



**Native Women's
Association of Canada**



**Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking of
Aboriginal Women and Girls:**

Literature Review and Key Informant Interviews

Final Report

**For the Canadian Women's Foundation Task Force on
Trafficking of Women and Girls in Canada**

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The Native Women's Association of Canada

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1.0 Introduction

The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) is a national Aboriginal organization representing the political voice of Aboriginal women throughout Canada. NWAC works to advance the well-being of Aboriginal women and girls, as well as their families and communities, through advocacy, policy, and legislative analysis in order to improve policies, programs, and legislation.

NWAC's mission is to help empower women by being involved in developing and changing laws and issues that affect them, and by involving them in the development and delivery of programs promoting equality for Aboriginal women and girls. This work includes identifying gaps in Aboriginal women's human rights and by mobilizing action to address these gaps. It must be noted that Aboriginal women in Canada continue to suffer from human rights violations and fundamental freedoms.

NWAC is actively committed to raising the profile nationally and internationally on many issues such as the following: violence against women, the lack of justice response, high rates of women in prison, multiple forms of discrimination, poverty, and ongoing sexual exploitation and trafficking of women and girls, along with the many other violations to our basic human rights.

This research was prepared for the Canadian Women's Foundation's National Task Force on Trafficking of Women and Girls. This research will form a comprehensive picture on the state of human trafficking for sexual exploitation of Aboriginal women and girls in Canada. The review will help to inform the work of NWAC and the Canadian Women's Foundation's Task Force and aid in the Task Force's preparations to identify and suggest key solutions for a national anti-trafficking strategy effectively addressing sexual exploitation of Aboriginal women and girls in Canada.

2.0 Definition of Terms

Abuse: is about one person trying to control and have power over another. It can be emotional, financial, psychological, sexual, or physical, and the harm it causes can last a lifetime.

Child sexual exploitation: occurs when a second party benefits through a profit or through a quid pro quo through sexual activity involving a child. This may include sexual exploitation as the exchange of sex or sexual acts for drugs, food, shelter, protection and other basics of life primarily through street-level survival sex, brothel sexual exploitation, trafficking for sexual purposes and child pornography (UNICEF Child Protection Programme, 2001). Though the term prostitution is used above, when it is the case of a child being sexually exploited, we will refer to it as sexual exploitation as opposed to prostitution as no child can consent to their own exploitation. It should be noted that while use of the term prostitution for some denotes choice, NWAC maintains that all sex acts performed for an exchange of money, services, for pimps, johns, in brothels or on the streets, even when the person is of the age of consent, is a form of sexual exploitation and may be deemed sex trafficked. This perspective will be explored later in this report.

Human trafficking: is defined as "the 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. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs" (United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons*).

"Gender-based" violence: means any act of violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life. Gender-based violence includes: physical, sexual and psychological violence within the family; child sexual abuse; dowry-related violence; marital rape; female genital mutilation; rape and sexual abuse; sexual harassment in the workplace and educational institutions; trafficking in women; and forced prostitution (UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, 1993).

Sexual exploitation: is defined as "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).

3.0 Purpose

This review examines relevant research, legislation and regulations in Canada and internationally, as well as related reports to examine, review, analyze, and subsequently report on, relevant research in the area of sexual exploitation and human trafficking of Aboriginal women and girls in Canada. The results of the research were compiled and analyzed and include relevant qualitative and quantitative statistics from the literature.

In addition to the literature review, this report includes findings drawn from interviews held with pertinent stakeholders such as legal experts, law enforcement officers, crown attorneys, policy makers and policy analysts, experiential survivors, representatives of community based/women's organizations supporting Aboriginal women and girls generally, as well as those that support sexually exploited or trafficked Aboriginal women and girls.

The avenues of inquiry for this study resulted in an exploration of the root causes and impacts of trafficking and sexual exploitation on Aboriginal women and girls in general; identified the service gaps and priority areas to be addressed; examined the linkages between the experiences with the sexual exploitation of Aboriginal women and girls; and explored local, regional, and national endeavours (legal, justice, and policing-based) aimed at fighting and preventing sexual exploitation and trafficking. As a result of these paths of inquiries, this report includes a variety of areas relating to the sex trafficking of Aboriginal women and girls, such as:

- international examples of national anti-trafficking strategies for addressing sex-based trafficking of Indigenous women and girls;

- the social, legal, economic, and historical factors that impact on higher numbers of sexually-trafficked Aboriginal women and girls;
- preventative measures to decrease vulnerability of Aboriginal women and girls for sex-based trafficking;
- specific laws and regulations in Canada and the provisions relating to the trafficking of Aboriginal women and girls in light of their particular unique vulnerabilities; and,
- the legal, justice, and policy measures in place to address sex-based traffickers and Aboriginal victims in Canada.

4.0 Methods

This review includes the collection, review, and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative statistics, as well as provides a synthesis of results on the issue. In addition, the research identifies the research gaps that need to be addressed.

Prior to the commencement of the literature review, NWAC developed and executed a search strategy relevant to the areas of interest. The search strategy included the following: identify multiple, relevant databases, published literature and journals, individual websites (government departments, Google scholar, etc.), and grey literature (dissertations and theses). Results from database searches were imported into Reference Manager to screen abstracts, remove duplicates, and obtain the full text of any selected articles.

The literature search was restricted to dates ranging from 2003 to 2013, though exceptions were made based on relevance. Search results were reviewed for applicability, and relevant documents were collected for review. Several databases were searched for initial data collection. They include the following sources: Academic Search Complete; Canadian Business and Current Affairs (CBCA); Canadian Periodical Index; ERIC; Sociological Abstracts; PAIS; PubMed; Social Sciences Abstracts ProQuest Dissertations and Theses; Cansim; ICPSR Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research; UNdata; Canadian Public Policy Collection; Globe and Mail: Canada's Heritage from 1844; HeinOnline Law Journal Library; Google Scholar; SocINDEX; and Government of Canada Publications.

Key terms were used to identify relevant resources from scholarly journals, reports and government reports, books, dissertations, theses, and newspapers. The following key terms were included in the search:

- *Population:* First Nation; Inuit; Métis; Aboriginal; Indigenous; Native; North American Indian; Indigenous
- *Issues:* Human trafficking; Forced prostitution; Prostitution; Gang; Commercial sexual; Sex trafficking; Trafficking; Sex traffic; Youth traffic; Child traffic
- *Social factors:* Poverty; Impoverished; Economic; Historic; Education
- *Legal:* Police; Policing; Law; Legal; Policy; Strategy/ies* (in combination with any of the above)
- *Governmental:* Policy/ies; Legislation; Municipal; Province/ial; Federal; Act; Strategy/ies* (in combination with any of the above)

5.0 Literature Review

This review includes published literature from 1998 to 2013 on the sexual exploitation and human trafficking of Aboriginal women and girls. It also includes other literature reviews, reports (by both governmental and non-governmental sources and organizations), manuals, and media content. Using a culturally-relevant, gender-based approach, the root causes and unique Aboriginal community contexts that lead to their overrepresentation are explored and included. As well, the review will identify, from the literature, effective methods to prevent the sexual exploitation and trafficking of Aboriginal women and girls and those strategies that help them exit the trade.

According to the 2006 Canadian Census, Aboriginal peoples (North American Indian -First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) made up 3.8% of the total population, with just over half (51.2%) of the Aboriginal population being female. This is nearly 4% of the total female population in Canada. Although they are only a small percentage of the population, Aboriginal women and girls are severely over represented in sexual exploitation and trafficking in comparison to the general Canadian population (Seshia, 2005; Sethi, 2007; Saewyc et al, 2008; Sikka, 2009; Farley, Lynne, & Cotton, 2005; Ursel et al, 2007; Barrett, 2010).

In an extensive research report conducted over the period of two years and involving some 181 participants in the sex trade in Vancouver, 31.1 percent of the women participating indicated they were Aboriginal (Cler-Cunningham & Christensen, 2001, p. iv). It should be noted that the Prostitution Alternatives Counselling and Education Society (PACE) organization, who not only commissioned this research but helped execute it, is made of former sex workers. In their report they made no discernible statements indicating a difference in view of women who have been sexually trafficked and women who have been prostituted. Participants were primarily those who worked in street-level trade – a restriction on the research based on funding. Participants completed questionnaires with the support of a PACE worker. As an issue of over-representation, additional research shows there has been no real change to date. Although this research is twelve years old, its juxtaposition with the more recent research highlights the continued persistence of this issue.

As part of her literature review on Aboriginal adolescent girls in the United States of America (USA), Pierce's 2012 research paper explored recent Canadian research. Also grouping prostitution and human trafficking for sexual exploitation together, her review of Canadian literature identifies "Vancouver, British Columbia; Ottawa, Ontario; and Winnipeg, Manitoba as major centers for the sexual trafficking of Aboriginal women and children" (p. 39). Pierce's assertion is built upon the work of several reports. Vancouver: Farley and Lynne (2005), and Farley, Lynne, and Cotton (2005) reveal startlingly high rates of Aboriginal women and girls' sexual exploitation in Vancouver at 52% in their studies; Ottawa: Chansonneuve (2008) reviewed intake documents for an Aboriginal healing lodge (Minwaashin Lodge), of which a high of 51 clients to the lodge self-identified involvement in the sex trade (p. 4); Winnipeg: Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (2010) released a document citing a Government of Canada website (www.stopsexwithkids.ca) identifying that of the approximately 400 children and youth exploited in Winnipeg every year, a high of 70-80 percent were of Aboriginal descent (and 72% of the 400 had been processed through Child and Family Services).

A 2010 extensive literature review by Barrett identified and explored promising practices for the prevention of human trafficking in Canada for the Status of Women Canada. Barrett stated that “studies on human trafficking in Canada conclude[d] that the majority of people trafficked within Canada are Aboriginal women and children victims of sex trafficking” (p. iii). She makes this statement on the strength of research such as those linked with Farley and others that explored the data with a primarily qualitative approach where specific percentages were not sought. While the many research efforts were often not in pursuit of exact numbers, these reports featured either high rates of Aboriginal participants when gathering participants who had been sexually exploited for trafficking, or in working with frontline service providers, the researchers repeatedly heard of the high rates of Aboriginal clients engaged in the system of exiting sexual exploitation beyond what can be accounted for as their percentage of the general population.

With shocking assertions such as these from multiple researchers into sexual exploitation over a large span of years, it begs the question, “Why are Aboriginal women and girls so overrepresented in sexual exploitation and trafficking in Canada?”

Several significant themes emerged from the literature which provides a deeper understanding into this question and the key issues surrounding it. They include: root causes, recruitment methods, prevention and exit strategies, services and supports, gaps, and recommendations.

5.1 Typical Experiences: In the Life

Reviewing the research, a glimpse into the depth of the difficulties of the typical experiences of Aboriginal women and girls who are sexually exploited and trafficked comes to light. In a 2005 study examining the Canadian context by Farley, Lynne and Cotton, one hundred women and children participated through completion of quick, structured interviews with the assistance of trained interviewers. Locations in Vancouver were selected through the guidance of local frontline workers providing services to these people, and were primarily restricted to street workers (as opposed to indoors). Working from Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside, Franklin, and Broadway and Fraser, and using the snowball method for recruitment, the researchers built up a total of 100 participants. The snowball method involves asking those who have been recruited to help bring in others. Of these women, 52% identified as being First Nations. They reported astounding occurrences of violence that include:

- 96% reported childhood sexual abuse, compared to 82% by non-First Nation participants.
 - 81% reported childhood physical abuse, compared to 58% by non-First Nation participants.
 - 88% experienced physical assault while in prostitution, compared to 89% to non-First Nation participants.
 - 92% experienced rape in prostitution, compared to 92% of non-First Nation participants.
 - 83% reported homelessness, compared to 87% of non-First Nation participants.
- (p. 253)

Research into Aboriginal women in the USA demonstrates similar experiences and rates of trauma. In a more recent comparative study by Farley et al (2011), set in the state of Minnesota, 105 Native women were interviewed on their experiences. This study focused on Aboriginal women, and while the researchers were not restricting participants to only those trafficked for sexual acts or

prostituted, they found that the experiences of roughly half the participants aligned with the definition stated in the UN *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons* of being sex trafficked (in this case the legal definition required third-party control over those being trafficked). The researchers do not attempt to separate the individual statistics (such as how many were sexually abused as children) into trafficked and non-trafficked. However, many statistics are well over fifty percent, showing the reader just how similar many of the experiences are for both the ‘forced’ woman in trafficking and the woman of ‘choice’ in prostitution. Even for those who may be seen to choose this path, the experiences of trauma, poverty, and previous abuse point towards prostitution as a life-threatening field of ‘work’. Below are some of the highlights of the experiences of the experiential Aboriginal women in the report:

- 79% had been abused as children (on average by 4 perpetrators).
 - Over two thirds of the women had family who had attended boarding schools.
 - 92% had been raped.
 - 84% had been physically assaulted.
 - 72% experienced traumatic brain injuries in prostitution.
 - 98% were either currently or previously homeless.
 - 52% at the time of the interview had PTSD; 71% had symptoms of dissociation.
 - 80% had used outpatient substance abuse services; 77% had used homeless shelters; 65% had used domestic violence services; and 33% had used sexual assault services.
 - 92% wanted to escape prostitution.
- (Farley et al, 2011, p. 3)

Additionally, from the pool of participants, thirty-nine percent identified as prostituting as minors (below the age of eighteen) – which means they were trafficked. A further finding in the Farley et al 2011 report is worth keeping in mind when reviewing research on human trafficking and prostitution. In their findings, they reported a strong cross-over of prostitutes working both ‘on the street’ and at indoor locations, and many participants (45%) reported that at some point they had been trafficked for sexual acts. Essentially, a currently ‘prostituting’ woman may also be formerly trafficked.¹

What can be gathered from looking at the span of the above statistics, both the 2005 and 2011, is that there is a solid continuation of traumatic and damaging experiences that Aboriginal women and girls experience both prior to being trafficked and in the life of being trafficked for sexual acts. Unfortunately, experiences of violence, various forms of abuse, and trauma seem to be very consistent and prevalent within human trafficking.

One of the defining characteristics of Farley et al’s research is the examination of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in prostituted and sexually trafficked women. PTSD consists of three types of symptoms: persistent, intrusive re-introducing of trauma; numbing of responsiveness and persistent avoidance of stimuli of trauma; and persistent autonomic heightened arousal. Those who participated in the study completed an evaluation of criteria for PTSD.

¹ Attempting to limit the focus lens to those currently being trafficked, at that given moment, may prove an unfair burden to those attempting to do research in this field.

In a 2005 paper examining prostituted and trafficked women, out of the one hundred participants, including both First Nations and non-First Nations, 72% qualified for PTSD, which is “among the highest reported in populations where PTSD has been studied, including *battered women, combat veterans, childhood trauma survivors, rape survivors, and torture survivors*” (Farley, Lynne, & Cotton, 2005, p. 255). Those who are prostituted and sexually trafficked often experience extreme and intentional violence, abuse and torture. It is no surprise that these women and girls fulfill the criteria for PTSD. Such evidence suggests the difficulty of trying to move on from sexual exploitation, trafficking, and prostitution. It is a deeply traumatic experience that impacts on one’s physical self, the mental, and the emotional. It would be beneficial (and perhaps encouraging) to see longitudinal studies on the health impacts for these women and girls after their exploitation has ended. However, studies focusing on PTSD are relatively recent, and at the time of this writing, we had not come across long-term health effect studies in a Canadian context (our research focus).

5.2 Root Causes

The over-representation of Aboriginal women and girls in sexual exploitation and trafficking in Canada has been explored on repeated occasion through a span of years. However, the identified root causes never seem to change. These are the impact of colonialism on Aboriginal societies, the legacies of the residential schools and their inter-generational effects, family violence, childhood abuse, poverty, homelessness, lack of basic survival necessities, race and gender-based discrimination, lack of education, migration, and substance addictions.

In some Aboriginal communities, these root causes coupled with rural/remote living conditions creates a complex environment that contributes to an increased risk among Aboriginal women and girls in being sexually exploited and trafficked. Also, some of the cultural aspects of rural environments make it difficult for Aboriginal communities and individuals to address this issue, prevent it and/or heal from it. Factors such as isolation, poverty, lack of support networks, lack of education and cultural activities further enhance the vulnerabilities of Aboriginal women and girls when they migrate to cities (Kingsley & Mark, 2001; Barrett, 2010; Urban Native Youth Association, 2001; Seshia, 2005; Farley & Lynne, 2005).

Colonization in Canada has taken and maintains the form of systematic discrimination, embodied in harmful policies and legislation that have greatly damaged Aboriginal societies (Farley & Lynne, 2005). Many participants in the various studies identified the dysfunction of families as a forerunner to their experiences of sexual exploitation (Kingsley & Mark, 2001; UNYA, 2002; Farley, Lynne, & Cotton, 2005; Seshia, 2005; Sethi, 2007).

We use Kingsley and Mark (2001) as the beginning of what can be considered a relevant image of sexual exploitation for Aboriginal girls in Canada. It is one of the most cited of all the reports in Canada on this issue and it is thought of as also one of the most thorough and reliable (some influential documents on the subject referencing Kingsley and Mark: Barrett, 2010; Senate Standing Committee On Human Rights, 2011; Hunt, 2011; Farley et al, 2011; Pierce, 2012; McIntyre, 2012; Gosnell-Myers, 2012; Ferland et al, 2012). The interviews conducted for Kingsley and Mark’s report were done via focus groups of one hundred and fifty Aboriginal youth and children (both female and male, ages ranging from 12 to 24) across Canada, in 22 communities (cities, smaller communities, and rural communities).

There is little research out there that attempts to gather an image so wide and from so many Aboriginal-specific participants. The focus groups were coordinated by local on-the-ground staff working with Aboriginal youth. Participants, all having experienced some form of abuse, repeatedly identified the history of abuse, inherited from their family's experiences in residential school and sometimes racial abuse from a hostile, wider Canada. Saewyc et al (2008) conducted a study on sexually exploited youth in BC to determine who is being sexually exploited and factors that may have played a role in their exploitation. This study utilized data from over 500 sexually exploited youth from communities in B.C., and while their focus was not specifically on Aboriginals, as with other studies, they found a disproportionate number of the participants were Aboriginal. While their study does not have the across-Canada view that Kingsley and Mark has, it gives a strong picture for the current context in BC for Aboriginal youth. Using data from five studies, the researchers found that Aboriginal youth that had been sexually exploited (counting both male and female), in BC urban areas in very high rates, ranging from one-third to one-half of the exploited youth in the different studies.

Kingsley and Mark (2001) found that many youth described the unhealthy environments of their upbringing as jeopardizing other avenues of success and prosperity. It disrupted and endangered their success in school, and they have little alternative from their unstable home for acquiring social skills and self-confidence. Saewyc et al's findings distinguished the following characteristics as making youth more likely to be sexually exploited (their list is mostly an 'in-general' rather than Aboriginal specific, yet the indicators may be found in greater frequency amongst Aboriginal contexts): being lesbian, gay, bisexual; having a physical or mental health condition; those who have experienced sexual abuse by family members; youth who had been in government care (p. 36). The connection this has on being trafficked as adults is that there is a strong link of sexual abuse as children or youth and being involved in the sex trade when they are older.

If Aboriginal women and girls try to move to the city, they find that there is little opportunity for legal employment. Sethi (2007) conducted research on Aboriginal girls in Canada specifically, intending to gather information on domestic trafficking of Aboriginal girls and distinguish it from sex work. She conducted interviews with 18 key informants (from a pool of NGOs, women's organizations, and community-based groups and individuals that are working to address sexual exploitation in Canada). This study is also valuable for the range of regions involved, as participants were consulted from Quebec, the Prairies and Northwest Territories, Ontario, and the Atlantic, as well as a one-day roundtable in BC. Most of these participants were frontline workers. Thus, most participants would be speaking from the experience of working with many experiential women and girls. Sethi's informants testified to a similar finding as Kingsley and Mark in terms of roots of experience prior to being sex trafficked for Aboriginal women and girls: "Many key informants identified familial-based sex trafficking as poverty-driven and intergenerational or cyclical resulting from the residential impact of colonization and residential schools" (p. 59). They went on to identify gang-related trafficking as well, calling it a 'sophisticated' form because it often took place in the guise of escort services, massage parlors, and dancers (p. 59). The reference to familial trafficking is rare in our research; the common theme here was the impacts of poverty and Residential School inter-generational effects.

In other reports, the researchers cite the creation of vulnerabilities when Aboriginal women move to cities as an avenue for exploitation by traffickers. However, Sethi reports that there is a patterned

movement for trafficking some Aboriginal women (as identified by her key informants). One example circuit she provides is, “in Saskatoon, which is in close proximity to Edmonton and Calgary, girls are moved in triangles such as Saskatoon – Edmonton – Calgary- Saskatoon and Saskatoon – Regina – Winnipeg – Saskatoon” (p. 59). One motivator provided by the key informants in Sethi is the capital incentive of the oil and mining businesses in Alberta: “Significant number of men travel back and forth from Saskatchewan to northern Saskatchewan or Alberta for short periods of time to work in oil rigs or at uranium mines. In keeping with their movement, girls are increasingly being moved around and sexually exploited” (p. 60). From a more widespread perspective and consultation with key informants, Sethi shows us that the trends identified in Kingsley and Mark are ongoing today.

When Aboriginal youth reach the city, additional vulnerabilities are created due to the increased isolation, increased gang activity, a continuation of poverty and cycles of abuse, and gaps in services for aiding them (Barrett, 2010). The Urban Native Youth Association (2002; hereafter referred to as UNYA) put together a manual based on interviews with service providers and at-risk or abused youth (they never disclose the age-range they use for the category of ‘youth’).

While their study may seem dated, they identify similar factors leaving Aboriginals vulnerable as later studies, and, therefore, their cautions and recommendations are still quite relevant. The repetition of this information through the years also tells the reader how little has changed regarding Aboriginal women and girls and their vulnerability to sexual exploitation and trafficking (and prostitution). In the UNYA interviews with youth, when asked specifically about “What leaves urban Aboriginal youth vulnerable to exploitation” (p. 16) they named vulnerabilities such as poverty, unstable homes (attributed to inter-generational residential school effects), a lack of education on what is healthy sexuality, substance abuse, self-esteem challenges (which they attributed to racism, abuse, and unhealthy role-models), and homelessness.

With respect to migration specifically, they identified a lack of a support network for the migration, a lack of employment opportunities or education for legal employment, and susceptibility to recruitment from having emerged from violent relationships back home. Seshia (2005) offers a more focused lens on root causes as she examines the context of Winnipeg specifically through interviews with six frontline workers and seven experiential women who had come into a drop-in program that also accepts those who have been sexually exploited. The participants in this study listed the following concerns that led to being sexually trafficked: poverty, survival needs (includes homelessness); residential school legacy and the continuity of colonialism and racism; unstable upbringing as well as being placed in multiple care homes; childhood abuse (which includes physical, emotional, and sexual abuse); gender discrimination as well as discrimination against Two-Spirited or transgendered people; pimps; peer pressure; generational sexual exploitation; substance addiction; and vulnerabilities created through low self-esteem (p. 14). What was identified broadly across Canada for Aboriginal youth and children in 2002 (UNYA) is still true for youth and adult Aboriginal women and girls in Winnipeg in 2005 (Seshia).

