

Commission Spéciale Sur L'Exploitation Sexuelle Des Mineurs

Assemblée Nationale du Québec

4 Novembre 2019

How the Sex Trade Offender Program Began: Community advocacy

Impact of Street Sexual Exploitation – 1990s

Police identified over 250 children and 750 under the age of 30 who were sexually exploited through street sex trade in 1992.

People were upset and started working together:

- Neighbourhood residents
- Police officers
- Crown prosecutors
- Families whose daughters were exploited
- Women who survived sex trade exploitation
- Front-line outreach and safe house workers



The first “john school” was May 25, 1996

Concerned citizens, parents and formerly exploited women **Advocated** to Alberta Justice, City of Edmonton and Edmonton Police Service – **Take action to reduce the Demand for sexual exploitation and help those who are harmed.**

The Minister of Justice, the Mayor and the Chief Crown Prosecutor heard the concerns and approved the “john school” for first time offenders.

The Alberta Minister of Justice determined the men would be charged the equivalent of a fine and the money would go to a community organization to *heal the harm* because it was the community that raised the concerns, took action and brought the exploitation to the attention of leaders.

Sex Trade Offender Program – “john school”

Programme pour les délinquants du commerce du sexe

Goals:

- **Inform** (federal laws, provincial act “Protection of Sexually Exploited Children”; health risks)
- **Educate** (realities of sex trade: pimps/traffickers/vulnerable youth and adults, impact of online sexually violent and degrading images; sexual addictions, healthy sexuality and relationships)
- **Build Empathy** (stories from community, formerly exploited persons. Family members)

Federal Law: S. 286.1 (seeking to purchase sexual services)

Adult Alternative Measures Program – first time offenders

Three different ways to attend the STOP

- 1) **Arrested for the first time** and have no previous record of violence against women.

Police Arrest through an undercover street or online operation.

Crown Prosecutor determines Eligibility.

Then, referred to Probation after 1st Court appearance.

- 1) **Condition of Probation** after being found guilty for S. 281.1 or even a related sex offence. Crown Prosecutor recommends and Judge decides.

- 1) **Request to come without being arrested** because men have identified they need help.

STOP Curriculum – 8 hours

THE LAWS: Sex Commodification, Purchasing,
Human Trafficking, PSECA

Pimps, Traffickers, Exploitation of youth

Buying Sex Services: Where Does It Lead?

Probation Consequences

Health Risks & Facts &
Voluntary Testing over the lunch hour

Healthy Sexual Behaviours/Addictions
Impact of Pornography

Impact on others– Small group Scenarios

Sexual Exploitation – Personal Impact Stories

Wrap-up: What is one thing you learned today?
What is one positive action you will take as a result
of being here today?

Crown Prosecutor

EPS Human Trafficking & Exploitation Unit

Former Sex Buyer

Probation Officer

Alberta Health Services – STI Outreach Team

**Peer Educators: Sex addiction self-help group
member and former sex trade buyer**

CEASE facilitator & Community Rep

Women with lived experience, Mother

Each man stands and speaks

Why Men Say They Buy Sex Services

- Peer pressure among males
- Girlfriend is ill
- Marriage problems
- Separated
- Lonely
- No strings attached - Anonymous sex
- Stress
- So easily available, advertised all over – she's selling, it's my right to buy
- pornography

Research – over 15% of men attempt to purchase sex at some time in their lives.

Men educating men is powerful: Two men speak at the STOP: one is a former sex trade buyer for 35 years; one is a member of a sex addiction self-help group.

They ask the men: first time?

- 30% - 50% of you are true first-timers:

Say to yourself: you are lucky you got arrested and you didn't get into the cycle of hunting

- 50% of you have purchased sex one or more times:

Ask yourself: why did you go again? Excitement, getting into risky situations, addictive looking at websites and escort reviews

Suggestions:

Q: Is hunting for sex trade workers helping you to achieve your goals in life?

