



Special Committee To Prevent The Abuse And Exploitation Of Children Through the Sex Trade

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**SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO PREVENT THE ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION
OF CHILDREN THROUGH THE SEX TRADE
2000**

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Kelvington-Wadena

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Carolyn Jones
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Don Toth
Moosomin

Kevin Yates
Regina Dewdney

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The committee met at 9 a.m.

The committee continued in camera.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Well, welcome everybody. We're going to open the public portion of our hearings. This is the second day of our hearings in Saskatoon. We want to express our appreciation to all of you for attending this morning. In a moment we're going to hear from representatives of Saskatoon Police Service, and we're very much looking forward to that.

But just before we hear from members of our police service here in Saskatoon, we're going to review the role of the committee and introduce you to the members of the committee, for those of you who haven't attended the hearings before. This we hope will be helpful.

So this is a special legislative committee that was set up to look at ways of preventing the abuse and exploitation of children through the sex trade. I'll introduce you to the members of the committee. My colleague and Co-Chair is Arlene Julé, who's the member of the legislature for Humboldt. I'm Peter Prebble; I'm the other Co-Chair, and I'm the member of the legislature for Saskatoon Greystone.

Arlene, I'll let you introduce the other committee members.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — All right. As I'm going through committee members I'll help you to recognize the ones that are not with us today, because we have actually a few members that could not be here with us today.

Ms. June Draude is the member of the committee from Kelvington-Wadena. And she was here yesterday but unfortunately had a funeral today and could not attend. And to my right — I hope I get the names right here today — we have Mr. Ron Harper; he's the MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) from Regina Northeast.

And also absent today is Ms. Carolyn Jones; she's the MLA from Saskatoon Meewasin, and Carolyn is in hospital. Mr. Don Toth is the MLA from Moosomin and he's also absent. Mr. Toth had other very important obligations that he had to take care of immediately. And to our left is Mr. Kevin Yates, Regina Dewdney.

And we also have with us today some very valuable help and assistance in Margaret Woods. Margaret is our committee Clerk and she's to my extreme right. And also with us, a very capable and valuable asset is Mr. Randy Pritchard; he's our technical adviser.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — We'll just review some of the key principles that the committee is using to guide its work.

The first is that every child is everyone's responsibility. That it takes a community to raise a child and that we're all responsible as citizens in the community, for each of the children in our community.

The second is that the involvement of children in the sex trade is child abuse. This continues to be referred to often as child prostitution, and we've rejected that terminology. We see the child as the victim and we see the involvement of children in the sex trade as the exploitation and abuse of children.

And third, that our objective ultimately is to completely end the involvement of children in the sex trade and child sexual exploitation. So zero tolerance is our goal for this kind of involvement and activity. Arlene.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — The committee has set out for itself a task, and that task is to address and to make recommendations to stop the abuse and exploitation of children through the sex trade within Saskatchewan. And the committee will consider and report on consultations so that we have . . . with stakeholders . . . stakeholders that have an interest, and we will seek their input on the next steps that we are to take in the province.

And the committee will also consider and report on the strategies that are employed in other jurisdictions such as Alberta and Manitoba, and we will be considering and reporting on the effectiveness of their approach in other jurisdictions.

And we will also be considering and reporting on reasons why these children end up on the street in the first place. And it is our hope that we will be getting a lot of information on the root problem behind why children end up on the streets and possibly some of the recommendations that are put forward in the end can help deal with that.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — The public hearing process is going to involve us obviously listening to the views and concerns of all Saskatchewan residents who are interested in appearing before us, including youth. And that of course includes youth who are on the street or have been on the street. And they've already provided us with some very valuable advice.

We're going to be holding public hearings in Saskatoon and Regina and Prince Albert and we'll also be holding public hearings in other smaller centres around the province. We have plans for hearings in North Battleford and in Yorkton and in La Ronge, and have extended invitations to municipalities over 5,000 around the province to be willing to go to their community if the mayor and councillors in that community would like us to attend.

Finally, with respect to ways of being in touch with us and following the proceedings of these hearings, I'd invite you to take note of our web site. On the web site you can find a record of all the proceedings. The proceedings of this special committee are recorded in *Hansard*, and as you can see to my far right our *Hansard* staff are hard at work. So everything that's said here will be recorded and you can go to the web site and view proceedings that are occurring in other communities. We've already held public hearings in Regina for instance and those are . . . the record of those are on the web site.

And in terms of contacting us, you can see on the screen that

you can reach . . . you can reach us through Randy Pritchard at 787-4003, and contact is in Room 239 of the Legislative Buildings. You're also welcome of course to contact any member of the committee individually and we have . . . if you need information on how to contact us just talk to us individually at the break. I think we're ready to proceed, Arlene.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Just for the benefit of the guests we have in the room, just behind the presenters, I'm going to introduce the members of the Saskatoon police that we have with us and we have Constable Joceline Schriemer, and would like to really welcome you and let you know how much we appreciate your being here.

And we also have Superintendent Bill Hargarten and Sergeant Len Watkins, and we welcome you also and extend our appreciation to you.

Okay, and we will . . . actually we'll leave it up to any one of the three of you to proceed in whatever order that you so choose, so.

Ms. Schriemer: — We've given you a package of information as well as an agenda, so to speak, of the items we're hoping to cover this morning. We're hoping to limit our time to 30 minutes and leave the rest of the time for questions, as I understand you usually have a lot of them.

With all due respect there will be times when there is coarse language and we will not be sugar-coating the realities of this issue.

I'd like to first share a speech with you that I presented on behalf of the Saskatoon Police Service at a street symposium organized in partnership between the Saskatoon Police Service and the Saskatoon Tribal Council in May of 1999. It was attended by sex trade workers and human service personnel dealing with them.

To effectively deal with johns that purchase sex for money, female officers work in an undercover capacity as prostitutes. In past practice this was done primarily on a volunteer basis. The officers receive a short briefing on the hazards of undercover operations prior to being sent out.

Approximately two years ago, several officers' safety concerns were identified in regard to these types of operations. The department remedied this by making available a comprehensive undercover operators' course for the women officers that work undercover as prostitutes. When targeting johns, these specially trained officers are a valuable asset to law enforcement.

Female officers working undercover as prostitutes have stated that the johns often treat them like dirt and report feeling degraded, angry, and frustrated. We of course realize that this is not our reality, but more importantly we recognize full well that for some women and children, life on the street is their reality. It is their world.

When I joined the police service, I was married with two children and had had previous employment opportunities. I

considered myself to be a relatively mature woman.

In one of my first undercover experiences as a prostitute, a 40 year old male stopped to pick me up. At the end of our conversation, he said to me: "Get in bitch, we'll see how good you are." After his arrest, it was found that he was from out of town and that he and his wife were in Saskatoon because their child was in hospital.

I knew logically that I was merely playing a role. Emotionally his remarks attacked my humanness. I felt angry and hurt. I thought, my God, if I feel these things, what goes on in the mind of someone who lives this reality.

In talking with fellow officers, some of them shared similar thoughts. Police officers are people just like you, and like you we have human emotions and a belief system. We are mothers, fathers, husbands, and wives.

Policing is a emotionally taxing profession. It is a profession where the truly good and the most horribly bad parts of humankind are seen up close and personal. Consequently we struggle with our own demons just like you.

I assure you that we police officers recognize and sympathize with the human plight that is the reality for these women. A lot of time, planning, and risk goes into an undercover operation. The results in court are often disappointing and can be a source of anger and frustration for the officers. We are aware of the damage that results from the actions of these johns and continue to work to make them accountable under the law.

Sometimes this question is asked: if police say they understand, then why do they arrest prostitutes? Communication for the purpose of prostitution is an offence under the Criminal Code of Canada. The charge however can be used as a tool for intervention purposes. This is similar to a drunk driver being ordered by the court to undergo addictions treatment as a result of repeat drunk driving offences. The purpose of an intervention is to come in between, as to mediate, to prevent, or to otherwise effect an outcome. The charge can be used as a catalyst.

Ideally personal issues are identified and the appropriate people or agencies are brought in to assist in the treatment and recovery process. The belief that you can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink has cost lives. There are times when a lever is needed. Interventions are a proven method of assisting people in identifying personal issues and seeking the help to address those issues.

Street life and its effects are extremely complex. There is not one clear solution. There is however plenty of room for honest discussion and understanding which over time will give us direction.

Prostitution is a difficult subject to discuss. It is uncomfortable because it touches on our human sexuality and our morals. The mainstream thought is that sex is something that two consenting adults share and it usually has an emotional component. We usually don't discuss it over coffee, especially with someone we don't know.

Now I'd ask you to take a minute and imagine what it would be like to talk about and then actually perform a sexual act with a total stranger, all the while hoping that this guy isn't some freak that will end up beating or strangling you. Now imagine the same scenario in the mind of an 11-, 13-, or 16-year-old girl or a boy.

I'm presently assigned to the community school liaison section and I'm responsible for five inner city and community schools. The schools are elementary schools so they are from K to grade 8. Constable Sellers, a colleague of mine and I, found ourselves dealing with truancy issues. And the politically correct term for truancy is absenteeism, which I will refer to from here on in.

Constable Sellers has five inner-city schools also ... elementary schools. What we found was that the kids that were absentee in our schools went from one school to another. I'll explain a case that we had that kind of started the whole idea of the absentee assessment team.

We were dealing with, in my school, a 13-year-old, a 12-year-old, an 11-year-old, and a 9-year-old that were non attending. The 12-year-old, 11-year-old, and 9-year-old were from the same home; the 13-year-old was from a different home. We found that the caregiver of the three girls reported them missing so we went to look for them. And you talk to a lot of kids and you get some trust going and you get information.

What we found was that these girls had been spending nights at the apartment of a 55-year-old man that has a sex abuse history. The social worker from the school got involved. There was a social worker from DSS (Department of Social Services) involved. There were several people involved in this case.

What ended up happening was the 12-year-old living in the home with the other three girls, were taking their little cousins and bringing them into this behaviour. So the 12-year-old was sent back to live with dad in Regina. The 13-year-old, the last that I checked, was still not connected to a school. The 11- and 9-year-old, after the cousin went back to Regina, started reattending and settled down.

In talking with these girls after, the 11-year-old was telling me that the man ... The 13-year-old, we'll call her ... actually this the case study in your handout called Lori, so we'll call her Lori. Lori, the 13-year-old, had known this man and told the 11-year-old that in the past the man asked her to take her top off. And at first she felt uncomfortable, but then she got used to it.

The night they spent there, the man gave the 9-year-old beer for washing his kitchen floor and would give cigarettes and beer to the 13-year-old for sexual favours. The link here is that truancy or absenteeism is an identifier, is an identifier.

Another case involving absenteeism and connecting it to youth at risk and child abuse is two sisters from another one of my schools were not attending. So the school social worker went out to find them. And grandma was their caregiver, and grandma said that they ran away. She hadn't reported them missing. Their ages were 13 and 12.

In the home, grandma and her daughter — a 20-year-old — lived, as well as the two grandchildren. The parents of the grandchildren — the father was serving time in a penitentiary in Alberta; the mother was a drug addict. So grandma was caregiving the children.

So she hadn't reported them missing because she didn't want to care for them any more. She was tired; things weren't working; she had a lot of other stresses in her life; and she wanted to section 9 them under the child services Act where you turn them over to Social Services. So we got her to leave a missing report.

I started checking things out, asking around, talking to kids at school. Information came in that there was a guy by the name of uncle Bob who was an older guy that drove a car, and when a girl goes and hangs out on the street and needs a place to stay, well you can call uncle Bob. Uncle Bob was a caretaker and would have access to vacant apartments. So for, I imagine services, he would provide a place for these girls to stay while they were on the run.

Word amongst the friends in the school were that these two were working the street. So I let it be known that they can call me on my cell. I received a call from one of the girls who told me where I could find the two runaways. Constable Sellers and I went to this apartment one morning and found the two girls sleeping on the floor in an unfurnished apartment, and the apartment was owned by a known adult, female sex-trade worker.

The girls cried when we took them away. They looked to her as their caregiver. When we spoke to them, the older girl, the 13-year-old, said she met uncle Bob through her aunt who will also work the street; and that she would watch her aunt and uncle Bob have sex, and that's how she started.

When I asked the 13-year-old if there was anything in the world you could change, if you could take a magic wand and change anything in your world to make your life better, what would it be? I want my dad to get out of jail so I have someone to live with and someone to take care of me.

When we're dealing with children and families and absenteeism, what we found was that in elementary school, if a child at that age is not attending, meaning that they miss enough school that it's counterproductive to their education and causes a concern, the principal asks the school social worker to address the absenteeism issue. So what the social worker does is try and track down the child and family and reconnect them to a school.

Now in the school system we have social workers that don't have powers under The Department of Social Services Act, so they can't apprehend, all that kind of stuff. They have to contact a DSS social worker to do that or file a report. We have counsellors that talk to these children. We have teachers that are very caring and giving. We have a really good system within the school, however they're dealing with non-education issues. These are basic needs issues.

And all of the agencies that we have, all of our human service agencies, are doing a great job in and of themselves, at least

we're trying, but we're not connected and we're not collaborating. For example in Lori's case, there were five different workers working with this child and family. Sometimes there are as many as 12 and 13 whose care plans contradict each other.

There's no communication, there's no collaboration. It's ridiculous. And it's very ineffective. And it's not anybody's fault. It's our system. We've become so specialized that we forget that humans are a whole being. We're not just one part.

In the case of absenteeism in the elementary school system we recognized, as I said, that the absenteeism can be used as an identifier to identify a youth at risk. And that in order to deal effectively with the child, we must engage the family because the absenteeism is a symptom. So what's the cause. And in order to get the child back to school and connected to school and having all those needs met, we need to work with the family.

Also in the school system what we found was in Al's school, he would have dealt with Lori for the same issue. So sometimes when the social worker goes and contacts the family, the family changes schools because you got another social worker coming into your house telling you what to do. So if I just change schools . . .

So when they change schools, the whole assessment period starts over again. They present a pattern of absenteeism, the teachers have changed, usually the social worker and the pupil services' staff at that school is changed. So you start all over again.

What the Saskatoon Police Service proposed was that we form an inter-agency team to address the issue of absenteeism in the elementary schools. So what we did was we identified the agencies that are imperative to do this. And that would be Social Services, Saskatoon Tribal Council, our health agencies like youth addictions, mental health, public health, and the Saskatoon Police Service.

So we formed a team. We said okay, let's get everybody to the table so we don't have to go and track down all these different agencies, and have families go to 20 different intake appointments. So we have a member from each of these agencies; a front line member . . . And the Public and the Separate School Board — I forgot to mention — and from each school board, we have a social worker and a counsellor and myself. We have a child protection worker who's not yet named. A financial worker from Social Services. Gary Beaudin from the Saskatoon Tribal Council Family Services and Michelle Robson from youth addictions who is also covering off for mental health.

So we formed this team, and we said okay, in two schools, one separate and one public, we will address the absenteeism referrals by using the child as a vehicle to engage the family and look at them as a whole, and hopefully address any needs there are. And hopefully that will address the symptom of absenteeism.

That was the theory and that was the framework. The process

that we chose to do this is called wraparound, and this is a whole other little piece.

Wraparound process is not a program, it's a process. Wraparound was . . . came about with Dr. John VanDenBerg out of the United States in the '80s. Apparently when Alaska wanted to repatriate the Aboriginal youth adopted outside of the state, VanDenBerg used wraparound to do this.

Wraparound is also being used now in Canada and the guru in Ontario is Andrew Dubicki.

What wraparound is, is a process by which you make a child and family team that focuses on faith, family, and friends. Because normal, healthy people when they're in crisis turn to faith, family, and friends. So what you do is you take the child, you meet with the family, you talk about their strengths. Who do they go to for support. Everyone phones someone. When mom gets beat up by dad, maybe she phones auntie or a friend. When little Johnny runs away, maybe he goes to his cousin's all the time. So you look for positive strengths and supports.