Of course these issues are not limited to Aboriginal women and girls. Barrett’s 2010 paper reported a UN global study that found that those most vulnerable to trafficking were:

- Young;

- Female;
 - Poor;
 - Socially and/or cultural excluded;
 - Undereducated;
 - Coming from dysfunctional families and/or institutions; and,
 - Desiring a better life but facing limited economic opportunities.
- (Clark, 2008, as cited in Barrett, 2010, p. 13)

The picture painted by the research for this review highlights that the inciting factors (particularly dysfunctional families due to colonialist policies and residential schools; deep poverty; cycles of abuse; and lack of alternatives) are amplified in Aboriginal contexts. In other words, this increased vulnerability is a result of external forces acting for a long period of time and is not a characteristic of Aboriginal Peoples. Trafficking and exploitation around the world falls hardest upon the poorest groups; oppression, systemic discrimination, and poverty are the universal commonalities for finding over-represented groups in sexual exploitation for human trafficking.

Returning to Canada's Aboriginal, rural communities, there are some characteristics that bear special mention. Some youth described the context for abuse as being extremely pervasive. For Kingsley and Mark 2001, "Many Aboriginal youth consulted had internalized this abuse as a common element in their lives, and felt powerless and unable to effect change" (p. 42). They further define the effects, as "many youth, being recipients of abuse for most of their lives, come to identify commercial sexual exploitation as a 'normal' life progression" (p. 42). Some describe the sexual exploitation in their family as multiple abusers and victims. In essence, it is normalized. Informants in Seshia (2005) repeat identifiers of a history of abuse and low self-esteem, if for a much smaller region than Kingsley & Mark (just Winnipeg), but Sethi reflects similar findings in 2007 in multiple regions of Canada. These issues seem to be pervasive, and do not seem to be changing. However, without more statistical data, to borrow from a proverb, what we see are trees and not the forest.

When sexual exploitation occurs in rural communities, this further complicates attempts to heal, recover, or speak up. Kingsley and Mark (2001) found that the silence and an unwillingness to speak were much greater in smaller communities, which they suspected may have been based on fear. Some youth also felt others kept silent about the abuse for reasons of shame, and some to deny it. When the context is a close-knit, small community, it presents unique challenges to healing. However, it is important to note that this is a universal aspect of such communities, and would be a challenge for any small, remote, close-knit community.

A lack of education, often brought about by the challenges of an unstable, hostile home environment, as well as a generally greater struggle to acquire social skills for the working world and to pursue healthy opportunities and options are all complicated by cycles of abuse. The abuse is rooted in the cultural splintering brought upon by colonialist policies and practices, such as residential schools. These high-impact factors that push, restrict, and trap Aboriginal women and girls into sexual exploitation follow them into urban centres, and can be found to repeat in their lives irrespective of coming from Aboriginal communities. For some, migration is a form of running away from the abuse, yet without certain skills, opportunities, and education, many fall

back into cycles of abuse in cities as well. Taken together, these powerful influences remove options from individuals, making them more vulnerable to sexual exploitation.

5.3 Recruitment

Not surprisingly, the path to exploitation is through vulnerabilities that are extorted. As poverty, homelessness, isolation, and lack of education proved to be factors, so, too, are they found in recruitment.

In the UNYA Manual (2002), they identified through their research several tactics used to recruit. These tactics are: seduction (broadly defined as the use of seduction and charms to recruit, representing themselves as partners, presenting gifts, and emotionally manipulating); isolation (in this case they describe it as the act of separating the youth from their support network – though in other contexts it can mean preying upon their isolation, such as in the context of women and girls who have migrated to a new place); coercion (understood here as intimidation tactics, including not just threats to the girl in question but also her friends and family); and violence (more straightforward, this is the use of violence to force someone into sexual exploitation as well as a way to maintain their participation).

While the UNYA Manual may seem a bit dated, the recruitment strategies raised in the document are not. Sethi's 2007 paper on domestic sex trafficking of Aboriginal girls in Canada adds another recruitment strategy that occurs in the home, but her research also re-affirms the UNYA's manual. Sethi identified familial-roots of sexual exploitation as another lead-in to trafficking. This involves family members introducing young girls to the sex trade. While tragic, it is not unique to Aboriginal contexts. It is the result of systemic poverty and massive-scale efforts to destabilize and discriminate against a people. The participants in her study directly identified the poverty and intergenerational effects of Indian Residential Schools (IRS) as the driving force behind this familial trafficking. IRSs are now recognized for the extremely, purposefully destructive impact they had on Aboriginal peoples, greatly eroding Aboriginal cultures and the health of communities. This was a deliberate and national campaign:

For more than a century, Indian Residential Schools separated over 150,000 Aboriginal children from their families and communities. [. . .] Two primary objectives of the Residential Schools system were to remove and isolate children from the influence of their homes, families, traditions and cultures, and to assimilate them into the dominant culture. These objectives were based on the assumption Aboriginal cultures and spiritual beliefs were inferior and unequal. Indeed, some sought, as it was infamously said, "to kill the Indian in the child". [. . .] The government now recognizes that the consequences of the Indian Residential Schools policy were profoundly negative and that this policy has had a lasting and damaging impact on Aboriginal culture, heritage and language. While some former students have spoken positively about their experiences at residential schools, these stories are far overshadowed by tragic accounts of the emotional, physical and sexual abuse and neglect of helpless children, and their separation from powerless families and communities. (Harper, 2008)

Participants from the UNYA manual made direct links between the cultural breakdown and fragmentation brought about by the IRS and its intergenerational effects and the dysfunction and abuse some experienced in the home.

Sethi lists several recruitment methods used by traffickers; she describes the underlying theme behind their efforts as coercion and deception. The specific strategies and points of interception that Sethi's key informants listed were the following: airports; schools; bars; boyfriends; girls as recruiters; dancers; the internet; and hitchhiking (Sethi, 2007, p. 60).

Airports are used less according to her research. It requires coordination between someone from a girl's home community and a trafficker in the city the girl was trafficked to. Relying on the fact that the girl would not have a support network in the new location, the trafficker would make themselves available and offer lodging and resources. Schools, that were traditionally intended to be paths to education and self-improvement, are being used as convenient locations in which to find Aboriginal young girls susceptible to promises of gifts and a better life. According to key informants, young Aboriginal girls in a new city looking to be connected with and meet up with other Aboriginals will head to bars in hopes of ending their isolation. Sethi's key informants suggest that the community centres where these young girls might have otherwise gone to for the same purposes are closed relatively early in the day in many cities. In the bars, the traffickers will recruit them with offers to help them connect with other Aboriginals, an offer that turns into sexual exploitation afterwards.

Traffickers who make their way in via masquerading as boyfriends is a frequent example. These traffickers mask their exploitation behind the guise of claiming to care about the girl, and the relationship may start out with expensive gifts. Sometimes girls are made to recruit other girls, their motivation is frequently not their own economic profit but fear of violence from their own trafficker if they refuse or fail to bring in someone else. The dancers who end up trafficked are Aboriginal girls who are moved many times across provinces for their job until they have become disconnected from friends and family. Aboriginal girls, particularly in rural communities, are sometimes lured through communications with traffickers in the city who promise them employment (in respectable jobs, not trafficking). Hitchhiking is more of a direct approach, where girls are picked up attempting to relocate or travel, and are pushed into sexual exploitation.

In a 2009, comprehensive, prairie-focused study on sex trafficking of Aboriginal women and girls, Sikka highlighted a link between Aboriginal girls being in care facilities and a link towards ending up recruited for trafficking:

Many [Aboriginal] girls first point of entry into the criminal justice system is a charge for an offence committed within a care facility. Girls may be charged with assault on a staff member or other 'violent' offences and are then remanded to detention centres, where they come into contact with sexually exploited youth and recruiters. . . Given the high rate of apprehension of Aboriginal children, their over representation in the child welfare system leads to their over representation in the criminal justice system, which in turn facilitates their entry into prostitution. (Sikka, 2009, p. 9)

It is important to remember that Sikka's analysis is built in part upon key informant interviews with people who work in front lines with Aboriginal women and girls who have been trafficked (no experiential women were involved that were not also frontline workers), and on her own literature review. As will be discussed later in this paper, Sikka puts forth a compelling argument on the problems with separating 'prostitution' from human trafficking for sexual acts, and while she uses the word prostitution here, she also identifies recruiters as part of the process. Whether Aboriginal girls end up in prostitution versus trafficked is less important than recognizing this process as a feeder for Aboriginal girls to traffickers at least in part.

The key stakeholders in Sikka's study also reinforce the findings in Sethi (2007) and the UNYA manual. Many of the girls or youth are pulled into sex trafficking through so-called friends. To return to the care facilities referenced in the quote above, key informants in Winnipeg and Edmonton informed Sikka that many girls functioning as recruiters for their traffickers in care facilities often consider their trafficker their 'boyfriend'. The impact of this view of their relationship is that it indicates a difficulty for the trafficked girl to recognize the cycle of abuse she is in, and that the current relationship she has with her trafficker is not a healthy one. This may prolong the girl's time in that abusive relationship and make it more difficult for her to seek help or exit the life (as it would most likely also mean leaving a 'partner' who would not only resist her exiting from being trafficked but would also be actively trying to maintain this abuse cycle as a source of financial profit).

Schools also function as access points for traffickers—Edmonton in particular was highlighted by informants as having major recruitment being conducted in schools (p. 14). Their peers, or peers and their family members would coordinate recruitment and draw in young Aboriginal girls, and this was sometimes facilitated through invitations to parties or outings that these girls go on dates with their peers' older male relatives, who would take on trafficker roles. Across the different scenarios, "nearly all participants noted the use of drugs in the recruitment of young Aboriginal girls" into the sex trade (p. 14).

Sikka uses the word prostitution, but she continues the discussion by noting that the stories she heard from the frontline workers were of exploiters recruiting vulnerable girls with compliments, presents, then drugs (p. 15). Once the young Aboriginal girls become addicted, their 'boyfriends' would use their addiction as leverage, forcing them to sell themselves for the boyfriends' profit before he would supply her with the drugs for her addiction. According to the participants in her study, drugs were a preferred method for many gangs. Holding the young girls' new addictions ransom, they would send them out to 'earn money' for the gang's profit in order to receive more drugs for their addiction.

In Sethi's 2007 paper, she reported trafficking rings that her informants identified were moving Aboriginal girls for the purposes of sex trafficking. Sikka addresses the idea of movement quite differently and states a very different perspective informed from her own interviews with frontline service workers. Sikka noted how few participants identified Aboriginal girls being moved in 'circuits' currently. The reason for this, she theorizes, is that street-based sex work is now addiction-related, and the women are "not in a position to move away from familiar territory and the gangs with whom Aboriginal girls are involved are less likely to be connected to criminal organizations far from their home territories" (p. 15). Her theory requires that her informants also

be familiar with gang practices and habits to bear significant weight, but it is not clear from her report if that is the case. However, she is able to substantiate her claim that many of these Aboriginal women and girls remain unmoved geographically. Her informants instead recounted stories of these women being preyed upon from the vulnerability of their mobility and transience (Sikka, 2009, p. 15). The very different emphasis between Sethi and Sikka on trafficking and relocation bears further research and should include direct accounts from experiential women and girls.

There needs to be very clear and upfront language used on the researcher(s) perspective on whether or not there is a distinction between women and girls being used as trafficking victims and those working in the sex trade. The Sikka study makes it very clear that the researcher does not separate the two issues, and trusts the reader to decide whether to accept her evidence and analysis. It is worth noting that although Sikka sees the distinction as false, she did not attempt to usurp interviewee testimony to her view, and in her and Sethi's studies, the Key Informants made this distinction during their various interviews, and the authors kept those distinctions in the data. However, the goal here is not to discount one stance or the other but rather identify that the experiences of trafficked Aboriginal women and girls fits both profiles as it does with other vulnerable groups in the Canadian population. This is a complex subject requiring further comprehensive study.

To return to Sikka's coverage of mobility as point-of-vulnerability as opposed to after being trafficked, she continues, noting that, after relocating, Aboriginal women and girls face the same vulnerabilities as those already living in urban centres; however, Aboriginal women and girls are at greater risk because of their isolation, which is exacerbated by an absence of opportunities and supports.

A heavy presence for recruitment in research is that of gangs. One of the motivators for a gang presence in the sex trafficking of Aboriginal women and girls may be the perception that trafficking women and girls for sex acts is a low-risk crime for incarceration (Totten, 2009). Gangs use similar recruitment methods as other more straight-forward traffickers. Many participants in Sikka's study (2009) identified that drug addiction was a popular tool for gangs, seemingly over that of force, for achieving these women's compliance. For vulnerable Aboriginal youth, often faced with low self-esteem and a lack of sense of belonging, gangs can offer both of these through enrollment. Sometimes, their recruitment process requires sexual exploitation or that they recruit others (Totten, 2009; Sikka, 2009). Gang presence is on the rise, and represents a growing, if not completely quantifiable, source for active recruitment of Aboriginal women and girls into sex trafficking (Barrett, 2010).

Investigating sexual exploitation in more rural settings, Saraceno (2010) found that participants identified risky scenarios for exploitation as the following: alcohol and addiction (p. 92), substance use and lack of safety at home (p. 93), teen drinking (p. 94), hitchhiking (p. 96), walking alone or at night (p. 98), lack of adult guidance or support (p. 99) poverty (p. 101), and high school (more specifically, the transition between middle school and high school, which for many Aboriginal students can mean switching from attending school on-reserve to off-reserve) (p. 102). While her study lacked numbers in terms of participants, as a qualitative study its goal was to identify issues for those specific participants in that community. Following a qualitative approach, it is up to the

reader to determine if the contexts and findings can be transferred to their own context. For our purposes, we see much of what she identified in a rural context supportive of other studies' findings in urban and rural settings.

Statistical data and qualitative interviews carried out in many locations in Canada, including urban, rural, and multi-provincial, tell similar stories and have very relatable findings for the most part on the sex trafficking of Aboriginal women and girls. They are being recruited through drugs, gang pressure and recruitment, 'boyfriends', and peers masquerading as friends. In some cases they are pushed into it from family (though this was sparse in the research and not the source of the majority of trafficking). They are consistently preyed upon through their economic disparity, homelessness, isolation in urban centres, their lack of supports, and their lack of an education to obtain legal, reputable work. For many, it is a challenge to recognize their own exploitation as their pimp pretends to be a boyfriend and the frequent background many of these women and girls have of coming from unstable and abusive homes makes it more challenging for them to recognize that this exploitative treatment is not healthy or normal.

Systemic discrimination in terms of over-representation in the criminal justice system and their over-representation in the child welfare system are large racial pressures that push these women and girls towards being trafficked. Their systemic discrimination is a powerful contributor to the unstable life they grow up in where many are abused and many more grow up with low self-esteem. Their presence in these institutions profiles them for traffickers looking to recruit the vulnerable. There is not a large bank of statistical data to tell us the depths to which institutional, racial discrimination plays a part, but the testimony of many informants from multiple locations in Canada, key informants who work in front lines with trafficked women and girls, have repeatedly identified the link between a girl with a history with these institutions and her being trafficked. Studies that identify Aboriginal women and girls' vulnerabilities to recruitment into trafficking, such as UNYA (2002), Sethi (2007), Kingsley & Mark (2001), Sikka (2009), et cetera, identify the same vulnerabilities that are identified in institutional discrimination.

Ultimately, large societal factors such as poverty, lack of education, and widespread low self-esteem increase Aboriginal women and girls' vulnerability to being trafficked. These are factors that increase the vulnerabilities of non-Aboriginal women and girls as well, but in Canada Aboriginal women and girls are greatly overrepresented in statistics of poverty and lack of education (compared to the national average). These, as well as other issues are rooted in colonial practices, both historical and current.

5.4 Prevention

Prevention in the literature is multifaceted, approached from a variety of angles, and focused not only on potential victims of sexual exploitation, but on engagement with those closest to them, and involving society in general in efforts to prevent sex trafficking.

Kingsley and Mark's 2001 paper is an excellent resource. Unfortunately, after a little over a decade as we have seen, their findings are still relevant. Considering this, the depth to which they explore preventative measures should **not** be ignored by reason of date. In 2001 they advocated for the need to use preventative measures that are aimed not just at those who may be victimized, but

society as a whole. They put forth two sets of recommendations, the first is a set of strategies aimed at developing the link between communities and Aboriginal youth through dialogue and initiatives (while youth are always their focus, it can still be expanded to apply to or guide initiatives addressing both Aboriginal women and girls). This recommendation will be included in the recommendations section, as it deals less with prevention directly and more about addressing sexual exploitation. The second set emerges directly from the Aboriginal youth that participated in the study.

On the topic they were asked directly for their input on preventative measures. Their summarized list is as follows:

- Awareness-raising through education and discussion;
- A safe, non-judgemental place to go;
- Cultural connection;
- Raising self-esteem;
- Service providers who have experience in the trade; and,
- Viable economic alternatives.

(Kingsley & Mark, 2001, p. 60)

Education in this context refers to being educated on the difference between healthy relationships and unhealthy ones (specifically, sexually exploitive relationships). Participants felt that education was crucial, both for potential victims and those around them, including the community. Part of education is not taking things for granted. It is not always obvious what is and is not appropriate:

“For myself, if I had been informed as a child, I think I would have made a better choice as a teenager and adult. In school, the children are learning to learn, so why not teach them everything else too? Especially if it can prevent something”

(Kingsley & Mark, 2001, p. 57).

The youth participants also felt that one of the ways that exploitation is allowed to continue is due to the lack of education of the realities of the trauma and prevalence of exploitation. Educating is not just for the potentially exploited, exploitation happens in the dark, in unhealthy environments, and for many, before they have a chance to learn and set healthy parameters. Active discussion may make it easier for children to speak up if they are victimized as well.

The youth dialogue in the study repeats a strong theme of cultural consideration. Aboriginals may feel more comfortable raising issues if it is to someone they feel understands their background, such as an Aboriginal counsellor. Cultural programming and initiatives that strengthen culture were also felt to be effective.

The UNYA (2002) also provides a comprehensive model for prevention that reflects many of the same priorities. They, too, press for educating at an early age both for those at risk and for those who work with or are family to those at risk. Awareness is something that should be taken into schools and taught to teachers and other adults – including what to look for if one of their students becomes the victim of sexual exploitation. The UNYA manual strongly advocates for teaching life skills and living. They urge adults in a youth’s life to strive to be a positive role model and display

affection (once more addressing the need for self-esteem and approval), and working to build their educational successes. Life skills and parenting would also help to create more stable, healthy environments where youth are both less likely to be victimized and less likely to be susceptible to it later (p. 47).

Promoting awareness and educating is not just about sexual exploitation. This is also about combating race- and gender-based discrimination. For some root causes, such as race- and gender-based discrimination, it may not be immediately obvious how to enact preventative measures. The major focus of Barrett's 2010 report is on exploring promising practices on responses to human trafficking in Canada. The practice of sexually trafficking women and girls is one that discriminates against their gender, under a justification on the part of the trafficker that this behaviour is somehow permissible. Therefore it comes as no surprise that one of the key thrusts of Barrett's proposals is the promotion of women's equality. She advocates that these be pursued in laws and policies that focus on reducing harm against women. She also identifies that another effective preventative measure is to provide quality programs for abusers.

Barrett's review of the literature and practices includes Aboriginal communities. In fact, she is one of the researchers who concludes that research into human trafficking in Canada shows that Aboriginal women and children are the majority of those trafficked domestically. Her recommendations for the Aboriginal community are based on data from both a review of the literature and interviews conducted for her report, and her focus on prevention and promising practices leads to very thorough, well-thought-out recommendations. Part of her description of the issue is not the vulnerability of Aboriginal women and girls per se but the vulnerabilities of Aboriginal communities. This reasoning fits in with a view of the systemic problems in Aboriginal communities that lead to heightened vulnerabilities for Aboriginal women and girls. By regarding human trafficking in a community capacity as well as victim capacity, she puts forth the following ideas for prevention:

Programs to reduce school dropout rates and develop economic opportunities in Aboriginal communities; raise public awareness of human trafficking for Aboriginal leaders, government officials, and the public; and support and strengthen Aboriginal family and community networks, such as survivor-led shelters, transition programs and specialized services for Aboriginal women and children vulnerable to trafficking. (Barrett, p. iii)

One of the main focuses is in providing safe, stable, supportive homes for Aboriginal women and girls to grow up in, with economic security and prospects for their future other than sex trafficking. The underlying theme here seems to be that Aboriginal women and girls (and any woman or girl) who grow up in healthy, stable environments free from poverty are not likely to end up in sex trafficking. Barrett's approach should also be recognized for not only addressing community challenges and needs, but also recognizing a wider discriminatory issue at hand in identifying formal education issues, and economic challenges as needing to be addressed to prevent human trafficking, as well as her emphasis to bring together multiple parties to address the issue that involves Aboriginal leaders, government officials, and the general public.

A more recent document that covers prevention is Hunt's 2011 *Restoring the Honouring Circle: Taking a Stand Against Youth Sexual Exploitation*. This resource manual is a guide for Aboriginal communities on the issue of sexual exploitation with an emphasis on BC communities. The manual is built from dialogue with Aboriginal youth via interviews and focus groups, and many others. In total, 60 people were interviewed to inform the document. The guide is extensive; a full breakdown of its elements is beyond the scope of this paper. However, there are a few points of relevance to highlight here.

First, the topics addressed in the manual come from the research participants themselves. Based on the many interviews they conducted in making the resource, the assembled topics and coverage offer an approach that ranges from focusing on individuals and families and, similar to Barrett (2010), to whole communities. The consensus among participants is that it takes an entire healthy community to end unhealthy cycles and to change attitudes. The general stance in the manual is that sexual exploitation of youth is a significant concern; it is important to be clear that their assertion is that for things to change, the whole community needs to get behind a movement for awareness, discussion, and healthier living patterns. This is not to say that sexual exploitation is everywhere, but that there is often a silence in the communities regarding it, and this restricts efforts to heal and change. Silence is not a healthy approach. However, awareness, education, and openness are. Again, as used in Kingsley and Mark (2001) and the UNYA manual (2002), education here refers to people being educated on what is sexual exploitation, what are healthy relationships, and what people can do to help others or seek help themselves.

Second, the manual advocates for individuals and communities to build better understanding of one's own responsibility as an adult to support and encourage the healthy development of the youth in their community. This approach is supported by a series of activities that individuals and groups can work through to build their own awareness of themselves and what they can offer to help youth. The manual also provides activities for communities to identify their current strengths in terms of services they offer to support youth who may be being sexually exploited, and how to develop further action plans for the community and groups in the community. While some of these suggestions are intended to help empower people to work with and support sexually exploited youth, engaging in community discussions and working together to build healthier life practices would certainly aid in prevention.

Third, the manual is very direct about issues in Aboriginal communities. They speak bluntly about the issue of normalized violence that is the often-seen hallmark when cultures have faced generational, systemic discrimination as well as the Indian Residential School intergenerational effect. The normalized violence is a practice that damages children and youth's sense of what is acceptable (a re-occurring theme in the literature from as early as Kingsley and Mark in 2001). The frequency with which it is in their lives means that "Youth are living with the consequences of these norms on a daily basis. Research participants from across BC have said that often youth are assaulted or abused but do not report it or talk about it, saying that 'it wasn't that bad.' Youth often say that violence and abuse are 'just part of life,' and they may not even see that what is happening to them is abuse" (JIBC, 2006, as cited in Hunt, 2011, p. 72). Preventative measures must break through that wall of acceptance of abuse as normal and reset standards for individual children and the community. The key to achieving this change seems to be educating youth and children (and the community) on an awareness of healthy relationships and living, and supporting the

development of new, healthier lifestyle practices (again, the manual provides many activities to work on building these necessary dialogues and practices). Healthy, restorative practices are often those rooted in regaining and reclaiming one's culture.

