

COMMUNITY

Williams
Lake

Project:

***Small Group Discussions on
Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation*****City of Williams Lake, BC**

Williams Lake is a City located in the centre of British Columbia, incorporated in 1929, with over 25,000 people living in the City and surrounding communities.

The City of Williams Lake boundary lies within the Secwepemc traditional territory and neighbours both the T'exelcenc First Nation (Williams Lake Indian Band) and the Xat'sul First Nation (Soda Creek Indian Band). Williams Lake is also home to many members of the Tsilhqot'in First Nation.

Eva Navrot is the Projects Coordinator at the Women's Contact Society in the City of Williams Lake. Eva planned and coordinated a two-day "Train the Trainers" workshop on human trafficking and sexual exploitation in Williams Lake in the late fall of 2012. The event was attended by over 56 participants from Williams Lake and surrounding communities. After the event Eva continued to visit smaller communities in the region to invite local service providers and community leaders into a conversation about human trafficking and sexual exploitation. The purpose of these visits and presentations was to help communities better understand how human trafficking impacts smaller communities in their region.

Eva offers a brief presentation on human trafficking, and then facilitates a discussion guided by the following three questions:

- How is human trafficking different in rural and urban settings?
- What do luring and grooming look like in this community?
- What information and training do you need around human trafficking and sexual exploitation issues, and what community education formats work well in this community?

“This is a very sensitive issue” said Eva, “so my approach is to work with small groups, six to ten people, so trust can be built and we can have a deeper analysis of how human trafficking may manifest in these communities.”

Eva's experience indicates that smaller sessions with key community members work well and result in the development of local capacity and leadership on the issue. Eva travelled to 14 surrounding communities to provide presentations on human trafficking and sexual exploitation. As a result of the presentations, participants reported that they understood the dynamics and indicators of human trafficking that could happen in their local area.