



UNDER **The Radar**
The Sexual Exploitation of Young Men

Manitoba Edition

Under the Radar: The Sexual Exploitation of Young Men- Manitoba Edition

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Preface

Over the past 15 years, much of my research has been focused on young people involved in the sexual exploitation trade. This academic research extends primarily through three interconnected pieces of work.

The first piece of interviewing took place in 1991-1992, and was released as my PhD dissertation in 1994 entitled *The Youngest Profession the Oldest Oppression*. During that time, I interviewed 50 young people in Calgary. This involved 41 females and nine males, 25% of which were Aboriginal heritage. This research found 82% of this population had experienced sexual abuse prior to their entrance into the sexual exploitation trade. It also demonstrated professionals had both ignored and failed to recognize the abuse this population had experienced prior to their entrance into the sexual exploitation trade. In fact, many had failed to act while young people were being sexually exploited in front of them. Given this failure to intervene, it was in fact a form of state-supported sexual abuse. In the end, this research resulted in raising both social and political attention in The City of Calgary and The Province of Alberta.

Over time, I observed the growing acceptance of youth involved in prostitution as a form of sexual abuse. I watched The City of Calgary and The Province of Alberta embrace this paradigm shift, subsequently resulting in policy, legislative and program changes. This paradigm shift slowly spread across the country as the term 'youth prostitution' was replaced by the term 'sexual exploitation.' Today these two terms are used interchangeably.

The second piece of research was initiated by two former youth I had interviewed in 1991-1992, who challenged me to revisit the same questions I had originally asked the ten years earlier in order to see what had and hadn't worked.

I took the challenge, and in 2002 a retrospective longitudinal study titled *Strolling Away* was released.

At that point, I had accounted for and interviewed 38 of the original 50 people I had interviewed ten years previously. Some of the women had worked in the United States, primarily Las Vegas, California or Hawaii. Two women from this group ended up working in Japan for up to six months and found it difficult to escape back home. The men seemed to work primarily throughout Canada.

In this study, I learned both young women and men could survive this experience; however, painful scars remain. We also learned that for young women, the value of producing a child, or the desire to produce children, brings with it both family and state support. Eighty-two percent of women from this study had in fact produced children. On the contrary, the physical birthing of a child was not an option available to young men. From our small sample of young men, we learned they entered the sexual exploitation trade younger and stayed twice as long. Childbirth was not a viable opportunity to exit for young men as it is for young women. We also learned through interviewing the same men ten years later that we tend to view sexual exploitation of children through a female lens only. Young men inquired as to why we still asked them questions from a 'chick perspective'.

This second piece of research made it apparent that we as professionals, and as a society, knew very little about young men entering the sexual exploitation trade. Why and how do they enter? How do they work? How long do they stay? What is their lifestyle? How do they exit?

This lack of knowledge was the impetus to begin the following connected piece of work titled *Under the Radar: The Sexual Exploitation of Young Men*. It was apparent that looking at only one geographic site would be unfair.

The long-term plan was to examine independently the provinces of Alberta, British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The Alberta report was released in June 2005. The British Columbia Report was released in December 2006. This current report examines Manitoba. We also plan to release the Saskatchewan report shortly, as well as a Western Canadian report summarizing and comparing similarities and differences of each of these Western Provinces in 2008.

The following research aims to answer some important questions. Hopefully in doing so, we will be better able to assist young men by providing them with specialized support services in order to live safe, healthy, meaningful lives.

Acknowledgements

This research was made possible with the support and energy of Resource Assistance for Youth Inc. (RAY) who provided guidance through many stages of this project, as well as many individuals, anonymous donors, the National Crime Prevention Centre, The Province of Manitoba Ministry of Family Services and Housing, and Covenant House. In addition, the following organizations provided invaluable support, direction, and information:

- AWM Aboriginal Community Development Consultant
- Family Services and Housing
- Manitoba Aboriginal and Northern Affairs
- Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth
- Manitoba Health/Healthy Living
- Manitoba Justice
- Manitoba Family Services and Housing
- Native Women's Transitional Centre Inc.
- NDINAWEMAAGNAG ENDAAWAAD
- New Directions
- Niji Mahkwa School
- RESOLVE Manitoba
- Salvation Army
- Winnipeg Police Service

Dedication

This project is dedicated to those young men who encouraged me to listen to their very compelling personal stories. They challenged my previous research as being too “chick focused”, believing there was an imbalance in looking at the issue of sexual exploitation of children solely through a female lens. This was a fact I had to face up to and address. It was this challenge that drove my determination to have an independent story told of the sexual exploitation of young men.

Thank you Fadi, Pytor and Zac who gave freely of their time to make sure this material moved toward a male perspective. You have created a lens for the voices of sexually exploited males to be heard.

To the Alberta Youth In Care and Custody Network who ensured the language of the questionnaires were youth friendly.

To Wendy Scheirich who coached and provided me support during the entire project. To Amanda Machalek who worked endless hours on coordinating the project in Winnipeg. To Anna Marie who provided the essential task of transcribing and formatting the material for analysis.

To Steve who did the majority of interviews, and Amanda who pitched in to assist. Together these Research Assistants embraced the value and need for such a study: They provided the energy, time and commitment to interviewing this population in Winnipeg.

To the 40 young men in Manitoba (2006-2007) who took the time to share their stories with our Research Assistants, thank you for your time and honesty.

Finally, to the spirit of Ms. Adventure who continues to inspire and motivate my personal commitment towards helping sexually exploited youth.

The Researcher

With over 25 years experience in the non-profit, public and private sectors, Dr. Sue McIntyre has developed a unique set of skills and expertise.

As a scholar and educator, Dr. Sue McIntyre is well recognized for her expertise in the areas of child sexual abuse and prostitution. She has made over 100 workshop presentations and keynote addresses to provincial, national and international conferences.

As an international research and policy advisor, Dr. McIntyre appreciates the relationship between research, the law and social policy in the development of social programs.

As a social service practitioner, she has combined her human service background with entrepreneurial business flair. She clearly understands the social sector's challenge to meet mission goals, and helps them integrate mainstream business practices and accountability into their daily operations.

As a leader in effecting organizational change and development, she has established a strong track record in identifying and meeting the needs of an organization.

As a fundraiser, her ability to provide an analytical, business approach towards matching a company's community interests to high priority social issues have earned her the respect of Calgary's foundations and corporate sector.

Her broad fundraising experience includes approving foundation grants, applying for foundation grants and securing sponsorship from numerous leading national and international corporations.

As an entrepreneur, she was responsible for the start-up of 25 operations in both the private and public sectors, guiding them from concept through to the stages of implementation and evaluation. Her pioneering work in designing a management service to partner the expertise of Calgary's corporate community with non-profit organizations was just one example of her work in this regard.

As a community volunteer, Dr. McIntyre has proven her personal commitment time and again. As a strong community advocate, she has co-chaired numerous volunteer committees and task forces involving justice, social services, health services and education.

As a professional who has devoted most of her life to helping sexually exploited youth, Dr. McIntyre's commitment to helping us better understand the sexual exploitation of young men is commendable. This important body of research is long overdue.

Foreword

My name is Steve. I was the primary interviewer for *Under the Radar: The Sexual Exploitation of Men- Manitoba Edition*. I think this research is very important, especially because it has never been done in Canada. Doing this study and publishing the results helps to push male and transgender sex trade issues out into the open, with the expectation of creating appropriate supports and services. Personally, I am very passionate about this work because of my own experience.

I was born and raised in Winnipeg, Manitoba in a two-parent family with myself being the fifth of six children. Growing up I witnessed physical, emotional and verbal abuse. Being raised in a Mennonite Brethren family, I was taught that gay people were sick, drag queens or child molesters and would burn in hell. As a result, I denied who I was.

At age eighteen I was married to a woman, and at 22 my only child was born. It was only at the age of 24 that I came to the truth about myself and realized the perceptions my family taught me of what it meant to be gay were incorrect. It was at this point that I 'came out'.

After coming out, I entered my first long-term relationship with a man, and was disowned by my family. Soon after this relationship began, my partner became verbally and emotionally abusive. It was at this point that I turned to the street. During my second significant relationship with a man, I also endured years of extreme physical, emotional and verbal abuse.

Next I turned to the "johns" to try and find the love I was lacking in my life. Anytime I worked the streets I needed to be under the influence of alcohol. I never did find the love that I was seeking. It was just another form of abuse I was well accustomed to. I worked the streets on and off for about ten years.

After years of abuse from johns, boyfriends, and family, I had the opportunity to enroll in a self-improvement course. There I was taught to love myself before I could love anyone else. It also taught me self-respect and confidence. In addition, with some help from a friend, I began to turn my life around.

Unfortunately, due to the lack of government agencies and resources for males such as a safe house for women in abusive relationships, I believe this helped perpetuate the cycle of abuse I was living.

Currently I am working as an Emergency Youth Services Worker with homeless, male, female and transgender street youth.

Dr. Susan McIntyre approached the organization I work for, to assist with *Under the Radar*. I was extended the honor to participate in the role of researcher for the project in Manitoba.

I feel it is of the utmost importance that their experiences and voices are heard and that issues arising out of this research are dealt with. Only 40 interviews were conducted for this research project in Manitoba; however there were many more males and transgender people that were willing and wanting to participate, proving there are many males and transgender people working in the sexual exploitation trade here in Winnipeg. Due to this fact, I am surprised there are minimal resources available, and that it is not seen to be an issue we are facing.

It is far past time that government and society recognize this segment of the Canadian population, and put into place services and resources that will help end the cycle of abuse these people are facing. I want to say that my experience is only one of the many out there. I have found that the longer one is entrenched in this cycle, the harder it is to escape. It is not necessarily drugs that bring people into the working life, but the longer they are involved, the more susceptible they are to them in order to numb the pain.

As a result, the need for money to buy drugs makes it even harder to break free from a very vicious and unforgiving cycle.

I will end with one quote. For those of you who are religious you will know it well. For those of you who are not, it is a good motto to live by. “Judge Not Lest Ye Be Judged”.

Steve

Executive Summary

In December of 2002, *Strolling Away* was released. *Strolling Away* represented a longitudinal retrospective study that examined young people from the sexual exploitation trade in 1991-1992 and then again in 2001-2002. The opportunity to interview individuals 10 years later was valuable.

One of its major findings was that we know very little about young men involved in the sexual exploitation trade. The young men I interviewed commented on how my questions were “chick questions”. It was clear that we have traditionally looked at this issue through a female lens. It became evident through this study that more research was required in order to understand young men in the sexual exploitation trade.

Interviews for *Under the Radar: The Sexual Exploitation of Young Men – Manitoba Edition* began in March 2006 and wrapped up in January 2007. Forty young men were interviewed in total. All forty interviews occurred in Winnipeg.

Characteristics of Respondents

- 67% of this population are of Aboriginal heritage
- 55% had involvement with the Child Welfare System
- Just over 30% had completed high school
- 77% had a history of running away
- 80% had a history prior to the street of being sexually violated
- 87% had been physically violated and witnessed aggression while growing up
- 70% entered the sexual exploitation trade under the age of 18
- 15% entered the sexual exploitation trade over the age of 20

- Males entered the sexual exploitation trade younger and stayed longer than young women
- Close to 70% experienced staying in shelters
- Almost everyone felt no one should do this type of work
- The fear of gay-bashing exists
- Drug use is extensive
- Exiting the sexual exploitation trade is a long process, and is usually attempted more than once
- Almost everyone has, and does, access HIV / STD testing

Summary of Discoveries

- Young men have comparable histories of sexual and physical abuse to young women
- Young men in this study were gay, heterosexual and bisexual
- Young men create a construct to be able to achieve a level of performance
- The issue of young men in the sexual exploitation trade creates a sense of discomfort
- Young men begin younger and work longer
- A significant portion enter the sexual exploitation trade over the age of 18
- Young men fly under the radar of service providers
- Young men have unique service needs different from young women
- Public education on condom use and HIV testing has worked
- The connection between the street and drug use is longer and greater in the variety of drugs for young men
- Young men have strained and distant relationships with their family
- Running away often triggers entrance into the sexual exploitation trade

Summary Recommendations

1. Efforts should be directed towards supporting the future expansion of this study to other provinces. Upon completion of the four western provinces, those being British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, a report should be developed outlining the differences and similarities in Western Canada. Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia should be considered as future sites in order to allow for national, eastern, central and western perspectives. This population tends to be rather transient so the opportunity to gain a national perspective as well as regional differences will be of assistance.
2. That we publicly acknowledge both young men and women are being exploited in the sexual exploitation trade, and that we provide services to help them exit.
3. That staff working with young men in the sexual exploitation trade be provided with gender non-conformity training.
4. That service providers create the opportunity for young men in and out of the sexual exploitation trade to tell service providers about the services they require. We should not assume that one service will fit all.
5. That a series of detox and rehabilitation beds be established for young men exiting the sexual exploitation trade. Years of extensive drug consumption requires an intervention that will provide them with temporary accommodation while detoxification and rehabilitation takes place.
6. That safe affordable accommodation is provided for this population once they have completed drug detoxification and rehabilitation. This population requires safe, supportive living arrangements.

Coupled with this, they need help seeking alternative employment. Close to half of this population had completed high school and some college and university; however, they have limited employment skills and experience. Standard employment assistance programs will be required to assist them in supporting a successful exit from the sexual exploitation trade.

7. That we approach the issue of demand, that being customers, with an equal balance for both young men and women who are being sexually exploited. Like women, these men are young people who are in need of our assistance.
8. That prevention information is directed towards both young men and women. We need to provide information that both young men and women in the sexual exploitation trade experienced sexual abuse in their part. We should support, not ridicule them.
9. That the community-at-large recognize the damaging effects of sugar daddy relationships on this young and vulnerable population. In addition, an awareness of the economic disadvantages facing young males involved in the sexual exploitation trade must be taken into account and considered as a symptom of the differential power relationship existent in sugar daddy relationships.
10. Develop mentoring connections for the population who are exiting. A need exists for those exiting to have support from those who have exited. An experiential voice can assist an individual who is in the process of exiting the sexual exploitation trade. There are many questions, and those who have been through such a journey can better answer challenges facing those who are exiting.

This type of service could be set up in a formal structure through an agency that works with this population or informally within the volunteer community network. This network could be set up in formal face to face meetings, telephone or online support.