5.5 Exit Strategies & Support

5.5.1 Kingsley & Mark and UNYA

When it comes to exiting sexual exploitation there are some repeated key themes throughout the literature. Participants in the studies, when asked about exit supports and strategies, tend to focus on the following: using frontline workers who are former experiential people to engage trafficked and exploited women and youth; ensuring support programs are flexible and set in judgement-free environments; and that anyone seeking to effectively engage with trafficked and exploited women, youth, and children have understanding attitudes, education, and training and support on the frequent and common issues and causes for their exploitation – for Aboriginal contexts this requires awareness of additional, systemic factors (understanding colonial roots of violence, Indian Residential School intergenerational trauma, community-wide poverty, etc.).

Kingsley and Mark (2001) and the UNYA Manual (2002) offer some of the most thorough collections of recommendations for supporting peoples' exit from the sex trade. Their recommendations focus on Aboriginal peoples, but are not necessarily restricted to only the female sex. Their recommendations are multifaceted and complex, and they recognize many of the issues covered under root causes and recruitment covered earlier in this paper. While the participants in both talk a little about the problems with some current strategies (at the time they were written), for the most part their emphasis is on what can be done and not what is being done wrong. Looking at their recommendations will help place us in the context of more modern research into currently-running programs and supports. Broadly speaking, the participants in Kingsley and Mark (2001) emphasized the following as promising initiatives for supporting exits:

- Specific services/agencies for the unique needs of Aboriginal youth sex workers;
- Services and support for those who do not wish to exit the sex trade;
- Longer term services;
- Experiential counselors;
- Decreasing obstacles youth face in accessing services;
- Education;
- Self-confidence building;
- Building trust with agencies, outreach workers and counselors;
- Basic life skills training; and,
- Social skills training.

(p. 67)

Other needs expressed by youth in Kingsley & Mark were “drop-in centers, emergency shelters, support groups, and community friendship centers with flexible and late-night hours” (2001, p. 59). The characteristics of these latter recommendations are their flexibility and accommodation. Those being sexually exploited and trafficked often do not find it easy to try and escape. When the need and the motive is there, places with accessible hours (particularly to a community that sees much of

its abuse at night), welcoming attitudes, and offering quick access will help to increase engaging with youth at those vulnerable moments.

As discussed earlier, the youth participants in Kingsley and Mark do not restrict their definition of abuse to being only sexual; however, it was the primary focus of the document and was intended to be addressed by the above initiatives. With any of these supports, the authors of the UNYA manual would add that it must be a long-term commitment on the part of the services.

Both Kingsley and Mark and the UNYA manual participants strongly emphasized the need for trust between people who are trying to or are enrolled in support programs to exit the sex trade and escape sexual exploitation. Without trust, it is very difficult to engage in healing. And when the participants in both articles speak of trust, they are often approaching it from a history of being abused (in many ways, but also specifically with sexual exploitation) by people who had a trust-role in their life. People masquerading as boyfriends, or gangs preying on low self-esteem and offering women and girls a chance to feel like they belong, or even their own family members may have betrayed their trust and a façade of caring to either directly sexually exploit them or recruit them into sexual exploitation on their behalf (trafficking). This history of abused trust is important for frontline workers to understand and be prepared to address if they are to establish trust. On a similar theme, participants from both articles also emphasized the impact of using experiential survivors as frontline workers. From their testimony, it would seem that having lived that life seemed to give these workers extra credit with victims of sexual exploitation.

When it came to culture, for the most part participants from both articles agreed: using culture for healing and support could be very effective. However, the UNYA youth also counselled that forcing cultural participation on youth could backfire – as could trying to connect sexually exploited youth to their home communities. As discussed earlier, the UNYA manual research was conducted in an urban centre, but many participants had migrated to the city from rural communities. These communities, some stated, were where their abuse began. The silence that could exist in those communities on the topic of sexual exploitation could stifle change (Kingsley & Mark, 2001), and it would seem that some of the youth in the UNYA felt that their trust in their home community was negatively impacted by what they perceived as a failure to appropriately address the issue of sexual exploitation in the community.

The participants in Kingsley and Mark emphasized education as a component of exit strategies in two different ways. In one way, it was about building awareness amongst the general populace about what constituted sexual exploitation, and what were healthy relationships and healthy touching. Such education initiatives would help those being sexually exploited to recognize that how they are being treated is a form of abuse, not a normal practice, and that there was something they could do about it. For many, these abusive patterns occur at a young age, and because of this it can seem normal and not something worth questioning. Hearing that message of what healthy relationships are can provide the awareness and motivation for many to take steps to end their own exploitation. For those not involved in sexual exploitation, a greater awareness of it through education would help them spot the warning signs and take steps when they perceived someone to be in distress. The participants in Kingsley and Mark (2001) particularly emphasized the need for teachers and other adults in positions of authority and overseeing children to receive this awareness education training to help them be more proactive in addressing sexual exploitation.

The other role of education as advocated in both Kingsley and Mark and the UNYA manual was to provide those who have been sexually exploited with education as formal training or schooling so that they become eligible to obtain an income through healthy engagement with the Canadian economy. This echoes Farley et al's (2003) assertion on prostitution (which still applies to trafficking), that to exit, women need real and viable alternatives. It is not enough to help them exit sexual exploitation; they need support to obtain the type of employment they were originally blocked from after growing up in what was often unstable, abusive homes, which negatively impacted their original path through formal education systems.

Rounding out the advice and recommendations the participants offered, both groups (Kingsley and Mark, 2001; UNYA 2002) also advocated for flexible programs to support exit from the sex trade. In this context they were arguing for a few things. Because of the many issues that are often faced by those who have been sexually exploited, to exit the sex trade means to leave behind other damaging practices such as substance abuses. Participants also advocated for more flexible hours for support services so that they would be available when sexually exploited victims reached out and not necessarily confined to a 9 to 5 schedule. These, combined with drop-in centres, staffed with experiential survivors (at least in part), and a non-judgemental attitude would go a long way towards providing effective supports to exit the sex trade.

The recommendations in the two articles are more in-depth than discussed here, and readers are strongly recommended to read the originals. They offer a solid foundation of recommendations. However, to some they may seem dated. Fortunately, there are a few examples of these services currently in place that offer insight into how programs such as these may be impacting sexually exploited victims.

5.5.1 Educational Supports

Some of the programs supporting these women and girls aim to promote a greater awareness of healthy living and relationships, as well as cultural teachings when appropriate. In addition to this, the programs also support Aboriginal women and youth to gain education (in this case education is meant in a more formal, academic, and skills-based sense). This is part of what Farley et al (2003) discussed when it came to leaving sexual exploitation. Many who are sexually exploited and trafficked come from backgrounds where formal education and job skill development have been compromised from traumatic childhoods and growing up in abuse. To help these women and youth escape the cycle of sexual exploitation, they need training in viable alternatives for income. It is not enough to protect women and girls from pimps and traffickers; the conditions of growing up in poverty and without a full education must also be addressed for lasting difference. As such, these organizations provide programs that specifically facilitate these women and girls' transition to another lifestyle. This can include life skills, substance abuse counselling, and therapy, to name a few.

5.5.1 Social & Cultural Supports

Seshia (2005) focuses heavily on exploring qualitatively what victims of sex trafficking themselves felt they needed in order to make a successful transition, as well as what were some of the reasons they began attempting an exit, and she also reviewed a few of these programs that, if not directly

influenced by Kingsley and Mark and the UNYA manual, certainly embody many of their recommendations. Her article provides useful insight into the impact of these strategies into an exit program and services for those in the sex trade. Seshia does not use the word trafficked. Her word choice is not accidental; she touches on the controversy around whether or not women who experience the sex trade are necessarily exploited or to what degree choice can be a factor. However, she makes it clear in her paper that her focus is on women who have been sexually exploited, and she talks of pimps and recruitment. We consider her experiential participants to be victims of trafficking, and even if one takes the stance that unless it is directly stated, they are **not** trafficked, their discussion of effective support programs would still be relevant to some degree for addressing sexually trafficked women. Additionally, Seshia never specifically identifies that she is exploring sexual exploitation of Aboriginal women; however, she emphasises literature on Aboriginal sexual exploitation in Canada, includes a discussion of Aboriginal sexual exploitation in a history of Winnipeg (as seen through a history of the sex trade), finds her participants (both her frontline workers and experiential survivors) from support organizations that focus on supporting Aboriginal women and youth, and discusses Aboriginal-specific issues of vulnerability to sexual exploitation as well as Aboriginal-specific requests in program evaluations. For these reasons we consider her paper to be focused on Aboriginal women and youth (who have been sexually exploited and trafficked).

Seshia reported that the participants greatly appreciated the resources and supports offered at TERF (Transition, Education & Resources for Females), Sage House, and Dream Catchers, as well as organizations that provided supports through similar models. These organizations provide supports and programming for women and youth who have been sexually exploited; they are not limited to Aboriginal enrollment but, at least in TERF, the majority of participants are Aboriginal. When the experiential survivors in her paper spoke of motivations to exit, there are only three listed: near death experiences (p. 23), motherhood and childbirth (p. 25), and role modeling and support from survivors (p. 26). The participants in the study identified the following as making the most contribution to supporting their exit from sexual exploitation:

Individuals who work at community organizations; the programs offered to sexually exploited youth and adults; and other peers participating and utilizing these programs.
(Seshia, 2005, p. 27)

The last we consider to be an example of the role modelling and peer support. The participants in the support program described staff as being very proficient and supportive. The behaviour of the staff, the non-judgmental atmosphere, and their encouragement towards participants had a simple yet profound impact: “Their actions showed transitioning people that others care about and believe in them” (p. 27).

Many of these frontline workers were survivors of sexual exploitation themselves. Their interviews revealed that they were able to demonstrate to others how they were now living their lives differently and that it was possible to overcome prior barriers and succeed in exiting the lifestyle themselves. Part of their influence on those wishing to exit trafficking came from their ability to share their own personal experiences, which “helped foster connections, trust, and openness while simultaneously empowering experiential women in the belief that they too could be survivors” (p.

27). This finding matches the assertions of participants in both Kingsley and Mark (2001), and from the UNYA manual (2002).

Both of these reports featured agreeing statements from participants that one of the most effective ways of drawing people into exiting is through engaging with survivors who had exited themselves and served as living examples of the possibility of leaving sexual exploitation behind.

In a 2007 review of the same TERF program that Seshia reviewed, researchers noted TERF's staff representation shares many important characteristics with the program participants: many staff members are Aboriginal, and many are experiential survivors (Ursel et al). The benefit of having so many survivors on staff, Ursel et al clarify, is that from their literature review of experiential people of sexual exploitation, they "consistently report that people in the sex trade seeking help report a preference for programs that have experiential staff" (p. 25). Some of the reason for this goes back to the atmosphere of understanding and non-judgmental attitudes that participants in Seshia's study indicated were so important. Found also in Ursel et al, "There is the belief that experiential staff would be less judgmental and more understanding than other staff" (2007, p. 25). And of course as living examples of the change sex traffic victims are looking for, they help draw participants forward on their path of healing and exiting.

In terms of peer support, this is part of the supports created through sharing personal experiences. It was the simple act of storytelling that Seshia found was "the most outstanding finding" (p. 28). The power of storytelling came from participants recognizing themselves in the stories of others, which helped build a supportive community. When those shared stories came from someone who had escaped sexual exploitation, those were very empowering experiences. This seems to be a part of why the Dream Catchers Peer Mentorship program was so impactful to participants in their statements to Seshia. Participants felt that isolation and shame, which are some of the vulnerabilities already discussed in this paper in terms of core issues and recruitment, could be alleviated through this peer support network. The Dream Catcher Peer Mentorship Program sought to maximize the survivor/peer support influence. Once someone graduated from their Peer Mentorship program, they then could turn around and help others through their transition out of sex exploitation, an act we theorize would not just be helpful and empowering to the next mentee as a real example of what they can achieve, but likely also furthers the empowerment and increasing well-being of the new, graduated mentor.

The women in the study further identified additional supports for transitioning:

- Transitional housing and a twenty-four hour seven-day-a-week safe house for sexually exploited youth and adults.
 - A women's-only addictions centre that is designed by women and transgendered individuals and is specifically for sexually exploited adults and youth.
 - More resources for sexually exploited transgendered women.
 - More resources and supports in general.
- (Seshia, 2005, p. 29)

Farley, Lynne, and Cotton (2005) asked the sexually exploited Vancouver, B.C. participants in the simple question, 'What do you need?' Farley et al (2011) repeated this question to 105 Native

women in Minnesota. Before proceeding, it is important to note that the 2005 study does not use the word trafficked, instead using only prostitution. The authors note that their participants ranged in age from 13 years old to 49 years. However, they made no distinction by age in participants' answers or statistical analysis. The Farley et al (2011) study has approximately 49 percent of participants as trafficked (as remarked earlier). While the 2011 study is specifically on Aboriginal people (in Minnesota, USA), the Canadian study lists participants as including 52% who identified as First Nations. The USA-based study results were based on 105 Native women participants, and the 2005 study 100 participants. We are including a statistical comparison even with their mixed representation because we believe it is valuable to see the similarity between desired supports and perspectives between those listed as prostitutes and those listed as trafficked. The table below illustrates their needs as identified:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| • 88% drug or alcohol treatment | • 75% individual counselling |
| • 78% job training | • 73% peer support |
| • 67% individual counseling | • 68% vocational training |
| • 63% self-defense training | • 67% home or safe place |
| • 61% home or safe place | • 58% substance abuse treatment |
| • 53% peer support | • 50% self-defense training |
| • 41% medical/health care | • 48% health care |
| • 33% legal assistance | • 34% legal assistance |
| • 24% legalized prostitution | • 26% physical protection from a pimp |
| • 16% childcare | • 26% childcare |
| • 4% physical protection from pimp | • 10% legalized prostitution |
| (Farley, Lynne, and Cotton, 2005, p.254) | (Farley et al, 2011, p.48) |

While the participants in Farley, Lynne, and Cotton (2005) are listed as prostitutes instead of trafficked, it is worth pointing out that **95% identified that they wanted to leave prostitution** (p. 253), and yet, they cannot. It is tempting to count this as being trafficked – it would seem that if one feels restrained and unable to leave that there is an element of force, yet current definitions of trafficking require more than the threat of homelessness, a lack of childcare, health care, or counselling, or the lack of other relatively basic needs to facilitate leaving the sex trade in order to justify moving women out of the category of ‘choice’ and into ‘forced’. It is difficult to reason that basic essential healthy environments are still so out-of-reach for so many and it is telling of ongoing discrimination in Canada against Aboriginals that one of the groups without is composed of so many Aboriginal women and girls.

Many of the suggestions listed up to this point have mentioned Aboriginal culture as a positive link to successfully exiting from sexual exploitation and trafficking and something to be considered as an addition or enhancement for more effective programming. Yet it would be remiss not to repeat the caution that comes from the UNYA manual: “Don’t assume that an Aboriginal youth wants to know their culture or be in touch with the Aboriginal community, for some youth their worst fear is to go back to the community that they experienced their pain in, ask them what they want and let them decide how important culture is to them at this point in their lives” (p. 48). Add to this caution the expectation that a youth wants to be reunited with their family. The UNYA participants came from an urban pool, and this may be an influential factor.

Hunt's 2011 Restoring the Honouring Circle sexual exploitation guide is aimed at rural BC Aboriginal communities, and it features extensive cultural components for both preventative measures and to support ending sexual exploitation. Ursel et al (2007) did a thorough analysis of the TERF program, which is held in Winnipeg, an urban environment, and it is worth noting that the youth-focused component (they have both an adult and youth program) featured classes on Aboriginal culture; however, the youth made particular mention of, "an appreciation for staff encouraging but not pressuring them to take part in cultural activities" (p. 13). Youth's preference not to be pushed into cultural activities should be taken cautiously, as the TERF program during that review did rely extensively on cultural elements, including having an on-staff Elder, and these youth did participate in cultural activities, just under their own preference for engagement. At the time of the study, the current youth participants' preference seemed to be for less history-related cultural lessons and more of the ceremonies and culture-based activities.

It has already been discussed that building trust and being supportive are effective support delivery methods. Seshia's study adds to this a few guidelines, the first of which is a voluntary and value-based environment. Voluntary in this case means that no one can be forced to heal. Without the decision from the exploited person, the initiative is unlikely to be successful. Thus, invite and be welcoming, but a program that attempts to force healing is counter-productive and repeats some of the denied-to-make-their-own-choices that these people have already experienced in sexual exploitation and trafficking. Value-based means to shift from rule-based to a positive value-based focus, "life skills and assets that participants have or can develop" (Seshia, 2005, p. 35).

5.5.2 Harm Reduction

Harm reduction is viewed as an effective support method. One way to describe harm reduction is not to expect a complete cessation of negative behaviours and actions all at once and immediately. Instead, focus on reducing negative consequences. The example given in Seshia's report is to switch out abstinence in favour of advocating for and providing condoms (p. 35). Seshia further provides that this is a particularly valid approach for the support of those who have been sexually exploited: with many, they continue using substances in order to cope. Ultimately, harm reduction based means "accepting sexually exploited youth and adults wherever they are in life and trying to improve their safety in non-coercive ways" (p. 35).

Not the same as the earlier mentioned long-term care, the other support Seshia identifies in the research is that of no time frames. Bluntly put, one participant phrased it aptly: "People don't heal overnight. It took seventeen years to get all the shit inside of you and it's probably going to take twenty years to get it out of you" (p. 36). Quick-healing regimens are unrealistic. Healing takes time, and sexual exploitation is a violent, oppressive, and damaging process. In a 2003 study on sexual exploitation with some 854 participants, their findings were that prostitution was multi-traumatic, with 68% meeting the criteria for posttraumatic stress disorder (Farley, et al., 2003, p. 34), which, also happens to match the same range of PTSD as combat veterans (Weathers, Litz, Herman, Huska, & Keane, 1993, as cited in Farley, et al., 2003, p. 37). If prostitution is categorized as choice and trafficked as forced, it may be that trafficked women are dealing with even more PTSD.

Seshia highlights an approach to design programming supports for victims of human trafficking (an approach NWAC follows in its own initiatives). Seshia states that: “**Experiential people are best able to identify their needs and discuss how to best address these needs**” (emphasis added) (p. 36). She identifies a program, Honouring the Spirit of Our Little Sisters (HSLs), that followed this example. This program is run under Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre, which is an Aboriginal-directed organization in Manitoba that focuses on children in care and community-based programs and services. HSLs used a participatory model from the start. Five experiential women were involved as an advisory council. They participated on every level, from hiring to location scouting to furniture selection. A representative of the program testified that their involvement was critical to the program’s success.

Ursel et al (2007) would add a few more details about the nature and impact of the TERF program first raised in Seshia. From the TERF program’s own data, they reported the following successes:

- 53% of adult graduates [of the TERF program] in 2004-2006 earned course credits;
 - 36% of youth graduates in 2004-06 earned course credits;
 - 40% of adult graduates returned to school;
 - 26% of youth graduates returned to school;
 - 33% of adult graduates obtained employment;
 - 14% of youth graduates obtained employment;
 - 13% of adult graduates regained custody of their children; and,
 - 7 of the 8 students in the Red River College program for Child and Youth Care are TERF graduates.
- (Ursel et al, 2007, p. iv)

Seen in overview, exit strategies that are successful can be broadly said to practice two overarching methods: first, they provide for the exiting of those sexually exploited, typically through a multitude of flexible approaches (such as a safe place, welcoming and judgement-free environment, with survivors as counselors, etc.). Second, they provide sexually exploited individuals with the means to move on in life without prostitution or trafficking (the programs discussed in the literature we reviewed did not seem to discriminate against one group over the other; their primary focus seemed to be in helping those in the sex trade to exit and heal). This means life skills, addiction treatment, moral support, training, and job skills, etc. Not all programs or exit strategies will utilize all supports as there is no effective approach that reflects a “one size fits all” program. Participants in several studies repeated the following message: It is not enough for temporary relief; sexual exploitation for livelihood is not what they want to do: it is what they are forced to do to survive. They need real, viable alternatives and support to realize new opportunities for themselves.

5.6 Obstacles & Problematic Assistance

Exiting sexual exploitation can be one of the most difficult things a person does in their life, though arguably one of the best things they can do for themselves. It requires the acknowledgement that there can be a different way, and, for some, a moment of belief in themselves that they can achieve another way of life for themselves. One of the things that might cause a person to hesitate, and it is important to keep these potentially negating forces in mind, is the shame many feel at being sexually abused. As Kingsley and Mark found in their 2001 report, “Caught between shame and

negative consequences, youth do not go to the very services that are supposedly in place to help them” (p. 47). When they do, there is always the risk that their reception will not be welcoming. Age discrimination and being treated very badly are some obstacles exploited youth have faced in seeking aid (UNYA, 2002).

Sometimes the service provisions have gaps. It may not seem like it, but operating a nine-to-five schedule when you are attempting outreach with exploited people may be missing key times, and thus vital opportunities, to engage with trafficking victims. Those trafficked typically work night hours and are sleeping through the nine-to-five schedule. There is a “lack of consistent long-term funding” (Sethi, 2007, p. 64). Ursel et al (2007) noted that the funding for adults attempting to exit the sex trade was significantly lower funded than the youth program. At the time of the article they were not receiving full core funding dollars for the adult program. The youth TERF annual core funding was \$640, 000 compared to the adult program at \$171, 100. While we would certainly argue against reducing a discussion on funding for supporting an individual’s exit from sexual exploitation to only a matter of numbers, the cost-benefit does seem to be in favour of adequately funding and supporting exit programs:

TERF program reduces social costs

- \$173, 788 is the estimated life time personal cost for exploited individuals.
- \$467, 343 is the estimated cost to social services and justice per exploited individual’s life.
- \$446, 026 is the estimated other societal costs per exploited individual’s life time.
- \$1.1 million dollars in social costs and lost potential per exploited individual.
- TERF assists 15 to 20 individuals to exit the sex trade every year. Realizing a saving to our community of millions of dollars a year.

(Linda DeRiviere (2004), as cited in Ursel et al, 2007, p. iii)

Funding shortages, combined with long waiting lists may lead to missed opportunities to engage those who are sexually exploited. Depending on how they are received, there may not be another attempt to exit. As the UNYA counsels, “Be compassionate with youth, believe what they have to say, you may be the only one they will ever tell if you don’t handle it well” (2002, p. 48). Many key informants in Sethi’s 2007 report identified that there was both a lack of female-only treatment centres for addictions, and that many staff may be unwilling or unable to deal with their sexual exploitation trauma (p. 64). Having a female-only environment may help sexually exploited women and girls with trust issues to attempt an exit program and use its resources. However, all-female programs would not necessarily be immune from continued sexual exploitation. As discussed earlier, sometimes such facilities are used for recruitment. Participants in a study in Winnipeg indicated that during one’s time in care facilities, it is also a risk that they may meet girls who are being sexually exploited by someone whereby the dynamic is such that this girl “may receive benefit by involving other girls in the residences in the sex trade” (Sikka, 2009, p. 14).

