

PROMOTING ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR SEX INDUSTRY INVOLVED ADULTS WHO HAVE BEEN SEXUALLY ASSAULTED AND ADULTS WHO HAVE BEEN SEX TRAFFICKED: A TOOLKIT OF RESOURCES

Abstract

This toolkit provides a list and description of practical education and awareness resources to promote access to justice. Resources include training curriculum and information materials aimed at providing professionals working in the justice system including police, social services and community health, and journalists with information and skills needed to provide survivors of sex trafficking and sexual assault with a supportive response.

This Toolkit is a knowledge translation product of the Support to Report Project (2017-2020). Support to Report was funded by the Department of Justice Canada, Victims Fund



Funded by:

Department of Justice Canada, Victims Fund
Measures to Enhance Criminal Justice System
Responses to Adult Sexual Assault in Canada



Compiled by Gerda Zonruiter, Research and Evaluation Consultant (www.cfoe.ca) for Salvation Army Correctional and Justice Services London and Area. 2020

Supporting Sexual Assault and Sex Trafficking Survivors to Access Justice: A Toolkit for Social Service System Workers and Justice System Professionals

Purpose:

The purpose of this toolkit is to promote access to justice for people involved in the sex industry who have been sexually assaulted and sex trafficking survivors. Primarily developed for social service system workers, emergency respondents, and criminal justice system professionals, it is a useful resource for anyone who supports sexual assault survivors, including family and friends.

This toolkit includes a summary of impact of sexual assault, barriers to reporting, and supportive practices learned through Project Support to Report (2017-2020). From these learnings, a listing of relevant key resources that address the justice needs of this unique group of survivors. Support to Report was a project of the Salvation Army Correctional and Justice Services that was funded by the Department of Justice, Victim Services.

To help identify which resources are most applicable to your setting and needs, the primary audience for each resource is highlighted, the type of resource is specified and a brief description is provided.

Many of these resources are provided through the Ontario Network of Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centres (sadvtreatmentcentres.ca/resource-library/).

Suggestions for Use:

- Include this resource as part of your staff orientation manual
- Incorporate training in your organizational or personal professional development plan
- Add this toolkit to your library of resources and tools
- Disseminate the resources through your organizations' staff communications such as e-newsletters, bulletins, et cetera
- Discuss the toolkit at team meetings to get input on the use of the resources listed and to identify any additional useful resources

About Support to Report

Funded by the Department of Justice Canada, Victims Fund, the Support to Report project aimed to promote access to justice for sexual assault survivors who are/were involved in the sex industry and adults who are/were sex trafficked. This population experiences higher rates of sexual assault compared to the general population and experiences significant barriers to reporting at the individual, service system and justice system levels.

Adhering to the principles of trauma-informed, person-centred and person-directed service delivery, a Case Manager was hired to provide information, education and individualized practical and justice system support to people who self-identified as being sexually assaulted. The Case Manager was a registered Social Worker. The goal of this relationship-based program was to empower survivors to make informed decisions about reporting sexual assault, improve personal wellbeing and to increase local justice system awareness of the impact of assault and survivor needs for a more supportive local response to sexual assault complaints among this population.

Program Learnings - Highlights

A total of 37 people received crisis and ongoing support, with 34 having 3 or more interactions with the Case Manager and 22 disclosing having been sexually assaulted or sex trafficked. Information about impact of sexual assault, barriers to reporting, what justice is, supportive practices to empower survivors

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to make informed decisions and justice system changes needed were gathered from information shared by participants through the course of the program, and from 2 small group interviews and 5 in depth individual interviews at the end of the program.

Impact of Sexual Assault and Sex Trafficking for Survivors

- Fear
- Shame
- Anxious
- Confused
- Anger
- Numb
- Detached
- Diagnosed with PTSD
- Lack of trust



Barriers to Reporting: Barriers exist at the justice system, service system and the individual levels

- Lack of confidence in the justice system and that the outcome would be favourable
- Past negative experience such as not being believed, and/or being shamed and blamed
- Fear
- Traumatic experience to go through the interviews and the court experience is traumatizing
- Lack of access to housing, income, safety, counselling
- Individual level challenges: 21 were dealing with mental health, 15 identified being substance-involved and 15 identified as being homeless

“If you don’t have [safe housing, access to counselling, food, safety, identification], how can you report?” (interviewee)

What Justice Is: Justice means different things to different people

- Perpetrator is punished
- Official acknowledgement – being believed
- Being heard, having a voice
- Acknowledgement from the perpetrator