- 11.** A review of prevention, intervention and re-integration materials be completed and adjusted to speak to the sexual exploitation of youth regardless of gender. Materials must recognize the differences facing young women and men in the sexual exploitation trade. Education for both genders needs to be covered in these materials, emphasizing that the sexual exploitation trade is a risk for both genders.
- 12.** That an evaluation occurs of harm reduction approaches such as distributing bad date sheets, mobile support services to sexually exploited youth. The opportunity exists to move into a more direct approach to intervention. The ultimate goal must always remain moving someone out of the sexual exploitation trade.
- 13.** That the National Youth In Care Network embrace the topic of sexual awareness. There is a need to ensure that youth from care have the same knowledge base as the general youth population. This information could be delivered through DVD, booklets or lectures.
- 14.** That we develop and pay closer attention to youth who are running away. We need to recognize this as the early warning system for possible entrance into the sexual exploitation trade for both genders. For youth, service providers and professionals, the opportunity to successfully support and stabilize a situation is more likely to occur prior to years of abuse and drug use on the street.

Introduction

Throughout 1991-1992, I researched the sexual exploitation trade in downtown Calgary. My goal was to observe and interact with this population in order to investigate the relationship of sexual abuse with a person's involvement in the sexual exploitation trade. Fifty young people were interviewed as part of this study which was titled *The Youngest Profession, The Oldest Oppression*.

In 2000, with the realization that retrospective, longitudinal information on prostitution did not exist anywhere in Canada or the world, I made the decision to track as many participants from this original population to determine if they were still involved in the sexual exploitation trade or not. In December 2002, this body of research was released, titled *Strolling Away*. This document included interviews that accounted for 38 of the original 50 people interviewed in 1991-1992.

During *Strolling Away* it became clear to me that males face very different challenges than females. It is my belief that for many years this social issue was examined through a female lens. Through *Strolling Away* it was discovered that there are differences. For example, males enter the sexual exploitation trade younger and stay longer.

My personal and professional interest in wanting to know more about this population and how we can better assist them initiated *Under the Radar: The Sexual Exploitation of Young Men*. Hopefully the following body of research will bring this issue out from under the radar to something we as a community can address proactively and effectively in the future.

Section 1: Impetus & Methodology of the Research

1.1 Impetus for the research

Is there a difference between young men and women who enter into the sexual exploitation trade?

Since the early 1980's, I have been interviewing and working with young men and women involved in the sexual exploitation trade. Over that time, I have slowly been forced to recognize there are differences between men and women involved in this sexual exploitation trade. In fact, for many years, this issue has been examined through a female lens only.

Often when I speak publicly about my research, *The Youngest Profession*, *The Oldest Oppression* (McIntyre 1994) and *Strolling Away* (McIntyre 2002), people would say “those poor young women”. While this is true, for the past 13 years I have always had to remind people that this sample includes men as well.

Following the completion and release of *Strolling Away* (2002), it was obvious that a study pertaining to males was needed. *Strolling Away* recommended the male study. The Alberta Government along with a series of anonymous donors recognized the need to understand this social issue from a male perspective and saw the need to further balance the scales by recognizing both young women and men are sexually exploited. This study was released early in 2005, entitled *Under the Radar: The Sexual Exploitation of Young Men*.

The momentum to address this issue has now gone into Manitoba spearheaded by the Federal Government's National Crime Prevention Centre, The Government of Manitoba and anonymous donors.

I am currently in negotiations to release a Western Canadian Report that will compile findings from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. In addition, this report will be accompanied by a 2-day training seminar that can be tailored for each province.

The goal of the work in Manitoba, and the additional provincial studies to come, is to impact youth involved in sex work at the levels of prevention, intervention and (re)integration. To do this effectively, there is a need to have a clear understanding of the unique differences of often-ignored males involved in the sexual exploitation trade.

While antecedents contributing towards entering and leaving the sexual exploitation trade are similar for both genders, certain unique differences occur in the following areas:

- Entering the sexual exploitation trade
- Styles of work
- Location of work
- Risk factors
- Patterns of work
- Duration
- Exiting the sexual exploitation trade
- Program requirements
- Law enforcement
- Social service intervention
- Health services

1.2 Process

Grounded Theory and feminist research principles were used in the design of the *Under the Radar: The Sexual Exploitation of Young Men* research. The specific

interview instrument was designed and reviewed in conjunction with three young men formerly involved in the sexual exploitation trade.

1.3 Methodology

Grounded Theory and feminist research principles were also used in designing the research methodology.

I used the combined inductive approach of Grounded Theory and a Feminist methodology to be complementary. Grounded Theory allowed the opportunity for immersion into the sex worker's life, and the Feminist methodology insisted upon face to face interviews, recognizing this would have a direct impact upon the researcher. (McIntyre 1994:6)

The first step for me was to finalize the questionnaire. I worked with three young men formerly from the sexual exploitation trade. In order to develop each question, many of the questions used in “*The Youngest Profession: The Oldest Oppression*” were crafted to fit the male study; however, terminology had to be changed, as did many of the questions, to suit this population. In addition, health authorities indicated a strong interest to include health-related questions.

It became clear to me that I could not do all the interviewing. As a colleague said to me, “Why not provide the discoveries to others as to how to interview this population?” Originally, allowing others to do what I had done up until then made me very nervous. I questioned whether they would be able to interview with the same level of compassion and commitment I had. Would they understand the questionnaire and the method of utilizing the information? I decided that realistically, I had no other option.

Finally, in order to protect the anonymity of the interviewees, pseudonyms were utilized in all cases.

1.4 Training

A Request for Proposals for Research Assistants was circulated in Winnipeg. The goal was to attract individuals and agencies that already had a level of comfort and connection with this population.

Two individuals were successful. Both represented Resource Assistance for Youth (R.A.Y.). RAY. helps street youth by providing them with what they need, on their terms to better their lives. This help comes in many forms, and is always non-judgmental and inclusive. R.A.Y. is an invaluable support network for youth living through crisis. It is a street level youth service located in inner city Winnipeg.

A full day was dedicated to training these Research Assistants and Coordinators. Some of the Research Assistants were experiential, in other words, they had previously been part of the sexual exploitation trade.

Originally there was some hesitancy in including experiential individuals in the interviewing process. Those that helped design the questionnaire and who were themselves experiential were doubtful that an individual formerly from the sexual exploitation trade could do this interviewing without experiencing discomfort, potentially triggering flashbacks.

By the end of the day, all Research Assistants had a level of comfort with the material. Time was then spent reviewing confidentiality and legal requirements, consent forms, tape recording, snowball sampling, and storage of interview materials.

1.5 Interviews

I personally met with those who were experiential youth to discuss their personal and professional comfort level with interviewing. Once I had a level of confidence with their ability to interview, they began.

In addition, I personally debriefed those who were experiential to establish their personal comfort after the first interview. All of those who were experiential and interviewing were at a minimum six months removed from the sexual exploitation trade.

The use of Research Assistants with an experiential background was certainly a bonus. They brought with them a vast knowledge base and understanding of this population. Those who were not experiential brought with them a level of comfort and understanding of this population. This combined group of Research Assistants and Coordinators brought professional expertise and comfort to those being interviewed. The breadth and quality of the research interviews was stellar and in-depth. I am grateful to have had such a diverse committed group.

The goal was to interview 40 young men in Winnipeg. That would mean a total of 40 interviews in Manitoba, 10 of which had exited the sexual exploitation trade.

Interviews began in Manitoba in March 2006 and ended in January 2007. In total, we completed 40 interviews in the city of Winnipeg.

Section 2: Demographics & Historical Background

2.1 Aboriginal heritage

When the male study *Under the Radar* was first discussed for The Province of Manitoba, we anticipated a significant percent of Aboriginal heritage young men. In Alberta, 54% of those interviewed considered themselves Aboriginal heritage. In British Columbia, 43% considered themselves Aboriginal heritage. In Saskatchewan, 85% of those interviewed involved in the sexual exploitation trade were Aboriginal heritage.

In Manitoba, 67% considered themselves Aboriginal heritage. This predominance of Aboriginal heritage young men can best be described by the following quote.

While the greatest proportion of female sex workers engages in heterosexual sex work; for males, regardless of their orientation or self-identification, the sex work is usually of a homosexual nature. I suspect this more than anything prevents any real work or may explain the further marginalization of male sex workers in regards to services and awareness. I think there is also a subconscious element of awareness that most sex workers are Aboriginal heritage, again furthering the stigmatization and marginalization. Most people who are sexually abused, assaulted or otherwise exploited when they are young, are not aware of the repercussions in their choices as a result of these experiences. I would love to see some development towards awareness in this way as well. How a person views him or herself is often not an accurate portrayal of their potential and body image is often ill focused. (J. Spencer Rowe, MA)

Of the 27 young men who identified as Aboriginal heritage, 74% had spent some time on a First Nations community. Twenty-six percent had never spent anytime on a First Nations community.

A further line of inquiry examined whether those 20 Aboriginal heritage individuals had lived on a First Nations community or felt connected to their Aboriginal heritage. Thirteen of the twenty individuals reported not feeling connected to their Aboriginal culture.

Not in the least. (Dylan)

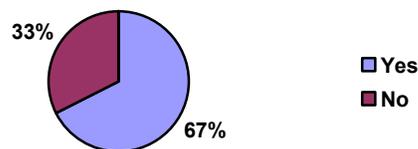
The other individuals felt some connection to their Aboriginal heritage whether they were primarily urban or First Nations community.

Maybe in the last five years. (Addison)

I was raised in a Christian home. I spent most of my life in that mentality but I knew I was Aboriginal and I did look for my traditional roots, I never got in touch with them until I was incarcerated. (Lane)

This inordinately high number of Aboriginal heritage young men in the sexual exploitation trade, and the continued marginalization of this population in Western Canada, is alarming. As we have found, young men in the sexual exploitation trade are **under the radar** and marginalized. Add to this the high percentage of young Aboriginal heritage men and this often places them even further **under the radar** and out of sight of our communities.

Aboriginal Heritage



2.2 Child Welfare System

Over half of this population interviewed had a family history with Child Welfare. This means that just over half of those interviewed had experienced some type of professional association like the provincial system of care as children. As information on sexual development is not usually provided by Child Welfare workers, many of the respondents did not obtain proper information on sexual development.

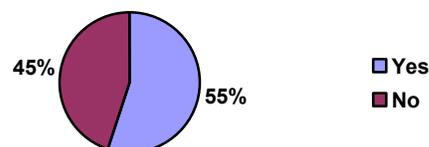
There is a sense that young men are not encouraged to talk about their physiological changes.

Boys are not encouraged to talk about the changes that are happening to their bodies. They receive less guidance about their reproductive role, despite being provided with information and support around the experiences of puberty. For girls, the onset of puberty often means the placement of restrictions on their freedom. Boys, on the other hand, are generally provided no support or information, are given more freedom, and spend more time outside of the home in unsupervised activities than do girls. (McCreary Youth Foundation, A Moment for Boyz, 2004:5)

There is an assumption that young men have received the knowledge about sexual biology and socialization that they require; however, this is not always the case. This is even less likely if they had grown up in government care according to Shauna Parks, Board Member, National Youth In Care and Custody Network.

Males are often overlooked when it comes to information about sexual development, especially if they're in care. A lot of times, people who work with these youth assume they have the knowledge or someone else has 'had that conversation' with them. (Parks, 2004)

Child Welfare Involvement



2.3 Education

Some of this population was generally well-educated. Over thirty percent had completed high school, and two individuals had entered post-secondary education. Only three individuals had been in grade school and gone no further.

I completed grade nine. Since then I got my GED, went to university and got my bachelors. (Baylee)

I have always been pushed forward. I started two years later than other kids". (Sal)

2.4 Run away

Seventy-seven percent of the population had a history of running away. Close to one quarter of those interviewed had never run away.

Running away was common. Of great importance when asked about running away was a subsequent question that referred to the offer of food and/or shelter while on the run.

A total of 81% were offered food and shelter while on the run. What becomes important about this finding is that 73% of those who were offered food and shelter had conditions attached by the giver. In most situations, these conditions were sexual in nature. Many of those interviewed described their first introduction to hustling/working in the sexual exploitation trade was while they were on the run trying to survive.

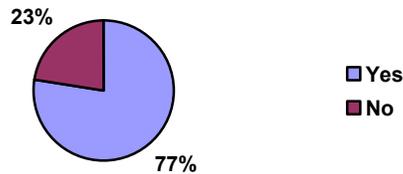
Sex for food and shelter. (Marcus)

Put out or get out. (Prentice)

To a certain degree but I was aware of that. (Raine)

There are always conditions. (Baylee)

Run Away



Of importance were the reasons provided for running away. Forty-two percent cited reasons of fear and/or avoidance of family violence and abuse.

Fourteen. They tried to lock me in my room. (Prentice)

Fourteen. Parents were abusive alcoholics. We were always beaten. (Addison)

Sixteen. Dad was drinking, abusive verbally and physically to my mom. (Tory)

Forty-five percent identified discomfort fitting in. This is common with young men struggling with their sexual identity. They often feel uncomfortable with their gender non-conformity. If they are comfortable with their sexual identity, often family and friends are not comfortable with it.

Fourteen. I just wanted to come back home and be gay. (Raine)

Fourteen. It was around my sexuality. (Carl)

2.5 Thrown out

Over sixty-two percent of those interviewed had a history of being thrown out of their homes. This often resulted in them having to seek temporary accommodation or to sleep in public places.

Because I wanted to dress like a girl. (Cagney)

I came home intoxicated and under the influence. (Addison)

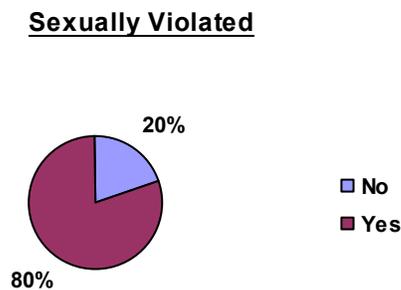
Many described running away either before or after being thrown out of their place of residence by an adult. This adult was often a parental figure.

They said leave or we will phone the cops. They were on a power trip. We were arguing. (Toby)

Running away or being thrown out often ended in the same result, that being the need to seek a means of survival on the streets.

2.6 Sexual & physical violation

While interviewing this population, a total of 80% identified themselves as being sexually violated. In other words, many had a history of sexual abuse.



Lots of times. (Prentice)

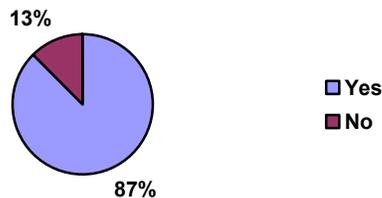
At a younger age yes. (Haley)

Eighty-seven percent reported a history of physical violation, or physical abuse.

Fighting and name calling, a cast iron pot to the head and choking. (Raine)

Depends on who was having the dispute. Mainly verbal abuse. Depending who was involved physical. Nothing was resolved. (Zion)

Physically Violated



In summary, this is a population with a substantial history of both sexual and physical violation.

2.7 Witnessing aggression while growing up

While growing up, over 90% had personally witnessed aggression.