5.6.1 Child Welfare

One of the services that made repeated appearances in the literature as linked to increased vulnerability to being sexually exploited and trafficked were child welfare services and foster care. Looking back even as far as 1991, child welfare was a major concern for Aboriginal children and youth that influenced their willingness to engage in support services: “Already jaded by experiences in foster and group homes, few young people with any experiences of the main child protection agencies will go voluntarily into the system’s embrace” (Webber, 1991, p. 77, as cited in Kingsley & Mark, 2001, p. 20).

One of Canada’s most ardent defenders of Aboriginal children is Cindy Blackstock. Her research, and research she has participated in, have built up an alarming picture about the state of child welfare in Canada today as it impacts Aboriginal children. She (and several other researchers) have claimed that the federal government has failed to adequately fund family and child support services for First Nations communities to a level that is equal to what is provided for children in the provinces, the federal government has failed to provide appropriate cultural supports, and they have failed in their duty to try to keep Aboriginal children in their natural homes (Blackstock, 2007; Gough, et al, 2005; Blackstock, 2009; Trocme, Knoke, & Blackstock, 2004; Blackstock, 2010).

Currently, child welfare is the domain of the provinces and territories. However, for child welfare services for First Nations communities, this is supported and funded by the federal government. One may be inclined to think that if children are being taken out of the home, there must be a good reason for it. However, Gough et al (2005) found that an analysis of child placement data revealed that Aboriginal children were no more likely to be remanded into child care than non-Aboriginal children for abuse. Instead, the differences between Aboriginal families with children in child care and non-Aboriginal families were found to be based on “differences [in] the socioeconomic conditions of the families and problems related to the primary care givers. Aboriginal families were more often dependent on social assistance and lived in unsafe housing. Aboriginal families were also more likely to have moved multiple times” (p. 2).

Currently, there are more First Nations children in child welfare care than in Indian Residential Schools at the height of their operations by three times the amount (Trocme, Knoke, & Blackstock, 2004). As has already been discussed in Root Causes and Recruitment, there is a strong link between poverty, poor housing, systemic discrimination, educational disruptions, isolation, and low self-esteem that heighten Aboriginal women, girls, and children’s vulnerability to sexual exploitation and trafficking. Faced with poverty and poor housing, and underfunding to family supports, Aboriginal families become targeted and profiled as high risk within the child welfare system. Children are instead being processed in disturbing numbers into child welfare, an act that further removes them from their communities, families, and further challenges their healthy upbringing, placing Aboriginal children in the care of provincial child welfare does not seem to be a better answer either.

Given the history of Indian Residential Schools and children being removed from their families, communities, and nations, the child apprehension practices continuing today are not likely to support community revitalization and healthier solutions among Aboriginal families.

While the research does not say that Aboriginal children who go into child welfare services and foster care will be sexually exploited, there is significant co-relational data to link heightened vulnerability to being sexually exploited and trafficked with being involved in child welfare services. TERF performs an intake evaluation on their participants and their findings are that:

- 74% of TERF youth are involved with Child and Family Services.
 - With an average of 5 placements in their short lives.
 - 68% of TERF adults were clients of Child and Family Services as youth.
 - With an average of 6.5 placements during their youth.
- (Ursel et al, 2007, p. iii)

Saewyc et al's 2008 study, compiling data from five different youth health surveys, and including 1, 845 youth across British Columbia, (and of which Aboriginal youth were found to make up one-third to one-half of the sexually exploited participants across the surveys) found that many participants had had experience with child welfare services. For some, foster care or a group home was their first site of sexual exploitation: 14% in 2000, 10% in 2001, and 12% in 2006 (p. 23). The researchers further explored the relation of youth in care and found that "sexually exploited youth were significantly more likely to have been in care than their non-exploited peers" (p. 40). The researchers specified further:

Among younger street-involved youth in 2006, 44% of sexually exploited youth had been in care, compared to 33% of non-exploited youth. Similarly, among older street-involved youth in 2001, 66% of exploited youth had been in care, compared to 41% of non-exploited youth. Youth in custody in 2000 had even higher rates: 75% of sexually exploited youth had been in care, while 59% of non-exploited youth had been in care. (Saewyc et al. 2008, p. 40)

The authors are quick to note that being in care does not equate with being sexually exploited; such incidence could happen previously or after. In fact, according to the results of their own examination, it would seem that more street-involved youth experience child care services and then afterwards are sexually exploited than street-involved youth who do not experience child care. Sikka (2009) also drew parallels in terms of time in child welfare and Aboriginal children's eventual over representation in the sex trade. Aboriginal children are being pushed into the child welfare system in Canada at three times the rate of Canadian children. This is happening in part because of the issues of poverty, substance abuse, and other challenges in the home – but has not been linked to over-reporting of incidences of abuse. Poverty, drug abuse, disruptions to education, these are examples of systemic discrimination and continuation of colonialist policies.

Blackstock, with the Assembly of First Nations, is currently participating in a Human Rights Commission case against the federal government regarding the discriminatory treatment of First Nations children in child welfare. Blackstock writes that "placing children in foster care has been linked with many of the same tragic outcomes as children who attended residential schools such as cultural and linguistic erosion, poorer educational outcomes, over-representation in justice systems, and higher incidence of substance misuse and sexual exploitation" (2010, p. 3). In other words, the children's time in the current under-funded and under-supportive system of child welfare provided for them by the federal government will likely repeat for many the very inciting factors that so

many other sexually exploited key informants have testified have been their path to exploitation. The damage that this child welfare process commits in an all-too-willingness to remove children from their homes instead of dealing with the family's social issues, or tackling the systemic discriminatory practices that lead to an overrepresentation of Aboriginal peoples as living in poverty and struggling with substance addictions and unsafe homes, will likely lead to continued links between high representation of Aboriginal children in child welfare and their high representation in sexual exploitation and trafficking in the time ahead.

5.7 Legal, Justice & Policy Measures

This section explores the legal, justice, and policy measures in place to address sex-based traffickers and Aboriginal victims of sexual exploitation and human trafficking in Canada. To this day, many Aboriginal communities are unaware of what human trafficking is and that it is being experienced by Aboriginal women and girls who are members of their community. The same can be said of many Canadians in that they are unaware of the extent of the problem of trafficking, specifically Aboriginal women and girls, in Canada. In the last ten years, this has become a significant legal, justice, and political issue.

One of the key issues with respect to the application of the law is the subjective interpretation of what constitutes sex-trafficking. Many believe that you cannot even begin a conversation about sex trafficking without discussing prostitution, as they are intrinsically linked. In determining whether the offense of trafficking has occurred, the issue of contention is consent and making a choice to prostitute. For many Aboriginal women, they are forced into prostitution at a young age or as a child, and when they reach 18 years of age, they are now viewed as making a willing choice to work as a prostitute. When trafficked at a young age and forced into a life of sex slavery, women are trapped in a cycle of violence, abuse, drug and substance dependency.

5.7.1 UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons

Until 2000, there was no internationally recognized definition of sex trafficking. The *United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons* (UN Protocol) defines human trafficking in the following way:

Trafficking in Persons shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of persons, by means of use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction or fraud, of deceptions, of the abuse of power of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payment or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over other persons, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at the minimum, the exploitations of the prostitutions of other or other forms of sexual exploitation, forces labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. (2000)

According to the UN protocol, sex trafficking does not require cross border movements of humans. However, many people continue to confuse or use the terms human trafficking and human smuggling interchangeably. Domestic sex-trafficking has recently been gaining attention in Canada. The reality for many Aboriginal women and girls in Canada are that they are victims and

survivors of domestic sex trafficking. Aboriginal women and girls are being targeted for sexual exploitation and relocated from their communities, homes, foster homes, to and within urban centres in Canada. In general, the high rates of migration from a reserve (rural area) to an urban centre also poses an increased risk and entry point through which vulnerable Aboriginal women and girls may be exploited. The promises by sex traffickers to provide shelter and employment in off-reserve communities can lead young Aboriginal girls to feel that they can escape poverty or a potential problem situation at home. They willingly leave their home and community only to discover that the promise was too good to be true and they are forced into sex slavery. They are manipulated and lured by sex traffickers. Many Aboriginal girls go missing from communities or in urban centres and they are viewed as runaways, or simply fall off the radar. The misinterpretations of misconceptions on the definition regarding cross-border movement and coercion leaves many trafficked Aboriginal women and girls unprotected and neglected.

The UN Protocol itself did not give legal effect to the definition, and countries were required to adopt legislative and other measures to establish criminal offences. Following the ratification in Canada of the UN Protocol, Parliament passed legislation to amend the Criminal Code with Bill C-49. *Bill C-49, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (trafficking in persons)* came into force on November 25, 2005. Bill C-49 creates three new additional indictable offences specifically to address human trafficking and which can be used by law enforcement to address this crime. Bill C-49 amends the Criminal Code (1) to specifically prohibit trafficking in persons in Canada. Previously, the Criminal Code contained no provisions to specifically prohibit trafficking in persons, although a number of offences – including kidnapping, uttering threats, and extortion – played a role in targeting this crime. In 2002, the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (2) brought Canada's first anti-trafficking legislation into force. Section 118 prohibits bringing anyone into Canada by means of abduction, fraud, deception, or use or threat of force or coercion.²

Bill C-49 adds to this legislation by going beyond the focus on immigration and making trafficking in persons a criminal offence. The bill contains three prohibitions. The first contains the global prohibition on trafficking in persons, defined as the recruitment, transport, transfer, receipt, concealment or harbouring of a person, or the exercise of control, direction or influence over the movements of a person, for the purpose of exploitation. The second prohibits a person from benefiting economically from trafficking. The third prohibits the withholding or destroying of identity, immigration, or travel documents to facilitate trafficking in persons.

Bill C-49 also ensures that trafficking may form the basis of a warrant to intercept private communications and to take bodily samples for DNA analysis, and permits inclusion of the offender in the sex offender registry. Finally, Bill C-49 expands the ability to seek restitution to victims who are subjected to bodily or psychological harm.

5.7.2 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

As a result of historical injustices (colonization, genocide, loss of lands and resources) and discriminatory government legislation and policies, Indigenous Peoples have been prevented from fully realizing or exercising all of their human rights. Recognized by Canada in November 2000 as

² Please see: http://www.parl.gc.ca/About/Parliament/LegislativeSummaries/bills_ls.asp?ls=C49&Parl=38&Ses=1

an “aspirational document, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) is a framework that re-affirms the rights of Indigenous Peoples, and to strengthen the relationship between States and Indigenous Peoples. This Declaration affirms that “Indigenous individuals have the rights to life, physical and mental integrity and liberty and security” (*Article 7*). Many Aboriginal prostituted women do not participate in the sex trade by choice and have been a victim of childhood abuse and sex trafficking. Aboriginal women have the right to protection and safety of the law regardless of the views of others that they are choosing prostitution.

Article 8c of the UNDRIP asserts that “States shall provide effective mechanisms for prevention of, and redress for any form of forced population transfer which has the aim or effect of violating or undermining any of [the] rights [of Indigenous Peoples]”. Indigenous women and girls are over-represented in the sex trade and are at a higher risk of being trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation. This is a complete violation of their human rights and States have an obligation to invest effective mechanisms, interventions, programs and services to address this issue. Indigenous women are often recruited into the sex trade when they are still children. *Article 17* reaffirms that States shall “in cooperation with Indigenous Peoples take specific measure to protect Indigenous children from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child’s education, or to be harmful to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, oral or social development”.

Trafficking, prostitution and commercial sexual exploitation of Aboriginal women and girls are all forms of extreme violence against women. They are repeatedly exposed to acts of violence, sexual violence, trauma, and torture. *Article 22* of the UNDRIP recognizes the responsibility of States to take measure to “ensure that Indigenous women and children enjoy the full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence and discrimination.”

5.8 Current Canadian Initiatives

Currently, there are four major responses underway to combat human trafficking in Canada:

- Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) Human Trafficking National Coordination Centre (HTNCC);
- British Columbia’s Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons (OCTIP);
- National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking (NAPCH); and,
- Manitoba’s development of the *Child Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking Act* (Act).

5.8.1 RCMP’s Human Trafficking National Coordination Centre

There exist other groups with mandates on human trafficking, but due to the timeframe under which this project was conducted, we will limit the analysis to these four.

The RCMP’s Human Trafficking National Coordination Centre (HTNCC) is intended to provide “a focal point for law enforcement in their efforts to combat and disrupt individuals and criminal organizations involved in Human Trafficking Activities” (RCMP, 2012). They have five priorities:

- 1) Develop tools, protocols and guidelines to facilitate Human Trafficking investigations.
- 2) Coordinate national awareness/training and anti-trafficking initiatives.

- 3) Identify and maintain lines of communication, identity issues for integrated coordination and provide support.
- 4) Develop and maintain international partnerships and coordinate international initiatives.
- 5) Coordinate intelligence and facilitate the dissemination of all sources of information/intelligence.

In fulfilling these priorities they have launched a campaign, “I am not for Sale” with educational tools aimed at Canada’s youth. They have also released a report, *Human Trafficking in Canada*. Regrettably, both of these initiatives are lacking a specific mention of Aboriginal peoples. The report goes so far as to include specific chapters linking Eastern European, Asian, and African women to human trafficking in Canada, and yet there is no specific mention of Aboriginal women and girls. Instead of putting forth the needed awareness and identification of the importance of Aboriginal women and girls’ sexual exploitation and trafficking in Canada, we are instead left with a stereotyped view of human trafficking that largely passes over the domestic nature of this crime in Canada.

Some considerations that may improve the impact and relevance of the RCMP’s efforts when it comes to the Aboriginal community (rural and urban) are to incorporate sections that specifically give information on recruitment strategies and outline healthy relationships versus exploitative ones. As we have seen in the research, many Aboriginal girls and women are recruited through ‘boyfriends’. However, it becomes trafficking when that boyfriend expects the girl to sell herself for his profit. For women and girls who are being exploited, this distinction is unfortunately not always clear, and the unstable upbringing that many Aboriginal girls face can lead to normalizing unhealthy relationships.

The RCMP document could promote cultural awareness and consideration to historically-influenced poverty and Indian Residential School intergenerational effect. While promoting an awareness of these issues amongst girls and women who may be at risk may help them become informed, including this information will also increase the document’s effectiveness in informing others, such as teachers, parents, and other adults or peers (for youth and adults) on understanding these issues. This may promote a more understanding and non-judgmental attitude towards those facing sex trafficking and exploitation and encourage them to open up – an important step towards seeking help.

Further challenging the RCMP’s task to address human trafficking is a lack of funding when it comes to Aboriginal women and girls. In a Committee report of the Parliament of Canada, it is reported that Sergeant Lori Lowe had advised the Committee, “that the RCMP’s National Aboriginal Policing Service had an interest in examining the trafficking of Aboriginal women for the purpose of sexual exploitation, but that the RCMP lacked funding and human resources to be able to carry out such research” (Standing Committee on the Status of Women, 2007, p. 10). Considering the prevalence of Aboriginal women and girls as victims of sexual exploitation, this is a funding and resource deficiency that should be sufficiently addressed so that the RCMP is properly informed on the issue.

5.8.2 BC's Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons

First established in 2007, this British Columbia program works in conjunction with two separate Ministries, namely the Ministry of Public Safety and the Solicitor General and the Ministry of Children and Family Development. The BC Office to Combat Trafficking in Persons (OCTIP) also collaborates with Federal and Municipal governments, faith-based organizations, academics, Aboriginal communities, and members of the RCMP. This multi-faceted approach is intended to address the complex and multi-dimensional needs arising from human trafficking. Its advanced, complex response makes this program the first of its kind in Canada.

The OCTIP's main function is to develop a strategic response for identifying gaps in services, as well as to coordinate services, and continue educating with domestic and international advocacy. OCTIP has four major goals: prevention, protection, persecution, and partnership (Ministry of Justice, *Human Trafficking in B.C.* online). Unlike the RCMP, they recognize the overwhelming need to protect Aboriginal women. As a part of their efforts to address this need, they have in their mandate the ongoing building of relationships with Aboriginal communities (Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General). Demonstrating their collaborative priority, the OCTIP worked with the Manitoba Chief's Initiative in 2010 to address the vulnerabilities of Aboriginal women in domestic trafficking.

In line with some of the suggestions put forth earlier in this paper, the OCTIP engages in significant public education endeavours on human trafficking. Networking and collaborating with Aboriginal communities is to be applauded, and their approach of education about human trafficking directly answers to calls in the literature for such practices. However, while they recognize the priority of human trafficking for Aboriginal women and youth, currently the organization is without a strategic plan on how to address the issue. It is also unclear how, from their report, they plan to leverage the relationship-building with Aboriginal communities to combat Aboriginal sexual exploitation in a systematic way.

5.8.3 National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking

The Canadian government released their National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking (NAPCH) by Public Safety in 2012. This report lists a number of concerns. The first is that the numbers of those trafficked domestically in Canada are difficult to assess. This is due to the nature of the crime and the reluctance of victims to self-identify. Second, situations of sexual exploitation for the purposes of human trafficking often go unnoticed and unreported (National Action Plan, 2012, p. 5). This is often because of fear for their and/or their family's safety, a lack of understanding that they are victims of human trafficking, distrust of those in law enforcement, and a lack of education on their rights (National Action Plan, p. 5).

The report also broke down factors for involvement in sex trafficking into categories of 'push' and 'pull'. Push indicates the factors that push a person towards human trafficking. They are listed as: extreme poverty, unemployment, lack of education, inadequate programming, gender-based inequality, corruption, war, conflict situations, and political unrest (National Action Plan, p. 6). Pull factors amount to pressures that keep someone within the abusive cycle of exploitation: finances, money and promises of a better life (National Action Plan, p. 6).

In a testament to how prevalent domestic trafficking is, the report identified that, of the cases waiting to be processed, ninety percent were regarded as domestic human trafficking (National Action Plan, p. 8).

The report identifies the disparities in the current protection system, confessing a knowledge gap in how human trafficking in Aboriginal communities manifests and takes shape (National Action Plan, p. 12). In their 2012 strategy, the only suggestion to address gaps in this area is that there needs to be enhanced engagement with Aboriginal organizations. More recently, Public Safety Canada tendered a call for proposals titled, *Research: Trafficking of Aboriginal Women and Girls: Trends and Issues*. At the time of this writing, this research is currently being carried out.

5.8.4 Child Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking Act, 2012

Relatively recent, this Act came into force in 2012 in Manitoba. This law creates a protection order for victims of human trafficking, requiring that the perpetrator has no contact with the victim (Manitoba Justice, *The Child Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking Act*). In addition to this, the *Act* also provides the victim with recourse to sue their perpetrator in Tort Law over the harm caused by their actions. While a valid effort, an analysis of Aboriginal contexts quickly raises some problem areas. In regards to the protection order, the requirement is for the victim to report the contact. This can be very problematic for those experiencing sexual exploitation at the hands of a familial connection, or for those whom have an unhealthy attachment to their abusers. Additionally, suing requires a lawyer, and a lawyer requires fees. Requiring Aboriginal women and girls to fund their pursuit of justice as trafficking victims is problematic. Considering that Aboriginal women and girls are among the poorest of the poor, this may be a very unaffordable option to pursue their rights.

Considering the widespread sexual exploitation of Aboriginal women and girls in Canada as a domestic trafficking practice, it would seem logical that any anti-human trafficking endeavours in Canada would have this consideration as one of its key understandings and act upon it. Yet we see from the above examples that it is quite often simply not the case. The Manitoba Act is the only one in existence in Canada.

5.9 *Prostitution, Trafficking & Aboriginal Women*

It is NWAC's stance that prostitution is a form of human trafficking. This is in alignment with research on the field of human trafficking in Canada, and in particular with the stance that is well-argued by Farley, et al (2003), Farley, Lynne, and Cotton (2005), and Farley and Lynne (2005) as well as Sikka (2009). Farley, a leader in research on prostitution and human trafficking, represents a persuasive and experienced voice on the subject, and the three research articles previously cited with her involvement represent some of the most thorough research on the subject done in Canada and internationally. Throughout the three articles, the collective argument of the researchers are that the prevalence of sexual abuse suffered by these women as children, their on-going exploitation until they hit the age of 18 (at which point Canadian law, law enforcement, and civil society seem to deem it a 'choice'), their poverty, and their lack of alternatives can only logically and ethically mean that it is **not a choice**, they are being exploited, by pimp, madam, or john. In the 2003 article,

which was a research endeavour exploring the roots of ‘prostitution’ in nine different countries, these authors make the contention that genuine consent cannot exist in prostitution.

Real consent requires: “physical safety, equal power with customers, and real alternatives.” (Farley et al., 2003, p. 65)

Farley et al. are not alone in their assertion. Sikka’s thorough paper exploring trafficking of Aboriginal women and girls in Canada also identifies the problematic approach that would exclude prostitution-without-pimps as a form of trafficking. Her research was conducted over the course of ten months and involved a review of national studies on trafficking in persons as well as community-based research on prostitution and sexual exploitation specifically in the Prairie Provinces. She conducted interviews with key informants, some of which, as mentioned before, were front-line workers who were also experiential survivors; however, she specifically excluded including currently experiential women and girls. Her reasons for this exclusion are not a bias but a lack of resources to involve them respectfully (she could not offer compensation for their participation nor did she have the level of direct community involvement she felt was needed to collect their direct input). The key informants by location were Winnipeg (25), Regina (13), and Edmonton (16). Informants, all front-line service workers, were asked about their experiences with clients who were subject to sexual exploitation, as well as its specific characteristics in Aboriginal contexts. After reviewing national studies on trafficking as well as Aboriginal-specific research and conducting interviews with those who could speak to Aboriginal contexts, her research led her to make the assertion that:

Although Aboriginal women and girls in Canada are at a higher risk of being trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation, the types of acts perpetrated against them are often not viewed as ‘trafficking.’ Historical representations of Aboriginal women, poverty, racism and criminalization of Aboriginal girls have worked together to cloak crimes committed against them in invisibility. (Sikka, 2009, p. ii)

The study highlights that:

This invisibility translates into a lack of services available to address the trafficking of Aboriginal women and girls and a general apathy from the criminal justice system towards the types of trafficking they face. (p. 1)

Historical views of Aboriginal females as sexually available and as criminals carries over into some modern views. Added to this image are the impacts of colonization, residential school trauma and intergenerational effect, and the breakdown of traditional communities as a result of these pressures and impacts (Sikka, 2009), resulting in inter-related factors increasing the over-representation of these women and girls in Canada’s domestic sex trade. However, these factors do not move these women into the category of what is popularly and legally considered trafficking, “thus, things that happen to [these women and girls] are not viewed as exploitation or trafficking in persons, but rather as a natural consequence of the life that she has chosen to occupy. The image of the trafficked ‘victim,’ therefore, does not include her story” (Sikka, 2009, p. 2).

If, in attempting to address women who have been sexually trafficked, we ignore women working in prostitution who have not been relocated for the purposes of sexual exploitation, and we ignore women who have no pimp but are daily exploited by johns, then it is NWAC's stance that such a perspective would be unethical to addressing sexually exploited women, and such endeavours would be built to greatly limit the addressing of the real society issues and factors that make up human trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation in Canada.