The family identifies those members and you talk to them about coming and being part of the child and family team. No more than 50 per cent of the team can be made up of professionals. So what you have here is a community-based team that hopefully, through the process, will depend less and less on formal supports and address their issues through faith, family, and friends.

The difference between this and regular human services is in regular human services everything's deficit based. The workers come into your home and they say, you're an addict, you need to go to this program and if you don't finish this program, well you can't do this and on and on and on.

What wraparound does is people identify their needs and their issues and make plans to work through them. Now the important piece here is that it involves everyone. It brings in everyone. So you don't end up with these 25 different people involved with the child and family. You get a clear picture and you get a buy-in because the family and child own this.

Wraparound to human services right now is like what DNA was to the criminal justice system. It's new; it's better. And it means, though, like the criminal justice system — we had to change things to allow for DNA — and so too will human services have to change some of the way they do things, some of the way we do things.

I'll give you an example of the wraparound process. A family that we were dealing with at one of the schools, there were major issues. And wraparound is specific to complex-needs families which most of these absenteeism kids are coming from — a real complex-needs background.

So this family it was — Judy, I'll call her — was married, Aboriginal woman, her husband worked nights. They were not on social assistance. They had five children, three of their own and two they were basically fostering for his side of the family. One was a deaf mute; one, a little girl, had been severely sexually abused and she was not reconnecting to school. She

was too scared . . . the mental health issues.

So her sister got hooked up with a pimp and a druggie, and Social Services ended up apprehending the sister's five kids. The oldest is a very severe FAS (fetal alcohol syndrome) kid who's 15. Now these kids ranged all . . . Okay, so five of the sister's and five of hers. We have 10 kids now ranging in age from 16 to 4.

The mom, after the apprehension, the aunt, decided that she's going to give custody to Judy, her sister, and relinquish all Social Services help or claim. So Judy now has 10 kids with a sole income of a husband working night shift as a cleaner. So he's getting . . . I think he's getting a little over minimum wage.

As things progressed, a week went by and they were in crisis. Four of the kids were not attending school so we have an absenteeism issue. But there is such a mismatch of complex needs, problems. Judy was beside herself.

The social worker and I picked Judy up, brought her to the . . . and I mean we're not even going to address the education issue because that's way above basic needs.

So I asked Judy, I said Judy, tell me three things right now. Identify three things in your life right now that if you could have help with, if you can change, if they can change, that it would make your life a little bit more manageable right now.

She said okay, I need food, I need lice shampoo, and my wash machine is broken. How basic is that. Are we even going to touch on, Jeez Judy, why aren't those kids in school? Schools are having to deal with that. We need to help schools — that's on the aside.

So the social worker went and got some lice shampoo. The school provided it, the school provided some food that they had left over. And I phoned . . . she said she had called the food bank and that the food bank wasn't going to give her any food because she didn't have a letter saying she had these five extra kids and she wasn't on social assistance and on and on.

So I didn't know how the food bank worked. So somebody told me to phone Equal Justice For All. And I never thought I'd be making a call to Equal Justice For All. But I did. And they said well, if you call as a police officer to the manager and say that she does in fact have these extra mouths to feed, they can give you an emergency supply. Which I did and went to pick up with Judy and she was very happy that she had food for 10 people for a week.

The wash machine was another story. In wraparound you need a flex fund and it's for things like this. And at that time we didn't have a flex fund. There's a laundromat not too far away so I went to the bank and got her some money and said here, go do your laundry at the laundromat. So that's how that went. And as it turned out over the weekend, her husband's friend came over and fixed the wash machine.

But the relief and the ability to go on in a really stressful situation, like you could just see her relax. I mean these were big things to her and big things to the kids.

So the absentee assessment team project is still going. We haven't taken as many cases as we'd hoped, but we feel that we're on the right track. That this is definitely a good indicator and a good way to keep these youth from getting entrenched in street life and being victimized. We know that youth at risk are prone to criminalization, drug abuse, and victimization.

So we're seeing this as part of the solution. The problem with this however is all of the people on the team, including myself, are doing this job and our regular duties. And it's very difficult to squeeze this in. We're hoping that we can get more of a time commitment. And we feel that because an at-risk youth affects Health, Justice, Social Services, and Education, that those agencies could maybe kick in and give us five people full-time to take wraparound training and do wraparound on the absentee assessment team with these children and families. But that's the pie in the sky dream. Thank you.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Thank you very much, Joceline.

Mr. Hargarten: — Sergeant Watkins, would like to . . . (inaudible) . . . on the vice details perspective.

Mr. Watkins: — Okay. I'm a sergeant in vice and work with two other constables and one sergeant at the time. It will be getting one other constable and there'll just be myself in charge of vice then.

I'll just give you some information on the way that vice perceives this problem. And I've worked out in the stroll area for the past 26 months; 16 of those months being in the vice section, the previous 10 months being in uniform as the west side control sergeant in that area.

The stroll, for you people that don't know the location of it, it's basically from Avenue I South, 22nd Street to Avenue W, and it's basically bordered from 22nd Street on the north side to 20th Street West on the south side though we do have pockets of youths working down as far as 18th Street and Avenue J, K, I area. The majority of the prostitution takes place in the area of the stroll on 21st Street West. This is a residential area. People in that area are not very happy with this kind of activity on the stroll and in their area.

I've got first-hand experience with a lot of sex trade workers. I can go up and talk to them and ask them what they're doing out there. And they'll say, well I'm out here because I've got a bad habit. And I say what kind of habit. Well they roll their sleeve up and they've got track marks from their knuckles up to their elbows. Morphine, cocaine and what have you . . . ritalin.

Other girls say that they're being worked there because of pimps. And I've personally seen pimps walking girls out to the location and then going back down into a hidden secluded area, an alley, and watching their girls.

Now there's certain reasons why these girls are again out there. Drug addiction, alcohol. They have to work to support their habit. A lot of girls are weekenders. What they do there they go out, they need money for booze, pot, possibly go to the exhibition, and secondly, being pimped. With these pimps they're being manipulated, their lives are being threatened;

they're scared for their lives.

One of our initiatives in vice was to charge as many pimps as what we could. That hasn't happened. I've been in there for 16 months, and out of those 16 months three girls have come forward and laid charges against their pimps.

The first one that came forward to me in 1998 in November, subsequently laid 20 charges against him. That goes to threatening her with a firearm to beating her up that she can just crawl; assault; procuring; living on the avails. And these offences took place here in Saskatoon, down to Regina, back to Saskatoon, down to Regina where she finally was able, with the aid of some friends down there, just to walk away from it.

A very sad situation. She's a very nice girl, and she's finally gotten her life straightened out now. It's still before the courts.

These girls do not have the trust with the police because they love the . . . I shouldn't really say love the environment, but they're comfortable with the environment that their pimps give them. But on the other hand these pimps — they'll beat them, assault them, possibly kill them if they don't do what they're told. So they're going to fall back into that rut of working for their pimps.

These girls' lives are at risk. Again some of these girls are assaulted by their pimps. Worse yet, we've just had one come in and lay complaints against a john. And she's badly beaten.

And again I bring your attention to Crawford there a few years ago who killed some sex trade workers and left them down south of the city.

These girls are also at a health risk. There's sexually transmitted diseases, HIV (human immunodeficiency virus), AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome), hepatitis, and that's not only amongst them but it's given to their clients.

The police, their main objectives are to help these girls. But we have to do it in certain ways. We've charged many prostitutes, placed conditions on them. These conditions are: stay off the stroll; curfews; abstain from drugs, alcohol. Many of these girls have returned onto the stroll and have again been charged for breach of their conditions.

Just last week I arrested one for a breach. She's a habitual sex trade worker and has probably been out there since she is very young. She went to court and subsequently got a 30-day jail term and a no-go clause when she gets out of jail not to return to Saskatoon. But that is only for a certain amount of time and once that condition is off, I'll guarantee you then we'll see her back on the stroll because she's got a very bad morphine habit.

These operations that we do, it requires a lot of manpower for us to run two undercover operators. To pick up sex trade workers such as hookers it takes nine members. To do a john operation it takes seven members. It's very time consuming and takes a lot of manpower away from other priorities of the police department.

I've observed many young girls working the street corners. One

way that we can get them off is through these hooker sting operations. But again I bring your attention to February 4, we did a hooker operation, two girls aged 13 and 14 were arrested and warned for soliciting. We turned them over to Social Services. The following night the one 14-year-old was in the company with a john the following night. So that had no impact on this individual.

But the police require a procedure that enables us to get these youths off the street into a proper treatment facility. Charging them is just a revolving door. That way the youths can be helped with their problems, may it be addiction, or put them in a different environment away from their pimps. Thank you.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Thank you very much, Ken. Bill, did you have a presentation also that you wanted to put forward?

Mr. Hargarten: — It'll be brief, Chairman Julé.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Thank you very much. I think it's good that we hear from all of you first and then we'll go to the questions.

Mr. Hargarten: — I am here to present the police services official opinion on the possibility of support of legislation. I congratulate this committee on perceiving this problem as child abuse and not prostitution. That clearly places it under the Canadian Constitution as a provincial responsibility because the purpose of such legislation would be to protect children and not to punish criminals.

Our constitution places the administration of justice, social services, education, and health, as provincial responsibilities and through this type of legislation we could — the police service — could and would extend its ability to protect children.

In making this presentation I did a small amount of research on the Alberta legislation whereby there is a continuum of intervention recommended on the part of police or other government officials. And in Alberta people may be . . . youth may be apprehended for up to 72 hours for assessment and beginning treatment to get them off the street and get them away from sex abuse.

We discussed this among ourselves at the police service and we're unsure whether 72 hours is adequate, because many people are addicted to such drugs as cocaine, which would take longer than 72 hours, perhaps as long as seven days, to get them detoxified.

We are somewhat apprehensive though. Some of our community partners do not want forced apprehension of youth. However as Joceline mentioned, we feel that sometimes hitting bottom and having the police intervene is a positive experience. And I would cite statistics out of Calgary where 65 forced admissions were largely successful. Out of the 65, they only had 12 repeat admissions. So obviously the forced admission can work.

And I think that's basically all I have to say. I'm open for questions.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Okay, thank you very much. We will just proceed with the committee members then presenting their thoughts and questions and discussion with any one of the three of you or all of you.

Mr. Harper: — Good morning, and thank you very much for coming.

In your experience — and I'll put this question forward and whoever wants to answer it certainly may — in your experience dealing with individuals working on the streets, those that you have apprehended, how many of them through your apprehension have been able to change their life, get off the streets, and seek other opportunities?

Mr. Watkins: — I'll answer that. I don't have the exact figures, but as I mentioned in my presentation here is that we have habitual ones and they will always be out there. That's why we set forth so many conditions and that we monitor it through the courts. In fact one constable, that's his main job is to keep the courts up to speed on what we want — the conditions.

And I'd say that the weekenders, again, if they get caught, they're not going to. But then again with the younger ones, that don't have . . . that were warned or charged, they don't have much to lose, because what can we do? But I'd say the majority. I can't place the exact number on it.

Mr. Harper: — But approximate percentages, numbers aside, would it be half?

Mr. Watkins: — That repeat?

Mr. Harper: — That would repeat or just the opposite, that would leave the trade and find other opportunities. Or leave the street; I wouldn't call it a trade.

Mr. Watkins: — Well I'd say . . . Like we've charged 65 female street workers. And I'd likely say we have charged, I'll say, 15 to 20 again. I don't have the exact figures. I'd have to look it up, sir.

Mr. Harper: — Yes, okay. No problem.

Have any of you or any of your colleagues who are enforcing the streets experienced having a street worker approach you and ask for your help or your guidance in getting them off the street?

Mr. Watkins: — Yes, we had one girl. She tried to phone me. Unfortunately I was on annual leave at the time. But she hooked up with my partner and she was placed in a safe house. She stayed there for approximately three to four days and she's back out on the street.

And my partner again is working on one now that was brought to his attention almost a year ago and she's finally come forward here in January and we're just wrapping that up. And it's a case against her pimp.

Mr. Harper: — If forced detention was a tool available to you,

how long do you think that detention would have to be to be effective? I believe you indicated you thought that 72 hours was probably not long enough to be effective. How long would you perceive the length of time to be effective?

Mr. Hargarten: — Well because of the addictions with certain types of oil-based or fat-based drugs that stay in the body, we would like to see a 7-day detention.

Mr. Harper: — That would be enough time for detox and counselling and give the person a legitimate opportunity of making a choice?

Mr. Hargarten: — Mr. Harper, I'm certainly not an expert on detox but that's what I'm hearing from detox workers.

Mr. Harper: — Okay, thank you.

Ms. Schriemer: — Can I add to that? What we also discussed was that . . . I mean nothing in isolation is going to work. It's not just the magic number of seven days. We need a continuum of care. We need workers, counsellors. We all need to work together, we need collaboration. The police in isolation can't get someone off the street. Neither can the social worker. Neither can the addictions worker. And we don't have that right now.

Mr. Hargarten: — That's a very good point. Were we just to have enabling legislation, it wouldn't be adequate. We need a place to take people for assessment and treatment.

Ms. Julé: — Actually I would like to sort of make some comments in respect to the discussion around legislation and the effectiveness of the legislation that's in Alberta. I think there's some misconceptions and certainly not a thorough knowledge of how the legislation works by many members in Saskatchewan, many people in Saskatchewan.

In going into some questioning and in-depth, sort of, I was trying to understand how the legislation would work. Now, a lot of people are talking and wrapping their heads around the 72-hour detention and saying well, you know, is that enough time to detox. I must tell you that it was never meant for detox time, the 72 hours.

If we first of all can start with a whole change of attitude, that the children on the streets are not to be arrested in the first place. They should not be arrested. We have to get out of that mode because these are . . . if we're going to have protective legislation, we have to see this as protection. To protect a child, the children need to know and word needs to go around that we are, as a whole society, police included, recognize that they are victimized.

And even though they may act as though they want to do this to earn money and so on, they are victims and that's all there is to it. And so the protection attitude has to be out there for the children as well as the police. And if the police in fact, I think you'd mentioned, Ken — I'm not sure which one of you — but you'd mentioned if there was some place to take them. So it's fine and dandy that you would have legislation to protect and take them possibly to intervene on reasonable grounds that they're in danger. But where are you going to take them? You took them to the safe house. For four days they stay, and then they're gone

again.

We don't have a continuum of treatment in this province and we do not have a continuum for really healthy healing. We don't have the integrated services and we may as well simply admit that. It's not here. There are good people that care, but the services are there in name only sometimes. They're just not the whole works working together.

So getting back to the legislation, this 72 hours would be . . . it's up to 72 hours for just an assessment and to keep the child safe from pimps, from perpetrators that would harm them. And the assessment then determines whether or not the detox is needed and then from that place of . . . safe place, then they are referred to, maybe back home. Because some children have just run away from home as you well know, and are just getting basically into trouble without knowing it. Sometimes there is abuse going on at home.

But there's an assessment done in that 72 hours and from the assessment then the best sort of avenue for the child is looked at. So it is not meant for detox. There's a safe place, a place where a child can bathe, where they can get into some clean clothes, and where they gradually know that there are caring people around them.

So I think it's really important that we understand that as part of that legislation that is in Alberta, that you know, the up to 72 hours is meant for assessment and that's pretty well it. Unless you have heard something else about it, but that's certainly the impression that I've been given.

And I really have to emphasize, and I know that you all know and believe this too, that when we're looking at this whole problem, we have to sort of make sure that we act and speak in a way that children are seen as the victims in need of protection. And part of the legislation of course, in Alberta as well as Saskatchewan now, has stronger penalties for johns.

And I think that the police need some authority to be able to assist and then you need some tools, from what I can understand, in order to intervene and make this meaningful in helping the children. And I don't believe you have that. And I know that that legislation in Alberta would provide you those tools. So it's up to you.

The other aspect I need to bring up is that in talking with some of the street youth and hearing their presentations and talking, it's pretty clear that they do not trust the police nor want to be involved with the police.