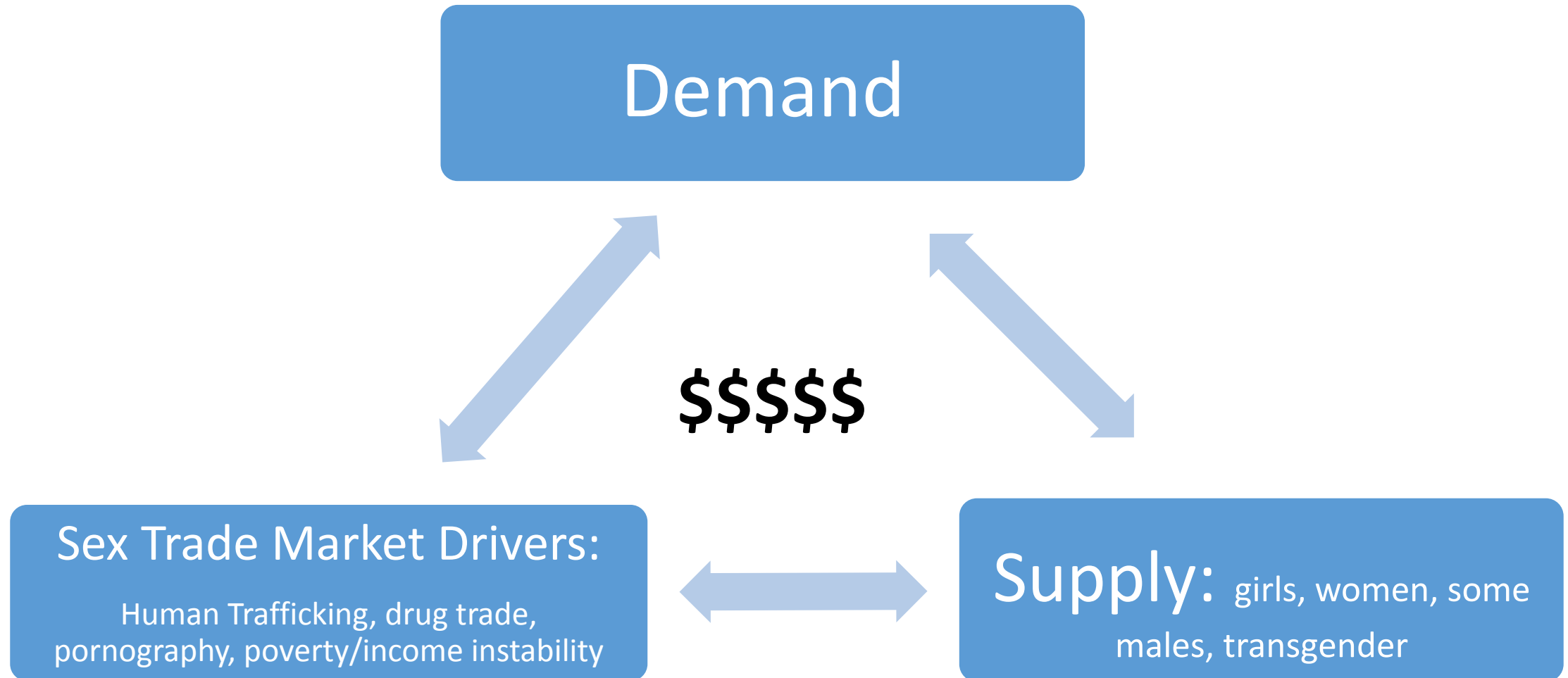
Q: Can you commit: don't make contact for 3 months; put reminders on your phone; filters on your computer; plan ahead when you know you will be in risky situations

Scenarios – small group discussions

Beginning to build empathy

- **Community Impact: what if you lived in this neighbourhood?**
 - You find your 4 year old daughter playing with a used condom
 - You find a man with a young woman in a truck behind your garage
 - Children see you picking up women outside their school
- **Pretend you are the women in these experiences:**
 - You have to line up in a massage parlour for men to choose you.
 - You are an Asian woman who was physically assaulted because you are older than the internet ad that portrayed you as 19 and willing to do anything.
 - You are your wife, who is diagnosed with an STI because you had unprotected sex.
 - You are the hotel worker having to pick up the condoms you leave in the room.

Ask the men: Where do YOU fit into the picture?
YOU create the *Demand* that fuels exploitation.



