



ANTI-SEX TRAFFICKING PROTOCOL

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Statement of Purpose

The *Policy/Program Memorandum 166 Keeping Students Safe: Policy Framework for School Board Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocols* (PPM166) sets a strong foundation for Ontario school boards to build local anti-sex trafficking protocols.

Ontario's Anti-Human Trafficking Strategy (2020-2025) calls for "continuing education and prevention efforts geared to children and youth through Ontario schools, building on the school curriculum." This protocol will support coordinated action by all community partners to prevent, identify, and recognize sex trafficking and to develop responses to facilitate early and appropriate intervention¹.

Welcoming and engaging school environments lead to positive student experiences, especially when families and communities are intentionally involved in the students' learning². Safe Schools, both physically and psychologically, are a critical element to successfully nurturing positive student experiences.

Due to almost daily contact with students, teachers and other education staff are well placed to educate on prevention and promote healthy relationships, to notice troubling changes in behaviour, and to connect with students as caring adults. By training staff to recognize the signs of sex trafficking, they will be better equipped to identify the cues and to safely intervene if they suspect a student is being trafficked or involved in trafficking. Education can also serve as a key factor in helping survivors or persons with lived experience of trafficking heal and rebuild their lives, helping to prevent re-victimization, and resetting students on a healing trajectory towards positive outcomes.

The protocol should be utilized **EVERY TIME** a staff member identifies risks or signs that a child/youth is at risk of being trafficked or a student reports being trafficked.

It is the duty of all staff members to take every threat of human trafficking seriously and take action.

The type of action required is outlined in the following pages of this document.

¹ In response to: [Legislative Assembly of Ontario, Private members' motions](#), 42nd Parliament, 1st Session, Motion 122 voted and carried on December 3, 2020.

² Ministry of Education. (2021). [Parent Engagement: Encouraging Parent Involvement in Schools](#).

Reporting of Children Suspected to need Protection

Teachers and Principals have a duty to report children in need of protection to a children's aid society. Teachers and Principals who have reasonable grounds to suspect the abuse or neglect of a child shall forthwith report the suspicion and the information on which it is based to a society. The duty to report applies to any child who is, or appears to be, under the age of 16 years. On January 1, 2018, Ontario raised the age of protection from 16 to 18. A professional, or member of the public, who is concerned that a 16-or 17-year-old is or may need protection may, but is not required to, make a report to a society and the society is required to assess the reported information. [CYFSA, s. 125(4)]

For additional information, refer to the document "Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect: It's Your Duty: Your Responsibilities under the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017", which is available at:

http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/documents/childrensaid/reportingchildabuseandneglect_EN.pdf

Important Facts About Child and Youth Sex Trafficking

- Over two-thirds of police-reported human trafficking violations in Canada occur in Ontario.
- A person can be trafficked anywhere, including their home community.
- Any person under the age of 18 cannot consent to engage in sex work.
- When a person under the age of 18 is advertised for sex, it is a criminal offence.
- More than 70 per cent of known human trafficking victims identified by police are under the age of 25, and 28 per cent are under 18.
- The average age of recruitment into sex trafficking is 13 years old.
- People who are being trafficked, as well as people who encounter them, may not know, or understand that a crime is taking place.
- Young women and girls are particularly vulnerable, especially those from Indigenous communities and children and youth in care, though boys, men and people who are 2SLGBTQQIAAP+ are also targeted.
- It can be very difficult for a person to leave a trafficking situation as sex traffickers manipulate them to make them believe that they are better off staying than leaving.

Statement of Principles

A role for parents/guardians/caregivers

Parents, guardians and caregivers are key partners in the development, implementation and review of school board anti-sex trafficking protocols. Care must be given when reaching out to parents, families and caregivers to ensure they are safe adults prior to engaging with them on matters regarding the student/s. Outreach to Indigenous parents and guardians, as well as outreach to Black and racialized parents and guardians, should be trauma-informed and recognize historic and systemic barriers that may impact their participation. Every effort should also be made to reduce cultural and/or linguistic barriers when reaching out to parents, guardians and caregivers about this work.

Foster student voices

Students are at the centre of this work and should be involved in efforts to develop actions against sex trafficking. Student groups should be invited to participate and inform the design, development, delivery and implementation of anti-sex trafficking protocols. Students with lived experience are experts and, if willing and appropriately supported through trauma-informed approaches, can share their story and insights as part of efforts to build awareness and empower students.