And I think, you know, if it was known to youth that police really were taking the attitude that we're here to protect and to help you out of this, but oftentimes they say that there are derogatory remarks being made by police because they're on the street and so on. So we have a whole issue here that has to be ironed out, I guess, and we have to come to an understanding about.

Mr. Watkins: — I just want to add on, I've been out there on the street and whenever I see the girls, a young sex trader, I've confronted her. I said, have you heard about the safe house. No.

Some say no, some say yes. I explain it to them, give the location, give the phone number, leave my card with them. I said can I take you over there? No, I don't want to go. Well let's just go over there for coffee. No, I don't want to go. And it's very frustrating.

Like you just hit the nail on the head here — they don't trust the police. And if we don't have any powers or tools to get them off the street, how can we get them over to the safe house or some other agency that's a foundation to get them pointed in the right direction, and that? But I've tried numerous times. I asked them, let's go to the safe house, you can stay there. No.

Ms. Schriemer: — I think that that's a generalized statement that they don't trust police. I know that in my experience I have had girls that trusted me, hugged me. One died of an overdose. Her family tracked me down to invite me to the funeral.

There are other officers out there doing work like that. But it is not acceptable when you live on the street to say you're the friend of a cop. So the attitude or the reflection might be that they don't trust police. In general, police arrest people; but we also do a lot of other things, and it's not spoken about because it's not socially acceptable on the street to do so.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Okay.

Ms. Schriemer: — I would like to quote Det. Guy Pilon from Edmonton Police Service, who was part of the group that drafted the Alberta legislation:

Children have access to services without being locked up. Although the legislation is intertwined with Social Services, there is no requirement for them to be receiving Social Services before they can access services.

Now that's a problem in Saskatchewan.

Several children who have been removed from the streets have told us that the Safe House is a great place to go. It is a safe haven from the streets. Intervention methods against sexual exploitation of children can be consented to by the children. They can't (however) give (their own) consent to their own abuse. The child is removed from a dangerous and perilous environment and brought to a safe environment. This carefully mirrors the Child Welfare Legislation. In this analogy, if a child were left in a home unattended, with no food, heat or at risk of being sexually assaulted, the police or social worker would invariably make an apprehension under the Child Welfare Act, even if the child objected. How does this situation differ from that of a child standing on a street corner waiting to be sexually assaulted, robbed, or who may be high on drugs or alcohol? Would we as police allow this to continue merely because the child objected to us interfering in the unsafe behaviour? I think not. Every time an apprehension is made and a child is removed from the perils of prostitution and drug abuse for 72 hours, we extend their life by three days.

Thank you.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — That is a really valuable witness from Mr. Pilon, and I thank you for that. I'm just going to . . . oh, Kevin.

Mr. Yates: — I have a number of questions. The whole issue of dealing with the john side of the issue. Have you spent any time looking at what possible pieces of provincial legislation that could be amended to help you deal with making it less desirable for johns to be in the neighbourhood, increase your ability to intervene to stop the actions of johns on the street?

Mr. Watkins: — No, we haven't. I've heard about these john schools. I believe that's one avenue that the courts use after these guys are picked up and that. But we haven't gone after that process but, if I understand you correctly, what do we do regarding the johns out there?

Mr. Yates: — No, what I'm asking is have you looked at the legislative base of authority that the province would have. The Criminal Code is outside our authority to change, but within provincial legislations — say, Highway Traffic Act or various Acts — there's authority given to police and various peace officers to enforce certain procedures.

Have you looked within those Acts at ways to make your job easier, amendments that we could make that would make your job easier?

Mr. Watkins: — Haven't looked into any legislation like that, but when we have done operations out on the stroll that are aimed at the johns, we utilize The Highway Traffic Act, vehicle equipment, alcohol regulation, gaming Act. And it's strictly heavy enforcement. We'll do spot checks, stop traffic and it's aimed at the johns.

Ms. Schriemer: — I think if I could add that before Sgt. Watkins got into vice, Cst. Sellers, who now works with me in schools, was working a special detail, and what they were doing is apprehending under the child welfare Act. But what was happening was there wasn't a good continuum of care to really work with the child and family to, you know, get the child off the street. So they were apprehending, not charging, under, you know, a dangerous situation for a child. But once we do that there has to be a continuum of care.

In Alberta, for example, there's a PCHIP (Protection of Children Involved in Prostitution Act) social worker that is assigned to the child and we don't have that continuum here. And in isolation, we can have all the legislation in the world, but without the complete model we're not going to be effective.

Mr. Yates: — I'm planning to go in that direction in a second. But first I wanted to deal with if there weren't a market, we'd have fewer children being abused on the street. So are there things that we could do to assist, because there's more than one avenue that may have to be looked at in tackling this problem.

One is what can we do to dry the market up or change the market in such a way it's more manageable. And the second part, the second question I was going to ask, basically dealt with . . . I was going to ask about the situation in Alberta and are there other . . . Alberta's a particular model of dealing with the

problem. You allow a 72-hour hold on a child.

In fact, in our family service Act today, a child can be apprehended in their own interests for longer than 72 hours. But have you taken a look at . . . are there other particular pieces of legislation or issues or changes that we could make that would be more effective.

Can we build on perhaps what's gone in Alberta. As is with any first introductory piece of legislation, Alberta's a model but we may not want to go directly down that road for a number of reasons. There may be ineffective portions of that legislation.

Have you spent any time looking at what would be most effective here and are there other ways under The Mental Health Act, as an example, for addictions. Are there other . . . have you spent any time looking at those types of . . .

Ms. Schriemer: — We looked into Manitoba with the amendments to The Highway Traffic Act. And what they do is seize johns' vehicles. And through the court process what happens is, if it's a john he pays \$400 and goes to johns school and the charge in the end, once he completes john school, is never laid. He also pays the seizure of his vehicle and gets his vehicle back at that time.

As far as the sex trade workers go, they have a three-day camp, so to speak, where they go and gather information regarding the perils of street life, alternatives, access to support, stuff like that. The \$400 fee is used to run both programs.

When I was Edmonton at a conference this fall, Guy Pilon was speaking at a school's conference and he invited me to a johns school that was happening the next day and I went. And I have to say that it was very moving. And the community — a lady by the name of Kate, I can't remember her last name — was very involved and ran the school. She chaired or introduced the speakers and fielded questions, and stuff like that.

There were probably about 25 guys, all men. And out of the 25 when an ex-prostitute was talking about her life and how she got off the street and what had happened to her in her life and how she felt about johns when she was engaging in prostitution, there were a couple of guys that were crying. There was one guy that had a cocky question. The rest were very submissive and listening and thinking.

They also had a girl that lived in a stroll area, a young girl, who said I'm not a prostitute, and when I walk home these guys drive up to me and yell at me out the window about sex. So we've looked at that. I know that in the meeting that that's something our administration would support is a johns school.

Mr. Hargarten: — Yes.

Ms. Schriemer: — And the seizure of the vehicle as well, I think we also are looking at that. I don't know how effective it is. When we talked to Winnipeg, 68 john vehicles were seized, 67 were returned, one was sold to auction, and none of those guys had re-offended to date. But that doesn't mean that they're not engaging in the act — they're just getting smarter.

Mr. Yates: — Not wanting to lead you in any particular direction but, as an example: if we were to change provisions of The Highway Traffic Act making it easier for you to stop a vehicle where you believed, as an example, that there was a child in the vehicle that shouldn't be there, or changed provisions that you could ask for identification for all persons in the vehicle and failure to have, you could remove a person from the vehicle, those types of changes — just as examples, I'm not saying we're going there by any stretch of the imagination — would give you some additional authorities in intervening and preventing an act from occurring. Would those types of things be beneficial to you?

Mr. Hargarten: — Mr. Yates, that's . . . when you and I talked this morning that was the first I'd heard of that idea and I would really like some more time to think about it. I'm getting caught up in the police officer legal thing here on the right of the state versus the right of the individual. And I want to duck the question if I might. I would be prepared to comment later if I had time to do some research.

Mr. Watkins: — I'd just like to add that we have stopped johns with sex trade workers and issued them tickets and have seized their vehicles. Mind you, they can go down and get their vehicles out within a couple of hours or a day and that.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — I want to thank you very much for your presentation. It was very worthwhile. And I've got . . . I just want to pursue the . . . Bill, I appreciate what you said about needing more time to think about this.

Could I make a suggestion in this regard, in you wouldn't mind? I wonder if Saskatoon Police Service and Regina Police Service and maybe P.A. (Prince Albert) Police Service might sort of get together and talk about this issue over the course of the coming months. We're going to be holding public hearings again in the fall. And you may be able to . . . after those consultations, not just between the three police services, but you may want to broaden this obviously and consult with many of your community partners.

But I think we'd be grateful for some advice in the fall when we do a second round of public hearings. As you know, this is just the preliminary round basically for advice on provincial statutes that we could consider changing that would essentially allow you to do your job fully when policing the stroll, including determining the relationship between a possible john and a possible child in the car that's about to be sexually abused.

As we understand it from Regina police right now . . . And maybe, Len, you might have some comments on this in your experience — and Joceline as well — when you're actually policing on the stroll. But what Regina police have said to us is that when they stop a car, their undercover officers are basically allowed to ask just very minimal questions. They ask for the name of the person. They ask for their driver's license and registration. They try to make a determination about whether, you know, the person is impaired from the use of alcohol. They can ask, you know, they can ask other questions but the persons inside the car aren't obliged to respond. And if they don't get any response . . . and it seems that many people have become pretty streetwise in this regard, and therefore don't co-operate

with the officers.

Unless they're impaired they've got no ability to stop the car from driving away. Even though we've heard testimony in Regina that the undercover police officer is confident that in fact what's going to happen is that the john and the child in the car are going to engage in sexual activity and the child is going to be abused.

Is it your . . . the Regina police have basically said to us they feel powerless to stop that activity. I'm wondering if you do. And if you do, I guess the question is — this is further really to what Kevin was pursuing then — could you offer us in the fall some advice about what provincial statutes you'd like to see changed that would not leave you powerless to act?

I don't want to be putting any words in your mouth. Are you feeling that you're limited in terms of the degree to which you can pursue the investigation? Or do you have the tools that you think you need?

Mr. Watkins: — We are limited. Like if that young sex trader— or sex worker, pardon me — not wearing her seat belt, she has to give us her name and that. And we can record that. We can give her a ticket. But that's not helping her. What we want to do is to get her away from that john. You can ask her, do you want to leave? Or she can stay there or do what . . . our hands are tied.

Ms. Schriemer: — In other words the only way to get an idea on any passenger in the car is if they are committing an offence under The Highway Traffic Act, which in that case would be maybe a liquor ticket if they've got alcohol, or a seat belt. And that's the only way to gather ID (identification) right now correctly.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — But I wonder if we could . . . could you give us advice in the fall. In the event you have reason to believe that a child is in the car for the purposes that we're discussing this morning, could you give us some advice on what levers you think you need and what changes to legislation you think you need to pursue the investigation further?

Mr. Hargarten: — Mr. Prebble, I'll request that this be added to the agenda for the April meeting of the Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police; and just for your information, that also, that group also includes the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. And we can have a committee struck to discuss the matter and be prepared to bring you some recommendations in the fall.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — That would be wonderful. Thank you, Bill. Thanks very much.

Mr. Yates: — You know you could look at that perspective not just from The Highway Traffic Act, the family services Act, the mental health Act. There's a number of provincial statutes that when you're dealing with children can be viewed quite considerably differently than dealing with adults. And to give you the tools, you need to do your jobs as you see them and make some recommendations back to us.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — I would appreciate, in addition to that . . . and we don't want to overburden you because your work is really extensive already but you talked quite a bit, Joceline, about the continuum of care needed, the kind of services that we need in order to have the continuum of care, the ongoing comprehensive sort of programming in Saskatchewan — whether it be non- governmental or governmental, or whatever it may be that would be, I guess, specific to Saskatchewan. Like, what do we need here?

We have, for instance, we have a high incidence or high number of Aboriginal people in Saskatchewan that are being lured into the sex trade. And so if you have any ideas or suggestions about what kind of . . . what kind of services are needed that you see are not in place, or if you see any gaps in the system other than legislation, I'd appreciate if you could make comment on that also in the fall. Thank you.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — I have a couple of other questions. I wanted to ask a question about children not in school. And, Joceline, I really appreciated you raising this whole question of absenteeism and the fact that it's an indicator essentially that children are at risk. And I'm wondering if you've got any advice from us on things that the province could be doing to help track children who are not in school and in fact make that . . . make it easier for local authorities to be aware of when children may not be in school.

I know one of the suggestions that I've heard made on a number of occasions is that we could . . . you know that the province use . . . consider using its ability to track children through the provincial health card as a vehicle for knowing when they've moved from school to school. Because unless a child registers in another school, you know, that the school that the child left from has got no way of knowing whether the child is still in the community or whether they're not.

But I'm wondering if that's something that your committee has . . . your interagency committee has looked at. And if it's not, whether that's something that you might examine and again offer some advice in the fall on.

Ms. Schriemer: — Do you want the answer now because we have discussed this.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Sure absolutely, that'd be great. If you have a response now that would be wonderful.

Ms. Schriemer: — What we think one of the biggest solutions is, is that when a child is identified as absenteeism . . . absentee, that when the referral is made to the absentee assessment team — regardless if that child transfers to another school — the team doesn't change; the facilitator of that team doesn't change. So any school that that child moves to within this city, we would know and we would stay with the child.

Provincially, we could do the same thing. One of the glaring things in elementary inner-city community schools is the need for a Department of Social Services child protection worker to work in the school just like I do. Every time there is any indication of abuse, absenteeism, any child care protection issue, the school, we have to call Social Services in anyway. So

why not provide that service right in the school and have more of a coordinated service to keep track of the children, have a better handle on the family. So that's what we looked at and discussed.

Does that answer the question?

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Yes it does, yes, it does begin to answer it.

Ms. Schriemer: — Because I really don't know. Mind you, I could go find out if you like. I don't understand the Social Services number system and how that would keep track of the child. You know what I'm saying. Like does the number have to be provided when a child is registered in the school for example?

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — The reality right now is that Saskatchewan Health knows the location of each individual in the province by virtue of their health card.

Ms. Schriemer: — Oh, okay.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — So if somebody, if a child . . . Potentially — I mean it's not available to us now — but potentially we could use the health card system as a tracking system if we chose to do so. It's not something that's being done right now, but it's something that some people have suggested and I just wondered if it had ever been looked by your organization.

Ms. Schriemer: — The problem with . . . then the problem with what I suggested about Social Services then would be when the child moves out of the city, is there a worker within that Social Services region whose primary function is absentee kids. I mean if we had those people through the province, the file can change hands just as it does now, except nobody is designated to handle that specific issue within Social Services.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Right. I was wondering if you could provide us with an overview of sort of what, you know, given the limitations that you're working with in terms of your ability to determine what's happening on the stroll and when offences are being committed.

My sense is that we're looking at a pattern across the province where there's a lot more children under 18 who are being arrested. Well maybe what I should say is charged. A lot of these children are actually placed in jail not necessarily for very long.

But I'm wondering if you could give us some statistics in terms of what's been happening over the last year or two with respect to the number of children under 18 charged, number of johns charged for procuring sex with children under the age of 18, number of pimps charged, particularly pimps who are charged with respect to pimping children under the age of 18. Can you give us a sense of what the pattern is in the city over the last year or two with respect to charges laid?

Mr. Watkins: — Okay, regarding pimps, as I mentioned previously, there's only been three girls come forward, and two

are still before the court and another charge should be laid here within one week.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Is that for pimping underage children?

Mr. Watkins: — The one was that I dealt with to begin with. That's just one charge. She is 17 years of age. And there's been approximately 15 to 17 johns charged in the past 12 months. There's been 65 girls arrested, charged.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — And how old are they? What's the breakdown of underage, under 18 versus over 18?

Mr. Watkins: — Well I can't . . . I haven't got those statistics regarding the people charged or warned.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Sure.