Talking turned to swearing and then the fists would fly. (Lane)

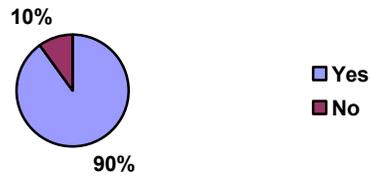
I watched my mom get beat up lots. (Jaden)

Witnessed alcoholism in the family growing. At any social, you could guarantee there would be a fight at some point. (Baylee)

I would say it would have to be when my father locked my mother in the bedroom for three days and just the sounds coming from that room not knowing what was going on, that was the most violent. (Zion)

Often, observing aggression can be just as challenging as being a direct victim of it. The vast majority, or 90%, had witnessed or had been a victim of family violence.

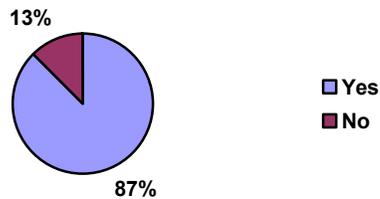
While growing up did you see aggression?



2.8 Police involvement

Eighty-seven percent of those interviewed had a history with the police. This included some criminal activities, mainly involving alcohol and drugs which had brought them into contact with the police.

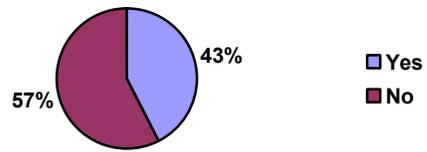
Police Involvement



2.9 Self-harm

Forty-three percent of this population identified periods where they contemplated self-harm. These periods occurred prior to their involvement in the sexual exploitation trade, but could have continued while they were entrenched in it.

Thoughts of serious self-harm



Section 3: Work Life/Hustling

3.1 Entering

It is clear that one factor alone does not result in an individual entering the sexual exploitation trade. Often a series of circumstances result in a person ending up in this situation. No one had the goal to enter the street trade. Over 75% saw this activity as a short-term method to make money, so they could survive.

When entering the sexual exploitation trade, a variety of factors come into play. We have seen from the previous demographics section that the following was established:

- 80% reported a background of sexual violation
- 87% had a history of physical violation
- 77% had a history of running away
- 67% were from an Aboriginal heritage
- 74% with Aboriginal heritage had spent time on a First Nations community
- 55% had a family history of involvement with Child Welfare
- 30% had completed high school
- 87% had a history with the Criminal Justice System

Most people see their entrance into this activity as temporary. It is seen as a method of survival. Some described their entrance as a way of belonging. As many are often on the run, many find connection and camaraderie with the activity.

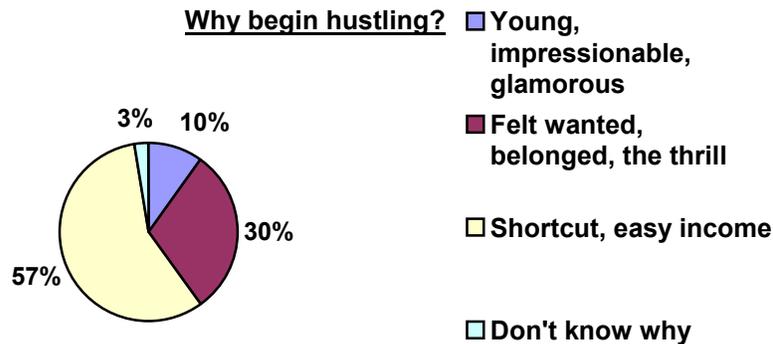
Survival. Food, shelter then drugs. (Haley)

A lot of complex issues behind this. One is self abuse. A possible history of abuse prior to working. (Jace)

Quick money. They don't want to deal with their lives. (Wyatt)

Friends and influence. (Finn)

They feel like an outcast. (Tory)



Understanding how an individual begins the process of working on the street is important if we ever hope to intervene in this activity. Often they are introduced to this activity while on the run. Eighty-one percent of those who had run away were offered food and/or shelter; however, for 73% there were conditions attached to this offer. Most often these conditions were sexual in nature, representing an introduction and entrance into the sexual exploitation trade.

3.2 Introduction to hustling/working

When we asked how someone entered the sexual exploitation trade and learned about its workings, we were provided with three consistent answers:

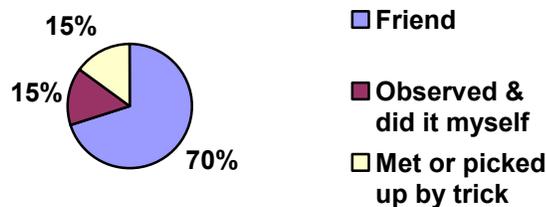
- Thirty-five percent learned about the sexual exploitation trade from a friend, and simply followed the process.
- Fifty percent learned what was required by observing other people.
- Fifteen percent ran into a customer, or “trick” who offered them this opportunity. It became a means for survival. The offer was made, and they were able to figure it out.

A friend who owed me money. (Marcus)

Stumbled onto it. (Prentice)

Through sexual abuse. My abuser offered me money. (Haley)

Introduction to hustling/working



There is a strong correlation between running away and a potential introduction to the sexual exploitation trade. Only nine of the 40 had never run away.

Often when young people are on the run they are offered food and/or shelter. A total of 81% who had run away were offered food and/or shelter while they were on the run. What is important is that 73% of those offered food and/or shelter were offered these necessities with conditions attached to them, often sexual in nature.

3.3 Age beginning hustling/working

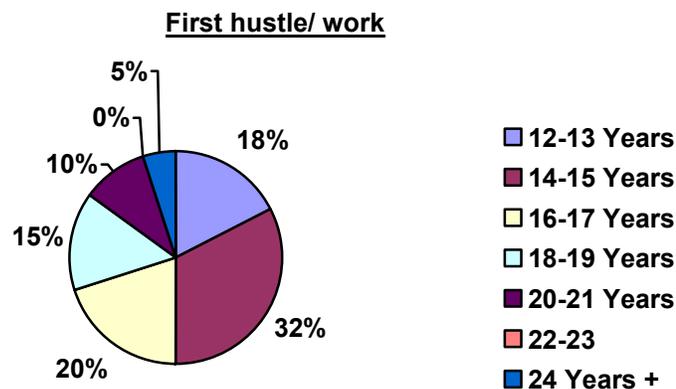
There was a broad range of ages when people began to hustle/work. The youngest person was 12 and the oldest was 30 years of age.

Seventy percent of this group commenced work prior to the age of 18 years. Half began work under the age of 16 years.

Thirty percent entered this life when they were adults (over 18 years of age). It became a way to achieve minimal survival, or something they did to survive. It can best be characterized as "voluntary desperation". What is important is that of

the 12 young men who entered over the age of 18 years of age, most had a background of sexual abuse. Close to 70% of those who entered the sexual exploitation trade as adults had a childhood background of sexual violation and/or abuse.

The relationship of sexual abuse prior to entrance into the sexual exploitation trade was established as far back as *The Youngest Profession: The Oldest Oppression* (1994). This finding confirms that sexual violation, or sexual abuse as a child, can affect an adult and often trigger or prompt their entrance into the sexual exploitation trade. The male sexual exploitation trade is not one that just attracts children and youth. Adult young men can be at risk of entering into the sexual exploitation trade too. Of the 12 young adult men that were over the age of 18, their average age was just over 20 years of age when they entered into the sexual exploitation trade. The oldest of this group entered at the age of 30. Of particular significance is that this group appeared to be challenged by the transition from school to work.



3.4 Time hustling/working

It is important to understand the length of time study participants had been hustling/working. The majority reported working for a long time. Five individuals had worked less than one year. What is important is that these young men

remain out of sight. They are not quickly identified and provided support services; therefore, work in a very clandestine, hidden manner. They are not quick to self identify as someone who just entered the sexual exploitation trade. Unfortunately, social services do not connect with them until they are ingrained in the sexual exploitation trade.

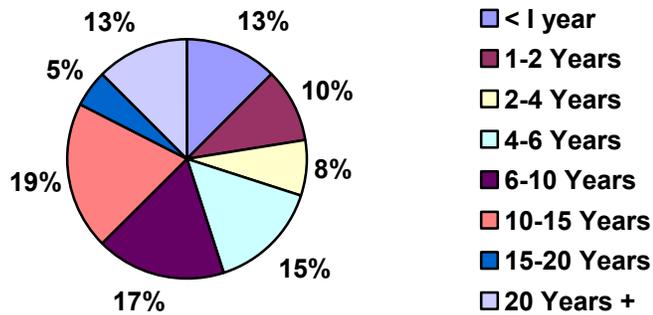
As you can see, most began to hustle/work at an early age. Seventy percent began street involvement prior to the age of 18. The other 12 individuals did not enter until they had turned 18 years of age.

As was discovered in *Strolling Away* (McIntyre, 2002) males often enter the sexual exploitation trade earlier and stay longer than women. This is consistent in both the Alberta and British Columbia Editions of *Under the Radar: The Sexual Exploitation of Young Men*.

Many stay in the sexual exploitation trade six to ten years. There was a combined total of over 280 years in the sexual exploitation trade, and this figure is growing as only 10 of the 40 young men interviewed left the sexual exploitation trade (Appendix #1). The average number of years working in the sexual exploitation trade for young men in Manitoba was 8.5 years. During that time, they often remain unidentified, and did not access services.

Another important feature was that the group of 12 young men who began working over the age of 18 initially began hustling as a quick fix, although this did not turn out to be the case. On average, those that entered after age 18 remained in the sexual exploitation trade for at least three years. This “quick fix” slowly turned into a journey of survival.

Time hustling/ working



3.5 Work locations

A variety of work locations were identified. Most worked in cars, hotels, and apartments. Some worked at truck stops and parks. Very few had worked in bathhouses.

Chat lines, house parties, bars, washrooms and the street. (Jamie)

In Winnipeg, the main locations of work were listed as: cars, hotels, houses, parks and washrooms.

3.6 Shelter stays

Close to 68% reported staying in shelters. The others had never stayed in a shelter.

For many, shelters were the only option available to them. Their ability to gain government support given their age and personal circumstances was minimal. Often, entrance into and continuation of the sexual exploitation trade results in a distinct lack of options.

Homelessness is a true reality for many of these young men. The sexual exploitation trade is a means to avoid homelessness and related shelter experiences. Only five individuals who entered the sexual exploitation trade over the age of 18 had never been a part of the shelter or child protection system. Initially, the sexual exploitation trade was seen as a viable option for the short-term; however, as we have seen, short-term is not the reality for most that enter the sexual exploitation trade. Their only other option becomes a crowded, uncomfortable shelter stay.

As stated in *Strolling Away*, 82% of young women had given birth to a child. This event brings back family support and can result in government support.

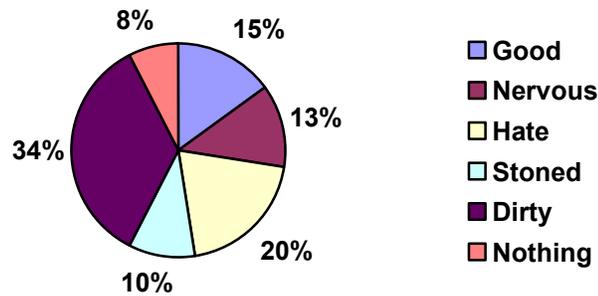
This is often not an option for young men. Of the 40 interviewees, ten had impregnated a young woman. Of these ten, four had been actively parenting their children. The other six pregnancies either resulted in an abortion, miscarriage or estrangement.

The biological act of conceiving a child does not bring a young man government or family support. In other words, the birth of a child brings with it support for women; however, it only creates additional responsibility for the young men. The need to provide child support also influenced an entrance into the sexual exploitation trade.

3.7 Feelings while working

It is important to gain some insight into how someone is feeling when they are hustling/working. How can an individual prepare for and sustain themselves throughout this activity?

Feelings while working



It is clear that the majority of these young men are not happy. It is a form of survival. They feel exposed to the public, and therefore psychologically and physically numb themselves due to the shame they feel. Substances such as alcohol and drugs help them achieve this sensation of numbness.

The fact that well over three-quarters of this population had a history of sexual violation prior to their involvement in the sexual exploitation trade plays a role in some of the disassociation and flashback episodes these young men subsequently experience. Unresolved abuse issues were a clear theme in the quotes of young men discussing their thoughts and feelings while working and after work.

I mentally would send myself somewhere else. I was there in body and they were doing that to me but I wasn't there in mind. (Scout)

Fine, I don't pay attention to what I am doing. (Daleny)

False sense of power. (Prentice)

It was meaningless, no emotion. (Haley)

For some, there is a clear sense of relief when they finish their time for that evening in the sexual exploitation trade. Half of the population interviewed had a sense of guilt and numbness from their experience. This is not an activity that people do proudly, or with a strong sense of safety.

I feel sick like why do I do it.” Sometimes gross. (Wyatt)

Awful, full of shame. (Kaelin)

Their goal is to work to feed their habit. The additional 70% try to finish work quickly, safely and without reaction by numbing the experience.

Their need for cleansing is important. The desire to physically wash off the shame is something that was identified.

Drained, low self-esteem, even suicidal. (Benjamin)

Like shit. (Prentice)

Horrible. (Russell)

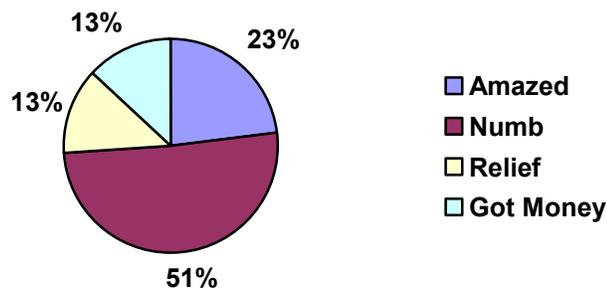
Very dirty, tired and burnt out. (Haley)

Relieved it’s over, feels pretty bad and degrading. (Jaden)

Crappy, because I know I won’t have any more drugs until I do it again or go steal something. (Xavier)

Filthy dirty and sick. (Scout)

How do you feel after working/ hustling



3.8 Family relations

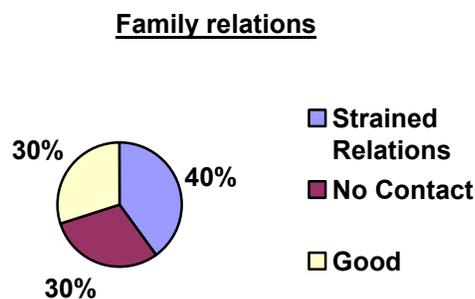
Sixty-five percent of the population interviewed said at least one family member was aware of their activity in the sexual exploitation trade. Although they are able to keep their work secret in the beginning, eventually family members figure out what is occurring. Thirty-five percent of those interviewed believed that their family was unaware of their involvement in the sexual exploitation trade.