Build multi-sectoral relationships with community organizations

Ongoing consultation and engagement with community groups/agencies that support members of the school community are essential to supporting anti-sex trafficking approaches that are responsive to diverse students and the needs of local school communities.

The Rainy River District School Board partnered with The Northwest Catholic District School Board, in the development of this protocol as well as the following community agencies and organizations:

Ontario Provincial Police
Treaty Three Police Services
Rainy River District Victim Services Program
Weechi-It-Te-Win Child and Family Services
Kenora Rainy River Child and Family Services (KRRCF)
Fort Frances Tribal Health Services
Binesiwag Centre for Wellness
Northwestern Health Unit
Grand Council Treaty #3, MMIWG Social Department
United Native Friendship Centre

Interventions must be safe

Caring adults and students within schools can promote a sense of student belonging, increase protective factors, help to reduce risk factors associated with sex trafficking, and support early intervention through identification and appropriate response, including connecting impacted persons to supportive services.

School board employees require comprehensive anti-sex trafficking training, so they:

- are equipped to identify the signs of sex trafficking
- safely respond to disclosures
- are culturally relevant and responsive to diverse student populations
- support the immediate physical and emotional safety needs of students.

Training must emphasize how to respond to immediate dangers and the need to avoid actions that will make an individual's situation worse or more unsafe.

Build up school-based prevention

The development of the protocol will complement existing prevention efforts in schools, including the teaching of consent, healthy relationships and healthy sexuality. It is important for school staff to understand the historical and social context of sex trafficking and implement prevention strategies that are responsive to the needs of students and members of the local school community.

Respect confidentiality, privacy and informed consent

Inherent within this protocol is the respect for confidentiality, and the work to ensure that the student fully understands how their information may be used or with whom it may be shared. It is key to develop referral relationships with community service organizations while adhering to applicable legal requirements, including those under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*; the *Ontario Human Rights Code*; the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*; the *Education Act*; and the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017*.

Promote equitable and culturally safe responses

Protocols should demonstrate a human rights-based, non-judgemental, culturally responsive, survivor-centered and trauma-informed approach to raising awareness, preventing, identifying and responding to sex trafficking.

Who is Most Vulnerable?

Sexual exploitation can happen to anyone regardless of age, sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, family history, ethnicity, religion, or geographic location. There are, however, several factors that may make a youth more vulnerable to being exploited and/or trafficked.

Traffickers and exploiters are experts at identifying vulnerable youth through their interactions. Whether online or in person, traffickers strategically prey and manipulate youth based on their weaknesses and unique vulnerabilities. Individuals are may be more at risk include:

- Runaway, homeless, or impoverished youth
- Youth in foster care
- Youth who have experienced sexual, physical, or emotional abuse and neglect
- Youth who live with mental health problems and/or diagnoses
- Youth who identify as 2SLGBTQQIAAP+
- Youth who have FASD or struggle with alcohol and/or drug addiction
- Youth who experience low self-confidence and esteem
- Immigrant youth or newcomers to Canada
- Youth who identify as Indigenous
- Youth experiencing a sense of security and belonging to their community, school, or family
- Youth who lack culturally appropriate programming in surrounding communities
- Youth who have learning disabilities or cognitive impairments

How Trafficking Can Happen

A person can be trafficked anywhere, including in their home community. People who are being trafficked, and the people around them, may not know that a crime is taking place.

Traffickers identify and target a person's vulnerabilities to gain trust and form a bond.

Some people who are trafficked are controlled and monitored constantly and don't have the opportunity to ask for help. Others may not realize or acknowledge what is happening to them or that it is a crime.

Traffickers can control and manipulate victims using:

- emotional abuse
- lies
- addiction
- threats

- violence
- isolation
- taking control of identification, documents, or money

Some people who are trafficked may fear their trafficker or law enforcement too much to risk getting help. They may also be manipulated to believe that the trafficker is the only person who cares about them and that they are best off staying with their trafficker.

Sex traffickers purposely develop a bond with the person they are trafficking and manipulate them by making them believe they are better off staying than leaving. For this and other reasons, the trafficked person may fear and resist police intervention. This bond is developed in stages, over time.

This is different from sex work, where the person is over 18 and legally able to consent.