Mr. Watkins: — But for the past 16 months, the vice unit knows of 261 female workers. Out of the 261, 61 are under the age of 18 and 8 are under the age of 14. And that was as of January, 2000.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Right.

Mr. Watkins: — And I must stress that some of these are not full-timers. Some are weekenders as previously mentioned, and they're not out there all the time. Those are ones that we have observed working, standing on a corner or being picked up or in operations, undercover operations.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Right. And then of the 65 girls charged, some are over 18 and some are under 18, I'm assuming.

Mr. Watkins: — Yes.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — So that's . . .

Mr. Watkins: — The majority of them are over 18.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — The majority over, right.

And of the johns charged, how many of those would be charged for seeking sex with children under the age of 18?

Mr. Watkins: — None of them. Those are undercover operations, so they've used a undercover operator. So it's a police.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Right. But in some cases the undercover operator may be posing as someone under the age of 18, right?

Mr. Watkins: — Okay. I can't give you any stats on that.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — But as far as you know there's none here that are under the age of 18?

Mr. Watkins: — No.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — So we continue to have a problem in catching johns . . .

Mr. Watkins: — Yes, we do.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — . . . who are seeking sexual services, sexual contact with children under the age of 18.

Mr. Watkins: — Yes. And the reason for that is a lot of them got regular customers. They see an undercover police officer out there; it's just out of place. Where did she show up? I haven't seen her out there before. I'm not going to pick her up. And that, they're not going to take that chance.

So it's they've got regular customers or it may not be the kind of girl they're looking for possibly — I don't know.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — I appreciate in the fall if you could give us some advice too on, on . . . I mean, this is really further to my other query. But I mean, somehow we need to look at legislative tools that you can use to lay charges against johns who are picking up children under the age of 18, and particularly under the age of 16, where you can't use an undercover police officer any more.

And I'd also be grateful for advice on how we can . . . on what additional tools you need to be able to lay charges against pimps who are using children under the age of 18. So your advice in that regard would be really, really useful because we clearly have a major problem here.

I know that the police are often picking up children under the age of 18 because they want . . . I mean they're hoping that the charge, as you've indicated in your testimony, will lead to something positive happening for the child.

The reality is that we then end up charging the children, but we don't end up charging the johns and we don't end up, in many cases, charging the pimps, with the one exception. So we've somehow got to turn that around. And if we can get your advice on how we help you do that — because we obviously know you want to do that — that would be very, very valuable for us.

Mr. Watkins: — It's going to very, very tough. As previously mentioned, these girls don't have the trust of the police or the justice system. And they may be taken out of that environment for a short period of time, but where are they going to go later after all this court proceeding is done with. They're going to go back into that same environment and that guy is going to be getting out of jail and they're going to be likely assaulted or other worse things could happen to them.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — I guess the other thing is we'd be grateful — I'd be grateful — for your advice on what we do to protect children in those circumstances. Because I think that's another key element here. If children feel they're at risk in the event that they testify against a john or pimp, what steps should government take to protect their safety?

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — I have just a couple of questions. And I guess in a sense, you have some relation to the courts, but one of you had mentioned that, you know, you find that the

courts are disappointing in a sense — from everything that I hear anyways and that I think a number of people hear; that even though we may have legislation that allows for the courts to throw the book basically at johns and go the full extent of the law, very seldom, if ever, is that ever done.

And you know, I just simply can't understand why it is not done, because it seems to me that a major deterrent needs to be in place in order to deter johns and make them think twice before they engage in the sexual abuse of children. And maybe, hopefully, the deterrent will cause them not to.

Now, it's not all that simple either. But I think that one component has to be a maximum, major fine rather than a minimum fine. And I would suggest that that might be one of the things we could do in addition to the other kind of, you know, helps that we want to provide for the children.

What kind of things . . . I think it was you, Len — did you mention the courts? Something about in a sense the courts being disappointing. Is that what . . . Were you referring to the way they are dealing with the johns or were you referring or talking about the way they were dealing with younger people, or what?

Mr. Watkins: — The thing we've got to take into perspective here is that section 213(1)(c) of the Criminal Code is so far down the list of offences that . . . Like you don't even get fingerprinted, you don't get photographed, it's so far down. It's a minimal kind of a sentence and I believe that the judges view it as that. And they rightly do have the authority to do so because it's such a minute offence as viewed by many.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Well boy, education is needed there then. I mean it's not minutely . . . Everyone is certainly quite aware in the province, the ordinary person is very aware of how detrimental, you know, this can be.

Mr. Watkins: — Yes, but the accused may only get a hundred and fifty to \$300 fine.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — I know. So in your interpretation, it's viewed as being a minor offence.

Mr. Watkins: — A minor offence under the Criminal Code.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — But it's not a minor offence under the Criminal Code for someone to pick up a child under the age of 18. That's of course a different section.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — But it's viewed as that.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Yes. But I think 213 . . . offences that involve children under the age of 18 though are treated by the Criminal Code as being far more serious, with serious penalties, right?

Mr. Watkins: — Yes.

Ms. Schriemer: — Most of the charges involving 213 where we have an undercover operator as a prostitute involved, because she's an adult and thus over the age of 18, then it's a 213 charge.

The problem is being able to get johns procuring for a girl under the age of 18 because we can't make our female undercover operators look 12. I think they did one operation. You had a buddy system?

Mr. Watkins: — Yes, yes. I don't know the details of it. I wasn't in vice at the time, but I think they had problems with that.

Ms. Schriemer: — Yes, I think they . . . What happened was they sent two female undercover operatives out. One looked older; one was a new recruit and she looked much younger. So the deal was that the older female would introduce the younger female as her little sister and thus under the age of 18 years old, make that clear to the john. And I think they only had one arrest on that. And I'm not sure what happened to it in court.

But it's just so difficult to . . . you can't do undercover operations and get johns that prefer the young girls.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — We were just commenting here. Mr. Prebble mentioned that, you know, that the Criminal Code does treat the offence of sexual abuse of children under the age of 18 more seriously. Frankly, I haven't seen that reflected in the courts either. And so I'm wondering if you have, you know, when johns are charged for sexually abusing children under the age of 18?

Mr. Watkins: — I can't attest to it.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — If it were reflected in the courts, I think it would probably be seen at least in newspapers and on the airwaves. And if it was a maximum fine or the maximum jail sentence, I think we would see that and notice it. And I haven't heard anyone tell me that they have.

So I don't think that, I don't think that the court system is treating it as any less an offence . . . or any more of an offence rather to sexually abuse children under the age of 18.

There are some, you know, some wonderful suggestions that you've put forth, Joceline. I'm really impressed with the wraparound program. And I think that that's one thing that you've identified that we could put more resources to into Saskatchewan — you know, into helping the situation in Saskatchewan.

I know in Alberta what they, you know, what they did do, the Street Teams organizations, is they identified where there was a gap in the system and that's why the whole thing was formed. And it was of course, as you well know, Ross MacInnes that kind of got the ball rolling. And it was a function of the police to run that program, but it got to be much just as you're finding this too much right now, the wraparound program.

And you're suggesting that possibly there be another agency or something formed in order just to deal with that. And I think that that could come to some fruition if it's pursued. It sounds like something that's really very valuable.

And, you know, I want to thank you for some of your ideas, all of you, and for your knowledge and for your views on this, and

certainly for your sincere intent to continue helping the children of Saskatchewan, especially the children on the streets of Saskatoon.

We hope that we can hear from you again in the fall with some of the recommendations you may have for the committee. And it's much appreciated.

It sounds as though one of our committee members . . . it seems as though one of our committee members has something they would like to add yet.

Mr. Harper: — Just one short question. I hope you don't see it as a unfair question, and I'm going to ask you if you could give me, I suppose, your personal opinion based on your experience.

If you had the powers to focus resources in one or another area, which would you choose? Would you choose focusing resources on increasing the laws, increasing the interception powers and retention powers and so on and so forth. Or would you focus resources on intervention, a system of identifying families at risks, individuals at risk in trying to provide a mechanism of prevention. Which route would you go?

Mr. Hargarten: — Prevention is always the best route to go. Unfortunately, as a police service we are an enforcement agency. And when you ask that, Mr. Harper, you're asking a guy who's only tool is a hammer to fix your watch.

Mr. Harper: — That's why I say I hope it wasn't considered an unfair question. But I just want to know your own personal opinions based on your experiences.

Ms. Schriemer: — Changing legislation doesn't cost manpower — it gives us the tools to do a better job. Whereas if you're talking money issues and resources and where to hire more people, we need that for dealing with the child and families and the continuum of care and having treatment centres or counsellors, some kind of coordinated system to engage the child and the family and elicit some positive change in behaviour.

Mr. Watkins: — I agree with Irvin — it would be nice to have the tools to do the job. These kids are victims, and it's very saddening when you're out there seeing a young girl standing on the corner and there's nothing you can do.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Just to mention before we close, and we do have to close, in Manitoba they established the Child and Youth Secretariat to do that very job that you're talking about, Joceline. It was to coordinate and integrate all of the agencies to make sure that they're working in tandem and that there was effective operations going on without duplication, and where human resources and financial resources could then, you know, be put to the best use.

So we've heard from some of the people in Manitoba and we can learn more from that, and also that may come forward in recommendations for this province at the end of these hearings.

So thank you very much.

Mr. Watkins: — Just one point. When I was talking to Mr. Prebble there regarding section 213 . . . (inaudible) . . . what I meant is it's low on the bottom of Criminal Code offences, but it's a very important offence. I just wanted to make that clear, because there's such a spinoff from it and that.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Yes, you're verifying it for the record and I appreciate that. And we really appreciate you giving up time this morning to be with us.

Ms. Schriemer: — I don't want to be sounding really negative and criticizing our system, because we have good people and a good system, it's just not really connected, and that we are moving through more coordination through the regional intersectoral committee.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Superintendent Hargarten, thank you very much for being here too.

Mr. Hargarten: — Thank you for this opportunity.

The committee recessed for a period of time.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — We're sorry that we're running late but we're really happy to have you with us . . . (inaudible) . . . Ingrid and Wayne, whichever of you would like to start first.

Mr. Ross: — Well maybe I . . . (machine technical difficulties) . . . is the social and justice arm of MNS, the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan, and they deal with a lot of MNS . . . or justice and social issues, like I said, in the province.

We have a number of different programs that are happening in the region and one of them is the community justice worker program where the community justice worker tries and implements some restorative justice programs within the communities; and the court worker program, which is a joint venture between the Saskatchewan and Canada Justice and MFCJS (Metis Family and Community Justice Services) together.

Those are the two programs that we have right now, and Ingrid's looking after the social services programs. Do you want to make some comments?

Ms. MacColl: — The social programs . . . I'm the director of family services. So far all we have under family services is support from Health Canada through the Community Action Program for Children. We currently do not have any resources from Social Services at this time. We are looking forward to getting some eventually.

Most of the social issues we look at and address go beyond just social services. We look at housing and — I'm a little nervous here — we look at housing, any of the needs our communities are bringing up. They're looking at housing issues, family issues — mainly the basic needs. Wayne.

Mr. Ross: — The MFCJS mandate is to facilitate, coordinate, and support the planning development information; management and monitoring of local community justice social

programs. This is done in order to promote, strengthen, and rebuild the Metis communities by supporting cultural and spiritual needs and trying to empower them in dealing with a lot of the justice issues within their own community.

They believe that Metis people should have Metis representation when they're in . . . going through the court . . . the justice processes. It takes into account all their spiritual, emotional and mental needs, and there's a whole lot of objectives that MFCJS tries to reach.

And just to name a few, is to ensure Metis children and youth families requiring justice services have opportunities to consult with individuals from Metis communities with respect to their situation. That's one of the objectives of MFCJS justice programs. They're trying to develop protocols with different governments in order to let Metis provide services to Metis people.

And the structure of MFCJS board of directors: there's 12 regions in Saskatchewan and there's one representative from each region. So there's 12 people on the MFCJS board. So each region is represented fairly by having someone sitting on this board. There's also a youth, one youth and one Metis woman of Saskatchewan representative.

If you're wondering what MFCJS stands for, it's Metis Family and Community Justice Services. I should have informed you about that right away but I was just . . . like I get so used to saying it over and over and over, I think everybody knows it.

Ms. MacColl: — In March of 1998, a memorandum of understanding had been signed between the province of Saskatchewan, represented by the Minister of Social Services, and the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan. We recognized affiliate Metis Family and Community Justice.

The purpose of the memorandum of understanding was to begin a process for the Metis to be a part of . . . to begin developing services and resources in the Metis communities. The main goal of this process was to begin to create a positive communication and respect between Metis Family and Community Justice and Saskatchewan.

We looked at six areas. The first one was the recognition that we're an affiliate or a department of the Metis Nation which looks at social injustice issues. Our organization has a vision to create an environment where Metis children are protected and cared for by their families and their community.

That our mission is to implement and manage a holistic approach to the development and delivery of programs and services which contribute to the healing of our families and prevent children from requiring apprehension.

The Metis Nation of Saskatchewan takes a position that there are inherent rights of Aboriginal people to self-government within the framework of the Canadian Constitution. Those parameters have not yet been determined.

The short-term goal for Metis Family and Community Justice is to consult with Metis communities on establishing their family

services programs and justice services programs. To this end, the parties agreed at that time to look at the long-term goal of MFCJS to work in partnership with Saskatchewan to develop community-based programming for Metis families and children. Saskatchewan and MFCJS do work together to ensure Metis people are informed of existing services and benefits which may be available to them.

Saskatchewan and MFCJS communicate effectively with each other and consult regularly through . . .

A Member: — Regional.

Ms. MacColl: — Not regional, provincial meetings. We have four provincial meetings. We do not have regional meetings at this time. We do not have . . . (inaudible) . . . services in the regions right now. And right now we have four meetings per year. And not really a defined agenda either.

Saskatchewan and MFCJS will work together to deliver services to Metis families in an accountable and responsible manner. MFCJS and Saskatchewan agree to discuss planning for the development of various initiatives subject to availability of resources. Such initiatives could include but are not limited to Metis support homes, a Metis support association, cross-cultural training with Saskatchewan Social Services staff, expansion of the family reunification program, crisis intervention services, healing programs, and Metis focus urban services.

To this, I would like to say thank you for the opportunity to make a presentation to this committee. I'd like to just start with a story to talk about how our services could fit in.

A few years back, I was driving down 20th Street with my younger sister. My sister spotted a girl she went to school with who was on the street. She was very surprised at this. The young girl was 16 at the time. She was from a northern Metis community. She had been in foster care most of her life.

This young girl had two children over the next couple of years. Her children were placed in foster care. One day we heard her name on the radio. Her body was found in Vancouver. They sent her body home for burial; her children were adopted.

This issue is happening in our own communities and we know that it is. Our organizational views regarding service delivery and legislation regarding the sexual exploitation of children and youth . . . Metis Family and Community Justice has worked with Communities for Children to address the issue of child abuse in the sex trade.

As part of a working group to stop the sexual exploitation of children by pimps and perpetrators, we had identified a number of services which needed to be put in place. However, the services would not work effectively if there wasn't a safe place for these children to go to in order to seek help. The safe shelter was open.

The component Metis Family and Community Justice was involved in was to provide . . . was in providing up to four satellite homes for the shelter in partnership with Saskatoon

Tribal Council urban First Nations family centre. Due to budget restrictions, only one satellite home was put into place. From what I understand this home no longer provides services to the shelter.

Some of the gaps we see in the services are that most of the services currently in place in Saskatoon provide intervention services — the safe shelter, satellite homes, Saskatoon Child Centre with the police and social services protocol, and Aboriginal victim services, mental health counselling services. We believe that the emphasis must be placed within the communities to help the families understand the issues of child abuse. Only then will communities begin to identify solutions that they can provide to prevent children from harm.

Many of the gaps that have been in the community . . . many of the gaps have been the community reporting situations prior to problems. In many communities, the issue of child abuse has been a long-kept secret. This secret has continued. It is important that key people in the communities are educated and aware of the issue, enough to show how the system can and will work for them.