5.10 International Examples – Legalization of Prostitution & Links to Trafficking

Over the years there has been an effort in many countries to legalize prostitution to support women and girls who rely on the sex industry for their livelihood. Unfortunately, though legalizing prostitution may benefit a relatively small number of sex workers who “choose” to work in prostitution, it, however, fails to protect women who are targeted by traffickers and who continue to be forced into prostitution, and there seems to be a direct link between legalizing prostitution and the rise of human trafficking for sexual exploitation.

Illegal prostitution, in the form of human trafficking, continues to take place in countries, such as Germany, where it was legalized in 2002. Two-thirds of the estimated 400,000 sex workers in Germany travel from overseas to the country (Osborne, 2013) where the system of legalized prostitution provides a cover for traffickers to mask indications of international human trafficking, allowing women in large numbers to be brought to Germany and sexually exploited (Unprotected: How legalizing prostitution has failed, 2013). When confronted by police, many workers from outside of Germany were told what to say by their pimps to avoid suspicion. Since the legalization of prostitution in Germany, the number of trafficked victims has increased from an estimate of 9,870 - 19,740 in 2001 to 12,350 – 24,700 in 2003 (German Federal Police Office Report, 2009, p. 75). The legalized prostitution system has provided for a great increase in trafficking victims in an unhealthy dynamic that seems to be increasing the number of women who are forced and trapped within a legalized system.

An argument usually linked with legalizing prostitution is that it will make it safer for women. Yet, according to a study on the effects of prostitution in nine countries, fifty-nine percent of the fifty-four women interviewed in Hamburg, Germany reported that the legalization of prostitution did not make them feel any safer from physical assault or rape (Farley et al, 2003). Physical violence is the obvious threat to women's safety, and yet there are many ways these women can be exploited under the guise of legal prostitution. In a brothel context, in Germany the owners/managers have been able to set policies by which the women, their employees, must adhere by. This has led to a model of a flat rate whereby a john can pay a single price for as much of multiple types of sex acts as he wants, without a condom, and no time limit. In one case, police reported that over 1,700 customers took advantage of the promotional advertisement at the Pussy Club (a brothel offering the flat rate prostitution package); however many customers complained afterwards in internet chat rooms that the service was unsatisfactory because the “women were no longer fit for use after a few hours” (Unprotected: How legalizing prostitution has failed, 2013). Under the right light (and it is not very difficult to find such a light), legalized prostitution can appear to share many exploitative and abusive similarities to human trafficking.

Many advocates for the legalization of prostitution argue that women will be able to file a complaint whenever they are raped, abused, or sexually assaulted and assume that the complaint will be followed with a police response, overall decreasing the harm of prostitution. Unfortunately, most health care workers and police do not treat women in prostitution as ordinary citizens, thus even with the legalization of prostitution, the stigma remains. And for those women who do not wish to live this way anymore, it is not as simple as leaving a prostitution job for something else. Eighty-nine percent of prostitutes told researchers that they wanted to leave prostitution but they did not have other opportunities for economic survival (Farley, 2004).

The legalization of prostitution has proven to promote sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, abuse and violence against women. Most trafficked and prostituted women feel shame, intimidation, disassociation, and terror - all factors that enable their silence. Much like the silence of battered women, prostitutes and trafficked women should never be misinterpreted that their silence is consent to prostitution (Farley, 2004). Instead of legalizing prostitution, governments should be looking toward alternative solutions that address root causes that make women susceptible so that they truly do have choices for survival. We need more services and options for women to prevent women from being trafficked/prostituted and assisting those who wish to escape the industry by providing services to help them transition. Legalizing prostitution is not the solution to a safer environment for trafficked and prostituted women. It is time that these women no longer be victims of silence.

5.11 Gaps

We have looked at Kingsley & Mark and the UNYA manual several times throughout this paper regarding different topics. What we have found is that issues raised at the time they were written are tracked forward and identified in more recent research. We find the same for the gaps they have identified, and so we return to these two seminal works here, as well as once more exploring more recent research.

To reiterate, the research identified a lack of awareness amongst society on the prevalence and impact of sexual trafficking (Kingsley & Mark, 2001; UNYA, 2002). Part of this is addressed in some of the anti-trafficking measures discussed above; however, there needs to be more Aboriginal-specific awareness building, both in terms of educating Aboriginals about the prevalence of sex trafficking and sexual exploitation and the warning signs, and also to educate others on this issue faced in Aboriginal communities and by Aboriginal women and girls in urban areas. The TERF program required thorough training of all staff, Aboriginal or not, in being more culturally aware. They found in participant interviews that even when an Aboriginal participant was not overly-culturally oriented, they appreciated the respect all staff exhibited towards other cultures (Ursel et al, 2007). Many Aboriginal teens, normalized to violence, have trouble recognizing the sexually exploitative nature of relationships they may be in with 'partners', making it less likely that they seek help (Hunt, 2006; Saewyc et al, 2008; Hunt, 2011). Efforts to make others more aware need to include more focus on Aboriginal communities and populations. This is an important group that requires attention in initiatives. A lack of knowledge about sexual exploitation and its effects could also mean more exploited youth are slipping through the gaps when teachers, parents, and other potential support people in someone's life are unable to recognize signs of abuse and trauma. This lack of knowledge also extends towards the understanding of

Aboriginal contexts of colonial violence and inter-generational residential school effects (UNYA, 2002).

Funding shortages and a lack of gender-specific programs have also challenged individual efforts to exit exploitive cycles, “There needs to be more safe houses, hostels, and residential programs for Aboriginal youth, preferably gender specific” (UNYA, 2002, p. 56). , “Youth must not be forced to live in Single Occupancy Rooms (SROs) in the Downtown Eastside, or in unsafe or unhealthy roommate situations” (p. 56). They also identify a lack of direct service to sexually exploited youth (p. 51). The TERF program had a severe difference between the funding they were provided with for youth and for adults, with the adults not entirely receiving core funding (Ursel, 2007). Without being able to provide lunches or help more with living arrangements, the program staff was concerned that they might lose adult participants to struggles outside the program such as housing issues (Ursel, 2007).

On a more legal consideration, Seshia’s 2005 article cites the following gaps:

Improvements in the way the police deal with and treat sexually exploited individuals; more thorough investigation of, and more public concern over, missing and murdered cases of sexually exploited youth and adults; and educating mainstream society about the issues and realities of sexual exploitation and street life. (p. 42)

The gaps present are indicative of systemic issues in Canadian society. They require decisive, broad, and multifaceted approaches that are adequately supported both in economic and human resources. A review of the literature suggests that, “In order to eventually eradicate the sexual exploitation of [Aboriginal] girls and women, broad changes are needed at the level of ideology, legislation, the justice system, and the restoration of [Aboriginal] economic autonomy and cultural strength” (Saraceno, 2010).

Testimony to the Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights (SSCHR, 2011) indicated that there was a distinct lack of both research and support services aimed at these communities for addressing sexual exploitation (p. 31). This came from advocates of Aboriginal communities (rural and urban). In this context research is referring to local contexts and assessing capacity versus needs regarding sexual exploitation. The resource guide provided by Hunt (2011) is an excellent example of the type of work this would involve and may prove useful to communities who have the capacity to carry it out but lack a local action plan or are unsure how to begin their effort. It is not entirely clear what the scale is for which communities are in need of how much support from the Senate report. Additional supportive research in communities, or perhaps funding provided to communities to explore this issue as well as support for developing partnerships and collaborations with resource staff outside the community (if needed) may help address this gap in information and service know-how. However, we are hesitant to suggest committing too much time and resources towards gathering more data, at least at the cost of more direct action to build supports and services for those facing sexual exploitation and trafficking as well as for preventative measures. An incomplete picture is difficult to work from to plan action, but more action and more comprehensive action are clearly needed.

A lack of capacity is not the only thing limiting research into sexual exploitation and trafficking. Another potential research limitation includes the difficulty in obtaining primary data on trafficking, in particular the estimates of the number of trafficked victims in Canada. Methodological challenges exist in social research in collecting data from trafficked persons. Additionally, there is a tendency for those commissioning, or undertaking, research to focus on limited geographical regions in the research, an issue which we address in the section below. But briefly, this is a gap that requires addressing and requires additional coordination across Canada to explore sexual exploitation of Aboriginal women and girls regionally. This will help to highlight the differences and particulars of different regions to better inform policy and programming and for targeted solutions. While research does exist that endeavoured to look at samples across Canada, these efforts also need to be updated to present a more modern snapshot in Canada.

Some of the research that is heavily referenced is now somewhat dated. We addressed that challenge in this article by comparing and linking it towards more recent research that may have had less participants, dealt with fewer regions, or did not have as much of a focus on Aboriginal women and girls, but still showed how some older findings continued to be relevant and remained to be tackled in Canada's current context. However, making a patchwork from articles that do not necessarily focus on Aboriginal contexts should not be necessary. Several reports produced significant data on Aboriginal victims of sexual exploitation and human trafficking either accidentally (in an effort to find out more about sexual exploitation, they made the finding that an overly representative proportion happened to be Aboriginal, such as Saewyc et al, 2008) or without having to restrict themselves to using an Aboriginal-specific data pool (Such as Sikka, 2009, relying in part on frontline services providers to people in the sex trade; most of whom testified to a high over-representation of Aboriginals in Canada's sex trade).

Perhaps it is time to reframe the discussion on sex trafficking in Canada and greatly increase the emphasis on exploring Aboriginal over-representation, exiting, and prevention as opposed to repeatedly 'discovering' high Aboriginal representation in research on Canada's domestic sex trafficking and sexual exploitation. Some of this would be addressed through pursuing a national research agenda that would present a comprehensive picture of Aboriginal representation in Canada's domestic sex trafficking. Partly it would depend on recognition in the ranks of policy development and implementation that Aboriginal contexts should be a priority. It is not our contention to displace others who are suffering in sexual exploitation and trafficking in Canada. However, from our research, and that of others, findings show that Aboriginal women and girls are drastically over-represented in sex trafficking to the point where they seem to be the dominant representatives in some regions of Canada, and not far behind that in other places. With Aboriginal women and girls making up such a small segment of Canada's population, this over-representation is unacceptable and requires immediate attention.

There is also a lack of long-term examination of exit support services. More tracking of long-term results and benefits would likely only bolster funding and lead to more support and encouragement for these initiatives. But we need the data to say so first.

5.12 “Pan-Aboriginal” Research Focus

The prevailing practice in research focusing on Aboriginal women and girls in sex trafficking and sexual exploitation in Canada uses a “pan-Aboriginal” approach which amalgamates First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples into one group. This is both troubling and problematic. It does not fully recognize the cultural diversity, distinctness, and identities of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples.

Surveying some of the more recent literature addressing Aboriginal women and girls, such as Public Safety Canada’s 2012 National Action Plan on Human Trafficking or the RCMP’s “I’m Not For Sale” campaign, there is no effort to identify or recognize how the contexts for these distinct Aboriginal groups may differ in risk factors for being trafficked or exploited for sexual acts. This obfuscates a full recognition of the problems of exploitation and trafficking faced by these different cultural groups, and it also makes it more difficult to develop effective strategies and solutions that fit both the particular contexts and cultures of these distinct groups.

Research has shown that there is a clear link between poor socio-economic conditions, history of abuse, involvement in the child welfare system, and lack of education, with increased vulnerability of being trafficked or sexually exploited. In addition, there exist historical, societal, economic, geographical, political and cultural differences between First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Peoples, living in urban and rural communities, that impact on their level of vulnerability. The Inuit, in particular, face unique geographical challenges such as the remoteness of Northern communities and the lack of support networks when moving to distant urban centres, which may further increase their vulnerability. Inuit women and girls migration rates to cities is not clear, the rates of abuse and other risk factors faced in remote Northern communities is also unclear. It has been the finding of the literature review performed here that culturally relevant programming greatly enhances effectiveness for drawing in women and girls and supporting their exiting from sex trafficking and exploitation. Yet without a clear picture of the rates and contexts for these groups, such as Inuit women and girls, these solutions and strategies are likely under-employed and lacking in cultural relevancy.

More work needs to be done to explore Aboriginal groups (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) with a lens acknowledging the possibility for different factors or different emphasis on certain factors that play a role in these vulnerable groups’ representation in sexual exploitation. Adequate solutions, that are culturally appropriate, sufficiently funded, and implemented in the most relevant areas and regions, require research that distinguishes between these groups, and explores contexts not just where it is most convenient, but in remote and isolated areas as well.

It should also be noted that the women interviewed as part of NWAC’s research and who answered our survey all identified as First Nations and Métis, and our research does not claim to represent the specific issues faced by Inuit women.

6.0 Discussion

6.1 Pornography & the Demand for Sex

On November 19, 2013, Dr. Gail Dines was invited by Joy Smith, MP in Ottawa, Ontario to present and participate in a panel discussion on the subject of the harmful effects of pornography on children, and how pornography drives the demand for sex and sex trafficking. Dr. Gail Dines is a professor of sociology and women's studies at Wheelock College in Boston, and an internationally acclaimed speaker and renowned author. She shared her research on the harmful impact of pornography on society and youth and on the hyper-sexualization of western culture and the ways that porn images filter down into mainstream pop culture.

Fellow panelist Julia Beazley, Policy Analyst for the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, through her extensive work and research, spoke on the issues of prostitution and trafficking of women and children for sexual exploitation.

“As I've studied and learned from women who've been exploited and prostituted – most from the time they were children - it has become clear to me that trafficking, prostitution, strip clubs and pornography are all interconnected. Unless we are willing to talk about and address each of these, and in particular, the demand that drives them, we won't solve the problem of sexual exploitation.”

Ms. Beazley further expressed that, “Pornography teaches entitlement – the idea that sex is a need, and that men have a right to it on their terms at any time, which legitimizes the buying of sex and leads us to accept that there should be a class of women made available for purchase. Porn feeds the demand for paid sex – which funnels women into prostitution. Men consume porn and seek out the sex they believe other men are having and feel they too are entitled to have. As violence and degradation in porn have become commonplace, this is mirrored in the lived experiences of women in prostitution. And all of this fuels sex trafficking. Increased demand for paid sex always leads to an increase in trafficking. Trafficking victims are exploited in pornography, and filmed sex acts are sometimes used as a means of coercion and control. Porn is also used to groom and train trafficking victims.”

In the literature, a John is portrayed as simply the person (almost always a man) who buys sex acts from the woman directly or from the pimp or controller for the woman to perform. While Johns are not usually the focus of most of the research done on human trafficking for sexual exploitation, their behaviours and impact are ever-present and cause the exploitation.

We know from the research that a very high number of Johns are violent (this includes both physical and verbal acts of aggression). High-volume participant studies return high reports of violence: 90% of 100 women (52 of which were First Nations) had been physically assaulted in prostitution (Farley, Lynne, & Cotton, 2005); 92% reported being raped in prostitution – over half were raped 5-10 times, 15% of them raped over 20 times; 84% reported being physically assaulted while prostituting, and of the assaults, Johns were the perpetrators for 44% of the attacks (Farley et al, 2011, p. 28). While we recognize that there is a distinction between prostitution and trafficking, as prostitution is deemed non-forced and trafficking as forced, we think it is fair to work on the inference that, if different, trafficking victims would face more, not less violence. For this reason,

studies on violence against prostitutes would still have bearing on people who are sexually trafficked.

Violence is so prevalent in the experiences of prostituted women that we feel it is safe to say that violence is part of the ‘package’ that some Johns pay for and feel entitled to. This further challenges the idea that legalizing prostitution would somehow make it safer. Farley et al repeatedly reiterate that prostitution itself *is* an act of violence against women (2003, 2005, 2005, and 2011). It is also sobering to remember that, “the violence of prostitution includes murder” (Farley et al, 2011, p. 15).

Dr. Gail Dines discusses an important factor in understanding the motivating influences for becoming a John and defining their behaviour. She draws a strong link between pornography and how it helps ‘make the John’. The foundation for her argument relies on four key pillars, or aspects, of pornography:

- Cultural legitimacy for buying and selling women.
 - The visual depiction of prostituted sex.
 - The actual use of trafficked women.
 - A feeder for demand.
- (Dines, 2013)

As a feminist, she argues that men are “not born rapists, [they’re] not born Johns, [they’re] not born pimps or bachelors; in fact [feminists] believe [men] were born with the full human capacity that women were born with” (Dines, 2013). Being a John is an act of socialization that comes through culture, of which media is a key element (Dines, 2013). Pornography, in this context, acts as a primary socializer for men’s masculinity and appropriate male-to-female behaviour. And essentially pornography, for Dines, is a cultural legitimization for buying and selling women.

If we understand that pornography is essentially a branded, culturally-approved process of buying women for sex acts, it sheds new light on the idea of pornography as an industry. Indeed, pornography is *very* big business: U.S. estimated annual pornography revenues are at \$13 billion, and worldwide, \$97 billion (Dines, 2013). Dines argues that we need to understand how deliberate the industry’s developments are: “We need to think about [pornography] with a business plan; we need to think about it as very smart MBAs getting together and thinking about how to drive demand, how to build markets” (2013).

Pornography as an industry that drives markets helps us understand the last pillar, how it becomes a feeder for demand. If we understand pornography as an industry, it makes sense that, like any other industry, they influence great control over the market and can influence tastes, much like the fashion industry and fast food industry influence what we wear and eat. This is a very troubling connection, especially considering the pornography market.

Dines describes the first pornographic materials (1950’s) distributed through mainstream such as Playboy and Penthouse as pornography of the “good ‘ole days”. Images were tame, referred to as “soft-core porn” in comparison to the illicit materials, photos and videos seen in today’s pornography. Through the use of strategic marketing ploys and its distribution as a “lifestyle”

men's magazine, pornography was successfully launched into mainstream society. This early pornography helped pave the way for the kind of dehumanizing and violent porn that has in recent years infiltrated popular culture and the Internet. Today, there is no longer a distinction between soft-core and hard-core internet pornography, it is mainly all hard-core "gonzo" porn. What was considered soft-core porn in the early days of Playboy, has now been integrated into mainstream media, advertising, music videos, television, and fashion magazines. Sexualized mainstream media has become normalized by pop culture and contributes to an earlier onset of sexual behavior in youth.

"Gonzo" in which Dines describes as a genre of porn that "depicts hard-core, body-punishing sex in which women are demeaned and debased", is fervently circulating through mainstream internet and is generating major revenues for the porn industry. This genre of pornography involves aggressive violent sexual acts and degrading treatment towards women such as force, torture, verbal aggression, choking, rape, and mutilation. Women are labeled in degrading and sexualized terms which serve the purpose of dehumanizing women in order to allow men to give themselves permission to watch and get aroused by sexual violence against women.

Today's porn delivers harmful images and messages to the viewer, that women take pleasure from being humiliated, treated like a sex objects, and sexually violated by the males in the porn videos. It diminishes gender-equality and contributes to sexual violence against women and children.

6.1.1 Impacts of Pornography on Children & Youth

Today's online pornography, which is mainly violent and degrading towards women, is becoming one of the main sources of sex education for Canadian children and youth. Millions of young impressionable minds sit in front of their computer or iPod in hand, vulnerable and unsuspecting of the potential danger and exposure to harmful online pornography which is unconsciously shaping their future sexual and relationship behaviours. Children, girls and boys, are being exposed to online pornography at a young age. Either out of sexual curiosity or by accident, children are searching online and are witnessing extreme hardcore, violent pornography - torture, rape, gonzo porn, teen sex, and child porn. The profoundness of the long-term impacts on children, in particular boys, who are being exposed to today's violent online porn remains unclear, however, some researchers believe that it will have serious implications on their physical, psychological, and sexual health. It can shape their views and attitudes about sexuality, and impact on their future sexual behaviours and relationships.

In a 2013 University of Montreal study on pornography and the viewing behaviours of men, Lajeunesse found that most boys seek out pornographic material by the age of 10, when they are most sexually curious. Interestingly, his original study focused on the impacts of pornography on the sexuality of men; however, Lajeunesse changed his focus when he could not find any male study subjects in their 20s who have not previously viewed porn. This exposure can lead to distorted views of sexuality and shape the sexual template of boys for years to come. It can also develop negative perceptions among them of healthy relationships with women and girls; and lead to harmful sexual behaviours. Porn culture also affects attitudes and behaviours of women and young girls in how they view their bodies, relationships and sex.

Sinclair et al. (2005) discusses the role that the Internet plays in “the sexualization and eroticization of children and youth in Canada and internationally: [leads to] the increase in the level and probability of exposure to sexually explicit material by children and youth; youth-to-youth victimization - youth accessing child sexual abuse images of similar-aged youth; and, youth who pose for photos/web cams, often referred to as self-exploitation.”

In general, men who view porn regularly want to experience the sexual acts they are seeing online with their partners, including degrading and violent acts. What happens when their partners refuse? This can potentially result in more men becoming Johns, seeking out vulnerable women who are being prostituted to perform their sexual requests. With the creation of more Johns is the potential for an increase in the demand for prostitution as well as the sex trafficking of vulnerable women and girls for sexual exploitation.

With the novelty of endless clicking potential for online pornography, men quickly become desensitized to hard-core porn and continuously search out more violent and extreme pornography (Dines 2010). This results in many men going to porn sites that involve the sexual exploitation of young girls and children. Pornographers are sexualizing incest, rape, child molestation and sex with children. Although many of the female porn actors are over the age of 18, they are being depicted as minors, young school girls, babysitters, and virgins. Many of these videos portray adult men taking advantage of young, naive, innocent and virginal children. They also show father and daughter scenarios in which the father sexually abuses his daughter or step daughter while she is all too eager to sexually satisfy him. “Pornographic depictions of the sexuality of women and children distort the truth about desires of women and children, and legitimize men’s sense of entitlement, and use of force, violence, and degrading acts by the male actors” (Marshall, 2000, p. 67).

What is deeply disturbing is that these porn sites are encouraging paedophilia and sadistic sex with children and suggesting that the child is aroused and enjoying it. It attempts to normalize and legitimize sexual abuse of children. This porn has tremendous repercussions for creating perpetrators and increasing sexual abuse and violence against children. Research has shown that some men who view child pornography will act out their sexual desires on children. Sher (an award winning investigative journalist) and Carey (a journalist specializing in brain and behaviour topics) in a NY Times 2007 article on the links between child pornography and molestation cited a then as-yet unpublished government study carried out by psychologists at the Federal Bureau of Prisons. In this study, Sher and Carey reported that the researchers found that “85 per cent of men convicted of downloading child pornography had committed acts of sexual abuse against minors, from inappropriate touching to rape.” Dines reported that men that she had interviewed in prison, although they did not consider themselves to be pedophiles, raped a child within six months of watching child porn habitually.

What is evident in today’s “gonzo” pornography is the theme of a power imbalance where the men hold all of the power and are sexually exploiting, abusing, and manipulating women and girls into meeting their sexual demands.

Pornography seems to play a strong role as an industry taste-maker, and its continued exploration of more and more extreme behaviour towards women may have both a powerful influence on encouraging John behaviour, and potentially is having an unknown and unhealthy influence on

general male-female social relations. The end result is not only increased violence towards women but also the development of unhealthy mindsets, attitudes, and behaviours of men towards women. It is important to explore these links further not just to protect women in prostitution, but also to address and improve men's health.

In short, being a John, a perpetrator of sexual abuse or exploitation, or a trafficker is fueled by this process of socialization which includes dehumanizing vulnerable women in society as acceptable to be used for their body.

