POLICY:	KEEPING STUDENTS SAFE - ANTI-SEX TRAFFICKING PROTOCOLS	#	1019
SECTION:	1000 : Safety	Page 1	of 7
APPROVAL/REVISION DATE:	January 17, 2022	EFFECTIVE DATE:	January 18, 2022
REVIEW DATE:	January 18, 2027		

CROSS REFERENCE:	PPM 166: Keeping Students Safe: Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocols PPM 128: Accepting Schools Act Administrative Procedures for Reporting Child Abuse Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017 Ontario College of Teachers Act, 1996 PPM 9: Child in Need of Protection Policy 703: School Code of Conduct

A: POLICY

The Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board (TBCDSB) is committed to keeping all students safe. We can play a powerful role to safeguard the safety, mental health and well-being of our students by helping to recognize, prevent and respond to sex trafficking. We have developed a plan with core components in place to protect students and empower our school communities to play a key role in fighting sex trafficking and keeping children and youth safe from sexual exploitation. This plan will support coordinated action by all community partners to prevent, identify and recognize sex trafficking and develop responses to facilitate early and appropriate intervention.

B: DEFINITION

Sex trafficking is the recruitment, harbouring, transportation, provision, obtaining, patronizing, or solicitation of a person under the age of 18 for the purposes of exchanging of something of value for sex with a child/minor. This form of abuse is predatory and devastatingly damaging to victims, survivors, their families and communities. Sex trafficking can include recruiting, harbouring or controlling a person's movements using force, physical or psychological coercion or deception and is generally for sexual exploitation and/ or forced labour.

C: WHO IS AT RISK

- Females, especially/young children/youth 2SLGBTQQIA+;
- Indigenous, racialized women and children;
- Children and youth in care or transitioning out of care;
- Homeless and marginalized youth;
- Children and youth with disabilities;
- Individuals with a history of physical or sexual abuse;

- Individuals with low self esteem, who are isolated or lack a sense of belonging.

School-aged and at-risk children and youth are prime targets for traffickers for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Students face a multitude of diverse and intersecting factors that increase their vulnerability to violence and harm. They may have difficulty identifying warning signs of sex trafficking, recognizing when they may be in danger and knowing how to seek help.

Warning Signs that someone may be a victim of Sex Trafficking include:

- Sudden decline in academic performance.
- Avoids eye contact.
- Expressing fear and intimidation through facial expressions or body language.
- Providing scripted or rehearsed answers to casual questions.
- Being controlled by others, driven to and from locations, and escorted at all times.
- Being moved frequently and claiming to be “new” or “just visiting.”
- Mental Health or Signs of Abnormal Behavior:
- Act in a fearful, anxious, submissive or nervous manner, excessive concern about displeasing partner/employer.
- Not being familiar with the neighborhood they live or work in.
- Not being allowed to contact family or friends.
- Having someone speak for them in public.
- Not having a passport or other forms of identification in their possession.
- Passport and identification documents confiscated by others.
- Not having control of their own money or cell phone and/or may have more than one cell phone in their possession.
- Lying about age/false ID.
- May be in possession of excess cash outside their financial means, prepaid credit cards and/or have hotel keys.
- A boyfriend/girlfriend who is significantly older than the student.
- Tattoos/branding (burning) suggesting ‘ownership.’

- May have visible signs of substance dependency.
- Fearful of law enforcement or immigration services.
- Uses slang terminology that is popular within the sex industry subculture (daddy/pimp/ bottom, etc).

Physical Appearance:

- May be dressed in age inappropriate clothing and/or inappropriate for time of year.
- May suddenly have expensive clothing, purses, shoes, nail services.
- May have bruises or other signs of physical abuse including being malnourished.
- May show signs of being physically restrained, confinement or torture.
- Lacking basic medical services or being denied services by employers.

Victims may:

- Not knowing they are being victimized because they have a relationship with their trafficker – it could be their friend, boyfriend or girlfriend.
- They do not appear to need assistance because they have a place to live, food to eat, nice clothes, medical care and even a “paying job.”
- Be unaware of their rights, or may have been intentionally misinformed about their rights so they don’t know they can receive help.
- Be taught to distrust and fear the government and law enforcement officers because they are afraid they will get arrested or deported (if from another country).
- Feel alone, isolated, helpless with nowhere else to turn.
- Fear for their safety or the safety of someone known to them, as some traffickers will threaten to harm the victim, their friends or family members if they report their situation to, or cooperate with law enforcement.
- Feel as though they have a debt to “pay back” – for things like gifts, drugs, accommodation, recruitment fees etc.
- Suffer trauma and psychological effects.