How Recruitment into Sex Trafficking Can Happen

- 1. Luring**

The sex trafficker can be a stranger, someone connected to the victim through social media or someone they know personally. The trafficker may suddenly be very interested in the victim, say nice things, take them out and spend money on them.
- 2. Grooming**

The sex trafficker may act like a generous boyfriend or friend, make the victim feel adored and spend money on things like lingerie, accessories, and new clothes. They may also try to get the victim to look older or sexier and push their boundaries by trying out risky behaviours, such as trying drugs or alcohol, missing school or other extracurricular activities, and taking sexually explicit photos.
- 3. Isolation**

The sex trafficker may try to distance the victim from friends and family, and make the victim feel like they are the only person who cares about them. This helps the trafficker assert control.
- 4. Manipulation**

At some point the sex trafficker will ask the victim to do sexual things with them or others, to “repay” them for the money that has been spent on them, to maintain their new lifestyle, or to earn money for their future together. The sex trafficker may also tell the victim that the victim owes someone money and something bad will happen to them if they don’t do what the trafficker wants.
- 5. Threats**

The sex trafficker may try to coerce the victim into sex by threatening to expose the things (e.g., explicit photographs) that they’ve done to others. They may also threaten to hurt the victim or someone they care about.
- 6. Exploitation**

The sex trafficker’s main goal is to control and exploit the victim by forcing them to have sex in exchange for things they need or want, or for money. Traffickers may abuse a relationship of trust, authority, or dependency with the victim to exploit them. If the victim tries to say no, the trafficker may threaten to harm them or someone they care about. Often the victim is not fully aware that coercion and threatening behaviour is happening because they are communicated in covert ways.

When someone is being trafficked, their traffickers often control every aspect of their life, including when they eat and sleep, what they wear and who they talk to. People who are being trafficked and people who meet them, may not know, or understand that a crime is taking place.

This is a broad overview of how sex trafficking may occur. Not all circumstances follow this pattern or include each of these elements.

Warning Signs

Someone might be a victim of **human trafficking** if they:

- are not allowed to speak for themselves and their activities are controlled by someone else
- are under 18 and involved in prostitution or sex work
- are unpaid or paid very little to work and seem to be treated poorly (long or unusual hours, not allowed breaks or forced to live in poor conditions)
- are repaying a large debt through labour or sex
- seem fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, tense, nervous or paranoid (they may avoid eye contact or seem fearful around police)
- show signs of abuse, such as bruising, cigarette burns or fractures
- have tattooing or branding symbols, particularly names
- don't have their own belongings or money, and don't control their own passport or other documents
- seem malnourished or lack medical care
- move frequently and may not know their surroundings well
- have been reported missing

Someone might be being groomed for **sex trafficking** if they:

- are withdrawing from family and friends
- are being secretive about their activities
- have a new boyfriend, girlfriend, or friend who they won't introduce to friends and family
- suddenly spend time with an older person or people
- begin staying out more often and later
- are absent from school or there is a decline in school performance
- begin wearing more sexualized clothing
- have new clothing and jewelry that they can't afford to buy
- suddenly have a new or second cell phone with a secret number

Strategies to Raise Awareness and Prevent Sex Trafficking

Education and prevention are the key to any successful Anti-Sex Trafficking effort. By empowering the students, staff, and families to recognize and respond to warning signs we can help prevent students from being impacted by Sex Trafficking.

Prevention is the key to any successful Anti-Sex Trafficking effort. If we can empower the system, students and families to recognize and respond to warning signs we can help prevent students from being impacted by Sex Trafficking.

The Protocol in its entirety will be available on the School Board Website which is accessible to the public. The Board will also advertise the availability and location of the Protocol via social media once completed, for anyone to review and reference. Copies will be provided to each staff at staff meetings, via E-mail and paper format as well as posted in all School Administration and Mental Health Offices.

For Students

Schools have the widest reach and access to all children. A possible strategy is to have subject matter experts attend junior and intermediate grades on a minimum of an annual basis to educate students and raise awareness on the signs a student is being targeted, lured, groomed or is trafficking another student, and how to bring concerns about luring, grooming, recruitment or exiting Sex Trafficking to a caring adult in the school.