A total of 30% described having a good relationship with their family. Once the family knows about their son or sibling being in the sexual exploitation trade, it can bring about a great deal of familial strain. The remaining 70% had strained relations, resulting in some having no contact whatsoever with their family.

Really bad I don't see them. (Cagney)

They love me for who I am, they just don't like the fact I work on the street. (Jamie)

It is no good. My grandfather hates me and I told them all I was bi-sexual and they look down upon me. (Lane)



3.9 Female customers

Sixty percent had been approached by a woman, and this often involved the request for a threesome with another male. The other forty percent were never approached by a woman. In many situations when approached by a woman it was to be with a heterosexual couple. In total, over 60% had been with a couple.

This could be a couple of men or heterosexual couple. There was also the request for someone to observe their significant other having sex with the male sex worker. Some young men who were gay were not prepared to involve a woman. Some were also approached by a gay couple for a threesome.

3.10 Why men buy sex

Those interviewed were very clear about why men purchase sex. They saw this as a quick, easy process for them to go through. A transaction. It was something that was easy and different.

It comes with no responsibility or strings. Things their wives won't do for them that a worker will. (Jace)

It's taboo. It is exciting, and it's wrong. (Daleny)

There are no strings attached. (Tait)

Because they can't get it elsewhere. Low self-esteem. (Sal)



Laud Humphreys (1970) completed a study on male sexual encounters in public bathrooms. What is important from his study, and the information offered from those interviewed, is that many of these men are not considered to be gay or bisexual but heterosexual in orientation. His thoughts reflect that many of the male customers of these young men are not seeking a gay relationship just something quick and different.

I find no indication that these men seek homosexual contact as such; rather, they want a form of organ-producing action that is less lonely than masturbation and less involving than a love relationship. (Humphreys, 1970:115)

The young men were asked what is the most sought after request from customers. They were very clear. Oral sex or 'blow jobs' were most prevalent, rated at over 80%. What is important to understand for young men who are working/hustling is that the customer can request a blow job from a young man, or vice versa. The customer then would perform oral sex on the young man. The roles can be described as the provider or the deliverer and are interchangeable. This is something unique to males in the sexual exploitation trade. This can include both oral and anal sexual acts.

3.11 Tell someone entering

All individuals were crystal clear that this activity was something individuals should not do. They were clear about the negative impact of this activity, and strongly suggested people explore other options.

Don't do it. The risks far outweigh any good. (Dylan)

Don't, not good, harmful and stressful, it's no good. (Wyatt)

Think about it long and hard because it is a completely different lifestyle. I suggest they don't do it. (Sal)

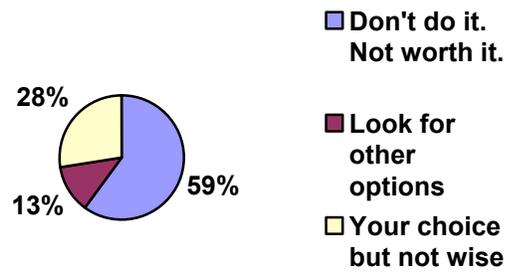
Think carefully, it destroys your life. (Jody)

Try to talk them out of it. It is not spiritually or emotionally sound. (Scout)

Forget it. Go back to school and make something out of yourself. (Raven)

Don't do it respect yourself. (Des)

Tell someone entering



This finding is significant because those involved in the sexual exploitation trade are adamant that others should be warned of the danger of entering.

Section 4: Staying

4.1 Staying in

As we have seen from the previous section, this group of young men stayed in the sexual exploitation trade for an extensive period of time. Forty-five percent of males entered and stayed in the sexual exploitation trade from one to six years. Just over sixty-two percent lasted up to ten years. The average length of time was 8.5 years in the sexual exploitation trade. The least amount of time in the sexual exploitation trade was for five young men was under one year, actually just a few months. The longest period exceeded over twenty years for five individuals. The cumulative total for the forty young men interviewed was 343 years.

4.2 Gay bashing

Both males and females in the sexual exploitation trade fear violence while working/hustling. Both young men and women experience violence and humiliation from customers and from the general community; however, the primary source differs.

For women, the main source of violence emanates from customers seeking their services. For males, the main source of violence is the result of homophobia. Males are at risk of gay bashing from onlookers who suffer from homophobia. Onlookers choose to physically damage and humiliate young men attempting to survive on the street. There is a perception that all these young men must be gay.

The fear of gay bashing is prevalent at all times for young men involved in the sexual exploitation trade. Forty-three percent have experienced gay bashing, but certainly all fear the potential. It is an activity that people react to whether the

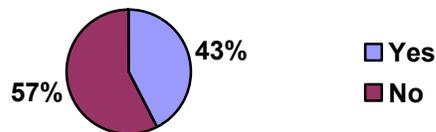
young man is actually gay or not. The classic homophobic belief system places these young men at risk from heterosexual males who react to their behavior.

Yes a few times. (Edan)

Twice now. (Jade)

Yes once I was gay bashed, hit on the back when I walked away. (Jamie)

Have you ever been gay bashed?



4.3 Worst date

This population was quick to identify the following worst experiences hustling/working. There was a general level of fear they had experienced from bad dates.

A total of 85% of those interviewed saw the sexual exploitation trade, hustling/working, as dangerous. They saw, experienced, and lived the reality of this fear and the dangers of the sexual exploitation trade.

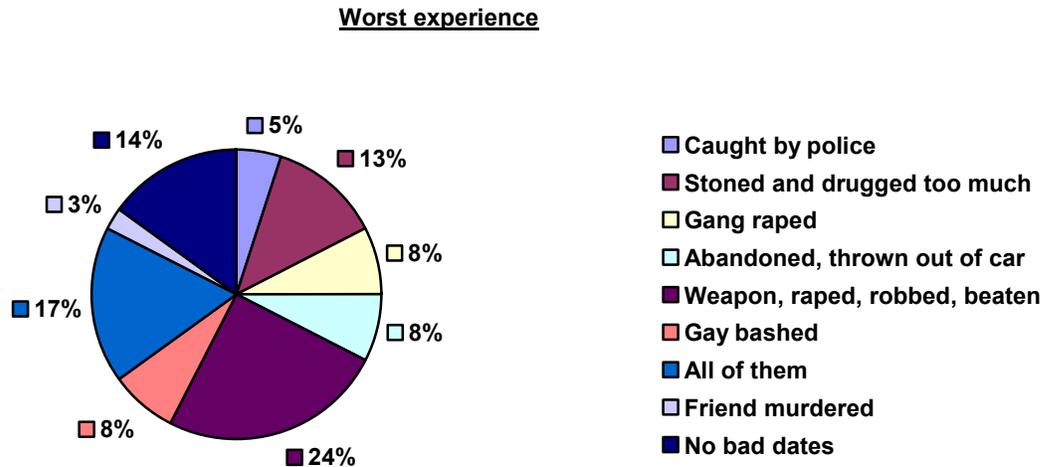
Only fifteen percent had not experienced a bad date although they all still lived in fear of such a situation occurring. The other eighty-five percent had experienced a bad date.

Not allowed to leave and threatened to kill me if I tried. (Jaden)

Slipped the date rape drug, woke up and didn't know where I was. (Dylan)

Kidnapped. Left out of town. (Sean)

*People driving by shooting fireworks at us, being raped and run over.
(Addison)*



4.4 Fear the most

During the interviews, we asked individuals what they feared most while they were hustling/working. Their fears extended from public exposure to drive-by shootings. The greatest fear was a bad date-- that is someone that would harm them and potentially kill them. As a result, the level of fear these young men have is both real and constant.

A total of 85% of those interviewed saw hustling/working in the sexual exploitation trade as always dangerous. They saw, experienced, and lived the reality of this fear and the dangers of the sexual exploitation trade.

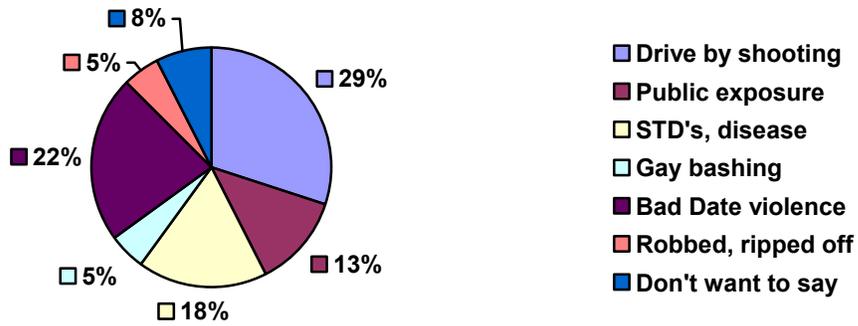
Seeing a friend leave in a vehicle then finding out she was missing and then murdered. (Haley)

*I have seen people overdose, commit suicide, get murdered and be gay bashed. I fear being raped and dumped outside the city on a winter day.
(Addison)*

It's dangerous because you never know what is going to happen to you. You could go with someone and they could kill you. (Zion)

It's just a dangerous life for the sellers and the buyers. (Baylee)

Fear the most working/hustling



There was a strong sense that violence could come both from gay bashing and customers. Fear is prevalent for both women and young men in the sexual exploitation trade. Women have a level of fear from customers, but not from those onlookers who harass them.

4.5 Thoughts when hustling/working

Given the length of time most of these young men have been involved in the sexual exploitation trade, there is value in understanding what they think about when they are and are not hustling/working.

Think about when hustling/working



Thirty-five percent think about what they have to do to get the money. This speaks to the continual grind of this type of trade. Absolutely no one spoke highly of what they were doing. It is simply a form of survival for many and they are not proud of it. They also acknowledge it is difficult to exit.

If I'll ever get out of it. If I'll ever be myself. (Benjamin)

The next fix. (Russell)

Death. (Jace)

Is someone there with an axe or something? Lots of things. (Toby)

How soon can I get out of here? (Des)

4.6 Thoughts when not hustling/working

It is also important to understand what people think about when they are not hustling/working. Most think about staying away, being safe and making changes. Eighteen percent think about their next fix or supply of drugs. Many are thinking about getting away and making changes and improvements. Again, this is not an activity they seem to be proud of. They are either looking for routes to exit the sexual exploitation trade or they are using drugs to numb themselves.

My future and childhood dreams. (Finn)

I think about what I would like my life to be. (Lane)

I think about money. Where am I going to get it from? I think about going back out. I think about how the hell I am going to change my life. (Zion)

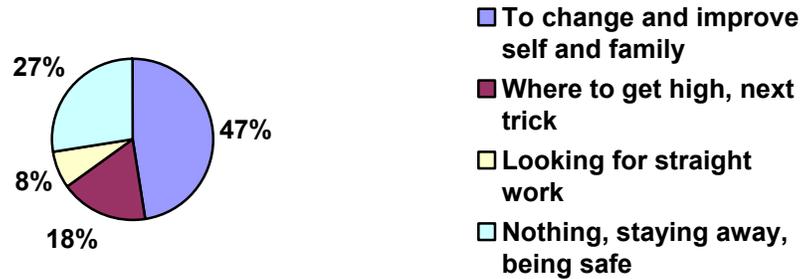
I keep my mind occupied and try not to think about drugs. (Jamie)

Where am I going to sleep? I think about seeing past clients. (Prentice)

Sometimes my family and where to get more money. (Wyatt)

How to get a better life. (Edan)

Think about when not hustling/working



4.7 Refusing a date

It was important to understand that all but one young man had refused a date at some point. Thirty-nine of the forty interviewed had refused a customer at some point. Fifty percent refused a customer because of a bad feeling they got, an uncomfortable 'vibe'.

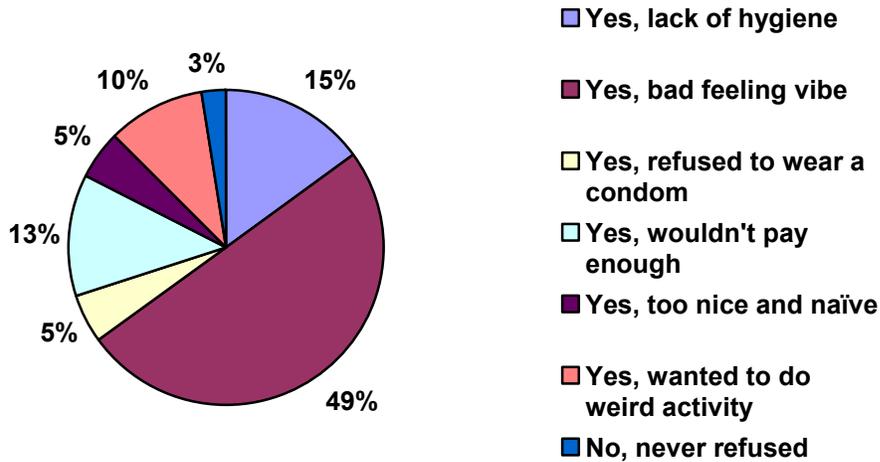
The use of gut feelings and intuition are important protection mechanisms for those in the sexual exploitation trade. It is an important skill that other peers in the sexual exploitation trade can teach them. Outreach and support services can play a critical role in encouraging and reinforcing the use of this gut instinct.

When asked why people refused certain customers the following responses were provided:

Yes, they scared me. There were too many people in the car and California license plates. (Rafi)

Yes, because the request would be disgusting, they crossed lines with body fluids. Some people were into shit and vomit. I stayed away from that. (Scout)

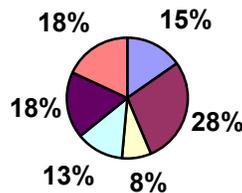
Refusing a date



4.8 Working safely

It is important to gain insight into how someone works safely. There are specific techniques young men rely on to keep them safe. These techniques are far from foolproof; however, they allow them a sense of control and safety. It is the best they can do, given the circumstances and nature of the sexual exploitation trade.

Working safely



- Someone knows where I am
- Not alone, friends, stand in lights
- Condoms
- Keep moving around
- Weapons, fists, metal keys
- Use intuition, gut feelings

The only method of support for this population comes in the form of outreach programs. These services provide condoms and support. As helpful as the services are, respondents felt this was the only service they could access.

4.9 Getting paid

Sixty-nine percent seek payment before the activity to make sure they are paid and not taken advantage of financially. This is similar to women in the sexual exploitation trade. It could be argued that the financial transfer of money motivates young people to close the deal as quickly as possible.

Cash upfront. I have held onto bank cards. (Russell)

Before or after. (Xavier)

At the end. (Jaden)

Sometimes half before and half after. (Benjamin)

Twenty-three percent will take payment after the act. From discussions with young men in the sexual exploitation trade, this often happens with regular customers in familiar territory.