There are a number of . . . One of the obvious gaps is in Aboriginal services.

There're a number of barriers to communities providing preventative services. One barrier to community-developed services is access to training to provide resource people in their communities. Awareness and education are key components to motivate communities to find their own solutions.

Another barrier to community-developed services is how funding is provided. If funding is provided to address this issue through this process, then there must be up to at least a three year or more commitment. Community projects need time to develop a strong core service before they begin to look elsewhere for continued support.

Some ideas to help stop . . . that would help stop the issue. Well barring the elimination of poverty, we can look at the protection of children. Metis Family and Community Justice, as a community organization, can coordinate a number of services within a variety of communities to help protect the children who have made their homes in the streets rather than remain in situations which have not been safe.

As a provincial organization we can work with Metis communities to find solutions to prevent child abuse. Metis Family and Community Justice would like to be part of the solution.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this critical issue. Any more to add?

Mr. Ross: — No, I was just listening with all the talk with the police officers and other discussions that I've been involved with. It's my belief that you have to start thinking of addressing this issue in a holistic manner and deal with the underlying causes. To me, like the sexual exploitation of children is the end result of what is happening in their environment, and that is facing poverty, high unemployment, whatever situations that

they're facing — addictions and alcoholism. To me, like addictions and alcohol is another end result of what's happening.

Children who live in that type of environment eventually start getting involved with drugs and alcohol and eventually start getting into prostitution. But if there was more focus on the poverty, the unemployment, and their home environments, and giving them some type of stable home environments that were well informed, and targeting the parents also, it would be effective in the long run.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Thank you for your presentation. We'd like the opportunity to ask you a few questions if you'd be open to that, and we really appreciate the time you've taken this morning. So Kevin would you like to start?

Mr. Yates: — Okay, a couple of questions for either Wayne or Ingrid. When you talk about tackling the problem from a holistic point of view — I agree with you wholeheartedly that that is the methodology that needs to be used in healing the community, the family — how would you suggest, if you had a magic wand or the ability to do any one thing and sort of dealing with poverty, because it is something that is outside our ability to deal with it at this point anyway, but in your communities or in your families, would you . . . is it best to deal with children and the parents at a very young age or is it an approach to be taken in school through an education process or how would you recommend we start that process if we were able to?

Mr. Ross: — Well I believe that in order to prepare children that are living in this type of environment, where they're disadvantaged in different areas and they're at risk of heading in that direction, I think that more education — whether it be through educating the parents or educating in schools — about the healthy choices that they could make in trying to avoid making these choices and ending up there in the prostitution trade.

There's a lot of things that I've been running through my mind to try and address these things but I don't know the answer. But I know, like, what would be effective in a lot of Metis communities?

Mr. Yates: — I guess, Wayne, that's what I'm asking. In your communities and in your home environment, are there things needed like parenting skills training, how you raise your children. It's indicated at age zero to three, the amount you hug your children, hold your children, all those things make a difference to the self-worth and ability of a child — are those types of things, do you think those would be helpful in dealing in long . . . in this issue over the long term, or are those types of skills needed in your communities?

Mr. Ross: — I believe they are. And the thing is like more focus has got to be placed on giving the Metis the opportunity to develop more culturally-sensitive programs that will educate their parents and these children based on their culture and traditions and values and things like that.

Ms. MacColl: — The community action program for children, or CAPC, through that program we work with CPNP (Canadian prenatal nutrition program). There are five projects throughout the province which look at children prenatal to six months old. The prevention is in nutrition and linking up with a variety of services and resources in the community.

The other program we work with is community action program for children and there are 38 projects in the province. Eleven of them are Metis projects. And I work closely with those communities to address programs for children zero to six years old. And in those programs they focus on zero to six years old, children at risk, which means a majority of the families are Aboriginal.

And what they're finding are the parents are bringing the children into the programs and the parents are beginning to bring up what their needs are. And their needs go a way beyond the mandate of the children's programs. They need to . . . they begin looking at housing issues, and employment issues, and all the other issues.

And the programs do not have the capacity to build on those needs. And that's where a continuum of programs and services need to be developed out of those kind of projects. They don't have the ability to do that because funding is restricted.

The limits to funding are: you apply for a Social Services program; you get funding for a year. During that time it takes you four months . . . two months to get the proposal in, and get everything all cleared up. The funding comes through, you have 6 months to run the program, and then you're winding down with the evaluation, not knowing whether you're going to get the program again the next year. And that's why I spoke to the issue of funding — it needs to be a longer term commitment to it, in order to really build on the foundation.

So those are two of the programs we have in place for families but we see a lot more need to bring other services such as health, education, social services, and justice.

Mr. Ross: — Thank you. That was all, Peter.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Ron, did you have any questions?

Mr. Harper: — Just a couple of little quick questions here. Do you . . . have you been able to identify the number of Metis people who would find themselves involved in the sex industry here in Saskatchewan?

Mr. Ross: — No not offhand. We don't have no concrete numbers of how many Metis children are out there, but we know there's a high incidence of Aboriginal children out there and the makeup is . . . a lot of them are Metis too.

Ms. MacColl: — That question poses an issue for our organization in terms of the resources that we have available to do research; and also it also says that there's a gap in other departments that are not doing this research themselves, to give us the information.

Mr. Ross: — I see the biggest gap is the funding for Metis family in community in regards to services. In order for us to take a really serious role in dealing with elders, things that we're dealing within the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan and the communities regarding justice and social issues, there's got to be a commitment with the federal and provincial government to give us the proper funding. Without the proper funding then our hands are tied. Like we're too busy focusing on keeping the office going on a yearly basis instead of focusing our energies in some type of community program that will deal with these type of issues.

So to me that is one of the biggest gaps that I'm facing right now. It all boils down to money I suppose. The more money you have, the more you could do. And I'm just hoping that we could work with the provincial and federal government to come to some understanding and change the things . . . the situation as it is now, because it's not viable for us to try and participate when we're not properly funded.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Yes, I just have . . . Actually we're really kind of limited for time here, but I want to thank you first of all for, you know, for informing us about, you know, what you know and your needs and so on and what you think would be needed in order for your Metis nation to be able to begin developing their own services and resources and you've already done that to a certain extent; but however, funding is a problem.

I just wanted to ask you if in the ideal world there was funding, if in the ideal world there was enough development in the province where there was wealth generation going on and so on, that there would be, you know, funding other than government possibly that could come to pass. And you assumed then the . . . I guess the whole . . . What I understand you saying is you want the responsibility as well as the privilege of being a part of government in a sense, and so you want to be able to have a say in your own social programs and so on.

So if then that responsibility would come to you, for instance if there were children from the Metis nation that were being sexually abused on the streets and that responsibility came to you, how do you envision . . . Like if tomorrow the money was dropped in your hands, how do you envision approaching their problem of being on the streets? If they actually said okay, you know, we want to be with our community and we want you to help us. How do you envision being able to do that? Where would you start?

Ms. MacColl: — In looking at a variety of models, the closest model that comes to . . . the holistic concept we talk about is the wraparound process. The wraparound process does work within a large community, and it works in specific communities.

We also have a number of resources within our community and within our nation to provide other services, such as Metis Addiction Council of Saskatchewan, Metis employment and training; our education institutions, Gabriel Dumont Institute and Dumont Technical Institute. We have a number of resources to provide to those families.

Do you have anything else to add?

Mr. Ross: — Well if I had all that money . . . First of all, like what I'd like to see is children who are being exploited through the prostitution trade be taken out of that environment and placed in an environment where their awareness can grow. Like to me a lot of this . . . the choices that they're making is based on ignorance. They've been so isolated in that environment for so long — probably generations — they don't have no other ways of seeing the world.

And if you can provide those kind of things to them, through giving them a mentor, a mentor that will take them to different activities and meet different people and show them things that this is how it works in the real world, they might just have enough information to make more healthier choices. That's one of the things that I'd like to see.

But there's a whole lot of other things that I'd like to try in order to address this situation. But like it all comes down to money again. But I'm trying to figure out where I can get these resources and start something without the dependency of funding all the time, you know. So that's a big job, but we'll find the answer somewhere.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — You bet.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Yes. I'm conscious of time so I'm going to ask one question, and I'm also going to ask if you would consider one issue for the fall hearings. We're going to be holding a second round of hearings in the fall.

My question for now is how the safe house that's been set up in Saskatoon is working from your point of view in terms of providing services for Metis children who are on the street? You know, are they utilizing the safe house? And what sort of resources do you need in terms of the follow up to satellite homes?

Have you got a sense of to what degree Metis children have used the safe house? And then what are your needs with respect to satellite homes?

Ms. MacColl: — There have been a number of Metis children who have gone through the safe shelter already, and then they go on to the STC (Saskatoon Tribal Council) family centre. And from there we get calls asking what resources are available in the Metis community. So there are some links.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — And in terms of yourself, like . . .

Ms. MacColl: — None.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — So you need additional resources there.

Ms. MacColl: — Yes.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — The question that I'd like to ask with respect to the fall, the fall hearings, is if you could offer some advice for us in specific terms on . . . You were saying that the real causes, the underlying causes of this problem of Metis children being on the street, and of all

children who are involved in the sex trade, is poverty, unemployment, housing. And that those needs need to be addressed.

With respect to your own people, with respect to Metis families, and with respect to the neighbourhoods where we're seeing this as a major problem in Saskatoon, Regina, P.A., I wonder if the Metis nation could give us some advice in the fall on how the issues of unemployment and poverty and inadequate housing could be tackled for Metis families in those urban neighbourhoods where we're seeing a high preponderance of children being pulled into the sex trade.

So if you've got any advice for us on that in the fall, I'd be really grateful.

Ms. MacColl: — We can bring this up at our CEO's (chief executive officer) meeting and have the other affiliates contribute as well and bring some recommendations back in the fall. Thank you.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Thank you both very, very much for taking time this morning to be with us.

Mr. Ross: — Thank you for having us.

The committee recessed for a period of time.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — We're going to get underway with this afternoon's presentations. Just before we do that, for people who are new to these hearings, we'll just review the makeup of the committee and the mandate of the committee.

So I'll formally open these hearings. My name's Peter Prebble. I am the Co-Chair of the Special Committee To Prevent The Abuse And Exploitation Of Children Through The Sex Trade. I want to welcome you here on behalf of all committee members.

The other Co-Chair of our committee — who I'm expecting will join us in a moment — is Arlene Julé. And she's the member of the legislature for Humboldt constituency.

The other members of the committee are June Draude who's the MLA for Kelvington-Wadena. Ron Harper — Ron is present, just to my right and is the MLA for Regina Northeast. Carolyn Jones, the MLA for Saskatoon Meewasin, is in hospital at the present time and so isn't able to be present for these hearings and extends her regrets. Don Toth is the MLA from Moosomin, and Don is also not able to be with us this afternoon. And Kevin Yates is the member of the legislature for Regina Dewdney, and Kevin is just over to my left.

The staff to our committee are Margaret Woods who's our committee Clerk, and Margaret is over to my far right. Randy Pritchard is our technical advisor, and Randy's immediately to my left.

I'll just review the key principles that the committee's been initiating its work around.

The first principle is that every child is everyone's responsibility. It takes a community to raise a child. And each

person in the community is responsible ultimately for the well-being of every child in the community.

Our second principle is that the involvement of children in the sex trade is child abuse. We've rejected the term child prostitution as I think now more and more of the community groups working on this issue have done the same thing. And we're treating any involvement of children under 18 in the sex trade as exploitation of children and child abuse.

And third, our goal is zero tolerance with respect to exploitation of children on the street. So our objective is to try to eliminate the involvement of children in the sex trade.

One of the tasks of the committee is to make recommendations to stop the abuse and exploitation of children on the streets in our province. Some of our other tasks include reporting on other jurisdictions and looking at initiatives that have been taken in other parts of North America with respect to stopping the exploitation of children on the streets.

We're also consulting with stakeholders around the province, who have an interest in this issue, to seek their input on the next steps that ought to be taken. Clearly we already have a lot of good work going on in our communities and government has taken several initiatives around this issue. And we've been reviewing — over the course of the Regina and Saskatoon hearings — a number of services that are already in place for children. But there's a great deal more to do so we're basically seeking your advice on the next steps that we should take.

And we're also examining reasons why children end up on the street in the first place and what can be done to prevent children from ending up on the street.

With respect to the public hearing process, the purpose of the . . . one of the purposes of this committee is to listen to the views and concerns of any Saskatchewan resident that is interested in providing advice on this issue including youth. And we've been — in the course of our public hearings — we've been hearing from a number of youth who are on the street or who have been on the street but have now left the street, and have been giving us advice on things that we could be doing to help young people who are . . . have been pulled into the sex trade.

We're holding consultations in Saskatoon and Regina and Prince Albert. We also plan to hold hearings in North Battleford and La Ronge and Yorkton, and we've extended invitations to the mayors and councillors of all communities with a population of over 5,000 expressing a willingness to hold hearings there. We also have been in touch with the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians and the Metis Nation with respect to holding public hearings with groups and organizations that they would like to see involved in this issue.

And finally we would like to invite your ongoing input. If you'd like to follow these proceedings on the net, you might want to make note of the web site number. This will give you access to all *Hansard* proceedings of this committee, and all meetings of the committee are recorded by *Hansard*. And if you want to be in touch with us, you are welcome to either contact Arlene Julé

— welcome Arlene — or myself as Co-Chairs, or be in touch with our technical adviser, Randy Pritchard, whose number is 787-4003. And you can contact our committee by writing room 239 of the Legislative Building.

I'd like to now call forward our first witness for the afternoon and, Bill and Don, if you'd like to come forward representing Egadz.

Members of the committee, this is Bill Thibodeau and Don Meikle who both have very extensive years of experience with Egadz. It's really nice to have you both here. Thank you very much for coming.

Mr. Meikle: — Thank you for having us.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — We'd like to turn the floor over to you to make your presentation, and then we'll have a number of questions I'm sure that we'll want to ask you, but it's really good to have you here.

Mr. Thibodeau: — We'd like to let Don start. He's done some extensive work and Don Meikle is our street outreach coordinator. And he's prepared some things to present to you so we'll let him start.

Mr. Meikle: — Thank you, we'd like to take this time to thank you for allowing myself on behalf of Egadz to present to you . . . to your all-party committee. We are hoping once again that through such processes, positive changes will continue to better assist those wanting to exit this lifestyle. The real fear is that children we now classify as children being sexually exploited through prostitution are only going to continue growing up and now becoming labelled as prostitutes which are out there because that's the choices they have made.

Once they become 18, most forget that these young people still carry with them the same issues that put them out on the street since as early as age 8. In our almost seven years of working in this program, not once have we heard anyone get into the van and state they like what they are doing.

Over the past few days in Saskatoon you have heard from various organizations such as Communities for Children, Tribal Council Safe House, and others that are continuing their work around this issue. For this presentation we will speak about the past, the present, and the future around this issue of children being sexually exploited on our city streets.

We will use only the expertise obtained through the work done on this program. I will not quote books, studies, reports, findings, or newspaper articles. What you will be hearing today is from our expertise in a van, in court, in the hospitals, partnership within other government and non-government organizations, and most important from the children.

We will share our frustrations of working in a system that the children are supposed to fit the system's needs, not the system fitting the children's needs. We will be making a strong recommendation for the need of a holistic, long-term treatment centre that works towards healing these children. What makes us the experts, some may ask? This program was started out by

our now executive director, Bill Thibodeau. It was his intention that this program was going to be different from most. We must not treat these children as caseloads but as living, breathing, human beings.

We did not have to bring an overabundance of book knowledge, but you must have a master's in compassion and understanding. One of the tallest orders were if we ever promise something, someone we would do something, we'd better follow through.

I've heard prostitution often called the game, working the streets — among other choice titles. This issue is not a game. A game is supposed to be something that you have fun on your way to hopefully winning. While a child is on the street and being sexually abused, he or she has no way of winning.