Indigenous Women and Girls are disproportionately overrepresented in Sex Trafficking. Our preventative measures include education to students on the continued impacts of colonialism on Indigenous People and how it intersects with Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. The Indigenous Education Lead partners with community agencies to support educators to bring content into the classrooms and build awareness with students around culturally appropriate supports and services that are available to students outside and inside of the school.

Curriculum-based learning about healthy relationships, consent, mental health and well-being, coping skills, personal safety and online safety is also part of preventative measures and the process is detailed under the **In Class** section below.

Students may not have a caring adult in the school or at home that they feel safe to ask questions or disclose to. They may choose a peer, or to not come forward at all. Resources such as the National Hotline are posted throughout the school (in bathrooms, offices, etc.), on Board social media and websites so students can get the information and resources they need any time and remain anonymous.

In Class

Technology and tools available to keep students safe:

The Rainy River District School Board provides Chromebooks for students in Grades 1-12 to use for educational purposes during instructional time. Various safeguards are in place to protect students from online threats, namely the following:

- Chat functions are disabled, and if an exception is made for learning purposes, RRDSB Information Technology (IT) staff can view and review all chat history.
- Signing into alternate accounts on RRDSB Chromebooks is disabled.
- Website filters and Firewalls prevent access to inappropriate websites. The search history can also be viewed by Board IT staff at any time.
- Go Guardian is installed on Chromebooks so Educators using the technology can view students' screens to monitor usage during instructional time.
- FortiClient protection protects potential "hacking" of student's Chromebook.
- RRDSB web filtering is automated Board wide through our FortiClient and is updated regularly throughout the day from a global service. Anyone can submit a review of a site that then gets evaluated by the service.

The 2019 elementary Health and Physical Education Curriculum contains preventative education around relationships and wellbeing. It helps students learn skills to identify, develop, and maintain healthy relationships as well as to identify and respond to physically and mentally harmful behaviours, including exploitative and coercive behaviours, and how to seek help as needed. These skills help protect against human/sex trafficking. [The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, 2019 - revised](#) is designed to be developmentally appropriate, and students develop and build these skills in every grade:

- In Grades 1-3, students begin to learn skills to identify, develop and maintain healthy relationships, to identify and respond to physically and mentally harmful behaviours, including exploitative behaviours and how to seek help as needed.
- In Grades 4-8, students continue to develop the skills they need to stay safe (in person and online) and how to help themselves and others.
- Learning about sex trafficking is explicitly included in the examples and sample teacher prompt/student responses of learning expectations in Grades 7 and 8.

Education and School Administrators will partner annually with community agencies to bring in subject matter experts into the intermediate and junior classrooms to educate and promote age appropriate awareness on Sex Trafficking. One-time presentations alone are not sufficient; presentations must be preempted or followed by appropriate curriculum content. The Mental Health Lead is the primary contact for connecting Schools to the applicable local community partners.

The Mental Health Lead is uniquely positioned to be an additional resource to both students and staff on Sex Trafficking. Participation in local training and committee opportunities is part of the role of the Mental Health Lead to ensure the most up to date information on Sex Trafficking resources and responses are available to staff.

Families and the Community

Partnerships with community service providers will help the RRDSB to be up to date on information and resources that are available for families around Sex Trafficking. These partnerships include RRDSB presentations to the Parent Involvement Committee and School Councils, promotion of events and resources via social media to advertise to the school community, as well as partnering to bring subject matter expert sessions for families and the community. Consideration is always given to making the format as accessible as possible to all, with varied formats (virtual, in person, etc.) of delivery considered when planning events.

Parent/guardian information:

- Education of parents/guardians through information posted on the RRDSB website, newsletters sent home, information shared on Seesaw and PowerSchool parent portal
- Promotion of events and resources through social media to advertise to the school community
- Reporting process – The Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline 1-833-900-1010 – Both the webchat and calls operate 24/7 and are responded to in real time by professional, trained anti-trafficking Hotline Response Advocates providing service in English and French
- Ongoing information updates for newsletters from the RRDSB Mental Health lead
- Speak Out: Stop Sex Trafficking resource <https://endindigenoustrafficking.com/> made available on the RRDSB website

Ongoing education of students:

- Curriculum-based learning through the Health and Physical Education expectations about healthy relationships, consent, mental health and well-being, coping skills, and personal safety
- Learning about Online safety through commonsense.org <https://www.common sense.org/>
- Implementation of Kids in the Know program from the Ontario Provincial Police
- Ongoing in-class presentations from community partners/subject experts on anti-sex trafficking and culturally appropriate supports and services available to students
- Response protocol shared in schools and school community