One young man felt that taking money first made him look weak and vulnerable. He wanted customers to think he could handle himself if a customer tried to rip him off. Others said payment after the sexual exchange brought a level of insurance that this person was not a police officer. This brought a different form of protection for young men in the sexual exploitation trade.

When do you get paid?



4.10 Sugar daddy

Young men in the sexual exploitation trade often seek out a 'sugar daddy'. This protects them, and has the potential to limit the time and risk they experience on the street. There is a vast difference between a regular customer and a sugar daddy.

A sugar daddy will seek a public relationship with the chosen young man. It often involves exclusivity and means a live-in role.

Close to three quarters had experienced sugar daddies. This experience resulted in rewards such as food, shelter, clothing, movies, trips, cash, and for some, whatever request they sought. However, usually one's position of being taken care of by a sugar daddy is a short-term one. Often these young men are replaced with other young men.

Significantly, in this case, the young man's sexual orientation is gay, as is the sugar daddy's. A sugar daddy will profile the young man he chooses. This often happens in public places or at events.

*Opportunity to have my expenses taken care of for a number of months.
(Tory)*

A “gay for pay” young man would not seek out such a public display; they are clearly heterosexual but work as a gay young person to earn money. Their sexual orientation is gay only when they are involved in the sexual exploitation trade. They would be more inclined to seek a regular customer in private and have an impersonal relationship with them.

A “gay for pay” young man could be inclined to have a regular customer as depicted by the actor River Phoenix in *My Private Idaho* (1991).

This type of relationship offers limited protection from the unknown elements. Just over 92% had a history of having either a sugar daddy or a regular customer. Some young men seek impersonal relations from their customers, but very few young men did not want any type of personal relationship with their customer. A sugar daddy or a regular customer brings with it a sense of safety and security.

4.11 Types of hustling/work activities

We asked about different venues for work. Over half of the young men had been approached to model for pornography. Nearly half had worked private parties. A very small proportion, under one-third, had experience in massage parlors, and on-line or escort services.

4.12 Hustling/working & drugs

The relationship between drug use and the sexual exploitation trade was explored. Often when speaking with those involved in the sexual exploitation trade, substance abuse (drugs and alcohol) entered their lives once they worked in the sexual exploitation trade. Some people had histories of partying involving drugs and alcohol; however, it was not their primary focus.

Many times, once people enter the sexual exploitation trade, drugs become a way of life. They are initially a reward of life on the street because they assist in blocking out or numbing the continual sexual exploitation and humiliation they experience. As time goes on, the relationship between the sexual exploitation trade and substance abuse becomes stronger. These two usually mutually exclusive experiences become associated.

Pretty much we sedate ourselves. (Baylee)

The initial introduction to work can be driven by money to survive; however, this often becomes replaced or adjoined with a need to feed the drug addiction.

What is important to understand is that close to half those interviewed avoid the use of drugs while they are on the street working. Nearly everyone interviewed spoke of some drug use in their private time. It is clear that drug use in their private life often fuels their need to work.

For me yes. I wouldn't be out there if it wasn't for the drugs. (Benjamin)

For some, substance use enables them to work in the sexual exploitation trade. Potentially, for a limited number, substance addiction drives them and keeps them in the sexual exploitation trade as they work to feed their habit.

I was hustling to pay rent and food. Then it lead to drugs. (Scout)

It is important to acknowledge the strong relationship between drug use and the sexual exploitation trade. The possibility exists that the longer someone stays in the sexual exploitation trade, the greater and more intense the drug use becomes. Just under half of this population had injected drugs, where needles were used.

The need to disassociate oneself and from the actual day-to-day degradation of the sexual exploitation trade intensifies over time. This will occur regardless of sexual orientation.

4.13 Other jobs

This population has limited work experience outside of hustling. The opportunity to turn to mainstream, well-paid work is not there. Most tried working either in retail services, restaurant services or landscaping. These were part-time positions paying minimum wage. Even though some of this group is educated, their lack of work experience results in a hand-to-mouth existence. There appears to be a gap regarding their education level and employment skills.

The sexual exploitation trade offered consistent, non-taxable work, with no specific skills, education or training required. In other words, it was something that brought short-term financial gain. Unfortunately, with that comes long-term pain. When consistent cash flow is achieved, it is often easier to remain in the sexual exploitation trade.

4.14 Charged

Only 25% of this population has been charged with 'Communicating for the Purpose of Prostitution'. To repeat, the average tenure for those in the sexual exploitation trade is 8.5 years. It is significant then, that so few have been subject to Criminal Justice intervention even though they have spent close to a decade on the stroll. If the Criminal Justice System does not respond to these young men, it is logical to say they are not approaching the customers of these young men either. It remains a hidden issue. Customers of these young men are not identified nor targeted for criminal prosecution. Most stings resulting in charges of 'Communicating for the Purpose' involve women from the sexual exploitation trade and their male customers.

Once again, these young men are being sexually exploited under the radar which results in no social support or intervention, and their customers escape any legal responsibility, leaving them vulnerable without any detection or support.

4.15 Various cities

This is a transient population. One third remained working in just one city, that being Winnipeg. The other two thirds of the population moved around.

Over twenty cities and small towns were identified in Canada. Four cities in the United States were identified and one Caribbean location.

4.16 Sexual orientation when hustling/working

What became clear to this author over time was that there is a difference between how an individual describes their sexual identity while working/hustling as opposed to their private time. Calgary Sexual Health Centre (formerly CBCA) defines sexual identities in the following ways:

Gay: Men who are emotionally, physically, and sexually attracted to men.

Bisexual: People who are emotionally, physically and sexually attracted to people of either gender.

Heterosexual: People who are attracted to the opposite sex.

Transgender: Refers to individuals whose sense of being a man or a woman does not correspond to their biological sex.

Two Spirited: Refers to First Nations peoples whose sexual and romantic feelings are primarily for the same gender who, historically, were revered

as embodying both female and male spirits. (*Calgary Birth Control Association, Celebrating Diversity, 2004*)

Some of these individuals labeled themselves as being 'two spirited'. The following is a specific description that was crafted at a conference in the late 1990's:

"The term two spirited has a number of meanings within several different contexts. "Two Spirited" means Aboriginal people who identify themselves as gay or lesbian. The terms gay or lesbian are of European origin. Therefore, "two spirited" is preferred because it is more culturally relevant to Aboriginal lesbians and gays." (Two Spirited People of the 1st Nations, We Are Part of a Tradition, 1998)

There is value in clarifying sexual identities prior to the actual discussion of selecting sexual identities when working/hustling and private, non-work time. The following hustling/working sexual orientations were identified:

- Gay
- Gay for pay
- Straight for pay
- Tranny
- Bisexual
- Confused

Gay refers to a young man who has embraced and accepted a gay (homosexual/same sex) sexual identity while he is hustling/working.

Gay for Pay refers to a young man who is heterosexual in his off-street sexual identity; however, to survive he will be 'gay for pay', becoming involved in sexual activities with male customers. This also means that only during the time they are hustling/working will they demonstrate and/or perform gay sexual activities. Often customers find the potential opportunity to alter a young man's heterosexual orientation very attractive.

Straight for Pay refers to a young man who is gay in his off-street sexual identity; however, to survive he will become 'straight for pay'. They appear as very "macho" young men while they are on the street, and approach customers as straight. Some male customers find it attractive to engage a young straight macho man in sexual activity. Some customers find it very satisfying to think a young straight man would be prepared to alter their orientation to be with them.

Tranny refers to a young man who has entered the world of being a woman or a 'transvestite'. This means they will dress and conduct themselves as a woman. They wear women's clothing and makeup, and style their hair as a woman. Some of those interviewed appear as women at all times. Others interviewed described themselves as being a Tranny in their personal life but not while working on the street.

A total of eleven individuals identified as transgender while they worked. Ten of the eleven individuals were Aboriginal heritage; however, eight individuals identified as transgender in their personal life. All eight that saw themselves as transgender in their personal lives were Aboriginal heritage.

The following quote clearly explains why a person will work straight but has a private identity of transgender. Often it reflects a need for safety, that being it is safer to appear as a male whether straight or gay for pay.

I try to see myself as straight. (Dylan)

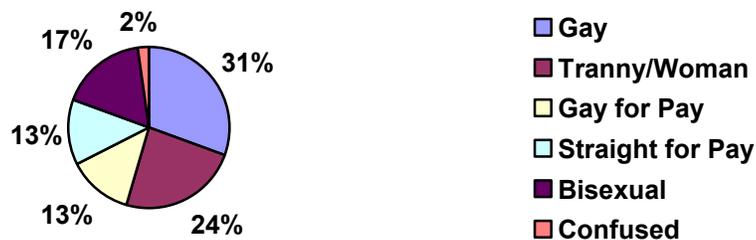
Bisexual describes a young man who is attracted to both genders. He identifies with both sexual identities. For some young men, seeing themselves as bisexual eased the transition to work with male customers. Some only saw bisexual behavior with men occurring when they worked in the sexual exploitation trade.

Others lived a full bisexual life while in and out of the sexual exploitation trade. Others identified as bisexual even though they were gay as some customers like the opportunity to see that a young man was attracted to women but chose to be with a male customer.

I believed I was gay and I used to tell them I was bisexual. I did that for them. (Toby)

Confused is how one individual saw themselves. They were unable to answer about their sexual identity when they were working, and unclear about where and how their sexual identity could fit while they were working.

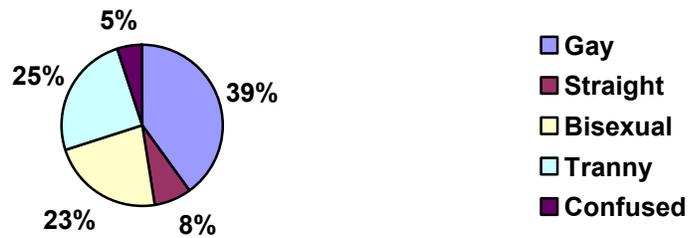
Sexual orientation when hustling/working



4.17 Sexual orientation when not hustling/working

An individual can describe his sexual identity while on the street as being different than that displayed in his private life. For example, eleven individuals saw themselves as being a Tranny while they were working; while ten saw themselves as being Tranny in their private time. One person protected their private time.

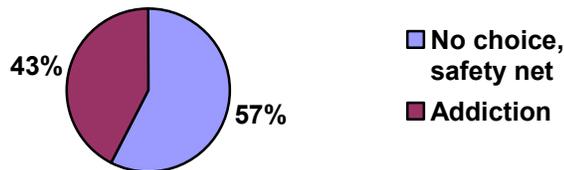
Sexual orientation when not hustling/working



4.18 Why people stay hustling/working

To understand why people stay hustling/working in the sexual exploitation trade it is also important to understand why they return. If we are going to be effective in assisting individuals leave the sexual exploitation trade for good, than we need to understand exactly what keeps someone in the sexual exploitation trade in the first place.

Why people stay



Fifty-seven percent did not believe they had other options or choices. The sexual exploitation trade represented a safety net to them and they relied on it for their immediate survival.

To be accepted and for money. (Benjamin)

There is nothing else for them in mainstream society. (Haley)

Low self-esteem. Making money. They are accustomed to what they are doing. (Delaney)

Money. Behavior is not easy to break out of. (Raine)

A large majority, 43% saw their addiction as playing a key role in why they stayed in the sexual exploitation trade.

A similar line of questioning was part of *The Youngest Profession: The Oldest Oppression* (McIntyre, 1994), where we found drug addiction for this population on the increase.

It is highly possible that access to inexpensive addictive crack cocaine and crystal methamphetamine or 'meth' has hastened the level of addiction and the numbers of those who are addicted. Crack cocaine was not a prevalent drug in use in the early 1990's. Expensive cocaine was certainly a drug of choice; however, the expense of cocaine has limited its use.

The inexpensive nature and highly addictive character of smoking crack cocaine and crystal meth has amplified the level of addiction; hence, the reliance on and entrenchment in the sexual exploitation trade.

The crack. (Rafi)

Addictions. (Finn)

To support themselves. Most have drug problems to support their habit. (Xavier)

If not addicted when you start, you will become addicted. Also the financial. You become addicted to the lifestyle, to the drugs and the false sense of what you are getting. (Zion)

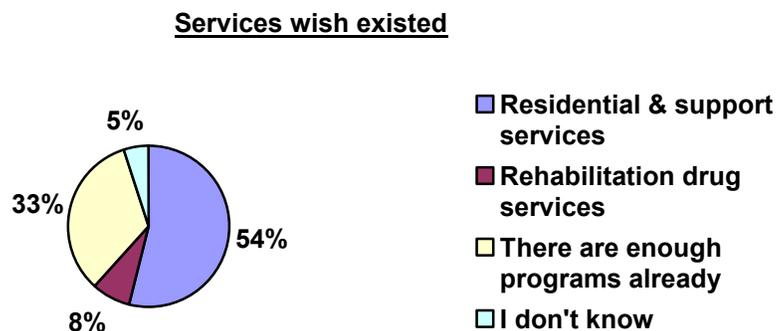
4.19 Services you wish existed

Throughout the interviews, we were curious about the type of services these young men felt should exist; however, there was a clear sense they felt that existing services were more female-oriented.

The delivery of services to young men has been hampered because we know very little about the different working styles or needs of these young men.

It is hoped that this study will provide the needed additional information for all these young men regardless of their sexual identity while working or in their personal lives.

In revisiting the male population from *Strolling Away*, they clearly stated they were different and we needed to hear their differences. Fifty-four percent from the Manitoba study felt strongly there needed to be residential programs and support services for males that addressed the unique issues facing sexually exploited males. Residential services should include services for drug rehabilitation.



Section 5: Attempts at Exiting

From our research, it is clear. People want to exit the sexual exploitation trade. They do not perceive the sexual exploitation trade as a long-term lifestyle for themselves; however, knowing how to leave is a process we need to understand, and we must then design supports accordingly.

5.1 Leaving

Everyone we interviewed wanted to leave the sexual exploitation trade. No one spoke of positive benefits or the desire to remain. Eighteen percent felt they looked and felt worn down physically and mentally. Forty-two percent felt emotionally empty. Many felt lost and that they had gone over the top. The other forty percent felt it was time for a normal life and they needed to find some support. Significantly, all had a reason to want to exit. All of these individuals had taken a time out, but most had slipped back into the sexual exploitation trade.

