

Envision Counselling & Support Centre – Offering Hope

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Southeast, Saskatchewan – Envision Counselling and Support Centre is a leading organization within the province dealing with issues of sexual exploitation and cyberviolence. Envision was the successful recipient of a five year grant from the Ministry of Justice Canada that focuses on assisting exploited and trafficked individuals in the Southeast. Envision also recently completed a two year project, funded by the Status of Women Canada, on the prevention and elimination of cyberviolence among young women and girls in Southeast Saskatchewan.

Envision staff possess knowledge and training regarding exploitation and violence and offer support to individuals and communities in the Southeast. Envision would like to take this time to acknowledge that instances of exploitation are not always easy to identify and many individuals may be impacted.

Sexual exploitation is a form of sexual abuse that involves individuals, often youth, being manipulated into exchanging a sexual act for money, drugs, food, shelter, transportation, love, acceptance or any other consideration. Sexual exploitation can happen to anyone, regardless of their age, ability, gender, ethnicity, religion, family income, class or sexual orientation. Victims of exploitation are often lured and groomed for a long time. The exploiter may use manipulation, guilt or threats to ensure the victim stays in the relationship.

WHAT IS SEXUAL EXPLOITATION?

is a form of sexual abuse. It happens when an individual forces, convinces or engages another person, often a youth, in any kind of sexual activity, in exchange for money, drugs, food, shelter or other reasons.

ABUSERS *often use lies and dishonesty to lure the victim into situations of sexual exploitation.*

NO ONE UNDER 18 *can consent to exploitation. Sexually exploited kids are not criminals, they are victims.*

Luring involves communication, often through technology, in order to facilitate sexual exploitation. This often involves information collection, boundary and vulnerability testing and assessing if the individual is open to engagement. Successful luring evolves into the exploiter *grooming* the victim by using promises, gifts or intimacy, among other tactics, to build trust. By

Estevan Office
Box 511
Estevan, SK, S4A 2A5
P: 306-637-4004
F: 306-634-4229

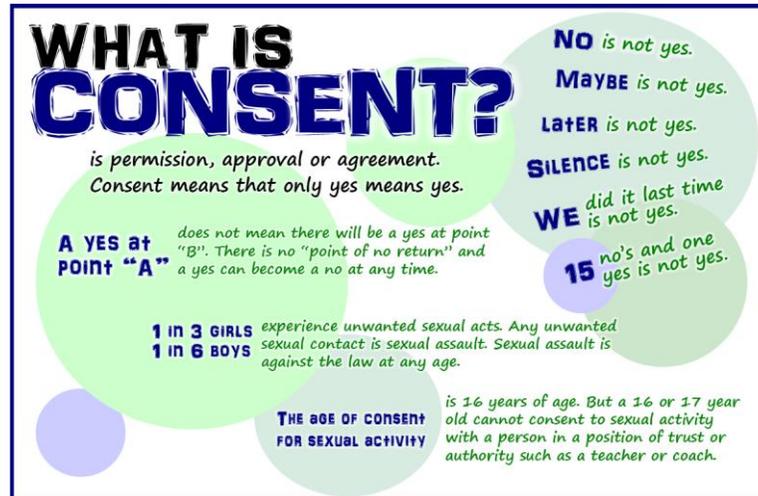
Weyburn Office
120-3rd Street S
Weyburn, SK, S4H 2L3
P: 306-842-8821
F: 306-842-8815

Carlyle Office
Box 1017
Carlyle, SK, S0C 0R0
P: 306-453-2405
F: 306-453-2407

Oxbow Office
Box 511
Estevan, SK S4A 2A5
P: 306-483-5555
F: 306-634-4229

this point, the victim often feels committed to the relationship and the exploiter can now coerce and manipulate them to engage in abusive activities.

Consent from all parties is required in legal sexual relationships. *Consent* refers to permission, approval or agreement to engage in a certain activity. The age of consent in Canada is 16 years of age, but Canadian Law clearly states that a youth **CANNOT** consent to **ANY** sexual activity with someone in a position of power or trust, such as a coach, teacher or boss.



Complexities surrounding sexual exploitation and the lack of understanding of what is involved creates an environment of *victim blaming*. There are many myths in our society that support victim blaming, which is a devaluing act that occurs when the victim(s) of a crime or an accident is held responsible — in whole or in part — for the crimes that have been committed against them. This blame can appear in the form of negative social responses from legal, medical, and mental health professionals, as well as from the media and immediate family members and other acquaintances or even strangers. Often the responses toward victims of crime are based on misunderstandings. These misunderstandings may lead them to believe that the individual deserved what happened to them, or that they have low self-esteem and seek out violence. As a result, it can be very difficult for victims to cope when they are blamed for what has happened to them.

You are never to blame if you are the victim of sexual exploitation or other crimes. The fault lies with the perpetrator. Envision Counselling and Support Centre provides support throughout the Southeast with offices in Estevan, Weyburn, Carlyle and Oxbow and also maintains a 24 Hour Abuse/Sexual Assault Support Line at 1-800-214-7083.

Visit Envision's website at www.envisioncounsellingcentre.com to find out more about what services are currently being offered.

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Sex Trafficking—It's not what you think



ASSUMPTION:

- Hooker/Streetwalker
- Chosen profession
- Doesn't happen here
- It could never happen to me

VS.

REALITY:

- Sex (or sexual acts) for drugs/alcohol
 - Sex in return for rides or rent
 - Exploitation on the internet
 - Being shared by your partner
- Massage parlours offering sex
 - Human trafficking
 - Escort services
 - Child pornography
- 10 - 15% of those exploited are male



Offering hope to the trafficked and exploited.

Expanded Programming :
Into The Sunshine
www.envisioncounsellingcentre.com



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For more information, or interview requests, please contact:

Christa Daku

Executive Director

Envision Counselling and Support Centre Inc. 306-637-4004

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