D. STRATEGIES

AWARENESS

TBCDSB is committed to raise awareness and increase understanding about the urgency and complexity of combating sex trafficking. With the collaboration of multi-sectoral partnerships the Board is aware of the valuable input heard from survivors of human trafficking, Indigenous communities and organizations, law enforcement and frontline service providers.

The following community partners will collaborate with the TBCDSB to raise awareness and training in Anti-Sex Trafficking:

- Thunder Bay Police
- Lakehead University
- CAS
- Thunder Bay Anti-Human Trafficking Coalition /Thunder Bay Counselling
- Dilico
- Ontario Native Women's Association
- Anishinabek Police Services
- Ontario Provincial Police
- Tikinagan Child and Family Services

It is important that all staff of the TBCDSB be made aware of the possibility of sex trafficking. All Board employees, including educators, administrators, support staff and any other staff be trained to recognize warning signs, respond to and present trafficking of children and to establish support for students who are at risk of being trafficked. Educators are encouraged to raise awareness of the risks of sex trafficking with their

students through curriculum based learning and in consultation with the Mental Health Lead. Students will be made aware of the signs of targeting, luring, and grooming for the purposes of sex trafficking and how to bring their concerns forward. Updated resource for staff will be made available through our Mental Health Lead.

TBCDSB's use of its website and online resources will provide information for all TBCDSB staff, students, families and the community at large. Links to the community partners' websites will be posted on our TBCDSB webpage. This will help engage the TBCDSB community on social media in order to help share resources and support with families.

RESPONSE

Thunder Bay Catholic District Board is dedicated to creating an environment that encourages disclosures, allegations or suspicions to be reported. Prompt action is essential in regard to disclosures, allegations or suspicion of child abuse and/or sex trafficking. Reporting to a child welfare agency and/or the parents/guardians as required by law and is deemed necessary for the protection of students. All disclosures,allegations or suspicions are considered confidential.

Steps in response to suspected student sex trafficking:

- Suspicions based on observations and warning signs indicated above.
- Discuss suspicions with the Principal or Supervisor.
- Principal or Supervisor will refer to the Mental Health Lead.
- Mental Health Lead will assess situations with relevant staff members, collect information and consult with community partners as needed. In the case of an abuse/CAS report, that duty to report remains with the staff who received the information/disclosure.

- Mental Health Lead will advise relevant staff members of their responsibilities and next steps related to suspected sex trafficking, and contact additional services or authorities as needed.

Steps in confirmed student sex trafficking

- Principal/Vice Principal responds and investigates potential school impacts.
- Mental Health Lead and/or Social Worker will offer/refer students to local service providers for victim support and protection. Mental Health Lead will provide recommendations on supports in school setting, and support for staff in responding to confirmed student sex trafficking.
- Educational planning and trauma informed supports implemented, and continue for victim(s).

Duty to Report

The Child Youth and Family Services Act requires that every person in Ontario has a duty to report to a children's aid society ("CAS") if they suspect that abuse or neglect has occurred or if a child is at risk of abuse or neglect. All TBCDSB employees or volunteers must remain vigilant about abuse and neglect. An employee or volunteer who receives an abuse/neglect disclosure, or suspects and/or witnesses abuse or neglect, will immediately report to a CAS Where abuse or neglect has been reported, the TBCDSB will cooperate fully with the investigating agency.

The dignity and all legal rights to privacy of those affected by an abuse or neglect disclosure will be respected. Where appropriate, support and as much information as may be legally shared and will be provided to the greater school community. It is not a staff member's responsibility to prove that the child has been abused or neglected, or to determine whether the child is in need of protection.

If a Children's Aid Society/Police Investigative Team comes to the school, in response to a reported case of child abuse, the Principal shall review the responsibilities of the Principal under the Education Act and under this procedure with the members of the Investigative Team. This having been done, the responsibility to proceed with the investigation now rests with the Investigative Team. Parental consent is not a requirement to interview the child with respect to a reported case of child abuse, and in fact, parental involvement before the Children's Aid Society/Police Investigative Team sees the child, might jeopardize the Team's investigation and thus diminish efforts to protect the child. (Children are often trafficked by a family member or parent) Initial contact of the parents/guardians is the responsibility of the Investigative Team, and not a school responsibility.