We are not here today to discredit anyone. In life we seem better able to cope if we can put the blame on someone or something else. All sectors of society can take the responsibility for the successes and the failures for these children.

Here is a case in point. This happened many years ago but is one we will never forget. Even today these children are still faced with the hardships and still carry the heavy burden of abuse, victimization, racism, and a community that would allow this to happen.

About six years ago we were doing our nightly run in the van and we came across three young girls. Their ages were 7, 9, and 10. Over a short period of time we learned that these three children were selling their sexual services for money. The youngest one was not shy to admit that they would give a hand job for \$5, oral sex for 10, 15 if the predators didn't want to use a condom.

On many occasions we would call mobile crisis and the police to pick them up. As soon as they would be picked up, you could count on them being out there again within a couple of hours.

I personally remember this night as though it was yesterday. We pulled up to the 9-year-old standing on corner of 19th and Avenue G. She had been sniffing and was standing out in minus 30 weather with only a light jacket and a pair of runners on. We noticed men as young as 30 and as old as 50 circling the block waiting for us to leave. After a lot of coaching, we finally talked her into the van to have a sandwich and a cup of coffee. As one staff talked to her, the other put a call into mobile crisis.

After 15 minutes of talking, this child wanted to leave as she had to make money or get beat up. When she stumbled out of the van, a worker stood beside her trying to talk her back into the van. During this process, four cars had circled around us wanting us to leave. The other outreach worker pulled the van directly in front of where we were standing, as one of the predators pulled his van right in front of ours and was motioning for her to get in.

As we went to ask him to leave, he drove away only to continue circling the block again. When mobile crisis came they took her home, only to be out on the streets two nights later.

There were two sisters pimping these girls. They themselves

were only 14 and 15. They were pimping these girls for their mother so they wouldn't have to go out there themselves. When it went to trial, they couldn't get a conviction on the mother. The 14- and 15-year-old took the rap. The three children who testified got only a thank you after court.

There was no counselling, community support, family intervention, or a program they could attend. Little outside support was offered until one young lady made the news. She still works the street on occasion and has a boy friend who's 36 years old.

The second child has gone through treatment, however is still a very angry and bitter teenager. The third one has never attempted treatment and uses daily, and will be one of the many that some day turn up dead.

We often reflect about the children we have lost to the street through living this lifestyle. In the beginning it was noted that it averaged about one a year. With all the successes there is still more young people dying a tragic death every year.

Is it a wonder children and youth behaviour is out of control and even lead to death when they are labelled and stigmatized by powerful people they are made to believe they can trust.

Some examples of this:

A young girl who went to the hospital for a drug overdose and the attending doctor stated if she died it would only be a less strain on our system. Comments like this were made in the presence of a social worker.

When we took a young person who had worked hard to exit this lifestyle to school to look at career options, the teacher was one of her regulars on the street.

A young person who is in treatment was called a hooker and told to go back to her reserve by another youth. When she threw her bowl of cereal at him, she was asked to leave because of violent behaviour.

Another young person was asked to leave when a young male made sexual gestures of her performing oral sex on him. She was asked to leave because she was out of control, after she threw a rock at him.

The young lady who was asked to leave after less than 24 hours because they heard from two other youths she had smoked a joint that night. No one had seen her do it, and the only thing that really happened that night was her jacket was stolen.

Examples of incidents such as these are only a small fragment of what children and youth are facing during the struggle to exit the street. It's a wonder how many of these children have the strength to continue on their own healing journey.

The next example is about a young lady we have worked with since she was 13 years old. I will read some parts of her psychological assessment, not only to give you some background, but also to give you an example of the labelling given to these youth and the odds they need to overcome. The

psychological assessment, we've blacked out . . . We will not identify her in anyway. We have gotten written permission to use it.

Part of the introduction was: the assessment took place and consisted of a clinical interview and psychological testing. Information was also gained through a view of her Kilburn Hall file and her previous file at Child and Youth Services. She did co-operate fully with the assessment, and the following is viewed as an accurate representation of her current functioning.

Background information. She is well-known to the justice system and the Department of Social Services as a street kid and a prostitute. When apprehended, she's usually placed in the northern part of the province to live with her grandparents. However, she typically only remains for weeks or months before gravitating back to Saskatoon. She has been placed in foster care and at home but again, left these placements and returned to the streets of Saskatoon.

Her biological mother currently resides in BC (British Columbia) and her mother has a history of selling and using drugs. She reports being sexually abused by her stepfather's dad at age seven.

She has a previous criminal history dating back to 1996. Her behaviour in open custody was volatile. On one occasion she became upset. She started damaging her rooms, so was moved to Kilburn Hall.

Her behaviour while in Kilburn Hall during her stay was not positive. Due to her acting out on the unit, she was placed in isolation. Her behaviour did not improve and she continued in isolation until her release.

She acknowledges extensive drug use. She has ingested cocaine, hash, marijuana, Ritalin, Prozac, and LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide). She explained that she was injecting Ritalin in 1998 and most time her arms did have small track marks. She explained that she was getting high almost everyday at that point. She also describes purposely squeezing her neck as a way of getting high. When placed in Kilburn Hall, she reported experiencing severe withdrawal symptoms.

Her mental status. She became tearful whenever the discussion centred on how she was doing in her life. She described how discouraged and depressed she is about herself because she's sincerely trying to stay straight and off drugs but relapsed.

Level of functioning. Level of functioning in the community could probably still be viewed as low. She still has difficulties following structure and is strongly governed by her needs for substances. She explains that she is getting high almost everyday when she's in the community, but indicated that she stopped all injecting. She said she is restricting her usage to marijuana and alcohol now.

She also said that she is no longer involved in prostitution. However, this is unclear. She does acknowledge that her friends are prostitutes and that she probably, with her friends, when her friends are actively prostituting.

She has not displayed the ability to stay in any specific place although she has indicated she has tried to attend services at Egadz on a regular basis.

Part of her psychological testing. She achieved a number of significant elevations suggesting several areas for serious concerns. Individuals who achieve the same profile as her tend to experience chronic feelings of inadequacy and anxiety. They seem to desire relationships with others including adults, can be introspective.

These individuals are able to criticize themselves and show some insight. However, at the extremes, they tend to be confused independently. Certainly her behaviours has generally demonstrated this confusion.

The testing results suggest even though she is capable of some insight, her general skill level is exceedingly low. Her performance suggests that she has little awareness of understanding how the world works, and therefore has difficulties interpreting why people do the things they do and why she does the things she does.

Individuals who respond in this way can be viewed as being under-socialized and their perception of reality on occasion can be viewed as distortedly.

This young person had felt safer in an institutional setting than facing the realities of everyday life. From the age of 13 till she was 15, she had spent 75 per cent of her time in a custody facility. When life on the street had gotten so rough, she would commit an offence so that she could go back to jail and become clean and sober for a while. Then she would get out of jail, and within days she would be back using drugs and working the streets.

It was not until we began to work together in a strong and lasting partnership that life for this young person began to turn around. This specific partnership included Mike Dunphy from the judicial interim release program, Department of Social Services; Karney Healley from Legal Aid; family services 16- and 17-year-old program; Dr. Clarke from mental health youth services; the My Home project; and the Egadz street outreach program.

The judge was in agreement to stay in constant with dealing with her matters. As she would re-offend, this youth would be brought in front of him for all dispositions. The most important partner, but usually the forgotten one, was the youth.

During one of the mornings we were in court, this youth was brought in front of this particular judge. She was swearing and kicking the wood surrounding the prisoner's box. She was like a caged animal, just wanting to be sentenced and begin doing her time. It was at that time I'd asked Mike Dunphy for assistance as I know, as soon as she was released, this youth would be more than likely head back to the streets.

Some type of safeguards needed to be put in place as her self-control was extremely low and she was a danger to herself.

We attended Kilburn Hall later in the day to offer our

assistance. She talked about the need for treatment and a desire to live with her family. The option was put forward for her to become the case manager and tell us her plan. We would assist her in anyway we could. It was made clear at that time she would be held accountable for her actions and that it may include custody.

She was released to attend Calder and was asked to leave a few days later because of outbursts of anger. She was put at the safe house and ran a few days later. She was picked up again and went through the processes of being remanded again to reformulate her plan. She returned to Calder and was again asked to leave because she was caught hugging a boy by the swimming pool.

It was the third time that she is there that the psychologist began to look into and test for FAS/FAE (fetal alcohol effect). Fortunately for her these tests did come back negative. She was referred to Mental Health and was seen by Dr. Clark. It was there that she is diagnosed with having bi-polar mood disorder.

She desperately tried the last time to complete treatment by going as far as the offer to take tranquilizer pills when she was feeling out of control. But again she was asked to leave because of her outbursts. She was breached again because she did not complete treatment and went again on the run.

She was placed in open custody for four months, hoping that she would stabilize. During her stay in open she got in a fight with another youth and received another month. Her time was converted to close with probation to follow. During this time Mike and myself kept in close contact with her as to her progress and desires to change.

In July she was released on probation and wanted to live with family members. This plan worked for a very short period of time. She was drawn back to Saskatoon in August by friends wanting her to come back, and missing the city.

When she moved into the My Home Project in August, we tried to get her into a normal school. She had gotten up 6 o'clock in the morning the first day of the new school year. With her book bag in hand, off she went to meet with the vice-principal, the mentor of the My Home, and myself. She was happy she was going to school where no one knew her, and she was going to be able to start a new life.

Her dreams came crashing down only 10 minutes after she'd gotten there and when they would not accept her. The school tried to refer her off to another school, and when they rejected her, she began to feel that the street lifestyle was her only option. Her stability only lasted a short time before she was once again in trouble with the law.

She went to appear in court on some breaches and was arrested right in court. After consulting with the youth, Legal Aid, the judicial interim release program, and Mental Health, we all thought it was the best option for us to try for her to be put on the electronic monitoring program. She needed that sense of others controlling her every move like she'd experienced in custody.

She received compliments from the judge that finally she was being able to control these outbursts of anger in court. For the first time this young person actually reached out to the judge and asked him in a letter to give her the bracelet instead of more custody.

In earlier December she was placed on the bracelet program and lasted till the end of December. As funny as this may sound, she had cut it off because she thought the world was going to come to an end because of the new millennium.

In early January she was picked up after wanting to go home, but was too scared. In January she was sent to Sakwatamo Lodge, and although she never did complete the program and was arrested for this, she waited for the police and faced the same judge again in court. This time he did not lock her up, but gave her community hours for cutting off the bracelet. His words of encouragement and his acknowledgement of her victories to try and leave this lifestyle only strengthened her self-esteem.

She is still on the bracelet and admits that it helps her stay clean. She is in another school, and although it has been trying for all involved, we can see the difference in her. When I discussed using her story as one of our successes, she stated it makes her feel good. Even though she is now pregnant, her baby is going to be able to come into this world clean and healthy.

Just the beginning of her healing journey has been two years in the making. It has been time consuming and stressful for all involved. We've had to support each other, as well as her. We have had to bend the rules to meet her needs. However, if the partnerships crumbled in the least bit, her story would not have been the beginning of the success.

The things you need to remember, the Egadz street outreach program, the judicial interim release program, Legal Aid, and the judge have all been involved with her for the past two years. Mental health has been with her since her first visit to our office a year ago. Our roles have all become well defined, and we see the need for such work to continue. This is not the first youth we have worked with in this manner and had such successes.

I want to thank Cree Nations, Sakwatamo Lodge, Poundmakers Lodge, White Buffalo, and Angus Campbell Detox Centre just to name a few. With strong partnerships and a mutual respect, we've been able to work together to have successes with youth that have been all but written off by most.

Poundmakers Lodge has worked with four youth and although some went back to drinking or smoking dope, not one to our knowledge has ever went back to work in the streets.

For years such centres have inspired me to understand and see what really works for children and youth. It is in the holistic teachings that youth are able to come to understand what has put them on the street in the first place. They allow them to become angry, sad, and open up true feelings. These places offer elders, sweats, and a place to find spirituality.

Successes are measured in hours for some and years for others.

A young person's struggle doesn't go away just because they have left this lifestyle. We've had individuals that we began working with still need the support seven years later.

A young lady left the street when she was 16. This process took us two years of hard work and some sleepless nights when her pimp took her back underground, with us not knowing where she was. She went to detox three times and treatment twice. After she had come back, moved, returned to school, and stabilized for two years, she was sexually assaulted again by her uncle and was pushed almost back to the street lifestyle.

What had saved her was that she had outreach staff who were there once again to hold her when she cried, put her into treatment again, and tell her they love her and it will get better.

We work with children and youth who, for most, are labelled unworkable. These are the ones called gutter trash, hos, sluts, and bitches. However, after a lot of painstaking hours, it is all worth it when you are able to attend graduation ceremonies as they are moving on to university.

The next story is a real testimony of how it doesn't matter how far you are involved in the streets, you can leave this lifestyle and make the world a better place for others.

This young lady was out on the streets on a nightly basis. She had made contact with her . . . we had made contact with her soon after the program had just started. She would stand on 21st Street with her common law. Then she began coming to the van asking for assistance to help her off the street. He would take her food and sandwiches for her as she rarely came to the van. It seemed the only way she could come to the van is if he wasn't watching.

At first she would come to get a sandwich or a couple of condoms. As time went on, we began to build a trusting relationship with her. This young person's life has been full of ups and downs. Her first child was apprehended, and when she was pregnant with another, the second child, she was going to give it up for adoption.

One-to-one counselling allowed her to speak out about her abusive common law who would beat her if she didn't make enough money, and daily visits to her residence were a part of what enabled her to take the steps to leave this lifestyle. Through hard work and support, she is clean, has both her children, a job, and has been making positive contributions back to society, and more important to the other youth, as the mentor of the My Home project.

Intervention is just as important as prevention. It takes a lot of hard work and an equal amount of patience. If we can assist the single parent or the child who has no one, we have turned the page and begun a new chapter that may hopefully keep their children off the street.

When you look at the Alberta Bill, it would only make sense that by locking these children up, it will only be another form of victimization. Where are we going to put them? Who's going to work with them? Children are very observant and take notice of the fact that someone who's caught up having sex with the

underage are not spending one day in jail. We're continuing to lock them up because they are out of control.

We have to work with these children with compassion, understanding, respect, and dignity. We cannot treat them like the pimps and expect to make any headway by controlling and having power over them.

I've heard this in the past, comments such as, we are the adults and we need to make the decisions for the children. If adults are making such good decisions, we would not be here today discussing this issue. If kids could vote at the polls like adults do, we would have to become more creative and the choices would have to be child and youth focused.

The Egadz van is a major component in doing the street outreach. The van is out Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturday evenings from 9 to 1 a.m. The van is out Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3 p.m. to 6 or 7. This allows the outreach worker an opportunity to connect with the high-risk individuals on their turf.

Here's some of the services and programs that we offer: a sandwich or a cup of hot chocolate or juice; personal hygiene products; emergency baby formula; diapers; printed information on various programs offered throughout the city; violent customer lists; crisis counselling; first aid; teddy bears for those being abused and beaten; the high-risk homicide registry; referrals to other agencies; clothing; and condoms.

These workers who are committed to and dedicated to these children, with some of the workers holding a degree in human justice and social work, they are working for under \$10 an hour.

Day work in the outreach program includes being in court four to five days a week; spending time at Kilburn Hall visiting youth and seeking alternatives to custody; taking youth for medical appointments; attending case conferences; advocating for children and youth; working with families; assessments and referrals for treatment throughout the province and on occasion into Alberta; transporting youth to detox and treatment, and picking them up once they complete or are asked to leave; case planning; follow-up; walk-in crisis counselling; one-to-one counselling; hospital visits; planning for pregnant teens; and whatever needs arise throughout the day.

The outreach program also runs the explorers' groups which gives children and youth the opportunity of fun and to experience different activities in a clean and sober environment. This program utilizes mentors who are ex-street-involved youth who are now clean and sober.