Every group that has fought for liberation understands that media images are part and parcel of the systematic dehumanisation of an oppressed group . . . The more porn images filter into mainstream culture, the more girls and women are stripped of full human status and reduced to sex objects. ~ Dr. Gail Dines

6.2 Women's Health

While previously discussed, the severity of the impact of prostitution and sex trafficking on the minds and bodies of women and girls is great and bears closer examination. We have already seen the high rates of post-traumatic stress disorder from Farley et al's research (2003, 2005, 2005, 2011). We have seen other statistics of the high rates of violence. However, there are other health impacts from being prostituted.

The following statistics come from Farley et al, 2003. The reported ailments come from a Chronic Health Problems Questionnaire that the researchers crafted based on previous reports of health ailments in their research that were then filled out by participants, of whom were both sexually trafficked women and prostitutes. The statistics below contain some of the highlights and are from the Canadian sample and contain a mixture of First Nations and Euro-Canadian prostituted and trafficked women, though the researchers do not attempt to distinguish between them. (p. 54)

- Muscle aches/pains (78%)
- Trouble concentrating (66%)
- Colds or flu symptoms (61%)
- Joint pain (60%)
- Shortness of breath (60%)
- Stomach problems (59%)
- Headaches/migraines (56%)
- Constipation/diarrhea (52%)

In an extensive health-focused study by Zimmerman et al (2006), 207 women "recently released from a trafficking situation" were interviewed on their experiences with a focus on health and violence (p. 2). Participants represented 14 different countries, and their ages were between 15 and 45 (with the majority between 21-25). From their research, the authors identified the following potential health outcomes for sexually trafficked women: (p. 43)

- Death;
- Acute and chronic physical injuries;

- Neurological complications;
- Gastrointestinal complications;
- Sexual and reproductive health complications;
- Dermatological problems;
- Cardiovascular complications;
- Musculoskeletal complications;
- Cognitive problems, sensory and nerve damage;
- Exhaustion, poor nutrition, malnutrition, weakened immune system;
- Deterioration of pre-existing conditions leading to disability or death; and,
- Mental health problems.

Downe found that physical health for those sexually trafficked could be endangered through other characteristics of the lifestyle beyond sex acts: “Individuals in the sex trade report constant feelings of fatigue, sleep deprivation, and lack of food (2003, as cited by Ursel et al, 2007, p. 67). Further compounding the issue, “They are unlikely to access medical care or any other services for sex trade workers due to fear of being reported to child welfare and/or the police” (Allman, 2000; Busby, 2003; Weiner, 1996, as cited by Ursel et al, 2007, p. 67). In interviews conducted for this research, NWAC staff heard how the working conditions often led to chronic lung problems and breathing issues, as these women and girls are often forced to work on the streets in any weather wearing revealing clothes that are insufficient to protect them from the elements.

A victim of trafficking will be plagued with health hazards including those that are both physical and mental, caused from both illness and in many cases by physical assaults from traffickers/ johns.

7.0 Key Informant Interviews

7.1 Frontline Workers

A series of interviews were held with eleven (11) frontline workers who worked directly with Aboriginal women and girls in order to collect qualitative insight into issues relating to trafficked and prostituted Aboriginal women and girls in Canada. Following a semi-structured format, frontline workers were asked a series of questions exploring the issues of sexual exploitation in Canada, services provided to these women and girls, and their relationship with the law in Canada, police, and social services. The themes covered by the questions can be seen in Appendix A.

In these interviews with frontline workers, we found that the answers were in line with what was in the literature. Collectively, the frontline workers we interviewed had worked with many women. The questions asked addressed recruitment, needs, exiting the sex trade, and how the current Canadian justice system and social services address the issue of sex work for these women. The answers are analyzed below. While this paper emphasizes Aboriginal women and girls who have been sexually exploited and trafficked, we have discussed some of the arguments around what defines prostitution and what defines trafficking. For the purposes of this section, interviewees discussed pimping, trafficking, and sex work. However, for language they often switched back and forth between talking of recruitment, controls, pimps, torture, and using the word prostitution. The language we use here reflects the perception amongst interviewees that trafficking and prostitution can be difficult to separate, and it reflects the word choices of the interviewees.

7.1.1 Vulnerabilities & Recruitment

According to the frontline workers, to understand why Aboriginal women and girls are targeted by pimps, johns, and traffickers, we need to understand that these people are looking for vulnerable people. These predators of human flesh prefer certain profiles, such as those with a history of abuse (including sexual abuse as a child), unstable childhood homes, lower education, emotionally needy, familiar with foster care, drug abuse, and poverty, among other characteristics. Essentially, pimps, johns, and traffickers are looking for those for whom there are little or no economic alternatives to prostitution, and who have a background that normalized abusive behaviours.

Unfortunately, there are many Aboriginal women and girls who match these vulnerability requirements. On these women and girls who have already had a more difficult start to life the trafficker, pimp, or john will ply manipulative means to facilitate the sexual exploitation of this group.

The frontline workers identified a popular model as a ‘pretending to care’ approach, whereby someone shows an attention to these women and girls that they have otherwise been deprived of in their lives. After a relationship of sorts is built up, at some point in the relationship the ‘partner’ calls upon these women and girls to begin bringing in money so that they can continue their relationship. The subtext to this pressure is recognition of the prevalence of poverty and lower education in these women and girls’ past. Their ‘partners’ are not telling them to get a professional job; the implication is that with their current skillset and qualifications, standard job options are not available to these women. Drugs are also used to lure women and girls into being trafficked, as these ‘partners’ may start them on drug habits and build their dependency as another control mechanism and incentive to perform sex acts for money.

Brought in through their vulnerabilities, manipulated by pimps and johns, these women may then be made to recruit other women through deceptive description of ‘the life’ as a prostitute (how we would presume they would describe it to ‘sell’ it, and not as being trafficked) and the money to be made. By recruiting others, these women are often sparing themselves additional hardships, including physical violence, by their pimps.

Ultimately, when it comes to recruitment, the frontline workers made it clear that pimps, traffickers, and johns are looking for vulnerable, abused people, as few others are willing to consider this work.

7.1.2 Reasons Why They Would Want and/or Not Want to Leave

Similar to the reasons for their being targeted in the first place, it can be difficult for these women and girls to attempt to leave sexual exploitation. The frontline workers cited history as a multifaceted factor into how these women may feel constrained in the life of forced prostitution. There is more to leaving than escaping one’s pimp/trafficker.

According to one of the interviewees, for many young of the prostituted women, their troubled history means, “they don’t have life skills; that time was stolen from them”. Their history of an unstable home and lower educational achievement led to a lack of skills for alternate employment, and a lack of feasible alternate work has been repeatedly cited in the literature as a major obstacle

to leaving prostitution. Their history of abuse for some can also mean a lack of faith that things can change. This point made by the frontline workers is further reinforced by the call in the literature for experiential survivors as frontline workers; living, breathing models of how change is possible was often cited by those exiting or having exited the sex trade as a powerful motivator. Another historical restraint lies in incarceration: once these women have faced the judicial system as a result of their prostitution, that criminal record history can be a major deterrent for their further employment success.

Not surprisingly, the frontline workers also identified the shortage in supports as a major obstacle for women and girls to leave prostitution. Not only is there a lack of supports, there is also the morale impact from the women seeing their prioritization by society through this shortage.

Many women are drawn in through their vulnerabilities, in particular their isolation when moving to cities (and due to lack of supports for these transitions and for finding employment, housing, or attaining job-ready skills). Once they are drawn in through such vulnerabilities, those weaknesses do not go away; rather, it is in the best interest of the pimps to continue these conditions. Frontline workers found that maintaining that isolation is often part of the pimps' strategy; however, many of these women do maintain relations with family, though perhaps not regular, often, or convenient relations.

In addition, once these women and girls are caught up in the court system, they can see further negative ramifications as a result. The frontline workers noticed that some of these women, after incarceration for prostitution or after picking up related drug habits, have found themselves rejected by community and/or family.

7.1.3 Health

The frontline worker interviewees identified some of the numerous health concerns women and girls in prostitution faced:

- Respiratory;
- Drug & alcohol related;
- Diseases;
- Inadequate nutrition;
- STDs;
- Inadequate health care;
- Torture;
- Suicidal;
- Psychological abuse;
- Verbal denigration;
- Racism;
- High rates hepatitis C, HIV;
- Diabetes;
- Post-traumatic stress disorder;
- Endocarditis (infection of the heart from not safely injecting); and,
- Chronic pulmonary respiratory illness.

In short, they suffer multiple injuries and illness, some due directly to prostitution and trafficking, some to the lifestyle surrounding it. These conditions are prolonged by the persecution and judgment they face as prostituted or trafficked women and the lack of supports to get better or change their lives.

7.1.4 Torture

While torture was mentioned as an element of health, it is a severe issue that bears further examination. Described here as severe and traumatic, deliberate pain inflicted by one or more human beings on another, the specific examples given provide a greater glimpse into the profound levels of violence women and girls face in sexual exploitation. The following are examples given by one interviewee of known examples of torture inflicted on a twelve-year-old girl:

- Withheld food and water;
- Chained and handcuffed to stationary objects;
- Tied down for long periods of time;
- Confined in a dark, closed space;
- Prevented from using the toilet (and forced to defecate or urinate on themselves);
- Beaten and choked;
- Beaten with a 'pimp stick' or heated coat hanger;
- Kicked repeatedly;
- Hung by her limbs;
- Cut and/ or whipped;
- Broken and dislocated fingers, toes, and limbs;
- Suffocated with an object on her face;
- Sat upon, making breathing difficult;
- Shocked electrically;
- Forcibly impregnated;
- Forcibly aborted;
- Raped by one and-or a gang;
- Raped with a weapon (i.e. gun or knife);
- Drugged with pills, alcohol, and injections;
- Forced to watch pornography;
- Exposed to snuff films;
- Forced to harm others (made to feel evil);
- Forced to watch others be harmed;
- Forced to harm or kill pets;
- Threatened to be killed; and,
- Called derogatory names and treated as a non-human.

This interviewee added that these experiences were not exceptional; rather, they were normal realities for those being sexually exploited. Experiences documented in the literature review corroborate this assertion, though the papers (such as Farley et al. 2003; 2011) do not usually break down violent experiences into such specific detail. Reading (or hearing) such an extensive list adds weight and validity to the use of the word torture and the need to address violence against these women and girls.

7.1.5 How Service Provisions Affect Victims of Trafficking

No one size fits all. In the literature it was often said that not only are more supports needed, but that it was also important that these supports be flexible in their approach and use multifaceted approaches to victims of trafficking. The experience of the frontline workers interviewed reflected this need. They also identified a need for validation as a healing approach and a harm reduction methodology as more effective to abstinence.

For the frontline workers, validation meant that the victims of trafficking must be recognized as having undergone a great ordeal which is inherently traumatic. The interviewees felt that this validation of their experiences could have a healing effect on these women that was important for recovery. Additionally, acknowledging their experiences and letting them know that their

experiences could be used to help inform others as to the reality women in this lifestyle face could also help provide that validating healing effect.

As discussed earlier in the literature, harm reduction is a methodology that accepts relapses and returns to previous behaviour, and it advocates for being judgement-free and supporting these women through a long-term struggle that accepts trips and falters. One interviewee further added that harm reductionist flexible approaches are needed: no curfews, non-judgmental, supporting options, flexible support (with housing, counselling, day-to-day issues).

7.1.6 Canadian Law, Police, Social Services, & Society

When it came to Canadian law, police, policies, and society, the frontline workers seemed to have a clear view of where the system was misdirected, and how assisting prostituted and trafficked women and girls was hindered rather than helped.

From their perspective, it would seem that the fundamental approach in Canada was misdirected, and that blame for trafficking fell squarely on the shoulders of trafficked women and girls. This was reflected in the fact that prosecuting of prostitution where currently women faced incarceration for acts of prostitution while the johns were sent to john school (a place where johns are educated on prostitution such that they are discouraged from engaging in it again). Incarceration only further marginalizes and discriminates against these vulnerable women and girls and makes difficult their exiting of prostitution for safer, more reliable employment options. The law does not seem to be effective in pursuing pimps and johns.

In their experience, the interviewees indicated that judgment, on the part of police and media, seemed to be a very relevant factor in terms of whether police perform fairly when it comes to missing and trafficked Aboriginal girls. The police are more likely to arrest the women over the men. Some may have thought it was a form of helping these women.

Looking at support again as a responsibility of Canadian social services and police, considering the large representation of Aboriginal women and girls being trafficked in Canada, the interviewees indicated that there is a lack of support from administration in terms of ensuring police are adequately prepared to deal with Aboriginal girls and in the volumes they represent on the streets. Also, police lack adequate training in terms of awareness of how women get to be in these roles and their 'victim status'. This lack of perspective, it is suggested, is negatively impacting how police interact with these women and girls on a daily basis, and thus negatively impacting how successful police are at addressing the needs of these women and girls.

It is not all negative: support can be very effective. One front-line worker mentioned how social workers in Winnipeg are empowered to do their own searching when someone goes missing. She goes on to say that while these workers may seem ill-received by the young person in question, this display of support and care does still make a difference. It shows these women and girls that they are noticed, important, and that someone is looking for them.

In short, the interviewees identify a lack of understanding on the part of the law, police, services and media. For example, when it comes to support and exit programs, they may insist upon

unrealistic regulations such as requirements of being drug-free for 72 hours prior to using a safe house. These are the sort of regulations that were repeatedly advised against in the literature review.

The interviewees gave the following cautions to other front-line workers assisting trafficked Aboriginal women and girls: do not abuse power, do not take things personal or interpret things as a power struggle – this attitude pushes experiential women away.

7.1.7 Internet

All of the interviewees noted that Canada is currently behind with internet action related to sex trafficking. The law has been focused on policing property and roads rather than patrolling the internet. Websites such as Craigslist are just one example of how the internet is being used as a vehicle to traffic and prostitute vulnerable women and girls.

7.1.8 Needs

Again, the frontline workers gave answers strongly in line with and supported by the literature. In their experience working with trafficked women, they said that what is needed is childcare, training, addiction treatment, trauma treatment, more support for housing, greater awareness and education on trafficking and prostitution directed at young girls as a preventative effort, and real, viable alternatives to prostitution. Childcare is an especially poignant need, reflected both in interviewee statements and in the literature. There needs to be an increase in respect for these women and girls and the protection of their human rights

Interviewees further recommend decriminalizing women and girls who are prostituted, and increase advocacy for appropriate services and viable alternatives to prostitution. Re-examine the criminal code particularly in regards to torture: it needs to be amended to include non-state actors (pimps, johns and traffickers).

7.2 *Experiential Women/ Survivors*

For our research on human trafficking and sexual exploitation, NWAC staff conducted interviews with four (4) Aboriginal women survivors. While all of the women have exited trafficking, some many years previous, there is little to no difference in their statements to that of those in recent literature. In fact there is much more in alignment with current literature than not. This has unfortunate implications for the progress made in reducing the number of cases of human trafficking for sexual exploitation of Aboriginal women and girls in Canada.

7.2.1 Background

When asked about their backgrounds as children, all respondents came from troubled homes. Two had been in foster care, and three experienced sexual abuse. All faced challenges to their self-esteem. In reviewing their statements, there is a growing sense of the grooming of these women in their younger years for a life of accepting abusive treatment. In other words, a cultivating of vulnerabilities that others would come to exploit.

7.2.2 Recruitment

In the literature, some of the methods of recruitment we saw were the practice of adopting it as a family trade, recruited out of group homes or support centres, and by ‘boyfriends’ who come in with promises of love and care, only to turn around and send these young women onto the streets to pay them back. The statements collected in our interviews had one person inherit being trafficked for money from her mother, one was recruited out of a group home by her own sister, and another was recruited through a ‘boyfriend’ who, after initially showing her great care, turned around and put her on the street to bring money in: “He put me up in a hotel room, bought me clothes, took care of me for a while. He said there was a way we could make lots of money, buy a house. Then I started working the street. From there it was more violence that kept me in it.”

Pimps and traffickers looked for young Native girls. This is a reflection of targeting vulnerabilities discussed in the frontline worker interviews. One respondent said she was pressured by Johns to try to recruit more Native women from up north.

7.2.3 Experiences

One of the words that characterize the feelings of these women after having undergone these experiences is distrust. When asked about their interactions with males around gift-giving or compliments, one respondent shared a different history with gift-giving and compliments than is perhaps thought of by most people: “My stepfather, that’s how he groomed me, he showered me with attention and affection and compliments”. At a young age this may set a pattern to mask abuse; it is certainly not limited to the experiences of children either. One of the women shared a little about how she was recruited into human trafficked, revealing an all-too-familiar practice found in the literature: “It was mainly buying me gifts, when we were in a boyfriend-girlfriend relationship. As time went on, he told me that I owed him and what I needed to do to pay him back.”

Working their way in through feigned affection and care, only to exploit that created trust is perhaps one reason that it can be so difficult to support these women’s exit from human trafficking. Many have heard the claims before that someone cares about them and has an offer they should accept.

One woman told a story of the speech her mother gave her upon finding out her daughter had ended up being trafficked like her. It was a dangerous life, her mother counseled. The advice she gave was to avoid drugs when with a john until she could better assess if he would be violent. It could mean the difference of life or death.

The respondents’ experience with family was strikingly varied. One tried to avoid her family to some degree to hide the fact that she was living a life being trafficked on the streets. One respondent said her family was involved in trafficking, so it would make little difference to isolate her from them as a way for a pimp to control her, one respondent talked about her family continued framing her in the context of a victim (disempowering) as opposed to a survivor (empowering), and one respondent was isolated from family.

7.2.4 Torture

Once involved in human trafficking, all four respondents testified as to the great danger involved in the day-to-day activities of being sold for sexual pleasure. It was a part of the experience, inseparable from human trafficking. Of the four respondents, three gave some statement on experiences of torture or being placed under some form of restraint, such as held in a quarters as punishment.

While there remains many traumatic aspects to being sexually exploited for the purposes of human trafficking, the deliberate destruction of one's person by another human being seems particularly cruel. Some of the examples of torture either experienced by interviewees or those they knew are: being hit, punched, kicked, slapped (various parts of the body), and confinement.

One interviewee explained the presence of torture as a combination of factors: "It's a lack of choice, it's misogyny, intimate violence towards women. A john turns ugly in two minutes. After his release, he gets ugly that he may not have done it right. Men are physically stronger. Torture is torture. I survived it. I'm an expert of it."

7.2.5 Drugs

One of the most common themes in the literature was the prevalence of drugs in experiences of being trafficked for sexual exploitation. Drugs, too, found their way into the life experiences of the respondents we interviewed. Of the four respondents, three discussed the role of drugs in their life. All three who had used it for the same reason: as a sort of self-medication, a way to numb themselves and cope with the trauma of being sexually exploited.

When I was being sexually abused in my home, I didn't do drugs. I just disassociated psychologically. That's how I survived. When I became involved in prostitution, because I was being raped several times a day for money, I could no longer rely on my ability to just psychologically disassociate. I needed help. I could turn 13 tricks a day. So, because my mind could no longer disassociate on its own, I did drugs. Drugs helped. After a while they didn't.

7.2.6 Health

The health repercussions for these women are serious. Though they left sex trafficking many years prior, they still face physical and mental ramifications of the trauma they endured. Some of the physical ailments mentioned are gastro-intestinal problems, being overweight, having a scar on the ankle and injured tendons, and being unable to have children through the standard birthing practice from damage to her body.

Not limited to the physical, some mental trauma discussed are post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, low confidence, combat disorder, paranoia, depression, and a need for trauma therapy as well as feeling an ongoing distrust of men. One respondent mentioned reaching the point of being suicidal a couple of times.

These experiences are testimony as to the violence encountered in being sexually trafficked in Canada, as well as to the enduring mental trauma that is simultaneously accrued. Being sexually trafficked bears powerful and damaging health consequences on these women and girls.

7.2.7 Internet

Having had their experiences in human trafficking prior to the popularity of the Internet, this ended up being a non-issue for our interviewed survivors in terms of their own experiences. However, one interviewee made this comment on pornography in comparison to the violence she suffered in sexual exploitation: “This pornography on the internet is more violent. It’s driving the internet. The porn industry. We’ve normalized programs at night about soft porn. Normalizing prostitution.”

7.2.8 Exiting

Perhaps unexpectedly, one of the major factors the respondents mentioned as a reason why they did not exit earlier was their low self-worth. It was difficult for them to believe in a life outside of being sexually trafficked. One respondent described her outlook at the time as the following: “All I was good for was sex . . . There was a time when I thought that was the only thing I was good for.” Similar to this, another said, “I was at a place where I didn’t care – told that it was all I was worth. Coming from my childhood, I believed it.” One of the women framed it in terms of her larger network: “[It was] hard to get out. It’s all I knew. You hear about these kids being born with gangs. I was born into streets. My aunts, cousins, and uncles ended up in the street. It was normal.” All three statements strongly connect to the argument put forward by Farley et al (2003) that all prostitution is forced; it is not a choice when one’s life has been groomed through abuse and poverty to be sexually exploited. It can be dangerous for policy makers to try and draw a distinction between prostitution-as-choice and being sexually trafficked as against-one’s-will. Such dichotomous thinking may lead to loopholes in strategies and laws meant to support women and girls being sexually exploited. It may also hinder efforts to connect with these women to support their exiting to attempt to frame those in prostitution as living a life they ‘chose’.

Aside from low self-worth are some familiar obstacles from the literature. One respondent listed all of the following as obstructions to her exiting the life: child care, including health issues for the child, housing, finances, and a fear of death from her exploiter/pimp should she try to leave. What finally motivated some of the respondents to exit were motherhood for two respondents and incurring an injury for a third. What aided this transition were housing supports, an alternate economic opportunity, and for one respondent, a very persistent, non-judgmental task force was key in helping her gain a new perspective on her future possibilities.

7.2.9 Laws, Supports, & Services

While the women interviewed had exited human trafficking for sexual exploitation some years previous, their statements regarding the law in Canada, supports, and services seems to be a blend of their own experiences and some modern observations.

Of their own direct experiences, they noted a distinct lack of support services when they attempted to exit. One counter-example is the task force group that persisted in looking for the one woman when she was being trafficked, demonstrating genuine concern for her in the face of her rejection of their efforts, and their focus on persecuting her pimp. Over time, this non-judgmental group's approach proved to be a successful service, as she credits them with being instrumental in her leaving human trafficking.

One of the criticisms they had regarding the laws was the lack of knowledge they and other women had about them. Arrested and detained by police, those same officers would never explain to them the relevant laws and what their options might have been. Additionally, from their perspective, the law focused on persecuting the women, but not on pursuing the traffickers, johns or pimps to any similar degree or priority. As one of the participants recounted, "One night, I turned a trick and he wanted his money back. I went to jail for robbery. He wanted his money back. They charged me federally." Regrettably, two respondents remarked that women would be unlikely to go to the police because police were potential johns as well.

Some of the impacts they saw on what services there were was a bias in programs away from women who were being sexually trafficked. One respondent gave the example of being turned away from a women's shelter as a battered sexually-exploited woman, but a battered wife would be admitted.

Some of the methods in the laws and services that respondents advocated for were the persecution of johns, consideration of the Nordic model for Canada and inclusion of Aboriginal cultures in support programs.