- Ongoing information updates for newsletters from the RRDSB Mental Health Lead
- Ongoing staff professional development from community partners on anti-sex trafficking and culturally appropriate supports and services available to students
- Mental Health lead participation ongoing with the Be the Voice Committee (Tribal Health) to support prevention and education of students
- Use of the resources:
 - Speak Out: Stop Sex Trafficking resource
<https://endindigenoustrafficking.com/>
 - The Trap: human trafficking digital education tool
<https://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/htapp/>
 - Mandatory OCT Training
<https://oct.ca/becoming-a-teacher/requirements/sexual-abuse-prevention-program>

Directory of Services Available

Information and Support Hotlines:

- [Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline](#) 1-833-900-1010
- Talk4Healing 1-855-554-4325 (HEAL)
- Kids Help Phone 1-800-668-6868 or text 686868
- First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line 1-855-242-3310
- Canadian Centre for Child Protection <https://www.cybertip.ca/app/en/>

Child Protection and Police Reporting:

- Weechi-it-te-win Family Service 1-800-465-2911
- Kenora- Rainy River Districts Child and Family Services 1-800-465-1100
- Ontario Provincial Police - Dial 9-1-1 or call 1-888-310-1122
- Treaty 3 Police Service 1-888-310-1122

Community Supports Rainy River District:

- Tribal Area Health Services (807) 807-274-2042
- Grand Council Treaty 3 Social Department 1-800-665-3384
- United Native Friendship Centre (807) 274-8541
- Binesiwag Centre for Wellness (807) 276-3376
- Rainy River District Victim Services (807) 274-5687
- Firefly hotline 1-800-465-1100
- First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line 1-855-242-3310
- Atikokan General Hospital 1-807-597-4215
- Emo Health Care 1-807-274-3261 ext. 5500
- La Verendrye Hospital 1-807-274-3261
- Rainy River Health Centre 1-807-274-3261 ext. 6500

Response Procedures

RRDSB Quick Guide to Human Trafficking Response Requirements in Schools

When an **EDUCATOR** or **ADMINISTRATOR** receives a disclosure or suspects human trafficking:

<p>Remember that making a disclosure is a highly vulnerable experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to the student without judgement. • Consider your bias: it may be hard to understand or empathize with some of the choices students make, or the barriers they experience. • Be aware of and soften your body language. • Mirror their language e.g.; if they say “boyfriend,” use this term. • Do not probe for their story, instead connect the student with support. • Avoid making promises you are not able to keep (e.g.; no confidentiality).
<p>If an <i>EDUCATOR</i> receives a disclosure or suspects human trafficking...</p>	
<p>Keep the student safe</p>	<p>*Always make the student aware that you are obliged to disclose any information regarding illegal activity with your administrator and possibly the Police and a Child Protection Agency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware that a threat to their safety may be imminent and an immediate response and intervention is required. • Do not leave the student alone.
<p>Explain your role</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain that your role in supporting the student is to connect them with professionals who can help respond to the concern they have shared with you. These roles include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. reporting to the school Administration; b. the duty to report child protection concerns; c. if the student identifies you as a key support, and the administrator determines this is appropriate, offering to be present in subsequent conversations between the student, administration, and community partners engaged in the response
<p>Reporting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protection Agency - Duty to Report <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. For students under 16 years of age, staff MUST report to the administrator and a child protection agency; b. For students 16 and 17 years of age, staff MUST report to the administrator and may report to a child protection agency. Please refer to Procedure 4.00 Reporting Suspected Child Abuse for guidance Rainy River District School Board (rrdsb.com) • Canadian Human Trafficking hotline - operates 24 hours, 7 days a week at: 1-833-900-1010 OR Use the Chat function on their website www.canadianhumantraffickinghotline.ca <i>It connects victims and survivors of human trafficking to law enforcement, emergency shelters, transition housing, long-term supports, counselors, and a range of other trauma-informed services. Services offered in 200+ languages and are accessible to the deaf, hard-of-hearing and non-verbal.</i> • Human Trafficking Specific Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Call directly to the Ontario Provincial Police - 1-888-310-1122 <p>Disclosure - Response Requirements MUST follow the Police and School Boards Protocol POLICE AND SCHOOL BOARD RESPONSE PROTOCOL (rrdsb.com)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Request an officer skilled at working with vulnerable youth. Meet with police first to outline known information before the police meets with the student.
<p>Contact School Admin</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediately contact your school administrator regardless of the age of the student.