Sick of feeling filthy and dirty. (Scout)

Hard on the mind, emotions, physical body. Loss of friends. (Haley)

Because it is degrading. (Jaden)

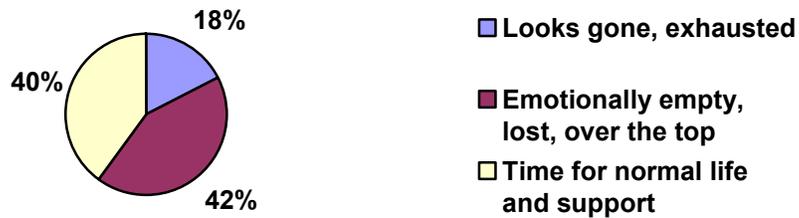
A violent incident. Wake up calls. (Jace)

Sick and tired of working. They found supports in the community, went back to school. (Kaelin)

Moved on in the world, it is a dirty job. (Jamie)

Someone helps them get out of it. (Toby)

Why people leave



5.2 Best thing not hustling/working

Only four people that had exited were unable to identify the best thing about not working. They had not yet discovered what the best thing was yet. Others who had short-term or multiple experiences with exiting were able to quickly identify the benefits.

Best thing not hustling/working



The sense of dignity was something that was quickly identified. A sense of self-esteem returned to individuals who had exited. The sense of fear disappeared and was replaced with a sense of safety.

5.3 Returning

Unfortunately, many of those who had exited experienced a sense of relief for only a brief period of time. Almost half felt they returned to hustling/working because they were stranded, unemployed and/or feared becoming homeless.

It is important to remember that the majority of these young men had lived either as runaways, or had been homeless and had experience in the shelter system. Some saw that their only option was to return to shelters or to the sexual exploitation trade.

The cash and the depression set back in. I guess a form of self destruction. (Des)

Boredom it's like an addiction too. (Jody)

I wasn't ready to deal with my shit. (Baylee)

Drugs and personal problems. (Jade)

Some realized friends and roommates were significant factors in returning. Although they had decided to stop working/hustling, they still continued to be part of the lifestyle through roommates. Unfortunately, this peripheral lifestyle becomes a slippery slope and most end up re-entering the sexual exploitation trade.

Moved back to Winnipeg. If I didn't come back I wouldn't have started again. (Daleny)

The level of addictions also played a significant role in re-entering the sexual exploitation trade.

Alcohol abuse and drugs. (Addision)

5.4 Stress

Over 55% had difficulty with stress once they ceased work. This stress most often occurred due to worry about survival. How exactly were they going to survive? Many were concerned with their ability, or lack of ability, to be a provider.

All of the individuals had limited experience with other forms of work. Minimum wage jobs require strength and endurance. Recent experience in the sexual exploitation trade did not prepare any of them physically or mentally to return to this type of 'legitimate' work. There was a sense of abandonment.

5.5 Problems sleeping

During periods of time when young men exited the sexual exploitation trade, over sixty percent experienced difficulty sleeping. Street life entails long, late hours. It was not just the adjustment to change. Often it had to do with other physical changes from drug withdrawal or sleep disturbances from dreams and nightmares.

Nightmares about going back into working the drug scene. (Marcus)

5.6 Flashbacks

Sixty-four percent experienced flashbacks once they left the street. Flashbacks are a very real disturbance for many individuals. Often they recall some of the difficult times that occurred while in the sexual exploitation trade or experience unresolved issues they suppressed while in the sexual exploitation trade.

Yes, really bad. (Prentice)

Yes, at first. (Finn)

5.7 Anger

Over half who had exited experienced problems with anger once they left the sexual exploitation trade. Some describe how they get angry now because they were once so guarded and/or stoned. Previously their anger was buried.

Yeah but it was the drugs. (Prentice)

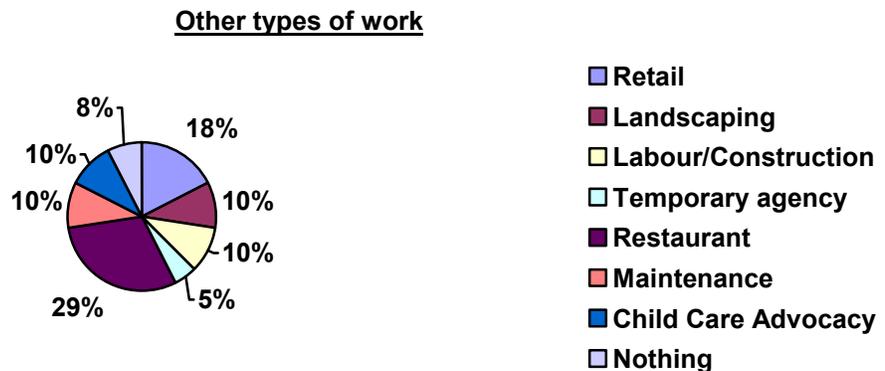
Yes, all from the addictions still. (Xavier)

It builds up. (Finn)

5.8 Other work

This population had dabbled in other types of work. Most times it was short-term, minimum wage employment. As mentioned in the section on education this is a group of young men where over 32% had completed high school.

The issue seems to be in the transition from school to work. The skills required to secure stable, suitable employment seem to be absent. The ability to find short-term, minimum wage income employment is easy, even though it is insufficient when living in expensive urban cores. This group appears to have a gap between their education and a transition into consistent employment.



5.9 Messages for service providers

It is important to hear what these young men wanted to tell service providers. An overwhelming number wanted to let them know that it is not easy to leave the sexual exploitation trade. As was found in *Strolling Away* (McIntyre, 2002), nearly everyone left at least once. The process of leaving is a challenge; they often do not have the resources to exit. Add to that their level of addiction, lack

of employment and limited resources, and a successful exit often includes homelessness and/or shelter stays.

Most males do not have children or child care responsibilities. While the birth and caring of a child often brings with it government aid and a renewed family connection for females, this is not an option for young men.

The young men in this study felt there was a need for service providers to understand them. They did not feel understood by service providers, nor did they believe program options were available to them.

Treat us fair, we are human beings. (Cagney)

Ordinary people who are misled, looking for love. We need basic essentials in life like food and shelter. (Benjamin)

We are not as bad as society says and views us. (Tory)

Stop marginalizing us. It's something we do, not who we are. (Kaelin)

The issue of drug rehabilitation programs was critical. Young men engage in sexual exploitation at a very young age and remain in the sexual exploitation trade longer than women. Consequently, they have longer and more severe experiences of drug addiction.

When asking the young men about services and service providers, the interviewers often received comments saying they were grateful for this study. Some of those interviewed sent notes directly to us thanking us for doing this study.

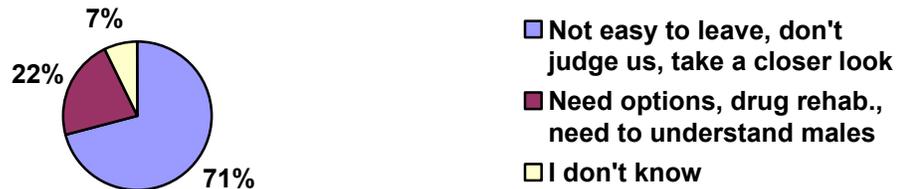
Finally, they felt their voice about needing services to meet their needs was being heard. Condoms and coffee programs assist but there is a desire for more in-depth services.

Shelter for men. Places to talk about things. (Benjamin)

People to help me deal with the day to day issues of the street, someone to hear your side. (Carl)

Yes definitely there needs to be more services like TERF Program a safe house or shelter for men. Like the TERF program for women there needs to be similar programs for men, better access to counseling because the waiting lists are ridiculous in order to get decent counseling on a regular basis. (Zion)

Tell service providers



5.10 Story of ten who exited

A total of ten individuals interviewed had exited from the sexual exploitation trade. These ten individuals had exited anywhere from 18 months up to over 15 years. As a result, they bring with them a wealth of information on the challenges and process of leaving the sexual exploitation trade.

The majority of individuals left the sexual exploitation trade more than once. Over three-quarters exited between two and five times before they had a successful exit. We need to understand that individuals do not exit just once in most cases. Many times it becomes a cumulative learning process.

The key findings from these ten interviews are as follows:

- The majority of individuals left the sexual exploitation trade more than once
- The issue of fear and abuse made four want to exit
- The desire to have a “normal” life created the desire for five to exit
- The need for income pressured seven to consider returning to the sexual exploitation trade
- Two missed the excitement and the thrill of the street
- When people did go back, they were quick to say things such as: better housing; drug and personal counseling; moving; and, being drug free could have prevented them from returning
- Half clearly stated they left because ‘enough was enough’
- Two were fortunate enough to say they left because they found employment
- The desire for a normal life, relationship with friends, and program support assisted and provided support to nearly everyone to leave
- Eight felt supportive positive relationships and treatment were what assisted them in not returning to the street
- People talked about missing life on the edge and the money once they left
- Many identified financial stress, missing action, relationship problems and drug addiction as factors that almost made them return to the sexual exploitation trade
- One lesson people identified after leaving the street was that they could be a valuable person
- After they left, many said they wanted to stop everyone from doing this, that we need to understand it is a method of survival, it makes people uncomfortable and it is child abuse
- When you leave, you should expect to be broke and stressed
- There are consequences for the life they were part of

- When questioned as to what surprised them after they left, they were quick to say they can leave, they have self respect

My new life. My job, my own place and my family back. (Addison)

That I am living my life. A real good life. (Baylee)

The biggest surprise would be that I never needed to be there in the first place. (Zion)

Section 6: Health Issues

The Calgary Health Region was a strong supporter of the study in Alberta and assisted in the development of the health questions which were used in Manitoba. There was a real desire to understand the health-related issues with this population.

In order to obtain this information, we asked questions about the need to access health services as a result of an individual's hustling/working. Over one-third had accessed health services as a result of the sexual exploitation trade. Two-thirds of those who had accessed the services stated they received good services and their needs were addressed.

Very good. They did a double take when I said my profession. (Marcus)

They have a job to do and a lot of people waiting. (Baylee)

Unfortunately, not all had positive experiences with the medical community.

They did not understand or respect me. (Haley)

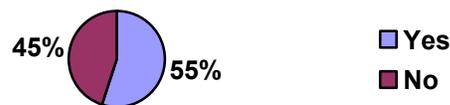
6.1 Health care workers aware of hustling/working

We then inquired about their own doctor or health care worker being aware of their involvement in the sexual exploitation trade. Fifty-five percent of the population interviewed had informed health professionals of their hustling/working.

Only one third of this population identified having a health concern. These ranged from HIV, Hepatitis C, STD's, and mental health issues which were either connected with, influenced by, or resulting from their involvement in the sexual exploitation trade.

It was of value to see that such a large percentage (55%) had kept health care professionals aware of their involvement in the street. This allowed for a greater level of awareness and proper health education and prevention.

Health care worker aware of your hustling/working



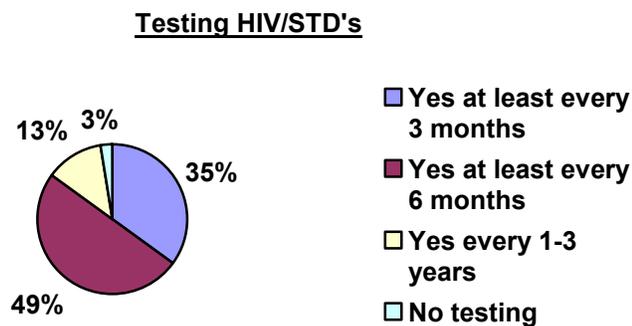
6.2 Testing for HIV / STD's

Many spoke highly of the medical services they had received to date. They felt it was important to have a good relationship with health care professionals. There was a strong commitment to being responsible with respect to HIV and other STD testing. Only one person had not been tested.

What is important is that the public education on HIV testing has made a significant impact. People understand the value and importance of regular testing.

6.3 Frequency of HIV / STD testing

When we asked about the frequency of HIV / STD testing, what was important about our findings was how regular testing is of value. Eighty-four percent went for testing at least every six months. Over half went for testing at community clinics such other street health services in Winnipeg.



When asked what makes it easier to get testing done, sixty-five percent spoke about having a neutral, confidential and anonymous service. One-quarter said they did not know what could make it easier, as they are always very nervous when they go for testing.

There was a clear sense from sixty percent of this population that they saw themselves as high risk for HIV. Five individuals interviewed were already confirmed as being HIV positive and/or having Hepatitis C.

6.4 Condom use while hustling/working

Next we asked about the importance of condom use while hustling/working.

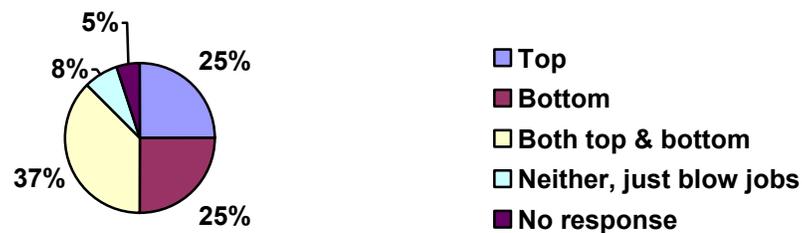
Public education on prevention of HIV and STD's has had some effect. The use of condoms while working/hustling was 87%. Five percent use condoms most of the time, but 8% do not use condoms often when doing blow jobs.

Condom use hustling/working



One of the questions designed by experiential youth also used the terms 'top boy/ bottom boy'. The term in the gay community is top or bottom. This term refers to the physical positioning of anal penetration. A person who fulfils the role as top will deliver anal penetration. The person who is bottom will be the receiver who is being anally penetrated.

Top/Bottom



It is revealing that the use and value of condoms is established and followed in a consistent manner according to those interviewed. There is clarity that condom use is imperative when engaging in anal sexual intercourse, as there is an understanding that the risk is high.

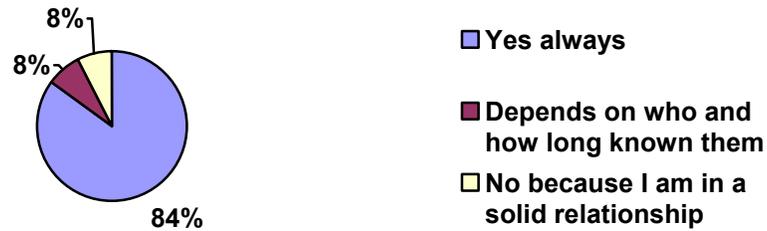
There is a lack of clarity in reference to transmission guidelines via oral sex. A need exists to have a clearly established medical position on the risk of disease transmission (STI/HIV) for youth and youth serving agencies. Suffice to say, the issue of condom use for oral sex is rather cloudy and Health Canada standards should be outlined and followed.

Although we found a majority always use condoms, there appears to be a need for clarification on the use of condoms when the activity is oral in nature. It appears there is a lack of clarity as to the potential effects of unprotected oral sex.

