

Get Organized

Goal

What is the goal of the Toolkit?

The goal of this Toolkit is to support community members to take action at the local level to raise awareness and prevent human trafficking. Human trafficking generally refers to someone who exercises control, direction or influence over another person for purposes of sexual exploitation and/or labour exploitation.

This section of the Toolkit will help you and community members get organized to raise awareness and prevent human trafficking. The information is provided in clear language so any community member can use it to begin to address this issue. A set of questions to help your community reflect on what is needed are provided at the end of this document. Suggestions for getting informed and taking action are made in the next sections of the Toolkit. Resources and stories from BC communities taking action on this issue are also provided.

Please note: *Community members who may be concerned about how to respond to situations of human trafficking should review OCTIP's online training course for service providers and contact local RCMP, municipal police, victim services, child protection and other front line service providers for assistance. For immediate help with coordination of services and supports for trafficked persons anywhere in BC, call VictimLink BC 1-888-712-7974 (toll-free, 24/7, interpretation available).*

Why

Why is getting organized important?

An effective way to address human trafficking at the local level, is to organize with others in your community. The issue of human trafficking is complex and working together will ensure a comprehensive and informed response

TAKING ACTION: Stop the Traffik

Stop the Traffik is a global movement. Activists from different communities, faith groups, and businesses around the world contribute their time and energy to combat human trafficking and exploitation. Stop the Traffik advocates for the free flow of information, resources, and knowledge within vulnerable communities to build empowerment and prevent the trade of trafficking. The movement encourages individuals in communities to step forward and start their own Stop the Traffik Group by offering registration online, along with a full Group Formation Guide.

<http://www.stopthetraffik.org/how-to-start-one>

Awareness raising and prevention efforts are important components of a community-based response to the issue of human trafficking. Human trafficking issues are often sensitive and may be difficult to talk about. Bringing people together who care about these issues is an important first step towards tackling issues of human trafficking and exploitation. The issues can affect many people in the community: youth, parents, teachers, social workers, businesses, elders and leaders.



Why

Prevention and awareness raising initiatives require planning and support from community members such as these to advertise and host events.

People in your community who are concerned about issues such as youth safety, crime prevention, ending violence against women and youth sexual exploitation may be potential partners to help organize efforts to combat human trafficking. Coordinated efforts are needed to prevent and raise awareness of these issues.

“Bringing people together around a common cause can lead to very powerful changes. When the collective strengths of a group of concerned individuals are pooled, efforts can move ahead with a common goal in mind.”

– Sarah Hunt—Restoring the Honouring Circle: Taking a Stand Against Youth Sexual Exploitation



Who

A key part of meeting your community’s needs is ensuring that all those with an interest are joining in efforts to address human trafficking.

For some communities, ensuring that youth are part of the discussions is essential. For others, the involvement of businesses is important to help raise awareness. When engaging in discussions about human trafficking, there may be First Nation and Aboriginal communities living close by who have concerns about the domestic trafficking of Aboriginal girls and women, or other community members who may be concerned about a nanny, live-in caregiver, or temporary foreign worker in the community.

Figuring out who has an interest, and who may want to join you in taking action against human trafficking is a key part of ensuring your action will have a long lasting and meaningful impact.

Community members may include those working in victim services, violence against women programs, women’s shelters and transition houses, youth serving agencies, immigrant settlement programs, and as social workers, police, health care providers and other frontline responders. Aboriginal communities, including Chief and Band Council members may also play a role. Members of the general public may also wish to be involved, as well as members of the faith-based community.



How

Reaching out to local members of your community and building relationships and partnerships is an effective step in addressing human trafficking at the local level. Community members, business leaders, schools, and young people themselves may all be interested in learning more about the issue and playing role to prevent it from occurring. Aboriginal community members, First Nation Bands and Council, those who are newly arrived in Canada, and formerly trafficked persons, called “experiential” or “those with lived experience,” and others may be willing to come forward to build relationships to address this issue.

How

Concrete steps to get organized in your community may include:

- Discussing the issue to determine the scope of the problem in your community (see reflecting questions at the end of this document and others in the Toolkit)
- Reviewing the Resources section of this Toolkit to become informed
- Exploring what is in place in your community to address this issue
- Researching whether existing committees in your community may wish to tackle this issue
- Contacting and joining an existing committee to address this issue
- Starting a new committee or Community Action Team to address this issue
- Developing a comprehensive community action plan to address human trafficking at the local level

What

What might help your community get organized? Check out the following resources:

1. Existing Committees in Your Community

Committees may already exist in your community that deal with issues related to human trafficking and exploitation.