If an ADMINISTRATOR receives a disclosure or suspects human trafficking...	
Keep the student safe	<p>*Always make the student aware that you may be obliged to disclose any information regarding illegal activity with the Police and a Child Protection Agency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure the student remains supervised by school staff. ● Ensure the student is not being re-victimized by having them repeat their story.
Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Child Protection Agency - Duty to Report <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. For students under 16 years of age, staff MUST report to the administrator and a child protection agency; b. For students 16 and 17 years of age, staff MUST report to the administrator and may report to a child protection agency. Please refer to Procedure 4.00 Reporting Suspected Child Abuse for guidance Rainy River District School Board (rrdsb.com) ● Canadian Human Trafficking hotline - operates 24 hours, 7 days a week at: 1-833-900-1010 OR Use the Chat function on their website www.canadianhumantraffickinghotline.ca <i>It connects victims and survivors of human trafficking to law enforcement, emergency shelters, transition housing, long-term supports, counselors, and a range of other trauma-informed services. Services offered in 200+ languages and are accessible to the deaf, hard-of-hearing and non-verbal.</i> ● Human Trafficking Specific Support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Call directly to the Ontario Provincial Police - 1-888-310-1122 <p>Disclosure - Response Requirements MUST follow the Police and School Boards Protocol POLICE AND SCHOOL BOARD RESPONSE PROTOCOL (rrdsb.com)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Request an officer skilled at working with vulnerable youth. <p>Meet with police first to outline known information before the police meets with the student.</p>
Contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Call Superintendent 807-274-9855
Contact Parent/Guardian, except...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Call parent/guardian prior to the police meeting with the student, except if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Directed not to contact parent/guardian by Child Protection Agency or RRDSB; ○ Student who is 18 years or older; ○ Student is 16 or 17 and has withdrawn from parental control

Supporting The Return of Students to School Following a Disclosure

Returning to School following a Disclosure or Incident

School can be a source of comfort for students or a source of stress. Vary the approach depending on the needs of the student.

Students who have been involved in Sex Trafficking need special care when they return to school. A return to school plan must be made for each instance, and should include consideration of the following key elements:

- Obtain parent/guardian permission to share and receive information with any collateral agencies involved (if over age 12 the student's consent) for consultation about the return plan.
- Obtain parent/guardian permission and student consent to share information with school staff (or selected staff) about their needs at school.
- A meeting between the School Principal, student, family, and support persons (both external and internal) identified by the family will occur prior to the return to school to determine how the school can best support the student. A safety and support plan will be completed at this time and documented. The plan will be given to the student and shared with parents and staff as appropriate.
- Ensure student safety during the school day, the following of the return plan, and check in and monitoring of well-being throughout the day from trusted staff members identified by the student.
- The student may require additional mental health supports, if they indicate agreement a referral to mental health supports may be warranted, contact the Mental Health Lead at (807) 275-4992 for resources available.
- If other students are aware of the situation, monitor and support students as appropriate.

When Peers/Other Students are involved in the Trafficking of other Students

Recruitment by Other Students

It's important to note that students or peers may be involved in the recruiting or trafficking of other students. In these instances, they still require the same care and intervention of those being trafficked. These students have often themselves experienced trafficking, coercion, threats, and fear for their safety and as such, deserve the same caring response.

If you suspect or are made aware of a student recruiting or trafficking another student, the reporting process is to be followed, giving the students involved the same care and safety measures.

The Police will provide further advice on how to address the occurrences in the school and support the response. Any additional questions or concerns contact the Mental Health Lead at (807) 275-4992.

Self-Care

Supporting students who may be involved with sex trafficking can be emotionally upsetting and/or stressful work. Your principals, school superintendent, as well as board staff responsible for Mental Health, can be resources to you as you plan for the student's safety and well-being.