Three of the respondents felt that overall there seemed to be apathy in society, that influenced how they, as sexually trafficked women, would be treated thus not providing much influence over positive and pro-active changes to current law practices and funding for, or expansion of, support programs.

7.2.10 Best Practices & Recommendations

From their experiences and knowledge of human trafficking for sexual exploitation in Canada, the respondents had several recommendations to put forward to those working in policy, law, and those working in frontline services and support.

- Prosecute traffickers/johns, including publicly shaming them;
- Consider the Nordic model for the reduction in prostitution practices that lead to trafficking of women and girls;
- Remember that culture is a form of treatment and to consider culture-based support programs;
- Include trauma counselors to work with formerly trafficked women;
- Understand that trafficked women and girls have experiences that are severe and can deeply effect their health and mental state;
- Educate and train police on Aboriginal cultures and culture sensitivity
- Educate police on sex-trafficking practices;

- Have more survivor-based services;
- Have non-group housing available;
- Recognize that colonialism is at the root of how Aboriginal women are treated; and include consultations with men as a focus for change;

To conclude this section, we urge you to reflect upon the words of one of the Aboriginal experiential women survivors interviewed:

“We want to see that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. We want change.”

7.3 Law Enforcement Officers / RCMP

For the purposes of this report, semi-structured interviews were conducted with three (3) law enforcement officers, including provincial police officers and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) officers, and one (1) individual working within a legal/policy background to combat trafficking in persons in Canada.

In relation to trafficked Aboriginal women and girls, their work and area of responsibilities involves awareness building in local Aboriginal communities through education/training in schools and with Aboriginal service providers. They also work on the development and implementation of anti-trafficking initiatives such as workshops, resource materials and toolkits on the issue of human trafficking designed specifically for Aboriginal communities. One interviewee is employed as an investigator on human trafficking related offences and works with various community groups and women involved in street level sexual exploitation. Another interviewee works in the Education and Prevention regarding Aboriginal gang awareness and violence against Aboriginal women and youth, issues which touch on human trafficking. Interviewees felt that community engagement and building strong relationships with communities was important in ensuring the effectiveness of anti-trafficking initiatives in Aboriginal communities.

The research participants have varying degrees of knowledge, training and experience on the issues facing Aboriginal women and girls in Canada. Some identified receiving training through workshops, seminars, presentations, reviews, and RCMP reports on domestic trafficking. Also, work experience and partnerships with Aboriginal agencies contributed to their knowledge. One of the participants identified having first-hand knowledge through experiencing the inter-generational impacts of the Indian Residential Schools System. This involved “growing up with family violence and being involved with the court system at a young age.” It is worth noting the potential benefits of ensuring the involvement of some Aboriginal officers in these issues. While it may not always be the case, when personal experience facing the same or similar systemic discrimination as is often faced by exploited Aboriginal women and girls, their knowledge may allow them to create more effective rapport with vulnerable women and girls and encourage reporting and victims seeking help from the law.

When asked to describe the amount of human trafficking taking place against Aboriginal women and girls in their respective jurisdictions, participants replied that numbers were unknown. A couple of reasons were provided for this lack of information. First, although interviewees were

aware of some human trafficking cases involving Aboriginal women and girls, they indicated that many of these cases are pursued under different charges of the Criminal Code. Secondly, there is no central database to track all human trafficking specific charges in provinces and nationally. For instance, in the province of BC, the database is separated into 4 servers and the data is not amalgamated. Also, data may only be collected on primary offence on a file and not on secondary offences.

According to participants, charges against johns and trafficked women differ in the following ways. Most experiential/trafficked Aboriginal women and girls are being charged with drug related offences, breach of probation, assaults, soliciting, and prostitution. When it comes to Johns, interviewees identified that they were mainly charged with kidnapping, sexual assault, gang/organized crime-related offences, prostitution-related offences such as communicating for the purposes, and offences under the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*.

With respect to estimates on reports of sexual violence and human trafficking among Aboriginal women and girls in the interviewees' respective jurisdictions, participants identified that this information was unknown. It was felt that there was a lack of reporting by victims to the police. And victims may be more likely to disclose to service providers, and/or local, regional health authorities instead of police. It was mentioned that, while they felt the connection between human trafficking and gangs is not well documented, they know that gang members are using Aboriginal women and girls to make money through forced prostitution and sometimes as drug mules.

One participant touched on the language utilized around sexual exploitation and the term "trafficking" in their experience does not resonate with many Aboriginal women, girls, and communities. Vulnerable women may not even be aware that their experiences fit the definition of being trafficked. Some Aboriginal women and girls had the tendency to normalize sexualized violence as a result of high rates of family violence in their communities. Some women have identified their pimps as being a family member or a boyfriend. An interviewee spoke on the importance of raising awareness about trafficking and the need to start having the conversation about what has been happening in Aboriginal communities.

When discussing measures that are enacted through police to protect trafficked Aboriginal women and girls, participants identified some programs/ services and supports for victims, as well as educational and prevention initiatives for potential victims. For instance, toolkits have been developed to raise awareness about human trafficking and to assist potential victims to identify the crime and report it to law enforcement. The Sister Watch Project in Vancouver was a partnership between multiple organizations and the police that sought to increase the safety of women by providing an enhanced police and community response service. Community outreach is done by law enforcement and community agencies with sex trade victims on a regular basis to provide referrals to support services/programs to address concerns such as addictions and safe work exit from the sex trade. Law enforcement liaises with community groups to follow up on any concerns with specific women involved in the sex trade.

In ensuring effective measures, the RCMP "E" Division in BC partners externally with Aboriginal Leadership such as the Assembly of First Nations, the Union of British Columbia

Indian Chiefs, and the First Nations Summit. They also work with Aboriginal social service agencies to develop ‘safety plans’ for women, and with a local university to gather information regarding at risk women to learn about their patterns and to plan initiatives to reduce their at risk activity. Some of the agencies include NWAC, Ending Violence Association BC (EVA), Sisters in Spirit, and provincial government such as Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) and Ministry Aboriginal Relations & Reconciliation (MARR). Internally, they work with Missing Persons Unit (MPU), Crime Prevention, Drugs and Organized Crime Awareness Services (DOCAS), and local detachments. The purpose of this is to develop divisional and local policies and best practice.

The participants were asked to identify promising practices used to combat trafficking in Canada. Participants reiterated strong partnerships and building positive rapport between non-governmental organizations, police, Aboriginal agencies and communities working towards a common goal of keeping women and girls safe. One participant mentioned national human trafficking awareness workshops to train law enforcement, prosecutors and immigration officials on how to recognize and investigate the crime, and assist potential victims. Another best practice involves distributing resource materials to Aboriginal communities including toolkits, posters, help sheets for parents, and youth booklets, to enhance awareness of human trafficking for sexual exploitation. Tracia’s Trust, a Manitoba strategy responding to children and youth at risk of, or survivors of, sexual exploitation was identified as a successful practice. Under this strategy, there is funding for an Aboriginal healing lodge and culturally-based support services. One participant identified include the establishment of an anti-human trafficking coalition in the Waterloo Region that will be looking at all issues of human trafficking and local Aboriginal service groups will be involved in this process.

Other promising practises mentioned include the OPPAL report that followed the Pickton inquiry which offers many valuable recommendations that law enforcement agencies are reviewing and implementing. One participant indicated that there has been an increase in second or third party reports with respect to assaults and missing persons in their district. They stated that “people are starting to speak about these subjects and are starting to report when their loved ones or friends are being victimized”. And although statistics are not kept, “the First Nations Policing positions have contributed to an increase in trust and communication which is directly associated with increased reporting”. Trust-building between police and affected communities and persons has and will increase reporting, a necessary step towards gaining a greater understanding of how widespread issues of sex trafficking and sexual exploitation are in Canada, as well as helping to encourage reporting through that established trust and allow for more individual action to help vulnerable women and girls.

With regards to changes to the existing laws in Canada, one participant recommended for “more effective inter-agency communication to identify and work on measureable common goals.” This includes developing coordinated multi-agency education/prevention strategies, safety plans, effective methods of data collection, and authority/authorities for agencies to report to. Such coordination would benefit the good work currently being done by helping remove the fragmented and divided practices that currently plague efforts to reduce and end these acts of sexual violence against Aboriginal women and girls.

When asked about their awareness of possible corruption in legal authorities, something which would negatively impact public trust and reliance from members of Aboriginal communities, the participants' responses were brief and did not indicate any widespread issues. Two participants stated that they were unaware of any such misconduct by legal authorities; another cited a case involving a former Prince George Judge David Ramsey who was convicted of using the services of vulnerable young Aboriginal women and girls coming before him for sex. Some girls were as young as twelve years old.

Another participant was aware of a few aspects that may involve miscommunication or action. In their opinion, the "corruption of legal authorities – police, health, government, etc. may have had instances in past where they were negligent either wilfully or unknowingly, and perhaps victimization standards were higher and more acceptable in the past... This has changed through accountability and improved training and technology today and I don't believe is an issue in my province or across the country. Within the RCMP, we have identified our gaps, worked and continue to work on closing any gaps, and have become very pro-active with our partnerships."

In their respective jurisdictions, the issue of drug use or drug dealings in relation to trafficked Aboriginal women and girls was common. Some of the substances used include: opiates, heroin, and crystal meth. Many times Aboriginal women and girls that are involved in prostitution activities utilize drugs. One participant felt that drug involvement was "highly correlated to Aboriginal women being trafficked" and that they are recruited into prostitution through dependence and/or drugs.

In general, law enforcement officers collected the following information from trafficked Aboriginal women and girls: age, date of birth, place of birth, address, and physical descriptors. Officers **do not** consistently collect information on race and nationality. The women have the option of disclosing how they came to be involved in sexual exploitation and details of their circumstances; however, it is not required. In fact, many do not end up facing charges related to trafficking. One interviewee stated that, "They are not being prosecuted as trafficking cases, but other sections of the criminal code. We're not getting a clear picture of what's going on." For the purposes of this interview there was not a clear indication of why these women may find themselves facing charges unrelated to trafficking. However, an interviewee did offer the following which may shed light on the complexity of selecting charges from Canada's criminal code related to sex trafficking. "Women are recruited into prostitution through dependence and/or drugs. They may become addicts. They may become human traffickers themselves as they become higher up in organized crime hierarchy or further dependent and their task may be to recruit others into criminal lifestyle, which is essentially human trafficking." This is similar to what has been shown in the literature: dependence built up through 'boyfriend' relationships, getting them addicted to substances, and forcing women to seek others for exploitation are all familiar patterns of exploitation for the purposes of sex trafficking in Canada.

In Aboriginal communities, Elders are a much relied upon resource for cultural and traditional knowledge in many areas such as of health, social, and economic well-being. Most of the participants have indicated that they have access to cultural advisors and Elders. One participant raised the issue that at times too much pressure is put on Elders to be resources for younger people as some Elders may not have fully healed from their own past traumas and experiences.

In general, while the contributions of Aboriginal Elders is valued and respected, the following caution from one participant re-emphasizes the importance of community discussions and engagement on the issue of trafficking and sexual violence:

During my work, I have unfortunately seen too often that sexual assault, assault, and human trafficking is culturally tolerated by community Elders. I cannot provide statistics to this but have direct and indirect experience with it in my job. I've seen instances where young females are told not to report because the family would rather blackmail the offender. I've seen young females in small rural areas prostitute themselves, and I've seen mothers tell their children it's not wrong to be sexually assaulted. I believe our work to keep Aboriginal females safe needs to focus on Elders who can then teach their families that being victimized is not acceptable.

7.4 Crown Attorney

In seeking interview representatives from the legal side of the human trafficking, we were fortunate enough to speak to a Manitoba Crown Attorney in Canada who is specially assigned to address cases of human trafficking of persons (which itself falls under the domain of the Domestic Violence Unit in that province, which includes child sexual exploitation).

The interviewee's emphasized Aboriginal women and girls' increased risk to human trafficking as being due to their socio-economic as well as family background. It is the case of many Aboriginal women and girls that they come from very difficult backgrounds, and this increases their vulnerability to being trafficked. When trafficking occurs, the interviewee felt that the Canadian Criminal Justice System possesses sufficient penalties for Johns when convicted to deter recidivism. However, cases of human trafficking can be difficult to prove. At each stage of a case, a Crown Attorney must ensure that i) Is there a reasonable likelihood of a conviction? And ii) Is it within the public interest to proceed with a prosecution? Should a case fulfill these two criteria, the Crown Attorney will proceed with the prosecution. In the interviewee's experience, it can be difficult to prove cases of human trafficking as set out in sections 279.01 to 279.04 of the *Criminal Code*, though in these cases it does not necessarily mean that no charges will be the result. Evidence insufficient to prove human trafficking may fulfill requirements for other charges that the Crown Attorney may proceed with.

According to the interviewee, some of the issue with prosecuting a case of human trafficking is the difficulty for the victim in coming forward. In order to prove the offence of human trafficking, in almost all cases the victim must be able to provide a statement to police and in most cases the victim will need to testify in court. Some of the success of their process for pursuing a case of sexual exploitation comes from the support system that exists in Manitoba. In Manitoba, there is a Victim Bill of Rights Act, which ensures that victims of crimes are consulted and informed of the coming legal process with criminal court. Additionally, victims are assigned a victim services worker to help them during the process. For child victims, a child support worker is assigned to assist them, and Aboriginal-specific supporters and services are available through non-profit organizations. Knowing that support is provided for the victim during the entire process has an important impact on the Crown Attorney: it is much easier to

prosecute these offences when the Crown Attorney knows that the victim is receiving support during this time (including with court preparation) and it makes the court process much more understandable and accessible for victims.

The interviewee provided information about court accommodations that are available to child witnesses contained in the *Criminal Code*. For example, if a videotaped statement had been taken from a child witness within a reasonable time of the offence by police, the Crown Attorney can play the statement in court and have the child confirm that what the child told police was the truth. The child will still be cross-examined; however, this accommodation makes it easier for a child witness to testify. Likewise, the *Criminal Code* allows children to testify behind a screen or by way of closed circuit television and permits a child to have a support person sit next to the child while he/she is testifying.

Several cultural training events have also been provided to the Crown Attorneys. The interviewee listed four different ways in which they had received cultural-sensitivity training (some of which was Aboriginal specific).

1. A half-day session on sexual exploitation in Manitoba, with other training to be provided in the near future (available to all Manitoba Crown Attorneys)
2. Attendance at a yearly conference on Missing and Exploited Children (several Crown Attorneys are sent to this training)
3. Cultural Training at Crown Conferences (this addresses working with victims and witnesses from different cultural backgrounds and includes Aboriginal victims and witnesses)
4. Ontario Crown School (typically, two Crown Attorneys are sent each year to a week-long Sexual and Domestic Violence training program)

Overall, Manitoba's legal processes seem very forward-thinking in establishing protections for victims to ease their experience giving evidence and going through a court case, as well as to generally provide counselling. Another very positive aspect of Crown Attorney professional development is the cultural sensitivity training provided, including some specific for working with Aboriginal women and girls. Unfortunately, human trafficking seems to still be a difficult charge to proceed with, and more research into why evidence in cases can more easily prove one charge over another should be explored to provide a better understanding of issues with prosecuting cases of human trafficking in Canada.

8.0 Online Survey Monkey Results

As part of the research, NWAC developed an internet survey using Survey Monkey to collect information from Aboriginal experiential women who were sexually exploited or trafficked as a women or child. The limitations associated with using an online collection method include under coverage, barriers to reaching target population, low response rate, and data quality. Some of the advantages include the relatively low cost in implementing the survey, increases convenience for participants, and is more timely (reduces time to fill out paper survey and mail back).

8.1 Method

The survey questions were developed with input from Aboriginal researchers and technical staff at NWAC. The Survey Monkey link was distributed to National, Regional and local Aboriginal and women's organizations, researchers and other experts on the issue of trafficking of Aboriginal women. The survey results is not representative of the target population, however, it provides a small snapshot of some of the experiences of Aboriginal women who have been sexually exploited or trafficked in Canada.

8.2 Results

More than 20 surveys had been partially completed, however, we were only able to use thirteen (13) of the surveys. Out of the 13 Aboriginal women who completed the survey, 80% (8/10) identified as being First Nations and 20% (8/10) as Métis. When asked how old they were when they were first recruited, over half (53.9%, 7/11) answered that they were 14 years and under. 75% (9/12) of participants said that they had on average 6 to 12 paid sexual contacts ("tricks") per day. Ninety per cent (10/11) were asked to do things that they were not comfortable doing. All who answered (11/13) said that they were expected to do everything that the men wanted. Fifty- five per cent (6/11) answered that they often or always tried to resist and leave their situation. 81.8% (9/11) of participants answered that they were sexually abused, raped or molested in their lives before being sexually exploited, or trafficked (as a child, by a relative, by a partner, etc.) The rates of drug, alcohol and substance abuse among participants rose from 36.4% to 81.8% after they were being sexually exploited or trafficked. 63.7% (7/11) of respondents were sexually exploited or trafficked for 3 years and longer.

8.3 Respondent Concluding Comments

We conclude this section with the words of five First Nations women participants from the online survey. At the end of the survey, the experiential women were invited to give comments on what they wanted the reader to know that had not been covered in the survey. In response to our invitation, these are their unaltered contributions:

- Workshops or ways to inform people of our rights and privileges to be safe and free from harm.
- There is too much racism against native women. People think we deserve what we get.
- Male youth are also recruited using drugs as incentives, they find them in youth shelters and target them and they abused by men.
- Human trafficking is such a horrific thing to go through. If more information is given to Aboriginals on where to get help. Nobody would believe me. I had to get out myself with help with a few friends. I almost ended up dead. It happened over 15 years ago, I still look over my shoulders even today. I teach my children to know surroundings, to know who you are with, stay away from gangs of men, that people close to you set you up so don't go listen to your instincts. It may be basic, but Aboriginal women need to know

they are safe and can be safe. It was hell and so don't want anyone else going through this.

- There's no way out and if you were as young as me, I was 10-11 years old when I was recruited into prostitution, there are no services to access, you're too young and they tell you to come back when you are 16 also if you're not addicted, there are even less options as to how to get out. There needs to be research done on how many girls are actually in government care. I was at the time and all throughout the 10 years I was prostituted, and so was every girl I knew out there. Gangs targeted Native girls and girls in care with no one who cared about them out of group homes and foster homes, off the streets. They would set us up and target us way before we ever even knew. Then the head guy would step in, save us, claim us as his and then say we owed him for saving our lives. They would promise us safety, love, family, belonging and then name the price it would come at. In my case, I believe everyone knew but no one did anything, my elementary school teachers, my social worker, youth workers cops they would pick me up and take me back to him because when I was 13, the social worker gave him guardianship of me because I was a Class 3 runaway at that point in time and I was considered too hard to place and hard to handle. It was easier for them this way but what they didn't know was that he beat and raped me every day and sold me to at least 10 men a day. At one point when I tried to leave, he stabbed me 8 times. I had 86 stitches and woke up in the hospital with him and a social worker with the social worker telling me I was lucky he saved my life. "Really!" I thought. He tried to take my life and he almost did. She sent me back to him for another 2 years before someone finally listened to me and then placed me on a youth agreement. Didn't stop him.

9.0 Recommendations

9.1 Recommendations from the Literature

The research we read as part of our review was consistent in following ethical processes that actively engaged with those most affected: sexually exploited Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women and girls. This lends strength to many of the recommendations, as so much of them come from those with lived experience. Their recommendations are diverse and relevant, touching upon many aspects.

Among the first encountered were those by Kingsley and Mark (2001). Their goal in making their recommendations and engaging in their research initiative was to promote linkages between youth and communities, which they in turn believed would lead to more effective services and efforts to assist those exploited and help break cycles of abuse. Their recommendations are as follows:

- A series of national and regional round tables
 - A series of youth-driven pilot projects
 - Establishment of a youth network
 - Creation of a national awareness campaign
- (p. 5)

As we have seen in this literature review, some of what they advocated for has already come to pass in terms of the TERF program and its nine sites. Health Canada has begun a national action plan, which reflects the nation-wide comprehensiveness they advocated for, if lacking in a focus on Aboriginals. The RCMP's awareness campaign conducted in some Aboriginal communities may also be considered steps in this direction. Far more comprehensive an example would be Hunt's resource guide (2011), which outlines a thorough process for engaging with multiple members of the community (including youth), promoting awareness, and encouraging discussion. It would be beneficial to explore how communities who have used the guide have been impacted. More awareness of the possibility of change can only help individuals, families, communities, and Canadian society move towards healthier practices and relationships.

As for the youth, while many of their recommendations have already been discussed, they were very thorough in addressing the multiple aspects of sexual exploitation. Beginning on page 71 of Kingsley and Mark (2001), they address the priorities for changing public attitudes and doing advocacy. The reader is encouraged to read their full list, but here we will reiterate their focus on the following: A need to educate the public on the impacts of exploitation on youth; the need to properly educate the public that sexual exploitation is serious in terms of its prevalence. This is an oft-repeated recommendation. Hunt (2006; 2011) identifies the difficulties of Aboriginal youth to recognize sexually exploitative relationships (including being trafficked) as a result of the troubled upbringing many have endured, and she advocates for building awareness in communities as to what are healthy living and relationships. Saewyc et al (2008) also noted a need to make youth more aware of what is a healthy relationship. Participants in Seshia (2005) and the TERF program (Ursel et al, 2007) also commented on the need to be shown alternate, healthier ways of being.

The UNYA (2002) has an extensive list of recommendations beginning on page 54. Highlights from the list are a call to Native communities, agencies, and leaders to be more active in addressing issues of sexual exploitation for Aboriginal peoples. They also recommend that people in protective roles (parents, guardians, friends, school staff, etc.) need to be able to educate youth on options, on resources for what they can do if they are facing challenges. They also need to learn how to recognize the signs so that they are better able to identify and provide support for those struggling. INAC (now Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada) initiatives discussed before the Standing Senate Committee on Human Rights also revealed a family focus: “INAC’s various programs being developed . . . focus on a preventative approach to ensure that more First Nations children and parents get the support they need to prevent the types of crisis that lead to intervention and family breakdown” (2011, p. 32). With this approach, “It is anticipated that programs based on a prevention-focused model will ‘ultimately enhance a sense of security among children and hopefully decrease the risk of sexual exploitation’” (p. 32).

In a less specific but no less useful scope, Farley et al. (2003) reminds us, “It is essential to address the root causes of prostitution: sex inequality, racism and colonialism, poverty, tourism and economic development that destroys traditional ways of living” (p. 59). While the word used in that article is prostitution, as we have seen, systemic discrimination and poverty, and a lack of economic opportunity are at the root of what leads to Aboriginal sexual exploitation and trafficking. Measures to address sex trafficking must also be aimed at addressing poverty, systemic discrimination, a lack of formal education, and provide economic opportunities and alternatives. At the heart of it, this is really about building healthier communities. It is about eliminating the causes for abuse so that there is no reason to repeat it. Part of achieving that is for communities to be equipped with governance structures and resources necessary to be able to provide ideal safe and stable families (Blackstock, et al., 2004). Saraceno’s literature review further advocates for healthier communities. She recommends a responsive, holistic, community approach with ongoing support over time (2010).