These may include:

- **Community Action Teams (CATs):** These teams address the sexual exploitation of youth. Victim Services and Crime Prevention maintains a full list of CATs in British Columbia. Note that CATs are comprised of local service providers that meet to address the issue.
<http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/crimeprevention/exploitation/index.htm>
- **Violence Against Women in Relationships (VAWIR) Coordinating Committees:** VAWIR teams address issues of domestic violence, including sexual violence. There are many VAWIR committees throughout British Columbia and some may be addressing human trafficking, sexual exploitation issues already; others may be interested in including these issues in future plans.
<http://endingviolence.org/>

2. Toolkits for Community Action—How to Develop a Community Action Plan

There are a number of excellent community toolkits that will help you work together to address human trafficking issues. Find out how to set up a community action group, develop a community action plan to address issues of on sexual exploitation of youth, youth gang prevention, and human trafficking, and get your community to work together. Key resources are listed here. Your community may also have developed other local resources and toolkits.



- a. **Taking Action Handouts (BC Ministry of Justice)**
 A series of six handouts for communities in British Columbia to address the sexual exploitation of children and youth. The handouts were developed by the Justice Institute of B.C. with funding provided by the Ministry of Justice and Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada. Communities wanting to take action on issues related to the sexual exploitation of children and youth may use these handouts to guide them through the process of setting up a Community Action Network, creating a community action plan, applying for funding, building awareness, and more.
<http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/crimeprevention/exploitation/index.htm>
- b. **Sexual Exploitation Toolkit (Justice Institute of B.C.)**
 A one-stop website for information about the commercial sexual exploitation of children and youth, with a focus on British Columbia. Many people want to do something in their community about sexual exploitation, but may not know where to start. This website provides user-friendly and accessible information.
<http://host.jibc.ca/seytoolkit/index.htm>
- c. **Restoring the Honouring Circle: Taking a Stand Against Youth Sexual Exploitation: An Information, Prevention and Capacity Building Manual for Rural Aboriginal Communities in British Columbia (Sarah Hunt, Justice Institute of British Columbia)**
 A manual for people working with Aboriginal youth in rural and isolated communities, specifically designed for people who are already working with youth, but who want more information on how to integrate sexual exploitation into their work.
<http://www.jibc.ca/sites/default/files/research/pdf/Restoring-Honouring-Circle-Manual.pdf>
- d. **Youth Gang Prevention Toolkit**
 The Youth Gang Prevention Toolkit for Community Planning and its accompanying Quick-Start Guide assists service providers, community leaders, and others who work to help prevent youth from becoming involved in gangs, or help them to leave gangs.
<http://www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/crimeprevention/shareddocs/pubs/youth-gang-prevention.pdf>
- e. **Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) Starter Kit on Human Trafficking**
 The Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR) advocates for the rights of refugees and people without full immigration status in Canada. The CCR developed the Starter Tool Kit for Awareness Raising on Trafficking in Persons to assist communities to raise awareness on the issue. Priorities include sharing and increasing knowledge about trafficking, speaking up about the key issues facing trafficked persons in Canada, and inspiring others to take action.
<http://ccrweb.ca/en/trafficking-starter-kit>

Reflecting

1. How does human trafficking impact me and my community?
2. What do we need to know more about to feel educated about this issue?
3. How can we start to address this issue?
4. How do we support each other in having difficult conversations about what is happening in our community?
5. What local resources could help us?
6. Is there a local committee that would take on these issues? Do we need to start a new group or committee?
7. What can I offer to the committee? What skills, abilities, passions, connections, and ideas do I bring?
8. Who else needs to be involved?
9. What is the first step we need to take as a community to address issues of human trafficking?

Next Steps

The next section of the Toolkit “Take Action” provides information and ideas for ways to engage members of community to address human trafficking. The [Resources](#) section of the Toolkit provides a list of resources and materials that will help you and other community members learn more about this issue. The “Community Action Stories” section of the Toolkit provides concrete examples from communities in British Columbia who have begun to address the issue of human trafficking.