Support is also available through your Employee Assistance Program or you can search for providers in your area with Connexontario <https://www.connexontario.ca/en-ca/>. If you are concerned for someone you care about or are looking for immediate supports call Crisis Response Services at 1-866-888-8988

Training for School Board Employees

The successful implementation of the Anti-Sex Trafficking protocol requires the training of staff at all levels to promote awareness, identify warning signs and how to support students impacted by Sex Trafficking. Training will include:

- Key definitions, common misconceptions and myths about Sex Trafficking,
- Learning about human rights-based approaches to combatting Sex Trafficking, including the application of an equity lens, anti-racism, a gender-based lens, trauma-informed approaches and Indigenous cultural competencies,
- Information on protective factors and prevention-focused supports and resources,
- Information on risk factors and signs that a student is at risk, being lured, groomed or trafficked,
- Supports available to students and affected staff, including culturally responsive supports,
- Additional training and resources to support staff to understand and safely respond to Sex Trafficking,
- The Board Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocol and Response Procedures.

The Ontario College of Teachers has partnered with the Canadian Centre for Child Protection on the development and deployment of an online sexual abuse prevention program. It is mandatory for all Ontario Certified Teachers to complete.

[Sexual Abuse Prevention Program](#)

Indigenous Education staff, Mental Health staff and School Principals/Vice Principals are integral positions for role modelling and disseminating information on Sex-Trafficking to staff and students on an ongoing basis. Additional training resources and opportunities will be provided to these key groups throughout the year and/or as it becomes available.

Training can include but not be limited to the following:

- What to expect when you call the National Hotline, with a presentation on what to expect when you call, coordinated through the Mental Health lead.
- CODE Webinars for Principals and Managers available through the Ministry VLE.
- Ministry of the Attorney General – Online Training Initiative to Address Human Trafficking, developed by Survivors, based on life experience. The training can be found at <http://helpingtraffickedpersons.org>

Measuring Success: Accountability and Evaluation

The Ministry of Education will collaborate with school boards, as well as anti-human trafficking partners, to develop a performance measurement framework. This framework will monitor the effectiveness of training (for example, whether staff feel they are more aware and more able to safely identify and intervene in situations where a student is suspected of being trafficked or trafficking) and whether the protocols respond to the needs of students.

The Protocol will be reviewed at minimum every five years.

Measurement includes:

- completion rates of training by staff and follow up survey
- number of in-class presentations by community partners
- review of Protocol based on anecdotal feedback by staff implementing it
- School Climate Survey results
- Number of partners involved

References

Ontario Government (2021). *Ontario's Anti-Human Trafficking Strategy 2020-2025*. <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontarios-anti-human-trafficking-strategy-2020-2025>

Specialized Anti Human Trafficking Services and Supports in Ontario

A list of dedicated services and supports across Ontario that help victims, survivors and persons at risk of human trafficking can be accessed here:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/human-trafficking-services-and-supports>

This includes community and Indigenous-led organizations who provide specialized services and supports to victims of human trafficking across the province.

Online Child Sexual Exploitation

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-safety-canada/campaigns/online-child-sexual-exploitation.html>

Canadian Centre for Child Protection (2021). Cybertip.ca.

Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking (2020). *Human Trafficking Trends in Canada*. <https://www.canadiancentretoendhumantrafficking.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/ENG-Human-Trafficking-Trends-in-Canada-%E2%80%93-2019-20-Report-Final-1.pdf>

Ministry of Education, Ontario Government (2021). *Policy-Program Memorandum 166*. <https://www.ontario.ca/document/education-ontario-policy-and-program-direction/policyprogram-memorandum-166>

Montreal Urban Aboriginal Community Network (2021). *Indigenous Ally Tool Kit*. https://physiotherapy.ca/sites/default/files/indigenous_ally_toolkit_en.pdf

The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2021). *Final Report: Reclaiming Power and Place*. <https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/>

Glossary of Terms

Sex Trafficking: Is a form of sexual exploitation and is a crime under the *Criminal Code of Canada*. It can include recruiting, harbouring, transporting, obtaining, or providing a person for the purpose of sex. It involves the use of force, physical or psychological coercion or deception. Most individuals who are trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation are women and girls, but all people may be targeted.

2SLGBTQIA: Refers to Two-spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex and Asexual. We are aware this acronym is an umbrella term which refers to people who identify with different sexualities. It is always best practice to ask individuals for clarification.

