton

- ▶ Law enforcement undercover operations (EPS, RCMP KARE, COE Bylaw)
- ▶ Community NGOs and law enforcement working together
- ▶ Project SNUG, first organized through Safedmonton in response to murdered and missing women in Edmonton, now facilitated through MCFS.
- ▶ City of Edmonton Initiatives: Endpoverty Edmonton; WAVE
- ▶ Provincial Victims of Crime Grants to fund ACT Alberta and Victim Advocates Programs through CEASE and others
- ▶ Provincial funding: DECSA Transitions Program
- ▶ IAAW provincial initiative “Increasing Safety”
- ▶ Housing First programs, shelters, follow-up supports
- ▶ And, many, many other programs and initiatives!

About CEASE - Creating Bridges over Poverty and Pathways out of Exploitation

Vision: A community of hope, respect, and transformation for individuals, families, and communities affected by sexual exploitation, sex trafficking and social inequality.

Heal the Harm

Build for the Future

Inspire Positive
Social Change



- Project STAR Victim Advocates
- I Can / I Could Programs at NERC & FSCC
- Trauma Recovery



- Bursaries
- Empower U Financial Literacy & Matched Savings
- Building Blocks for Families



- Public Education, Civic Engagement
- Prostitution Offender Program
- Men of Honour Awards

Men of Honour Awards and Annual CEASE Benefit

Tenth Anniversary - May 1, 2015

- ▶ Past Men of Honour include former and current EPS members:
- ▶ Brian Nowlan - 2006
- ▶ Kim Lafreniere - 2007
- ▶ John Ratcliff - 2009
- ▶ Jim Morrissey - 2009
- ▶ Fred Rayner - 2011
- ▶ Greg Alcorn - 2013
- ▶ Dan Jones - 2014
- ▶ David Kabyrn - 2014