“Justice is Whatever is going to have the most positive effect on healing for the victim - therapy, medical help, monetary compensation, being safe in the community, moving forward with the goal, telling your story, pressing charges, filing complaints, suing. For some people it feels good to have punishment but not for everyone” (interviewee)

Supportive Practices: What Worked

- Hiring a Case Manager with a degree in social work, who was knowledgeable about the impact of trauma and implications for client support and service delivery

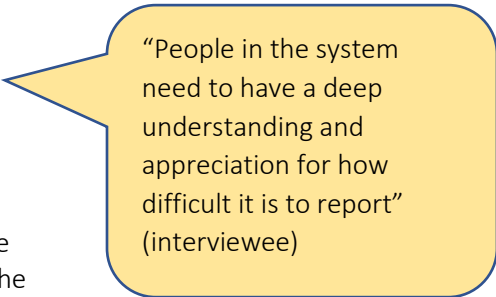
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- Being knowledgeable about various justice alternatives including the criminal justice system, funding, counselling, et cetera and helping survivors to understand the justice system response and provide system literacy so they can make an informed decision as to whether to report or not
- No formal administrative intake process. When people connected, the Case Manager would engage to learn what the person needed and would address the immediate needs and, based on the person's capacity at the time, would provide them with information about the program and contact information. The Case Manager did not go through an intake form with the client, rather, let the client take the lead.
- Focus on relationship building. The Case Manager was available through phone calls, text messaging and in person. One client talked about how much he appreciated receiving regular check ins from the Case Manager. The Case Manager had flexibility to provide the practical, social, emotional and justice system support that the client needed. These things helped to build rapport and relationships with clients who then disclosed more. Participants were able to get 1:1 support with a consistent person
- Providing a safe space and opportunity for clients to share as much or as little of their experiences and the impact on their life. Visits would occur at client-preferred locations. One client talked about how going on nature walks with the Case Manager gave her the courage and confidence she needed to start going out on her own more often. Others talked about how the program helped them in their healing journey
- Providing system navigation support
- Supporting and facilitating interconnections with other programs both within the organization and with social, health, and justice service partners. Because of the interconnections within the organization, participants were able to develop positive relationships with other agency staff. Connections with external partners facilitated referrals to and from the program, and helped participants access things like housing, income support, counselling, and medical care.

Changes Needed for the Justice System

- System needs to believe victims and justice system personnel need to be trauma- and violence-informed and trained
- Having a middle person or intermediary to report to
- There needs to be funding for safe housing, protection, all-around support
- Police and lawyers need to share more information with the victim. This recommendation from clients is supported in the literature:

"Many studies suggest that access to relevant information should be recognized as a basic need for victims of crime, for instance, while others indicate that the process of seeking information can help cope with victimization" (McDonald, S. "The Right to Information" Department of Justice Canada. Victims of Crime Research Digest. Issue 9. 2016 pp. 16-21)



"People in the system need to have a deep understanding and appreciation for how difficult it is to report" (interviewee)

Resources and Descriptions:

Resource	Primary Audience	Type of Resource	Description
<p>Trauma and Violence Informed Care (TVIC). equiphealthcare.ca/tvic-workshop/</p> <p>(citation: EQUIP Health Care. Research to Equip Health Care for Equity.)</p>	<p>Health and social service providers</p> <p>Relevant for all</p>	<p>Online workshop</p> <p>Downloadable materials</p>	<p>This 3-part online workshop covers (1) the importance of understanding trauma and violence, (2) describes TVIC and its core principles using video, workshop tools and exercises, and (3) vicarious trauma. Total time: approximately 1.5 hours</p>
<p>Trauma and Violence Informed Care (TVIC). equiphealthcare.ca/equip/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/EQUIP_GTV_TVIC_Principles.pdf</p>	<p>Health and social service providers</p> <p>Relevant for all</p>	<p>Downloadable PDF</p>	<p>1-page pdf illustrating the 4 principles of Trauma- and Violence-Informed Care (TVIC) with examples for practicing these at the organizational and individual levels</p>
<p>Trauma-Informed Practice Principles. bccewh.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/TIP-principles-Reflective-questions-2017.pdf</p> <p>Centre of Excellence for Women’s Health.</p>	<p>Health and social service providers</p>	<p>Downloadable PDF</p>	<p>This 2 page resource summarizes 4 principles of Trauma-Informed practice and asks a series of reflective questions that can be used in small groups to consider and reflect on what they are doing well and what else they can be doing to better practice trauma-informed care</p>
<p>Recognizing and Responding to the Commonly Misunderstood Reactions to Sexual Assault. hadvtreatmentcentres.ca/recognizing-and-responding-to-the-commonly-misunderstood-reactions-to-sexual-assault.html</p> <p>(citation: Mason, R., Du Mont, J., Macdonald, S. & Lanthier, S. (2018). Recognizing and Responding to the Commonly Misunderstood Reactions to Sexual Assault. [Curriculum]. Funded by the Ministry of the Status of Women, Ontario.)</p>	<p>All</p>	<p>Online Training Curriculum</p>	<p>This curriculum was designed to enhance diverse professionals’ knowledge about the commonly misunderstood reactions of survivors to sexual assault.</p> <p>In this curriculum you will learn about the range and diversity of reactions to sexual assault with a particular focus on recognizing reactions that are commonly misunderstood, and how to support survivors you may encounter.</p>