Barry Morgan from Morgan Theberge, and Bill Roe from Roe and Olson have been very instrumental in setting up and monitoring lawyers riding along in the van every second Wednesday. They offer free legal advice on such issues as criminal law, rights on detention, child apprehension, family matters, and other questions asked that would have not been answered if these lawyers weren't donating their time.

In the past we have had child and youth services offering counselling for these young women. However, with her

increasing workload and her reports for the courts, this time has become almost non-existent.

One of the outreach workers holds an addiction meeting on a weekly basis.

The odd job fund we also have provides spending money to children and youth who are trying to exit but need spending money. They either clean the outreach van, offices, or complete some type of work project. Egadz outreach provides children with some spending money, hygiene, calling cards, and clothing as needed for treatment. This is done through Social Services and the Communities for Children.

Other partnerships we are involved with and include family services' 16-, 17-year-old program, the judicial interim release program, and the Egadz street outreach is called the My Home project.

This home is run by a mentor who has had past street involvement. The home is open to young women who are wanting to make an effort to exit this lifestyle. The length of stay is determined by the commitment of each individual. The home has a youth committee attached to it which sets the guidelines and looks at other options for youth.

In 1994, we began to do our own assessments and referrals to treatment centres. In 1994, we did 74 referrals; 1995, 90; 1996, 96; 1997, 74; 1998, 94; 1999, 71. We have done our own assessments for the reason of time constraints. When a person wants to go to treatment, they need the opportunity to go now.

Some recommendations that we've asked you to look at and consider. In the past three years we have noticed a real change in the way children are being recognized as children sexually exploited through prostitution and seen as victims of sexual abuse by pimps and johns. There has been a large number of organizations stepping forward to address this issue. We now have a safe house operated by the Saskatoon Tribal Council that offers a safe place to stay for up to 30 days. However, we need to continue to push for change or many of these children are going to continue to slip through the cracks.

A good start would be to make anyone charged with communicating for the purpose of prostitution, under the age of 18, not have this charge read in open court. The next step should be that whoever and how many, and however many times they are charged, they automatically be placed in alternative program. This program should offer solutions to the client not making it punitive but restorative. People involved should be the people they trust and only be solution-focused.

Judges should automatically be asked to continue working with the same client flagged as a child being victimized on the street on an ongoing basis. This allows young . . . recognizes high-risk juveniles the opportunity to prove that even though some may see them totally out of control, the judge following the young person may recognize the successes and act accordingly. Justice has to become a solution as many are using the option of custody.

People working with these children and youth must — and have

to — leave out personal prejudices, jealousies, and the constant powering out on these kids who are already feeling hopeless and alone. We need to have a long term, up to six month treatment centre for female children and youth that have been sexually abused. A safe and a place to go to deal with their issues. The place must have a family component and is child focused. They have to be able to come back if they choose to leave. They have to be able to act out, and when they do, work with this issue not just kick them out.

Over the next couple of months we will be preparing our input on the design of the treatment centre for those sexually exploited on the streets. We here at Egadz want to continue to play a part in the solutions. If this committee would like to see this report, we would be more than happy to present it to you later.

You must remember that working with these children doesn't take an hour a week or even a year. It is an ongoing process that continues throughout their lives. If we continue to seek solutions and create healing for these children, not only will the numbers continue to lessen, we may not see their children out on the streets. I'd like to now turn it back to Bill.

Mr. Thibodeau: — Thank you, Don. I don't have a whole lot more to add to that, partly because I planned it this way to make Don do all the work. Truly, Don and the outreach staff are the ones that are out on the street on a nightly basis. On a daily basis, they do the follow-up work. And I just have a little bit more that I guess I'd like to re-emphasize along with what Don has just read. And talk to you about . . . I guess the one thing that I need to re-emphasize and that many of us probably know, that trust with the children and youth in the streets is critical and it's not a given.

Seven years that the outreach van has been going out to the street and connecting with kids, I can remember kids that we have come across at times that wouldn't trust us for up to two years. And that trust factor is forever fragile. It can be broken with the slightest little breeze if they suspect that we're not working in their best interest.

So it's something that even though it's established, it's something that's always ongoing in terms of us proving it to them that we're there for them.

I think another fact that needs to be pointed out, that almost all, if not all, children and youth on the street have little to no trust for the system nor those who represent the system. Many have often, from their perspective, had negative experiences associated with them. Examples of that being: apprehended and placed in care; arrested or a family member arrested; court; probation; custody — everything continually seems to be punitive by nature in their eyes.

The one common theme that the children and youth who exist and survive on the streets as they see it is the feeling . . . is that of the feeling that they do not . . . that they have not only been let down by the system, but by adults as a whole. This would include their parents, family members, medical people, social workers, justice worker, and the list goes on. Many of them have had one or more of these people involved in their lives,

promising to be there for them and when they were truly needed, they weren't there.

And I think everyone in life has experienced that feeling of someone not being there for them. Just imagine what that's like to live that way everyday, wondering, you know, that no one's going to be there for you.

It is readily recognized that nobody can be there every moment of the day for anyone. However Egadz Youth Centre, through the street outreach program and its staff, have and continue to provide that consistency which has, and is, a major contributing factor in getting children and youth off the streets away from their abusive lifestyles and on to more safer, healthier, productive lives.

I think the proof's in the pudding. We have Don Meikle who's worked for this program for seven years; Beth Worniuk, four years; Denise Sliva, two years now. Kids all have a continuum. They know a face. Any time that van goes out, there's always somebody in that van that these kids will recognize; it's not a stranger. And it's not rebuilding that trust factor all over again.

The amount of . . . I guess I really wanted to emphasize this one because Don read through some of it and maybe because I'm in the mix and the know of things, it sounded, you know, fairly simple, fairly straightforward in some of it. But the amount of time . . . or the amount of commitment, time and energy, money and patience that goes into connecting, reaching, and obtaining the trust of these children and youth, that we're all here discussing today, in my opinion, is one of the best and worst jobs in the world.

It's the best job when, as Don mentioned, you get to see the successes in these kids. It's the worst job when you have to go out in that van night after night and witness the abuse that these kids undertake on a daily basis.

Let's face the fact that when children and youth first hit the streets, who's there to connect with them? When case plans or home life blows apart, who's there to connect and provide the vital links to services and programs that best meet their issues and needs? And again, when this falls short, who's there again when these kids get back to the street again to pick up the pieces and try and rebuild these lives?

The outreach staff provide a continuum of service to better assist children and youth that exit their abusive lifestyles. The following is what has been developed over the past several years of working with children and youth sexually abused and exploited through prostitution, that has met with positive successes in assisting these children and youth move on to more safer and healthier lives.

Don talked about some of them. And again, the night work is critical. Given the amount of notoriety this issue has gotten in Saskatoon and Regina and other centres as of the last two to three years, we've been seeing a shift because of some of the pressures from community members, some of the pressures from law enforcement officials and which would tie with I believe to . . . will be one of the outcomes if there is ever a Bill introduced similar to the Alberta Bill.

We're starting to see a shift of when these kids are working the streets. So they're working during the daytime hours now — out of sight, out of mind — because all the pressure is happening late at night.

They're starting to move to different locations, and with the ongoing pressure it's only going to be a matter of time before we drive this issue underground. And you think we have problems now. That's part of it.

And also by driving this issue underground, people in general, the general population would tend to believe because of reduced numbers that are reported, therefore the issue is no longer an issue, that it's being solved. And that's not fair. It's not fair to these kids.

The daytime work. I don't want to regurgitate some of the things that Don's spoken about, but I really think that he softened the sell on the work that these folks do in getting young people into treatment centres in this province. The treatment centres that we're able to access for these kids comes out of a lot of hard, painstaking work.

We investigate and see who these treatment centres are, the type of programming they offer for these kids. And through partnerships with Social Services, by providing us with vehicles to transport these kids to treatment, we drive them up and we pick them up, even if they blow out or if they complete.

And even if they've gone through it and they come back six months later and decide that they need to go back, the staff will go to the wall again for them and access them back into a treatment centre. Again as Don alluded to a little while ago, these kids didn't get to where they were overnight, and they're sure as hell not going to get off the streets overnight.

It really is a lot of work. Out of the 71 children and youth that the outreach staff have assessed and put into treatment just last year, 1999, 55 of these youth were transported by the staff. The outreach staff at Egadz consists of four staff — three full-time and one half-time staff person that provide all the services that we listed.

And it's important, it's important when we have these kids go to treatment centres to have the things in place that we've worked so hard to get — calling cards, things of that nature. Even if they don't got a parent they can call. We've got treatment centres that allow these kids even within the blackout period to call our staff for support in order to try and encourage them to stay in treatment and continue on with their case plan.

While these kids are in treatment, the staff work very hard with those involved to come up with any kind of a case plan that's going to be positive and is going to truly affect these kids and help them move on. There's not enough hours in the day just for that issue alone.

I'm truly fortunate to have . . . and I often refer to staff that work at Egadz not as my staff but as my co-workers, because that's what these people are. By working together I have a lot of admiration and respect for the outreach staff and other staff members of Egadz to see how they work together when it

comes down to the crunch for these kids.

The addiction support meetings again is a must. These are things that need to be a continuum of care for these kids once they come out. To come out of treatment and say oh, just go and attend an AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) or an NA (Narcotics Anonymous) meeting just is not enough.

It's a scary as hell feeling when these kids go into treatment. I've driven some of these kids myself to treatment, and it's a great time. I'll tell you, when we leave town it's, you know, right on. Road trip; let's go.

Get 20 miles or half an hour from your designated spot and see a sign. The mood in the car becomes very sombre; you can hear a pin drop. These kids are scared. They're going to a strange place; they don't know what to expect. They're not sure what to expect as a whole after the whole treatment process as well.

So we stay in touch with them, work on a case plan for where they'd like to try and move. Involving the kids in their own case plans is critical. It's what I've seen the outreach staff here do. And not just haphazardly listening to these kids, but actually acting upon what they're providing input for. It's their life we're talking about. And even as adults, well yes, we know for the most part what may be best for some of these kids. You don't understand it unless you're these kids — you really don't.

The explorer's program is another continuum. These are things that they can utilize to help keep them positive and working towards their healthier, safer life. The My Home project that Don had talked about, again is another resource that has, again, not come without a lot of hard work through some very positive partnerships. Partnerships that haven't really existed in the true nature before.

And I think all the partners are starting to recognize the value of this by taking a look and focusing upon the kids first and the agencies last.

Overall it's our belief and our opinion that resources available are either underfunded, not effective by way of not fully addressing the issues, and are often punitive in nature. They lack input and involvement of those affected by the issues, are based upon the adults trying to make the children or youth fit the program and services and not the other way around.

The emphasis is continued on the children and youth who are already the victims, and with the lack of resources . . . this coupled with the lack of resources, being detained only further victimizes the individuals as to what is really being offered to access for what many has not already worked.

We're putting some of these kids into the same programs that just haven't met their needs, as a place to warehouse and store them. Get them out of sight, out of mind.

It's our belief that we don't have all the answers to the solution. I know that we have shared and have proven to have some of the answers to address these issues around children and youth who are sexually abused and exploited through prostitution. However, we cannot, as an agency as a whole nor individuals,

go along with or support any type of legislation that would further go towards driving this dirty little secret further underground which again would only lead people to believe it being effective.

While prevention is becoming a desirable option and is definitely valued and worthwhile, I would ask this committee to strongly consider and recommend some of the points expressed by Mr. Meikle on behalf of the street outreach program and the youth they work with, along with my suggestions that we do not forget about all those who struggle everyday to exit their abusive and exploited lives, and not further victimize them by writing them off as non-salvageable.

It is our experience that even with prevention there are those that are not reached. Does this mean that there is an acceptable percentage of human life that we are not willing to accept and write off as non-salvageable.

On behalf of the Saskatoon downtown youth centre, Egadz, and the children and youth who frequently utilize our service and programs, I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to hear our experiences of the children and youth we witness daily just trying to somehow survive.

I would like to also take this opportunity to thank the people who work hard at bringing awareness of this issue which does affect us all, especially the children and youth, who all too often feel no hope for themselves but manage to be survivors.

I also would like to especially acknowledge and thank, in my opinion the most dedicated people that I've ever had the opportunity to meet and work with, and that's Don Meikle, Beth Worniuk, and Denise Sliva—the outreach staff.

One final thing that I would like to leave this committee with is to consider in making its recommendations from all the information compiled throughout this process is: Andrea (Babygirl), suicide, 16; Tammy Lea, murdered, 17; Sky, now 23, HIV positive; etc., etc. The list goes on.

These individuals are only a few of the children and youth who will or have died as a direct result of being sexually abused and exploited through prostitution. Thank you.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Thank you very much for a very powerful presentation. Thank you, Don. I'm going to turn it over to Arlene and we'll go through a question session if you'd be willing to do that.

I should just say, Don, that we would really welcome hearing from you again when you've got this proposal for a long-term treatment facility prepared. That would be very useful for the committee and we'd really appreciate receiving it.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Hi, Don and Bill. It's good to see you again. I'm listening to your presentations and what occurred to me as I was listening is that there needs to be — and I don't know how one can have it happen, I guess, soon enough — but there needs to be a change in attitude as to how we view the children on the streets. And how we view, I guess, what's holistically and necessary also for the perpetrators.

It seems that up till now the way things have been dealt with is that the children have been the ones that are being treated as the criminals as such in this case. And the fact is that many people now, I think through awareness, can understand that they are not the criminals that the perpetrators and the johns are also — not only also but they're more . . . and most responsible.

There has been a great amount of debate around the fact of whether there should be what you would assess as punitive measures towards the johns or pimps that continue to exploit children. or whether or not the johns should also have the opportunity to grow holistically. And so to that effect johns schools, I guess, are . . . like I know there's one in Prince Albert and so on. And there again some people say that pedophilia is not curable as such. It's not . . . you cannot work with it, it is just something that is sort of a hopeless case. Other people say that there is a great deal of value in johns schools. And I was just wondering if you could give us your views on that.

And as you well know, the Alberta legislation has some very hefty fines that johns are responsible for if they're convicted. And as we all know, too, that I'm proposing a minimum fine of \$25,000 to act as a deterrent and certainly to remind people that harm children in this way that this not acceptable.

You know, once the fine is issued and people that are convicted pay it, there certainly needs to be, I think, further thought as to, you know, what can be done with that money. It can be going towards the healing of children, but also maybe towards the healing of johns.

So I just wanted some of your comments surrounding how to deal with the fact that in society we do have a situation here, and I think where mainly men seem to have the need because of the — I don't know; there's controversy on this too — but the need for power and control and that kind of thing. Where it came from, I guess we'd have to go back eons historically.

But the fact is that it is happening, and in your interpretation what is the best way to deal with the perpetrators?

Mr. Meikle: — If I can answer that using a real recent incident. I guess when you work in this mucky muck every day and you see the real uglinesses and you try to assist children and youth that are off the street, you have a real hard time feeling sorry for the johns or feeling sorry for the johns' wives. You know you feel sorry for the johns' wives in the only fact that what are they doing to her at home.

We just recently have been involved with assisting the police in arresting a man who committed a large number of sexual assaults on different individuals involved in this trade. And many of these kids, who have been started I know as early as like 11, 12, when you see them going into court and you listen to the kids come to your van, talking all the time about how these men treat them.

The one young lady who was sexually assaulted, and . . . he wanted oral sex and he wouldn't, he wouldn't allow her to use a condom, and he kept punching her in the face until she would swallow it.

When you hear kids coming up and talking about issues like this and talking about the hurt, it's really hard to feel sorry or put any sympathy on these guys that are going out there picking them up. And that is from my perspective.

Where's this money going to go? Is it going to go back into . . . if you give these johns these hefty fines, are you going to take that money or are you going to put it back into existing programs that help get kids off the street? Or is it just going to go into our government coffers? I guess would be a real thing . . .

I have a hard time with young women and men that are involved in prostitution going to school to get better. And our young women are continually going to jail for being involved in this trade. So we need to treat, start treating all johns as criminals, which they really are.