6.5 Condom use in personal life

There is a strong awareness of the importance of condom use in their personal lives as well. We found that 34 of the 40 interviewed will always use condoms in their personal lives. Three individuals use condoms depending on who the person is.

Condom use in personal life



Three individuals say they do not use condoms as they are in a solid personal relationship.

What is refreshing about this information is that there is an awareness of the need for condom use even in a personal situation. Five of the individuals interviewed are HIV positive and/or Hepatitis C but they clearly understand the need to protect others.

It was important to understand the medical services this population accesses. Medical services provided by street vans play an important role in the lives of these young men. Programs in Winnipeg such as: Nine Circles, Sage House, Klinik, RAY and Street Connections provide important public health information and direct medical services. These programs reinforce the awareness of condom use and the importance of regular testing.

Overall, what is of importance is that the critical need for awareness and action regarding health protection from HIV and other STD's is on the radar screen within this population. They are aware of the risks, but more importantly these young men are taking action to protect themselves. Health and AIDS professionals should be praised for achieving this current awareness and practice, and it is important to keep this information relevant and updated. There is a fear some will see AIDS as being curable and therefore become lax in using condoms. There is a need to keep updated and accurate health information for this population.

Section 7: Discoveries

#1: Comparable histories of abuse

Both young men and women have comparable backgrounds of sexual and physical abuse prior to their entrance into the sexual exploitation trade. What is key to understand is that these are children with backgrounds of abuse who have entered into the sexual exploitation trade. For young men, this background of sexual abuse was prominent. Eighty percent reported sexual violation, 87% percent reported physical violation, and 90% witnessed aggression growing up.

#2: Creating a construct

It was clear that many young men created an image or construct that allowed them to work while in the sexual exploitation trade. A number of different methods to create constructs existed.

Young men strive to create a construct to achieve a level of performance while on the street because they are placed in the position of needing to achieve sexual satisfaction (i.e. an erection and/or orgasm) for their customers.

According to many of the young men I spoke with, many talked about the pressure, need or outcome to demonstrate physical arousal whether they were the receiver or the deliverer.

Even if they are taking the lead in giving a customer a blow job, there is an expectation that some form of excitement, that is an erection, can be sighted. This becomes very challenging for a young man particularly if he identifies himself as heterosexual. Young men are expected to demonstrate 'buy-in'; whereas, women have the advantage of 'faking it'. Men must show some physical evidence of being sexually authentic so they select a construct in which they can achieve what is expected of them from customers.

As a result, a variety of different constructs exist, ranging from:

- Gay for pay
- Straight for pay
- Tranny for pay
- Bisexual
- Gay

#3: Male prostitution fear factor

During the years I have been involved with the topic of sexually exploited youth, I have often spoke of the original 50 youth I interviewed in the early nineties.

There seemed to be a pattern emerging that focused on the 'poor young women'; however, often I would have to clarify that nine of the original 50 were young men.

The issue of young men in the sexual exploitation trade made many uncomfortable. To ease this feeling, people would presume that those nine males worked with female customers; however, when I advised them that the majority of young men were involved with adult males, there was a great level of discomfort and angst.

It has been a challenge to gain an understanding as to why and how we are able to so readily accept young women in the sexual exploitation trade and not young men. There is a sense that as long as the activity is heterosexual, it is therefore 'normal'.

The issue of adult men purchasing sexual services from other young men raises discomfort with both the general public and service professionals. This level of discomfort is raised even higher when it is pointed out that not all customers are themselves gay men. Many are closeted married men. When we speak about young men in the sexual exploitation trade we are asking people to stretch outside of their heterosexual comfort zone.

#4: Begin young & working longer

Seventy percent of those interviewed began work under the age of 18. Fifty percent began work under the age of 16.

This means that criminal charges could have been laid in 70% of those cases under Section 212(4) of the Criminal Code of Canada, which prohibits anyone from 'attempting, or purchasing the services for the purposes of prostitution of someone under the age of 18'. To my knowledge, no single case involving males was brought into the Criminal Justice System.

Thirty percent of the young men entered the sexual exploitation trade over the age of 18 years. They were hard pressed to find alternative options, selecting this lifestyle as a short-term solution.

Young men averaged eight and half years working on the street. Fifteen of these young men had been involved in the street trade for over 10 years. Seven of these young men had been involved for over 15 years.

Overall, young men enter the sexual exploitation trade younger and work longer as part of this lifestyle of voluntary desperation. Young women are often handed a lifeline of support. A significant majority of women from *Strolling Away* (McIntyre, 2002) had birthed children. Young men do not have the option to physically birth a child and as we have seen, if they father a child they are often separated from any benefits.

Nearly every young man in this study had at one point or another spent time in a shelter or couch surfing.

The voluntary desperation of the street can often only be replaced by life in homeless shelters. Life in the sexual exploitation trade is often their only option to being homeless.

#5: Flying under the radar

What became clear to me is that many of the young men in this study had and continue to fly 'under the radar' of most service providers.

The lack of awareness of males is two-fold. Some fly under to avoid contact and interaction with professionals because of their backgrounds in care and drug use. Many avoid contact with family and friends. Others are harder to identify, given the difference in demeanor and working styles of young men and women. Males do not wear short skirts or stiletto heels, nor do they circle around corners when working. They are more mobile.

#6: Unique service needs

This research provided an opportunity to listen, hear and view the service needs of young men. Clearly, they were frustrated with the services they presently receive. They feel these services are an add-on to services provided for young women in the sexual exploitation trade, are minor in scope and reflect a female lens. Unfortunately, there is no specialized service in Winnipeg for young men.

#7: Public education on condom use & HIV testing has worked

It is refreshing to hear about the awareness and safety knowledge this population has gained through public education. They understand the need for condom use and have become committed to using them while working. The message has been clearly understood. The only time they consistently identified the lack of condom use was when they were in a long-term, committed relationship with the same person.

A strong awareness exists about the need and value of consistent HIV testing. The majority realize that consistent testing is both a preventive and self-protection tool.

Again, public education on condom use and consistent AIDS/HIV testing has worked with this population. Public education around the prevention of HIV/AIDS has also resulted in a significant level of awareness amongst this population.

There does however, appear to be a lack of clarity around the issue of choosing to use or not to use a condom when oral sex is involved. A need exists to gain a clear medical opinion on this issue in order to provide an appropriate platform for any public education awareness campaign. A great deal of inconsistency exists

on this issue between service providers, clients, and other professionals in the community.

#8: Connection between street & drugs is longer and more intense

Young men are spending a greater length of time on the street than young women. For many young women, they spend less time on the street and often take breaks to birth children. Hopefully, in most situations these breaks also disrupt drug use. The birth of a child can often work as a catalyst to disrupt, alter and cease drug use and street involvement. Again, young men do not have this opportunity. In many cases, this results in greater and more extensive drug use. It is possible that given the second stigma role of 'gay for pay' these young men feel both a greater level of shame and therefore drug use increases.

#9: Family ties

The greater the length of time a person spends in the sexual exploitation trade, the greater likelihood it stresses and alters family relations. Seventy percent of those interviewed had either a strained or non-existent relationship with their family. This strain and stress often results from a family's awareness of their son being in the sexual exploitation trade. Only 35% of those interviewed said that no one in their family was aware of their working. Many individuals kept their work a secret and they either had no contact with their family or just kept the

secret. Twenty-two of the young men interviewed were from Winnipeg and additional 10 young men were from the province of Manitoba. The fear of family awareness is high given the family roots in the province.

#10: Run away programs

Seventy-seven percent of this population had run away. What is important from this finding is that 80% of those who had run away were offered food or shelter with sexual conditions attached to the offer.

Running away plays a vital role in the potential entrance into the sexual exploitation trade. Often it is the trigger that initiates entrance into the sexual exploitation trade.

Section 8: Concluding Discussion & Recommendations

Young men in the sexual exploitation trade

In 2002, it was recommended in *Strolling Away* that a national study on males in the sexual exploitation trade would be of value; however, it was felt that the attempt of gaining an inclusive national study would be both onerous and time consuming. As a result, a decision was made to proceed one province at a time.

The Province of Alberta took the lead. They supported the need and provided the necessary funds required for such a study. They were joined by a series of anonymous donors.

Shortly thereafter, *Under the Radar: The Sexual Exploitation of Young Men* caught the attention of the Province of British Columbia. As a result, we were able to move the study into British Columbia, working closely with Covenant House in Vancouver, The Federal Government National Crime Prevention Centre (NCPC), The Government of British Columbia and some anonymous donors.

Funding was then secured from the Federal Government National Crime Prevention Centre, the Provinces of Saskatchewan and Manitoba and anonymous donors to fund continuation of the study into the provinces of Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Once both of these have been released, we will have a comprehensive picture of the issue of male sexual exploitation throughout Western Canada.

Under the Radar: The Sexual Exploitation of Young Men- Manitoba Edition provided the opportunity to design, enact, implement, review and complete a study on young men in the sexual exploitation trade. It also provided an opportunity to understand this issue from a male perspective, from the design of the questions, to the printing of this document. As males enter the sexual exploitation trade younger and remain longer, it is important that we gain as much information about young men involved in the sexual exploitation trade as possible.

Recommendation #1:

Efforts should be directed towards supporting the future expansion of this study to other provinces. Upon completion of the four western provinces those being British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, a report should be developed outlining the differences and similarities across Western Canada. Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia should be considered as future sites in order to allow for national, eastern, central,

and western perspectives. This population tends to be rather transient, so the opportunity to gain a national perspective as well as regional differences will be of assistance.

Abuse services

Eighty percent had a history of sexual abuse before entering the sexual exploitation trade. Eighty percent with previous abuse histories means that unresolved abuse could act as an antecedent to entrance into the sexual exploitation trade. As found in *Strolling Away* (McIntyre, 2002), often when attempting to or actually exiting the sexual exploitation trade, unresolved original abuse resurfaces. The issue of a history of being violated in a physical manner prior to entrance into the sexual exploitation trade was 87%. It is fair to say that the majority of these young men in the sexual exploitation trade had background histories of both physical sexual abuses before slipping into the lifestyle.

Recommendation #2:

That we publicly acknowledge both young men and women are being exploited in the sexual exploitation trade, and that we provide services to help them exit.

In over three-quarters of cases, both young men and women have a history of sexual and/or physical abuse. They are children who have been abused and are now being sexually exploited.

There is a need to ensure that children who are sexually and physically violated have the option to access treatment.

It is critical that we have services available for those exiting the sexual exploitation trade. Remember, for these young men, they have been in the sexual exploitation trade longer and the issue of homophobia circles around them. We must offer long-term clinical services to the populations who have escaped under the radar for far too long. As was discovered in “Strolling Away” once an individual exits the sexual exploitation trade, former memories of abuse before and during the sexual exploitation trade often flood individuals. There is a need to provide ongoing clinical support to this population during their reintegration back into mainstream life. This will increase the likelihood of a successful departure from the sexual exploitation trade.

Gender non-conformity training

A need exists for program staff that provide support services to this population to gain a greater level of knowledge and comfort with this population, especially regarding how they construct their own often fluid gender roles. Workers are often confused, uncomfortable or unaware of the profiles of young men in the

sexual exploitation trade. We live in a culture that presumes heterosexuality as the norm.

These young men have stepped outside societal norms in order to survive. No one wants to see a young woman in the sexual exploitation trade, yet there is a greater understanding of this as it is heterosexual in nature.

As we have seen, young men create a 'construct' to be able to survive in the sexual exploitation trade. Staff involved in programs and services need to understand and accept the constructs these populations have used to survive.

Training and information is required in the following constructs:

- Gay for pay
- Straight for pay
- Tranny for pay
- Bisexual
- Gay

Recommendation #3:

That staff working with young men in the sexual exploitation trade be provided with gender non-conformity training.

As discussed, there is often a level of discomfort, overtones of homophobia and a general lack of awareness and comfort amongst program staff.

Awareness of services needed for males

We need to look for and provide services specifically designed for young men. It is important that we understand they work differently than young women. Young women in the sexual exploitation trade work from a heterosexual framework.

Even when young women are under the influence of a pimp it is heterosexual.

Young men, regardless of their own personal sexual orientation, do not work in the sexual exploitation trade from the dominant heterosexual framework.

Service providers need to take the time to let a group of young men explain the types of services that would be of assistance to them. It is important that in designing such services we recognize the need to reflect both their work and personal sexual orientation. In other words, a young man who had to work as 'gay for pay', but is heterosexual in his private life will have different service needs than a young man who works and lives as a gay young man.

Services provided by Boys R' Us predominantly attract young men who are gay or transgender. A 'gay for pay' young man would not feel he fits into this service design. We need to take this into consideration in the support and treatment of this population. A young gay man interviewed had nothing but sympathy for 'gay for pay' young men.

It is important that we understand there are many young men who are being sexually exploited in the sexual exploitation trade. We need to get these young men on our radar screen and talk to them about their service and support needs. We need to stretch outside our standard heterosexual comfort zone.

Recommendation #4

That service providers create the opportunity for young men in and out of the sexual exploitation trade to tell service providers about the services they require. We should not assume that one service will fit all.

This type of information could be discovered through focus groups and individual interviews with young men from the sexual exploitation trade. A neutral facilitator would be a critical step. The use of experiential youth could also facilitate in attaining accurate needs.

Drug addiction

Young men are remaining in the sexual exploitation trade much longer than young women. They are unable to physically birth children, so this exit route, which can often lead to family and state support, is unavailable to them.

Pregnancy often leads to a decrease, if not a total elimination of drug consumption. Males cannot physically carry a child so often the drug intake is not interrupted.

As we found, young men are averaging six to nine years in the sexual exploitation trade. We know that this is associated with extensive and multiple drug use. The attempt to mask pain is managed through long-term self-medication.

Recommendation # 5

That a series of detox and rehabilitation beds be established for young men exiting the sexual exploitation trade. Years of extensive drug consumption requires an intervention that will provide them with temporary accommodation while detoxification and rehabilitation takes place.

Housing & training

Nearly every individual interviewed had spent time living in shelters. This included shelters for adults and youth. Shelter living is challenging. Often extensive stays and involvement in the sexual exploitation trade becomes a solution to homelessness. This group has experienced shelter stays and found this type of living extremely difficult. Once an individual is identified as working in the sexual exploitation trade, this label sticks.

In addition to detoxification and rehabilitation, we need to provide the opportunity for low-income affordable housing, as well as employment training and support.

This group has very little traditional work experience however close to 30% has completed high school. The challenge they have faced is in the transition from school to work. The challenge becomes even greater at this point, considering many of them have been in the sexual exploitation trade for an average of nine years. Assistance with basic employment skills training, and the option of trade tickets and apprentice programs is essential.

