

# Nova Scotia has become a source province for human trafficking

Contributed

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TRURO, N.S. — BY KEN BANKS

In Nova Scotia, human/sex trafficking is a real issue. In fact, our province is what is known as a source province.

Primarily, girls and women are lured into prostitution and are often taken to other parts of the country. Indigenous women are among the largest targeted group, with nearly half of all those trafficked in Canada from this background. It's easy to think of this issue as 'an away' problem, but it isn't. People who live among us are being affected

by this horrible activity.

When we don't personally know individuals who are affected, it can be easy to turn a blind eye; but when one hears that some trafficked individuals are pimped out 15 to 20 times per day, something is tragically wrong. Being pimped out at all is wrong.

If I read the data correctly, trafficking in Halifax is roughly five times that of the national average on a per-capita basis. This is outrageous!

Recently, I became aware of TREY – Trauma Recovery for Exploited Youth .

TREY endeavours to reach out to survivors of sexploitation.

According to their website, TREY services are based on an integrated foundation of professional competence designed to meet the spiritual, emotional, physical and psychological needs of those recovering from trauma.

This is done through the use of recreation, exercise, yoga, hiking, biking, kayaking, music, writing, art, animals, horses, dogs, healthy eating, cleaning, and beautification – both inside and out.

TREY also provides life skills, helping survivors deal with being safe physically and emotionally; helping with medical needs, addictions, STD's, anxiety, depression, PTSD; discerning between healthy vs. unhealthy relationships and relationship boundaries; establishing healthy eating and sleeping habits; setting goals and making decisions; budgeting; learning culinary skills; improving employment skills; finishing high school and/or learning a trade; seeking higher education; and discovering what it means to be free.

TREY partners with both local and provincial partners, including a licenced female physician who specializes in women's care.

All counsellors have a master's in counselling psychology, and all volunteers have a secondary education in a chosen field of service or several years of experience. All staff is required to have a criminal record check and child abuse registry check.

TREY is a faith based non-government organization that provides a safe restorative family environment, serving youth, ages 16 and up. You can find out more information about TREY at their website - <http://treynovascotia.org/>.

If you are interested in a more hands-on experience, there is going to be music café on Saturday, March 2 at 6:30 p.m. This will include an evening of desserts and entertainment, as well as a silent auction and an opportunity to make a freewill donation. TREY is a registered charity.

The music café is being held at Immanuel Baptist Church, 295 Young St., Truro.

**– Ken Banks is the lead pastor at Connection Church in Truro.**