Building Empathy through Stories of Impact

Courageous women share:

- Indigenous woman who was sexually exploited for 25 years since childhood
- Caucasian woman exploited in massage parlours and escort agencies
- Mother of a young woman who was murdered.



Who are the men who exploit others?

There isn't a typical sex trade buyer

- All ages, social, education, income levels
- Average Age: Forties (35-54)
- Range: 18 – 78 years (under 18s go to youth sentencing circles)
- At least 50 - 60% are married, common-law, have girlfriend
- 58% have children, including adult children
- Majority completed high school & some post-secondary

Men's Comments at End of Day

- Eye-opener – learned about the other people affected by my actions
- Thank you for your stories – they helped me understand
- I will tell other men what I learned today
- Before this – I blamed women, I am divorced, now I see it differently
- I never want my daughters to go through this
- Glad I got caught – wake-up call – I wanted to stop, but, couldn't seem to
- There are two sides, I have my own demons, you taught me I need to deal with my demons
- I don't want to see people going through this trauma just because of my actions
- Touched by stories, inspired to engage in this work and help out
- I was only thinking about myself and won't be doing this again
- I will change my life from today

Is the “john school” approach successful?

Starting Point: Approximately 75% of those arrested by EPS are eligible for the Adult Alternative Measures Program – first time arrested.

Others have serious records of violence against women, or were arrested before for this charge, and do not qualify.

- Re-arrest rate after attending the STOP – ranges from 1 – 3% per year.

The arrest and the attendance at the STOP **interrupts** an unhealthy, predatory cycle. It **deters** men from engaging in this behaviour again.

It helps men improve their own lives, review their relationships with the women in their lives.

The fees they pay fund important healing programs for those harmed.

How are the fees from the STOP utilized?

CEASE: Centre to End All Sexual Exploitation is the community agency delegated to facilitate the STOP and to utilize the fees.

The priorities are for programs and direct assistance to those who are harmed and exploited:

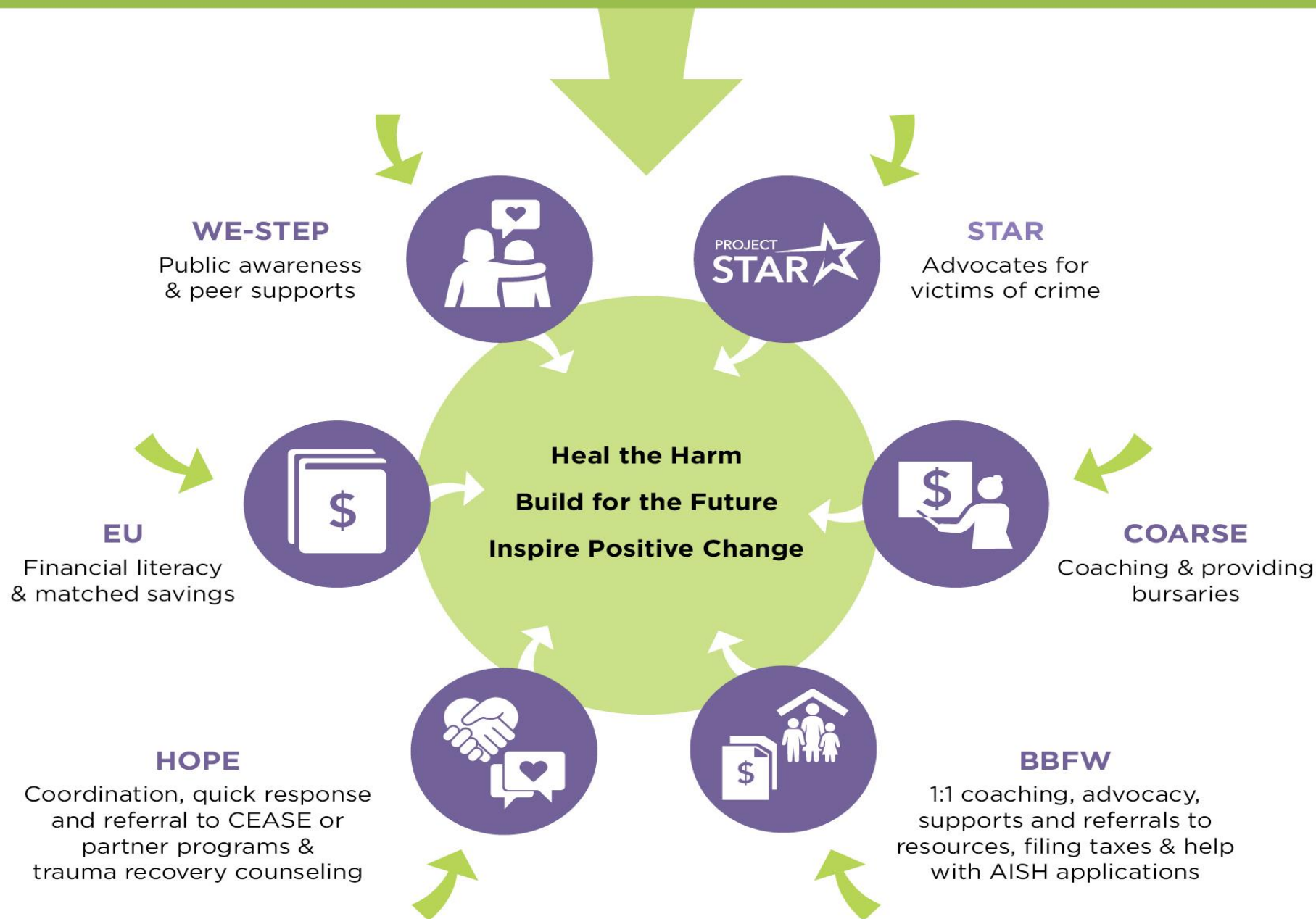
Heal the Harm

Build for the Future

Inspire Positive Social Change

CIRCLE OF SUPPORTS

Enter CEASE circle from anywhere and connect to supports



Alberta Action for Minors

- Alberta is marking 20 years of taking action to protect children and youth who are sexually exploited. This is Child Sexual Abuse.
 - Sadly, there is still a *demand* for sex children and youth, there are still pimps, traffickers and other exploiters.
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- <https://www.alberta.ca/what-is-child-abuse-neglect-and-sexual-exploitation.aspx>
 - <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/p30p3>

Protection of Sexually Exploited Children Act (PSECA)

Loi sur la protection des enfants sexuellement exploités

In 1999, Alberta created legislation and protective services for children/youth under 18 who are sexually exploited. They may be apprehended for their own safety by law enforcement or Children's Services social workers.

- Protective safe house – safe from pimps, drug dealers; focus on trauma recovery, regaining physical health social workers.
- Community support once a youth leaves the safe house.
- The PSECA Team is: Children's Services, Edmonton Police Service, Alberta Health Services Youth Mental Health & Addictions, and two community agencies providing community support.

Public Awareness is Essential

Billboards, transit ads, radio, internet ads and social media campaigns.

The Edmonton Police Service is a leader and has published ads in newspapers and on Transit.

They are working on digital outreach via LeoList to the men who are texting online.

They encourage people to “report-a-john” on the EPS website:

<https://www.edmontonpolice.ca/CommunityPolicing/FamilyProtection/SexTrade/ReportAJohnForm>

Stop the *Demand* – Educate the men



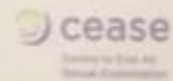
What will your partner think?

BUYING SEX IS A CRIME.CA

Dear 'john';

DEAR 'john'

**Going out for milk,
just giving that
young girl a ride.
Really?**



#Dearjohn



Grande Prairie, Alberta Educating Sex Trade Buyers



BUYING SEX IS A CRIME

You can help **STOP** Sexual
Exploitation in our community

Report-A-John
Confidential Tip Line

CALL 780-830-7077

WITH A LICENSE PLATE NUMBER

WWW.GPCRIMEPREVENTION.CA



#NotInMyCity – Edmonton Airport Ad, 2019

<https://www.notinmycity.ca/>

PATSON

Children under the age of 18 are being sexually exploited in Canada.
It is a crime.

It should not be happening.
Not here. Not anywhere.
#not in my city

EIA EDMONTON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

EDMONTON POLICE SERVICE

REACH EDMONTON
Council for Safe Communities

Edmonton

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