Recommendation # 6

That safe affordable accommodation is provided for this population once they have completed drug detoxification and rehabilitation. This population requires safe, supportive living arrangements. Coupled with this, they need help seeking alternative employment. Close to thirty percent of this population had completed high school and some college and university; however, they have limited employment skills and experience. Standard employment assistance programs will be required to assist them in supporting a successful exit from the sexual exploitation trade.

Supply & demand

As was discovered in *Strolling Away* (McIntyre, 2002), we place most of our attention on the supply end of the equation, meaning we put our energy into those young persons working in the sexual exploitation trade.

From this research it became apparent that our attention, minimal prevention materials and intervention are directed towards the supply of youth involved in the sexual exploitation trade. Outreach programs and secure treatment are designed to support or contain young people who have entered the sexual exploitation trade. These forms of intervention are directed at keeping the individual who is involved in the street, safe.

It is clear that if we are going to conquer this issue, a demand approach must be part of the equation. We need to educate with the goal of affecting and deterring present and future customers. A need exists to alter the demand for such services. During these interviews, both male and female sex workers spoke about the continual flow of customers wanting to purchase their services. This presented a challenge for those trying to escape the sexual exploitation trade (*Strolling Away*: McIntyre, 2002:37).

We have not kept sexually exploited young men on the radar screen. We have ignored them.

By ignoring them, we have also not addressed the demand side, that being the customers. Again we have ignored both the supply and the demand side of sexually exploited young men.

The Criminal Justice System pays minimal, if any, attention to the customers of young men. If 'communicating for the purpose' charges occur, they are most often directed towards customers of women in the sexual exploitation trade. In other words, police undercover sting operations are directed towards charging the male customers of young sexually exploited women. The reverse is also true, young sexually exploited women are more likely to be detected by the police and charged with 'communicating'.

Our view of the sexual exploitation trade is classically heterosexual. We are prepared and comfortable to intervene both from a social and legal perspective with young sexually exploited women and their male customers. This is the traditional lens, or vision we have of the sex trade and the manner in which we intervene. It is a patriarchal, heterosexual view. We are uncomfortable and reluctant to intervene with young men who are being sexually exploited by adult men. The reality is, men are having sex with boys and paying for it.

Recommendation #7

That we approach the issue of demand, that being customers, with an equal balance for both young men and women who are being sexually

exploited. Like women, these men are young people who are in need of our assistance.

Peer education

A need exists to educate peers that the road out of the sexual exploitation trade is challenging. Both genders who have exited the sexual exploitation trade identified challenges in this process. They attempt to return to their communities after exiting the sexual exploitation trade; however, many feel different, separate and outside their original peer group. They are often ridiculed, teased and challenged by their peers.

For young men, the ridicule of stretching outside the traditional heterosexual framework for an extended drug-addicted time can haunt them.

Recommendation #8

That prevention information is directed towards both young men and women. We need to provide information that both young men and women in the sexual exploitation trade experienced sexual abuse in their part. We should support, not ridicule them.

Community responsibility

Just over 92% of young men in the sexual exploitation trade had the experience of having a “sugar daddy”. Many of the young men interviewed were clear that these relationships were sexual in nature and included an older gay man seeking a relationship with a younger adolescent. This relationship often occurred in public.

The sugar daddy uses the public arena to display the relationship he has with the young man, who often serves as a status symbol for the sugar daddy. Numerous gifts and financial rewards are attached to this often temporary role. Many of the young men interviewed spoke about being fired or replaced by a new younger adolescent as they began to age.

While there are numerous relationships where age differences occur among both genders, the sugar daddy relationship is particularly damaging because the exploitation occurs in such a young and vulnerable population of young males.

(Eric Berndt, November 2004).

Awareness must be created in all communities that exploitative relationships should not be tolerated. Given the nature of the male sexual exploitation trade, this awareness is particularly important in the gay community as this is an arena where sugar daddy’s ‘parade’ their adolescent partner.

Recommendation #9

That the community-at-large recognize the damaging effects of sugar daddy relationships on this young and vulnerable population. In addition, an awareness of the economic disadvantages facing young males involved in the sexual exploitation trade must be taken into account and considered as a symptom of the differential power relationship existent in sugar daddy relationships.

Transitioning support

The transition from the street into the community is one that is difficult for young persons exiting the sexual exploitation trade. As we have noted, young men remain in the sexual exploitation trade longer than young women. Often young women leave the sexual exploitation trade because they have birthed, or desire to birth children. This is neither a motivator, nor an opportunity for young men to exit. During the exiting process from the sexual exploitation trade, there is an inherent danger in socializing with peers who are still in the sexual exploitation trade. There is the risk of slipping back into the lifestyle, which involves drug consumption. Little “formal” community support exists for this population. Often I and my researchers transitioned into support people answering questions for those exiting the sexual exploitation trade. Nothing formally exists for helping this population exit the sexual exploitation trade.

Recommendation # 10

Develop mentoring connections for the population who are exiting. A need exists for those exiting to have support from those who have exited. An experiential voice can assist an individual who is in the process of exiting the sexual exploitation trade. There are many questions, and those who have been through such a journey can better answer challenges facing those who are exiting.

This type of service could be set up in a formal structure through an agency that works with this population or informally within the volunteer community network. This network could be set up in formal face to face meetings, telephone or online support.

Public education

When we speak about the issue of youth prostitution or sexually exploited youth, we often see this as focused around young women. The prevention, intervention and support materials are primarily if not exclusively targeted to young women.

Recommendation # 11

A review of prevention, intervention and re-integration materials be completed and adjusted to speak to the sexual exploitation of youth regardless of gender. Materials must recognize the differences facing

young women and men in the sexual exploitation trade. Education for both genders needs to be covered in these materials, emphasizing that the sexual exploitation trade is a risk for both genders.

Harm reduction

The methods used in harm reduction approaches to drug abuse have been adopted for youth in the sexual exploitation trade.

As was noted clearly in *Strolling Away* (McIntyre, 2002), it was suggested by experiential individuals that outreach services and professionals should directly offer respite and exiting support. There is value in offering condoms and bad date sheets; however; the offer to discuss exiting is of great value to those working in the sexual exploitation trade. The ultimate goal must always remain moving someone out of the sexual exploitation trade.

Recommendation #12

That an evaluation occurs of harm reduction approaches such as distributing bad date sheets, mobile support services to sexually exploited youth. The opportunity exists to move into a more direct approach to intervention. The ultimate goal must always remain moving someone out of the sexual exploitation trade.

Youth In Care

Fifty-five percent of those interviewed for this study were under government care. As noted by Shauna Parks-Denton, a former Executive Director of the Alberta Youth in Care and Custody Network and a Board Member of the National Youth In Care Network, “often youth from care have gaps in their sexual knowledge and education.” This is even more pronounced with young men from care.

Recommendation #13

That the National Youth In Care Network embrace the topic of sexual awareness. There is a need to ensure that youth from care have the same knowledge base as the general youth population. This information could be delivered through DVD, booklets or lectures.

Running away

We have seen that 77% of this population had a history of running away prior to their entrance into the street. What is important is the majority of those that had runaway from home had backgrounds of physical and sexual abuse. While on the run, 73% of those were offered food or shelter from a stranger with conditions attached, often sexual in nature. This often became a means for an individual's entrance into the sexual exploitation trade.

Recommendation #14

That we develop and pay closer attention to youth who are running away.

We need to recognize this as the early warning system for possible entrance into the sexual exploitation trade for both genders. For youth, service providers and professionals, the opportunity to successfully support and stabilize a situation is more likely to occur prior to years of abuse and drug use on the street.

Appendix 1: Strolling Away & Under the Radar

Background Prior Sexual Exploitation Trade (males only)

	Average Age First Trick	Total Years On The Street	Sexual Abuse	Physical Abuse	In Government Care	Aboriginal Heritage
Total 38 Interviews	14 yr	260 yr Avg. 7yrs	84%	79%	61%	26%
Strolling Away						
Strolling Away	15 yr	200 yrs Avg. 6 yrs	82%	78%	61%	24%
33 Females (87%)						
Strolling Away	12 yr	60 yrs Avg. 12 yrs	100%	100%	60%	40%
5 Males (13%)		*				
Under the Radar AB	15 yr **	322 yrs Avg. 8.7 yrs	68%	86%	51%	54%
37 males (100%)						
Under the Radar BC	15 yr***	372 yrs Avg. 9.3 yrs	78%	90%	46%	43%
40 Males (100%)	17 yr***					
Under the Radar SK	15 yr	358 yrs Avg 9.1 yrs	75%	75%	63%	85%
40 Males (100%)						
Under the Radar MB	15 yr	342.5 Avg 8.5 yrs	80%	90%	55%	67%
40 Males (100%)						

* Sample size includes only 5 males

** 48% commenced street work under the age of 16 (18 individuals)
73% commenced street work under the age of 18 (9 individuals)
27% commenced street work as young adult that being 18 years of age and older (10 individuals)

*** The age of 15 was found for those 25 individuals that began under the age of 18. When including the 15 outliers the average age was 17.

Glossary

BAD DATE

When a customer/trick harms and/or rips off a sex trade worker. This often involves physical abuse and sometimes weapons.

BISEXUAL

This refers to an individual that is physically, emotionally and sexually attracted to individuals of either gender.

BLOW JOB

Oral sex/fellatio that a sex trade worker gives to a customer/trick. Male sex trade workers will often allow a customer/trick to give them a blow job. "French" is another term used for blow job.

BOTTOM

This term refers to the physical positioning of anal penetration. The individual referred to as bottom will be the individual who is being anally penetrated.

BUDDY

Customer/trick who purchases a man for sexual purposes in exchange for money.

CONFUSED

This refers to an individual who is confused about their sexual identity. They do not see themselves as being straight, gay or bisexual.

CONDOMS

Safe sex, sheiks, rubbers, prophylactics and covers are other terms used for condoms.

DATE

Customer/trick who purchases the man for sexual purposes in exchange for money.

DOPE PUSHER

An individual who sells non-prescription or prescription drugs illegally.

FEMINIST RESEARCH

“Feminist Research investigates the aspects of women’s oppression while seeking at the same time to be part of the struggle against it.” (McIntyre, 1995:15)

GAME

Slang term used for the activity of prostitution.

GAY

This refers to a male who is emotionally, physically and sexually attracted to the male gender. They have accepted and embraced a gay sexual identity in their personal life.

GAY BASHING

Is an activity that usually involves straight males whose homophobia results in violence towards gay males or those who appear to be gay in the sexual exploitation trade.

GAY FOR PAY

This refers to a young man who is heterosexual in their private sexual orientation, however will interact as gay strictly for pay in the sexual exploitation trade.

GLORY HOLE

This refers to a secluded private booth where a man can insert his penis and he is stimulated by a hidden individual.

GROUNDING THEORY

“At the beginning of the research, interviews usually consist of open-ended conversations during which respondents are allowed to talk with no imposed limitations of time. Often researchers sit back while the respondents tell their stories”. (Feminist Research, Glaser & Strauss, 1967:76)

HAND JOB

Sex trade worker masturbates customer.

HIGH

The physiological and mental reaction to drugs.

HUSTLER

Term most often used for male sex worker.

JOHN

The customer who purchases a man for sexual purposes in exchange for money. They are also referred to as "customer", "trick", "buddy" or "date".

LINES OF INQUIRY

The method of open-ended questioning on a specific topic.

MAINSTREAM FOLKS

People who are not involved in prostitution.

PCHIP

The Protection of Children Involved in Prostitution (PCHIP) was enacted in 1999 in Alberta. This legislation recognizes that children involved in prostitution are victims of sexual abuse and require support. Police and/or the director of Child Welfare may apprehend and confine a young person in a Protective Safe House.

PROSTITUTION

An individual who engages in sexual activity for the exchange of money or products.

PUMP

The energy, activity and unpredictable nature of street life described by sex trade workers on the street.

REGULAR

A consistent, repetitive customer who will interact with the same sexually exploited young man.

RITUALS

A pattern of behaviour that occurs in specific situations.

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION TRADE

Profession where youth engage in sexual activities with adults for money or products.

SNOWBALL SAMPLING

Results when persons interviewed tell others about the research and/or identify others to be interviewed.

SHELTERS

Large temporary accommodation that houses numerous individuals in the community.

SQUARE

A person who is not knowledgeable about the street.

STRAIGHT PEOPLE

In this case, it does not necessarily mean heterosexual. This refers to people not involved in prostitution.

STRAIGHT FOR PAY

This refers to a young man who is homosexual in his private sexual identity. For survival, this young man will perform heterosexual sexual activities for pay.

STROLL

Area where someone works on the street. Known as the 'stroll' because the sex worker walks up and down it. This constant movement was necessary historically because of the old Vagrancy charges. There is a distinction of "high stroll", meaning more expensive sex workers, like "high track". "Low stroll" is the same as "low track" meaning less expensive sex workers.

SUGAR DADDY

Refers to an older gay man who seeks a relationship with a younger gay man. This often involves sexual activity. The young man is rewarded with presents and necessities. The younger male is also often the exclusive 'ownership' of the older gay man in public places. A gay for pay young man would not seek out a sugar daddy relationship.

TOP

This term refers to the physical positioning of anal penetration. The individual referred to as top will be the individual who is anally penetrating.

TRACK

The street where you work is known as the "track" or "stroll". No one knows for sure why it is called track. Some relevant connotations are: that it is the wrong side of the tracks; track marks up and down arms; often by railway tracks; people drive up and down like they are on tracks. "Tracks" are sometimes seen as high and low.

TRADE

Slang term used for the activity of prostitution.

TRANNNY FOR PAY

This refers to a young man who is either gay or heterosexual in their sexual orientation who presents as a transvestite while working in the trade.

TRANSSEXUAL

An individual who has a consistent overwhelming need to live their life as a member of the opposite gender.

TRICK

Customers who purchase the man for sexual purposes in exchange for money. The customer is also known as 'buddy', 'john' or 'date'.

TURNED HIM

Refers to action with a customer. It means that the money is exchanged and the sex act is complete. 'Turned a trick' is another term for 'turned him'.

TURNED OUT

Refers to when a sex trade worker first began working.

TURNED A TRICK

When a sex trade worker completes a transaction with a customer. Also known as 'turned him'.

TWO SPIRITED

Aboriginal heritage people who identify themselves as gay or lesbian. The terms, gay or lesbian are of European origin, therefore, 'two spirited' is preferred because it is more culturally relevant to Aboriginal heritage lesbians and gays.

WORKING

If a worker considers themselves to be transsexual they will say they are working. The term "working" is one that women also use in the trade.

YOUTH IN CARE

An advocacy organization for youth who are in the care of government. Adults who were youth in the care of government now manage this organization.

YOUTH PROSTITUTION

A youth who enters the sexual exploitation trade.

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