

## Children and Youth Services

Children and youth have unique needs and vulnerabilities in trafficking situations. Some children and youth are at a higher risk of exploitation by human traffickers due to factors including emotional and social immaturity, homelessness, prior experiences of violence and sexual abuse, misuse of drugs and alcohol, disconnection from family or trusted adults, family instability, and failure to remain in school, work, or day programs.

A trafficked or sexually exploited youth may require similar types of services as a trafficked adult (shelter, emotional support, legal services, etc.) and these services must be age-appropriate for minors (under 19 or 18 years of age depending on province of residence).

## Special Considerations

- The heightened vulnerability of children and youth to human traffickers requires special measures, as noted by the UN Trafficking in Persons Protocol.
- The UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child should be considered to ensure all internationally protected rights of children and youth are assessed when intervening.
- In all cases, if you are dealing with a minor who may have been trafficked, consult with your local child protection services and follow your province's duty-to-report protocols. Duty to report protocols may vary from province to province.
- Take guidance from the youth and meet their needs in flexible ways with minimum barriers.
- Service providers may require education and awareness on specific ways to intervene with youth who are sexual exploited or at risk of sexually exploitation and human trafficking.

"When working with young people in the sex trade, it is crucial to gain an understanding into how they view the world. The sex trade operates as a sub-culture of mainstream society and children and youth who are exploited and trafficked become re-socialized into this sub-culture. Understanding this re-socialized world view will help practitioners and caregivers understand the child's behaviors not as delinquent but rather as a way they've adapted for survival.

"Experiential people (survivors of exploitation and trafficking) can be extremely helpful in providing an insider lens into the vast differences of the sex trade sub-culture so that they have a clearer ability to support these children both short and long term."

**Jennifer Richardson, National Consultant on Sexually Exploited and Trafficked Youth.**

## Where to Look

Services for trafficked children and youth may be found at or through the following:

- Provincial Ministry responsible for children and youth in your province.
- Sexually Exploited Youth (SEY) Programs and Community Action Teams (CRAT) in your area.
- Youth Empowerment and Support Services.
- Youth outreach programs that target at-risk youth and share information to keep them safe (representative of all outreach teams).
- Youth shelters/safe houses.
- RCMP and local police Integrated Child Exploitation (ICE) units.
- Child Protection Services: To find out how child protection services are organized in your province, please visit the [Child Welfare League of Canada's](#) website.

To report online sexual abuse of children and youth, including online luring, sexual exploitation and human trafficking, go to [www.Cybertip.ca](http://www.Cybertip.ca) or call 1-866-658-9022.

For a more comprehensive look at the sexual exploitation of children and youth, including human trafficking of minors, download the PDF titled *Stopping the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Youth*.