Anti-racism: Is a process, a systematic method of analysis, and a proactive course of action rooted in the recognition of the existence of racism, including systemic racism. Anti-racism actively seeks to identify, remove, prevent, and mitigate racially inequitable outcomes and power imbalances between groups and change the structures that sustain inequities.

Cultural Sensitivity: Refers to “an environment that is spiritually, socially and emotionally respectful, as well as physically safe for people. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience of learning together.” [footnote 1](#)
“Extends beyond language to include a much larger set of professional attitudes, knowledge, behaviours and practices, and organizational policies, standards and performance management mechanisms.” [footnote 2](#)

Equity lens: Involves “strategically, intentionally and holistically examining the impact of an issue, policy or proposed solution on underserved and historically marginalized communities and population subgroups, with the goal of leveraging research findings to inform policy.” [footnote 3](#)

Human rights-based approach: Is a “conceptual framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights. It seeks to analyze inequalities which lie at the heart of development problems and redress discriminatory practices and unjust distributions of power that impede development progress.” [footnote 4](#)

Ally: Is a trusted adult who supports, advocates for, and works with young people to create supportive and collaborative spaces, puts aside biases and assumptions, and ensures that students are heard and validated.

Survivor: Is a term used to refer to an individual who has escaped a trafficking situation, whereas *victim* is used to refer to an individual who is in the process of being recruited or is being trafficked. The term survivor may also be used to refer to an adult

with lived experience of being trafficked. This approach is used for clarity and not intended to label or define an individual's experience. Individuals who have experienced sex trafficking may prefer one term over another to describe their experiences. School board employees should confirm how an individual impacted by trafficking prefers to be referenced. (e.g., survivor vs person with lived experience)

Tactics: Strategies used by traffickers to target, recruit, manipulate and coerce victims. This can often involve a process of targeting an individual's vulnerabilities then luring, grooming, isolating, manipulating, controlling, and exploiting a victim to then conduct sexual acts (for example, forcing a victim to have sex, to take images of child sexual abuse). Often, a victim may not be aware that exploitation is happening, and victims may be forced to recruit other victims.

Trauma-informed approaches: Are “policies and practices that recognize the connections between violence, trauma, negative health outcomes and behaviours. These approaches increase safety, control and resilience for people who are seeking services in relation to experiences of violence and/or have a history of experiencing violence.” [footnote 5](#)

Victim: Is used to refer to an individual who is in the process of being recruited or is being trafficked, whereas *survivor* is used to refer to an individual who has escaped a trafficking situation. The term victim is often used to refer to a child who has experienced sexual exploitation. This approach is used for clarity and not intended to label or define an individual's experience. Individuals who have experienced sex trafficking may prefer one term over another to describe their experiences. School board employees should confirm how an individual impacted by trafficking prefers to be referenced. (e.g., survivor vs person with lived experience)

Luring: Involves the trafficker gaining their victim's trust. They may have several conversations where they form a bond over common interests or pretend to care about what they have experienced. They'll pose as good listeners, who care deeply, as they learn more about what they can do to insinuate themselves more deeply in the victim's life. Or, in situations where the trafficker may already be a part of their victim's life – like a family member – it may come more easily. Either way, traffickers will gain trust and collect information that can be later used to manipulate their victims.

Grooming: Involves manipulating the perceptions of children and adults around the children to gain their trust and cooperation. Offenders may use a combination of attention, affection, kindness, privileges, recognition, gifts, alcohol, drugs, status and/or money as part of the process to coerce the child to help gradually move the relationship to a sexual level.

Footnotes

- footnote[1] Indigenous Primary Health Care Council. (2018, June). [Cultural Competency Guideline for Ontario Public Health Units to Engage Successfully with Aboriginal Communities](#).
- footnote[2] Williams, R. (1999). Cultural safety—what does it mean for our work practice?. *Australian and New Zealand journal of public health*, 23(2), 213-214.
- footnote[3] Douglas, M. D., Willock, R. J., Respress, E., Rollins, L., Tabor, D., Heiman, H. J., & Holden, K. B. (2019). Applying a health equity lens to evaluate and inform policy. *Ethnicity & disease*, 29 (Supplement 2), 329
- footnote[4] UNICEF. (2016, January 23). [A Human Rights-based Approach to Programming: What is HRBAP?](#)
- footnote[5] Government of Canada. (2018, February 2). [Trauma and Violence-informed Approaches to Policy and Practice](#).