A recommendation that speaks directly to policy makers comes from Barrett (2010): “Recognize the vulnerability of Aboriginal people, particularly children and women, to trafficking as well as the complexity of contributing factors. Consider continuing and enhancing programs that address these vulnerabilities” (p. iii). She further cautions that the complexity of the Aboriginal community contexts will require multiple initiatives. No one anti-trafficking practice will do. Additionally, she advocates for collaboration with Aboriginal communities when drafting strategies that involve Aboriginal youth. See section 2.5 of her report for a detailed breakdown of her different suggestions.

The SSCHR’s concluding recommendation is multifaceted and aimed at addressing the sexual exploitation of children. Overall, they recommended that the Canadian government carry out and support research into Aboriginal community needs regarding the sexual exploitation of children; explore the development of services for children; develop culturally-appropriate policies to meet Aboriginal peoples’ needs; ensure these policies reduce harm to sexually exploited Aboriginal children (on- and off-reserve); and support initiatives at the local level for both urban and rural Aboriginal children, both those who are being exploited, and those at risk (p. 34).

A national action plan on poverty amongst Aboriginal peoples and in Aboriginal communities may be a powerful asset in an effort to decrease sexual exploitation. Addressing poverty may seem like a very large obstacle to tackle, but it is also necessary. While it is outside the scope of this literature review, we recommend that measures for effective economic development, in particular for rural communities, be explored in research and initiatives as a potential aid to lowering Aboriginal women and girls' vulnerability to sexual exploitation and trafficking.

Promoting educational success may also prove to have an effective impact. There have been numerous reports on promoting Aboriginal success in education in Canada. We would like to see more of these strategies pursued in areas where Aboriginal sexual exploitation and trafficking are shown to be high (which is to say, many places in Canada). Research initiatives could explore effective ways for preventing student drop-outs. Perhaps even a blending of the strategies used in programs like TERF and the Dream Catcher Peer Mentorship program in school settings could be attempted and analyzed. Our rationale for this is that peer-support was a powerful influence amongst sexually exploited and trafficked Aboriginal women and girls. Yet, sexual exploitation and trafficking were not all that they had in common. Perhaps support groups in schools aimed at young Aboriginal girls to identify with others struggling and succeeding in school environments would help them move towards building their own confidence in their success as well as creating an effective network to rely upon when dealing with what is for many a troubling and unstable life outside of school

Ultimately, solutions need to be multi-faceted, they need to involve experiential women and girls in the decision-making process, they need to be open, welcoming, and cognizant of the contexts lifestyles, and constraints on, those sexually trafficked (such as having flexible hours rather than just a nine-to-five option). They need to be cognizant of contexts particular to Aboriginal women and girls, and Aboriginal communities. Policies, initiatives, and the law need to address domestic, sex- trafficking and the prevalence of Aboriginal women and girls in it as a priority. Programs and services need to be long-term, culturally considerate, and whenever possible, employ healthy peer support and involve survivors. Programs, and any initiatives that are intended to succeed, also require sustained and reliable funding.

9.2 Overall Recommendations

One of our more important goals in researching for and writing this report on the human trafficking of Aboriginal women and girls was to provide effective and relevant recommendations for action that can be implemented to create positive change. The former recommendations section in the report touched upon the collective contributions gathered from the various papers read for the literature review. In addition to this we would like to provide an additional, overall recommendations that was inclusive of the input and reflection from our Key Informant interviews in conducting this report.

Provided below, we have divided recommendations into different areas of focus, though some blend easily into other areas. Our headings or not meant to be binding; we encourage flexible, creative thinking on the issue of sexual exploitation to generate more effective solutions.

The following recommendations will touch upon various actors with roles and responsibilities in Canadian society. Effective solutions are only possible when they receive widespread recognition and support from representatives of multiple facets of society: this includes policy analysts, legislators, law enforcement officers, education officers, government officers (of multiple levels, including federal, provincial, municipal, and band), social service support workers, communities, families, and individuals.

9.2.1 National

The following recommendations are meant to be implemented across Canada as both preventative in nature and to help promote action to end sexual exploitation from trafficking.

- Implement a national strategy on awareness raising of the issues increasing vulnerability of Aboriginal women and girls to sexual exploitation and trafficking
- Implement a national action plan on addressing the systemic poverty of Aboriginal women and contributing factors; the national action plan should include skills development, training, economic development, micro and macro lending for businesses, financial literacy training, child care, and family supports for Aboriginal women to engage in the economy
- Increase funding for culturally-relevant support services for women and girls to help them escape trafficking
- Implement long-term tracking of support programs to help measure effective services and success rates
- Increase research focused on Aboriginal women and girls in Canada's domestic trafficking, and shed the pan-Aboriginal approach for more regionally- and culturally-specific research to address the varied needs of all Inuit, Métis, and First Nation women and girls accordingly
- Increase funding supports to Aboriginal communities and encourage partnerships between Aboriginal communities' leadership and relevant stakeholders on issues of sexual exploitation and human trafficking to help them develop local, relevant initiatives for the given needs of their communities on the issue of sexual exploitation and trafficking
- Greatly increased engagement with Aboriginal youth to get regionally and culturally relevant input for solutions and what-is-needed in their lives to help prevent and exit sexual exploitation and trafficking; this can be done at any level of action (from federal to municipal, and in individual Aboriginal bands)

9.2.2 Education

As we have seen through our research, schools remain an active area for access to Aboriginal girls – by not only the exploiters for recruitment, but also an area of intervention for stakeholders for prevention and awareness. For these reasons, and others, we make the following recommendations.

- Schools should implement awareness workshops for teachers and administrators to improve their knowledge of signs-of-abuse and sexual exploitation so that they may intervene or connect the girl(s) with supports
- Schools should implement healthy relationships classes and/or components to classes that teach students about what are respectful and acceptable relationships and healthy touching, and what students can do if they think they are in unhealthy relationships or circumstances
- Schools need to be provided with the latest research on decreasing Aboriginal student drop-out rates and on creating culturally-relevant pedagogy/curriculum to better meet the needs of Aboriginal students
- Schools need increased funding to implement these education-based initiatives both on and off reserve and in remote, rural, and in urban areas
- Schools should have active engagement strategies for Aboriginal students to encourage retention.

9.2.3 Legal & Judicial

Charges and judicial proceedings on cases of domestic trafficking for sexual exploitation seem very low in comparison to the numbers of women participating in research as domestic trafficking victims. We know that often times charges are pressed not based on trafficking but on other charges such as domestic disputes or family violence-related charges, and that a more clear definition of trafficking that would separate cases of partner abuse with partner trafficking are lacking from current legislation. In general, there seems to be a disconnect between legislative ambitions, such as Canada's recently passed laws on human trafficking, and their actual use in regular police implementation.

Additionally, we would like to specifically address the aspect of torture in sexual exploitation and trafficking. Torture that occurs in the context of intimate relationships and trafficking is dismissed as an assault or domestic violence. Two of the key informants that were interviewed spoke of how disappointed they are in Canada because of the present government's refusal to change section 269.1 of the criminal code so that a private individual (a non-State actor) who commits classic torture can be criminally charged for the crime of torture they perpetrate; making such a change to the criminal code was a recommendation given to Canada by the UN Committee against Torture in 2012. They explained further that the criminal code only criminalizes torture perpetrated by State actors such as military and police personnel. Currently, the definition of human trafficking is about perpetrators who work to enslave a victim in the ways described in Canadian law and the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress & Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. The interviewees strongly emphasized that "once enslaved the reality is that many are tortured and Canadian law does not provide for holding such torturers criminally accountable for the torture they inflict; they must be, to eliminate discrimination under the law and support the human and legal rights of women and girls so victimized to speak their truth, be heard, and seek justice.

For the above reasons we make the following recommendations.

- Research is needed into why police may be under-using powers to pursue trafficking-related charges in favour of other charges.
- Provide training for police on what constitutes domestic human trafficking for sexual exploitation so that they are more familiar with the characteristics and signs to watch for (including situations where the victims may not tell the truth because they fear for their life).
- Provide gender and culture sensitivity training for officers for trafficked and prostituted women so that they can be seen as an advocate and protector rather than further traumatizing women and girls through their intervention.
- More explicit legislation, direction, and officer empowerment needs to be created to aid in the pursuit and successful prosecution of traffickers, pimps, and other purveyors of trafficked and sexually exploited women and girls.
- Police should engage in outreach programs to the sex-trafficked vulnerable and the victim's community to help build trust and dialogue to encourage Aboriginal women and girls to approach them when they are in need.
- Revise section 269.1 of the Canadian Criminal Code so that a private individual (a non-State actor) who commits classic torture can be criminally charged for the crime of torture they perpetrate.

9.2.4 Social Support Programs

Under this heading we are grouping support programs and services that help women and girls who are being sexually exploited and trafficked. This is a critical area for supporting Aboriginal women and girls, and it cannot be emphasised enough how important it is to have adequate and responsibly funded services for these support programs. The recommendations for people working in this area were fairly consistent throughout the literature read and interviews conducted for this report.

- As much as is possible and practical, involve experiential survivors in the running of support programs and services. According to previous research, this is one of the best ways to make positive connections with women and girls currently being exploited, which reinforces their own commitment for and belief in changing their lives for the better.
- Involve experiential women (former and, if possible, current) in the development of new programs and support services; showing them how important their voices and input are helps build confidence while ensuring the program will connect with them and meet their needs.
- Aboriginal women and girls need safe housing and safe spaces; homelessness and a lack of safe places greatly increase the vulnerability of these women and girls. Immediate funding and long-term support are needed to provide for this housing shortage
- Provide childcare for participants in programs. Many of these women and young girls are attempting to raise children; without adequately providing for their childcare needs, they may be unable to attend or effectively engage with any support programs and services.

- Programs and services must be flexible in their approach. This refers to the multiple obstacles women and girls face in trafficking, such as substance addictions that they acquire to cope with the exploitation. Programs which focus on only one trauma may fail to provide the support needed for these women.
- Workers in this area should follow principles of understanding, compassion, and a non-judgemental attitude. Research shows these to be among the most influential characteristics for connecting with experiential women and girls and successfully supporting them through exiting programs.
- Programs and services need to be culturally relevant to maximize engagement and success with experiential Aboriginal women and girls.
- Programs and services need consistent, reliable funding for operational costs so that workers and experiential women and girls can act in confidence that the program will be there through the long path towards exiting sexual exploitation and trafficking.

Successful efforts will be those that employ multiple examples of the recommendations and are supported by multiple stakeholders at different levels. There are no simple solutions, but each of the recommendations listed above should lead to real and positive change. A significant difference in the lives of sexually exploited Aboriginal women and girls can be made; the recommendations provided here are very actionable. But they do require passionate, committed people, funding, and faith in those most vulnerable in Canadian society to achieve positive change within their own lives.

10.0 Conclusions

Human trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation is a serious concern in Canada. The prevalence of Aboriginal women and girls that are drawn in through force and many other recruitment strategies represents a dark, discriminatory practice in this country. What is also of great concern is the lack of focus on domestic trafficking in Canadian law, and the lack of exploration and prioritization of Aboriginal-related concerns and issues around the issue of human trafficking for sexual exploitation.

Sometimes it may seem like sexual exploitation, with the majority of those trafficked being female, is a 'women's issue'. However, it may be more accurate and effective to view this as a societal issue. These women and girls are daughters, sisters, mothers, friends, neighbours, and strangers, but they are all part of Canadian society. They are not somehow separate – though they are pushed down and to the margins of society.

What we need is more education about sexual exploitation and human trafficking, more knowledge of what to look for, more willingness to acknowledge the issues that exist that leads to sexual exploitation and human trafficking in Canada, and more willingness to de-marginalize these women and girls and hold them in places of respect and equality. We need to support these women and girls who step forward looking for a healthier way to live. While sex trafficking victims are not criminals, it is not always clear that women and girls are being trafficked. We need to decriminalize those in sex work and switch the focus of judicial weight onto the johns, prosecuting them, as well as being more active in the prosecution of pimps and madams. We also need to educate those who would be victimizers, before they take that first step, of the true

consequences, emotionally, spiritually, and physically, of sexual exploitation. And we also need more education for the general public as to just how insidious human trafficking is in Canada, and that there are solid, actionable strategies that can be supported for real and positive change. Those who are trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation deserve more. Non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal women and girls all deserve better.

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Appendix A: Key Informant Interview Themes: Frontline Workers & Experiential Women

Purpose of Interview

The purpose of these key informant interviews is to collect information from a wide range of trafficked/experiential Aboriginal women and girls—including front line workers—who have firsthand knowledge about the crime of trafficking. These community experts, with their particular knowledge and understanding, will provide insight on the nature of problems and give recommendations for solutions aimed to fight and prevent sexual exploitation and trafficking of Aboriginal women and girls.

The following information was gathered from and about Aboriginal experiential women:

- General upbringing, background, and home environment;
- Family members experience with Indian Residential Schools, participation in cultural and traditional ceremonies, knowledge of their Indigenous language;
- What factors have led to Aboriginal women and girls being prostituted and/or trafficked;
- Tactics used by traffickers to lure Aboriginal women and girls;
- Role that drugs and alcohol have played in the lives of trafficked Aboriginal women and girls;
- Factors that keep trafficked Aboriginal women and girls in their situation;
- Reasons why Aboriginal women and girls are targeted by pimps, traffickers and Johns;
- Whether or not the Canadian justice system and laws protect trafficked and/or prostituted Aboriginal women and girls;
- Impact on family relationships;
- Health impacts (physical, mental, emotional and spiritual);
- Available services and their impact;
- Impacts of police services and social welfare agencies on trafficked Aboriginal women and girls, and on traffickers, pimps and johns;
- Challenges to accessing services;
- Main concerns of and for trafficked and/or prostituted Aboriginal women and girls;
- Suggested changes to laws and regulations in Canada;
- Protections and safety of trafficked and/or prostituted Aboriginal women and girls;
- Criminalization of trafficked and/or prostituted Aboriginal women and girls;
- Impacts of the Canadian legal system in deterring johns and traffickers;
- Influence of the internet in trafficking and prostitution and surveillance of traffickers;
- Promising practices in Canada used to combat trafficking;

Appendix B: Key Informant Interview Themes: Police Officers, RCMP & Attorneys

Purpose of Interview

The purpose of these key informant interviews is to collect information from Police Officers and Crown Attorneys who have worked with trafficked/experiential Aboriginal women and girls. The knowledge of these legal authorities will provide insight on the nature of problems regarding Canada's legal system and trafficking. From this information recommendations for solutions aimed to fight and prevent sexual exploitation and trafficking will also be gathered.

Information was collected on the following from legal enforcement / police officer / RCMP officers:

- Work in relation to trafficked Aboriginal women and girls;
- Incidence of trafficked Aboriginal women and girls in respective jurisdiction;
- Criminalization of trafficked Aboriginal women and girls;
- Criminalization of traffickers and johns;
- Estimates of sexual violence and trafficking of Aboriginal women and girls in respective district;
- Measures to protect trafficked Aboriginal women and girls;
- Promising practices in Canada used to combat trafficking;
- Training and education on issues facing Aboriginal women and girls in Canada;
- Issues regarding legal authorities;
- Drug use or drug dealings and its relation to trafficked Aboriginal women and girls within respective jurisdiction;
- Information collected on trafficked Aboriginal women and girls;
- Access to cultural advisors and Elders when dealing with sexually exploited and/or trafficked Aboriginal women and girls

Information was collected on the following from legal / crown attorneys:

- Experience in dealing with cases involving sexually exploited and/or trafficked Aboriginal women and girls;
- Specialized courts dealing with sexually exploited and/ or trafficked cases;
- Canadian Criminal Justice System laws and regulations dealing with victims of sexual offences;
- Impacts of the Canadian legal system in deterring johns and traffickers;
- Are there sufficient protections under the laws?
- Factors for prosecuting trafficking crimes;
- Cases involving Aboriginal women and girls as victims of trafficking and/or traffickers;
- Criteria required to consider an act as trafficking;
- Role of trafficked Aboriginal women and girls in prosecution of case;
- Are Aboriginal women and girls more susceptible to being trafficked;
- Private prosecution of a trafficking case;
- Evidence required to prove mental, physical and emotional harm to an Aboriginal women or girl in a trafficking case;
- Promising practices in Canada used to combat trafficking;
- Specialized training about Human Trafficking or the specific vulnerabilities that Aboriginal women and girls face.

Appendix C: Online Survey Monkey Results by Individual Question

1. What is your ethnicity / cultural heritage?

80% (8/10) First Nations
20% (2/10) Métis
3 skipped question

2. How old were you when you were first recruited?

7.7% (1/13) - Under 9
42.2% (6/13) were 9 - 14
23.1% (3/13) were 15 - 19
7.7% (1/13) were 20 - 29
2 prefer not to answer

3. Were others recruited at the same time as you?

50 % (6/12) Yes
16.7% (2/12) No
16.7% (2/12) Don't know
16.7% (2/12) Prefer not to answer
1 skipped question

4. If yes, approximately how many?

33.3% (2/6) said 2
16.7% (1/6) said 3
33.3% (2/6) Don't know
7 skipped

5. Who recruited you?

38.5% (5/13) Pimp / male manager(s)
15.4% (2/13) Madam / female manager(s)
15.4% (2/13) Intimate partner (boyfriend / girlfriend)
23.1% (3/13) Prefer not to answer
7.7% (1/13) Other - Club Owner

6. Did you sign a contract?

0 – Yes
75% (9/12) No
1 Don't know.
2 prefer not to answer

7. If yes, how long was it for?

No answers

8. Were you promised that you would make money?

66.7% (8/12) Yes
25% (3/12) No
1 prefer not to answer

9. If yes, how much were you told you would make in a day?

12.5% (1/8) \$101-150
37.5% (3/8) \$151-200
12.5% (1/8) \$401-500
25% (2/8) \$501 and over
1 Don't know
5 skipped question

10. Did you make any money?

50% (6/12) Yes
41.7% (5/12) No
8.3% (1/12) Prefer not to answer

11. If yes, how much did you make in a day?

33.3% (2/6) under \$50
16.7% (1/6) \$151-200
16.7% (1/6) \$401-500
16.7% (1/6) \$501 and over
7 skipped question

12. Of the money you made, what percentage did you get to keep for yourself?

51.1% (4/7) 0%
14.3% (1/7) 30%
14.3% (1/7) 100%
14.3% Don't know
6 Skipped question

13. Who was your daily supervisor/ manager?

53.8% (7/13) Pimp / male manager(s)
15.4% (2/13) Madam / female manager(s)
7.7% (1/13) Don't know
7.7% (1/13) Prefer not to answer
15.4% (2/13) Other, legal guardian , different men and women

14. Was this person also your intimate partner (boyfriend or girlfriend)?

46.2% (6/13) Yes
46.2% (6/13) No
7.7% (1/13) Don't know

15. Did this person collect the money you made?

61.5% (8/13) Yes
7.7% (1/13) No
7.7% (1/13) Prefer not to answer
23.1% (3/13) Other

16. What was the average number of paid sexual contacts (“tricks”) you had with customers per day?

16.7% (2/12) – 1
25% (3/12) – 6
8.3% (1/12) - 7
16.7% (2/12) - 8
16.7% (2/12) – 10
8.3% (1/12) - 12
8.3% (1/12) Don’t know
1 skipped question

17. What was the average number of paid sexual contacts (“tricks”) other women had with customers in your brothel or establishment?

50% (6/12) Don’t know

18. Were you ever forced or paid to have sex with any of the following persons?

Doctor 36.4% - Yes, 27.3% - No, 9.1% - Don’t know
Judge 33.3% - Yes, 22.2% - No, 44.4% - Don’t know
Police 44.4% - Yes, 22.2% - No, 33.3% - Don’t know
Social Worker 22.2% - Yes, 44.4% - No, 33.3% - Don’t know
Non-Profit / Non-govt org Staff 11.1% - Yes, 44.4% - No, 44.4% - Don’t know
Other “helping” person 12.5% - Yes, 62.5% - No, 25% - Don’t know

19. Were you asked to do things you were not comfortable doing?

90.9% (10/11) Yes
9.1% (1/11) No
2 skipped question

20. Were you expected to do EVERYTHING that the men wanted?

100% (11/11) Yes
2 skipped question

21. Were you ever promised a position as a madam, supervisor or recruiter if you cooperated and did well for your pimp/madam/trafficker?

45.5% (5/11) Yes
54.5% (6/11) No
2 skipped question

22. Were you allowed to come and go freely by yourself?

45.5% (5/11) Yes
54.5% (6/11) No
2 skipped question

23. Did you ever try to resist in any way, or leave your situation?

9.1% (1/11) Never
36.4% (4/11) Sometimes
36.4% (4/11) Often
18.2% (2/11) Always
2 skipped question

24. Did any OTHER women resist in any way or try to leave?

9.1% (1/11) Never
27.3% (3/11) Sometimes
18.2% (2/11) Often
9.1% (1/11) Always
36.4% (4/11) Don’t know
2 skipped question

25. What were the consequences if women resisted demands or were caught trying to leave?

54.5% (6/11) Beaten
27.3% (3/11) Locked up
45.5% (5/11) Drugged
45.5% (5/11) Increased debt / money owed
27.3% (3/11) Withheld food and water
1 Other – people followed and brought me back
2 skipped question

26. Did any of the buyers (“customers”) try to help you or other women get out?

100% (2/2) No
11 skipped question

27. If yes, did you or they have to promise anything?

No answers

28. Were you allowed to contact family and friends during the time you were in the situation?

30% (3/10) Yes
60% (6/10) No
10% (1/10) Prefer not to answer
3 skipped question

29. If yes, did you?

Only 1 out of the 3 that said yes contacted their family and friends while in their situation.

30. Did you tell your family and friends about what you were doing?

27.3% (3/11) Yes
72.7% (8/11) No
2 skipped question

31. Were you ever sexually abused, raped or molested in your life before being sexually exploited, or trafficked? (As a child, by a relative, by a partner, etc.)

81.8% (9/11) Yes
18.2% (2/11) No
2 skipped question

32. Did you abuse drugs, alcohol or other substances BEFORE being sexually exploited or trafficked?

36.4% (4/11) Yes
63.6% (7/11) No
2 skipped question

33. Did you abuse drugs, alcohol or other substances DURING being sexually exploited or trafficked?

81.8% (9/11) Yes
9.1% (1/11) No
9.1% (1/11) Don't know
2 skipped question

34. Are you currently abusing drugs, alcohol or other substances?

27.3% (3/11) Yes
63.6% (7/11) No
9.1% (1/11) Prefer not to answer
2 skipped question

35. Were your bosses involved in other types of businesses?

54.5% (6/11) Yes
9.1% (1/11) No
36.4% (4/11) Don't know
2 skipped question

36. Were these same bosses involved in any type of criminal activity?

72.7% (8/11) Yes
9.1% (1/11) No
18.2% (2/11) Don't know
2 skipped question

37. Did they involve or try to involve you in any criminal activity?

54.5% (6/11) Yes
36.4% (4/11) No
9.1% (1/11) Don't know
2 skipped question

38. How long were you sexually exploited, or trafficked?

18.2% (2/11) Under 1 year
9.1% (1/11) 2 years
27.3% (3/11) 3 years
9.1% (1/11) 4 years
27.3% (3/11) Over 5 years
9.1% (1/11) Prefer not to answer
2 skipped question

39. Are you currently being sexually exploited or trafficked?

18.2% (2/11) Yes
72.7% (8/11) No
1 prefer not to answer
2 skipped question