Resource	Primary Audience	Type of Resource	Description
			<p>Topics covered include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizing the problem • Complexity of sexual assault – societal factors • Neurobiology of/trauma of sexual assault • Commonly misunderstood reactions to sexual assault • How to respond • Examining your response to survivors in relation to your beliefs, values and practices
<p>Drug Facilitated Sexual Assault. sadvtreatmentcentres.ca/resource-library/</p> <p>(citation: Ontario Network of Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centres. Resource Library)</p>	All	Downloadable materials and video	<p>This link provides access to a listing of training programs and educational resources that are aimed at first responders, survivors, staff, and the general public.</p> <p>Resources include: posters, pamphlets, infographic and video</p>
<p>Care and Treatment of Persons Who Have Been Sexually Assaulted. sadvtreatmentcentres.ca/emergency-department-staff-training.html</p> <p>(citation: Macdonald, S., Du Mont, J., & Lanthier, S. (2015, June). Care and treatment of persons who have been sexually assaulted [Online Curriculum]. The Ontario Network of Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centres and Women’s College Research Institute-Women’s College Hospital.)</p>	Emergency department health care providers.	30-minute online training module	<p>Will assist ED health care providers in providing victims/survivors of sexual assault with appropriate and sensitive care in emergency departments.</p> <p>Topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of sexual assault and health impacts • Individuals with increased risk and their unique needs

Resource	Primary Audience	Type of Resource	Description
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicators of recent sexual assault and common barriers and benefits to disclosure • Facilitating disclosure and understanding your role
<p>Navigating the System While Experiencing Human Trafficking: A Legal Focus. May 2016. plelearningexchange.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Training-Manual.pdf</p> <p>(citation: Adams, K. (2016). Navigating the System While Experiencing Human Trafficking: A Legal Focus. CLEO Project Support for the Coalition Assisting Trafficked Individuals.)</p>	<p>Front line workers in London and Middlesex</p>	<p>Downloadable Training Manual</p>	<p>This training manual is a resource for front line workers in London and Middlesex County when supporting clients that may be experiencing or have experienced human trafficking.</p> <p>Topics covered include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complexities of navigating the legal system • Social and legal issues facing people who are being trafficked • Social service and legal supports available to clients
<p>Evidence Exchange Network for Mental Health and Addictions. An Introduction to Human Trafficking. eenet.ca/initiative/HT#about</p> <p>(©2020 Centre for Addiction and Mental Health)</p>	<p>Mental health and Addiction service providers</p>	<p>Free online course</p>	<p>This 2 to 3-hour online course helps service providers recognize and respond to the needs of human trafficking survivors. Topics covered include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define human trafficking, types and indicators • Common impacts on survivors, especially in the area of mental health and addiction • Approaches that mental health and addiction service providers can use to help human trafficking survivors. <p>Includes a letter of completion once all the content is completed.</p>

Resource	Primary Audience	Type of Resource	Description
<p>Reporting on Gender-Based Violence: A Guide for Journalists. equalpress.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/EP_Guidebook.pdf</p> <p>(citation: Equal Press. (2020). A Project of Mosaic. Reporting on Gender-Based Violence: A Guide for Journalists.)</p>	<p>Journalists</p>	<p>Downloadable PDF</p>	<p>This Guidebook is the product of a 3-year initiative based in Vancouver, B.C. that seeks to address how local news media represents gender and gender-based violence. It endeavours to help journalists integrate a trauma-informed approach into their work.</p> <p>The sections providing an overview of a trauma-informed approach and language and terminology guide offer useful general information and guidance. The language and terminology section provides specific language suggestions.</p>