We need to start . . . if we're going to say, let's treat . . . Where these children are now victims of sexual abuse, let's treat them like victims of sexual abuse. It's really easy to sit up here with committee members, Co-Chairs, Clerks, fancy videos, and saying, this is what this is: it's child victim, they're victims. And then I go into court tomorrow, and they're treated like prostitutes.

It's really hard for somebody that does this everyday to see it, you know.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — So why do you think then, Don, that the courts are treating the children like criminals? In this day and age, when there is . . . certainly there has been a great amount of awareness as to the children being victims, so why are the courts still treating them as criminals?

Mr. Meikle: — Judges — I honestly believe, and I have to say this — our judges here in Saskatoon are absolutely wonderful. Many of the judges — some who are not liked by many people — are actually looking for changes for these kids, and they're tired of seeing these same kids coming back in front of them on a regular basis.

But take the psychological assessment. The introduction, the first paragraph was talking about the charges she had. Then they talk about background information. The first sentence talks about jibber-jabberish; the second . . . the first sentence in the second paragraph is — it had her name — is well-known to the justice system and the Department of Social Services as a street kid and a prostitute.

You're calling them sexual abuse; psychologists are calling them prostitutes. And there's your answer.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — So, you know, that is one thing, Don, that has been impressed on me a great deal in this last while, is sometimes we're just plain, slow learners here, and we have to keep repeating that this is child sexual abuse. This is not prostitution; this is child sexual abuse. And hopefully by hammering that home over and over again, that the whole attitude will change.

I think that in respect to that, you know, the intent also of the

Alberta legislation has been misconstrued a little bit because the whole intent of that was to look at children as victims, and to recognize them as victims of sexual abuse, and to protect them.

And it's just that it's so hard to get our heads around the fact that there actually is that kind of thinking that you can have some assistance for children, but it implies also that legislation that there are . . . there is a comprehensive sort of situation in the province where we have an integrated approach and that there's continuum of care. And sometimes it's . . . I think there's a stop-gap and we find if we protect the children and have measures to protect them, where is the continuum of care?

I mean you are doing some, certainly some great, great work at Egadz, and I recognized that for quite some time. But I know that there are gaps in the system too that make, you know, that legislation that's on the table in Alberta may be not quite likely that we're able to be able to do that here in Saskatchewan yet so . . . There's just a couple of other things that I wanted to ask you and quickly. In My Home — how many spaces are there?

Mr. Meikle: — The home has spaces for up to 3 females at one time, and part of being in the home is that they have to make a real commitment to staying clean. The nice thing about it was me or Social Services didn't come in with a bunch of rules and guidelines of this home. There's actually six committee members who are all youth; we took Aboriginal, non-Aboriginal, First Nations. We've taken kids that have dabbled in prostitution. We've taken a kid that has just been out on the street but not been involved. We've had a couple that's been still involved — still using.

Looking at when this home is operational, how should it look? And it was kids — some of the real hard-core kids — that said this has to be a home that we feel safe in. No matter what the uglinesses are going on out there, when we come into the home we don't want boys in it, we don't want, you know . . . that it has to be safety, and it's for them first. And they wanted somebody in there that . . . that they want the person that's running that place . . . when they want to talk about these issues somebody that understands it, and that has happened.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — You've also mentioned that you, you know, you refer children to treatment centres and I wonder if you could please sort of list those treatment centres in Saskatchewan. And if you can give us sort of an idea of how many spaces are available all together in Saskatchewan for youth.

Mr. Meikle: — If — and I'm not bragging or anything but if any of the committee, any . . . who can I say — if somebody tried to call some of the treatment centres that we utilize and asked for a spot they would say: they have a 16-year-old kid or a 15-year-old young person, can we get a bed for treatment? They would tell you, no we're an adult facility.

Places such as Sakwatamo Lodge — through working with them for over the large number of years — that we have a trusting relationship. When a young person goes to that facility and they do not make it, we go pick them up. If they're on an undertaking . . . excuse me . . . they're accountable to the court, then they'll get arrested there. But if they're there . . . if they're

there and they're asked to leave for one reason or another, we go pick them up.

We have Calder Centre here with three beds, and lately they haven't been utilizing them a lot. We just haven't been able to have any kids stay the duration, a long period of time. And we use, for our 17-year-olds, we use Sakwatamo Cree Nations. We have a young lady in White Buffalo.

We have our best luck and successes with the holistic program, and when you look at holistic you need to look at the meaning of holistic. It doesn't have to necessarily be an Aboriginal, strictly for Aboriginal kids, because all kids can learn from that holistic. It doesn't have to be just, you know, three big, wonderful centres for non-Aboriginal, Metis kids, and First Nations kids because all these kids have a lot of the same issues.

It seems kind of really cute to me is we . . . going through such processes we find how we want to segregate these kids, you know. First Nations kids need to be doing certain things. Metis kids need to be placed in such homes. Non-Aboriginal need to be placed in such home.

If we respect people's culture, people's identity, who they are, the street, the kids that are on the street, they are Aboriginal, Non-Aboriginal, Metis kids, they'll talk together, they'll watch each other's back, you know.

I think with some real creativeness we could design a treatment centre that all kids could come to. But it must be holistic, it must have elders, it must have sweats, it must be really sensitive, and stuff there that kids could actually utilize to assist. And more importantly, when they get off the street, that we get off our butts as adults and we have a good, solid case plan that the kid is in agreement of doing it.

We are famous, we are famous as adults to say okay, you go to treatment, you're healed. But it's more than that. When they come from that treatment centre . . . and I've done this on I bet you at least a dozen occasions where I've taken in a young person to treatment, brought them home to the parents being piss drunk, you know. I've been to one home . . . I dropped a kid off. She was so happy that she completed something in her life as detox. I drove up to the thing and a beer bottle came flying through the basement window. And needless to say she didn't last very long.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — So, Don, it's a big question, and I know that the answer is probably not right on the tip of your tongue. But with adults then that haven't taken on, I guess, responsibility or recognize the need for their healing and treatment and not even, you know, we as a society can't even really . . . it's hard to identify, you know, what concept of treatment would be appropriate for healing because everybody's life has a little bit of a different slant on it.

So you know, you can't just set up a structural treatment centre I don't think either and say, well, if everybody goes through here just like, you know, we're just going to pass you through like robots and we're going to have this, this, and this for you — that may nor may not work for different people.

So you know, healing is one's own journey. And I think that from what I can see we can only facilitate the kind of place or ongoing process that will help people to see their beauty and their wonder and help them to work on their own and to build their self-worth.

But with parents and people that are guardians I guess, or supposed to be guardians, of these children that have to go back home, you know, what can you suggest that there might be a way of getting the message out to them.

Like I recognize that for instance Tamara's House in Saskatoon really works with women that are survivors of sexual abuse and so on. And it's their contention that if the adults are healed, you know, or can go through a healing process and move on with their life in a productive manner, that that is sometimes the only way that the children in the future will be able to be wholesome also.

So is there, you know . . .

Mr. Thibodeau: — I think if you look — and I'd steal this one — I think if you take a look at some of the kids that we've worked with and have advocated for them upon their release of treatment, that they not go back to the homes. I mean everyone keeps pushing that these kids automatically go back to their home. It's full well-known that the home is broken. It seems to be the easier answer than let's set up some alternative resources for housing for these kids as a place for them, as a stopover, until the family can recognize or make that decision that they want to be back together. That's where, then the parents need to step up to the plate and deal with their issues as to why their kids aren't there.

That's why Don mentioned about the treatment program that has a family component. It's extremely powerful as a parent for you to be standing in a room with a group of other people and have your child look at you and tell you straight to your face that as my parent, caregiver, the person that brought me into this world, that loved and cared about me, that you're screwing up my life because of your actions.

Mr. Meikle: — And it does happen.

Mr. Thibodeau: — I mean it's not an easy fix. And I mean I don't think anybody has kidded anyone that this is a quick and easy fix.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — I'm going to invite some of the committee members to make comments.

Mr. Harper: — I just want to ask this one question. In your opinion, tougher laws governing johns and pimps, huge fines, property confiscation, their vehicles taken and so on and so forth, do you believe that would suppress the demand for the services and therefore reduce the number of victims on the street?

Mr. Thibodeau: — It depends. I mean there hasn't been a conviction to date, you know. So you can have a half a million dollar fine, but if you're not getting anybody charged and convicted, it really doesn't matter.

You know, yes, I mean higher fines would certainly go, in my opinion, towards alleviating some of this; and it's like any other thing that happens in life, the less demand, the less need for the supply. But by the same token then, we need to also . . . Again we're back to resources for these kids — what do we do with them.

Mr. Harper: — But if that was the case, the higher fines were in place and probably confiscation and so on and so forth, do you think it would reduce the demand, or that it'd simply drive it underground and make it tougher to get at?

Mr. Thibodeau: — I think it would be a little bit of both. A fine's one thing. I think that anybody charged and convicted of this should automatically go to jail. People are a lot less willing to give up their freedom as opposed to a few dollars.

There is right now . . . You talked about the johns school, and I just know from a conversation I had with some police officers and some others, an initiative out of Vancouver called the DISC program, it stands for deter and identify sex trade customers. People in Vancouver, the johns that are going to Vancouver . . . or to the johns school in Vancouver, their first question going into the johns school program is: will this get my name erased off this DISC? Which tells me they don't give a crap about the rest of the . . . the whole purpose of the johns school. All they want is their name off this DISC for anonymity purposes. So I guess that's a part of my thought on the johns school.

Mr. Yates: — Just one quick question. I'm just following up where Mr. Harper was coming from as well.

In the light of the reality of today that it's very difficult to get convictions and we don't have any purview as provincial government over the Criminal Code or legislation, do you think changes that would make it more difficult in provincial legislation — and I'll give you an example, some enhanced ability to stop vehicles where you believe that they're picking children up and those types of things — that would result in elevated exposure, contact with police by johns, giving them additional authority to more or less make it more difficult for them, wouldn't necessarily end up in charges, would drive it underground or would be helpful in arriving at slowing the process down. In combination, understanding we do need to provide additional treatment and those types of things, but would those types of measures drive it underground or would it in fact, do you think, be helpful in deterring johns on the street and slowing down the process?

Mr. Meikle: — I guess something I have to say here is, you know, have you ever heard . . . and my buddy's here favourite saying is you create a better mousetrap, you always seem to create a . . . they seem to find ways to create a better mouse.

We seem to be able to come up with ways of catching people that kill animals for food. We seem to be able to come up with all these newfangled ways to, you know, charge drug dealers. We just haven't seemed to — is it we haven't seemed to, or we don't want to — come up with legislation or something that makes it easier for police to nab these perpetrators that are picking these children up. It seems that the perpetrator is more guarded and protected than our children are.

Like, we're really behind. You look at our family services Act. I think that if anybody that really cares or really wanted to do anything about children — they were really, really in high need of being apprehended or needed services for it — it's right there in The Child and Family Services Act. We don't need no great big Bill and stuff to deter this. We need people to become creative and look at ways of, let's get these guys off the street. Let's put the pressure on them. And yes, it's going to build, drive it underground. But if some, the ones that do go underground, if we're out there, have a trusting relationship with these kids, we'll go underground with them. And we'll bring them back.

And that's happened. It's happened where kids have gone underground and been hidden away for a week, week and a half at a time; but because they trust us and know us, they call us and we go underground for them.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — I'm going to limit myself to one question because of time for the next witness. I have many, but we can always talk privately as well, obviously.

But I'm going to leave the questions around the treatment facility until our fall hearings when I hope you'll be able to come before us again. When you do, could you give us some advice on the numbers of spaces that we need to be looking at in such a facility, in your view, because I think that's going to be fairly important. And that's one of the things that we're, that's one of the reasons why we're looking at numbers as well. We've obviously got to have some knowledge of that with respect to the scale of the problem that we're dealing with.

But I'd like to ask a question in an area that we haven't pursued so far. And that's the financial needs of kids on the street. And you were making reference to the jobs fund that I know Egadz has set up and has been running now for a while.

Could you give us some advice on what sort of financial support you think these young people who are trying to get off the street need? And how we could take the jobs fund idea that you've developed and in effect extend it so that ... Because one of the tough thing about leaving the street is that you don't have ... when you leave, the source of money that you had is gone. It has to be replaced with something and Social Services is often not enough to get by on.

So do you have any advice from us about how we could best address the financial needs of kids who are trying to get off the street?

Mr. Meikle: — I'll start and then you can finish. Yes. I think it's ... financial is all ... there's so many segments of the circle that need to be addressed and financial is actually a really big one. You have a kid that does really well, that's off the street, and then you're moving them back into a home that you probably ... a lot of the ... you wouldn't put your ... have your dog stay in. And we've got families living in housing like this.

You have kids that complete treatment and that are making a

positive change. And a perfect example is a young lady that we're working with right now that is here today — they can't get a telephone. Still till today, after all these meetings and the Communities for Children, still can't get a telephone because they're holding her thing for collections; so it's in collections. And now that she wants a phone, she's got her ... she's got a new baby, she's working at getting her other child back, but she can't get a phone because she ... because it's ... it's because she owes 200-and-some dollars.

You have a kid that's trying to ... When they go through treatment, you'll notice the kids a lot when they come out of treatment, they're really gung ho, they're really positive. And you watch over the weeks of them just start to slowly deteriorate because (a) we're trying to get them to quit prostitution, but yet we, you know, we don't want to ... it's such a taboo thing to say give the kids six bucks for a slurpy and to buy a 20 pack of smokes, you know.

They've come from using IV drugs, Ritalin, morphine, etc., to going back to absolutely having no income. Here's kids who were making a thousand bucks, up to a thousand and more a day to support their habits and now got zero.

But I think this committee needs to know kids ... these are not welfare bums that everybody ... that they're stigmatized as. These kids love coming to work. They love coming and vacuuming our office. They love cleaning the van. People want to give back something too, you know. Kids love that when they actually can work for something. So instead of performing oral sex, they can come and vacuum our carpet.

But financial's a really big, a really big thing that needs to be addressed. And it could be done very simply. We're looking for really complicated answers to this issue, and it's actually quite simple.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — What do you recommend that we pursue Don? What's your ...

Mr. Meikle: — Where we start creating ... For kids that are leaving the lifestyle, where we need to have a better working relationship with ... And they need to have better relationships with these kids. And when these kids are flagged to somebody that's coming off the street ... And I don't care whether they're 13 years of age or whether they're 23 years of age. The kids that are 13 and the kids that are 23 deserve the same amount of respect because leaving this lifestyle is not an easy task. And if the 23-year-old who's got a kid comes off the street, workers should be allowed to move them away from the area of the stroll.

The workers should be allowed to up their food so they continually ... they eat very well while they're in treatment. They're taught to live with a nutritional balanced meal. And we bring them back and give them their, whatever, few, measly dollars a month to live on, all of a sudden they're not eating adequately again. And they start having to get back to the same old manipulating and games to get their needs met. How long before they get back out on the street? A lot of times if things aren't put in place — not very long.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — I'm just so . . . I have to ask you one question as a runner-up to that, Don, because finances of course need to be done. Now I'm sure that you're aware that in other jurisdictions there are some programs in place where there's self-support through business . . . creating businesses while the healing is taking place and while they're moving into another life, an alternative life. And I think it's Woods Homes that I'm referring to in Alberta. They do have, like, skills training and so on throughout the healing time, and it's concurrent with the treatment for drug and alcohol addiction and so on. And there's also housing units so that they create their own wealth and can learn how to get into businesses.

So I'm just wondering whether or not, what is the greatest deterrent to having that kind of set-up here in the province?

Mr. Meikle: — Money.

Mr. Thibodeau: — Yes, I mean the money to start up. We currently operate . . .

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Seed money to get started?

Mr. Thibodeau: — Well we currently operate what's known as a pre-employment training program called the Jumpstart at Egadz, which is a six-month training program which . . . I mean again, money — if, you know, everything would go the way that you'd like to see it go, it's something I'd like to see actually go for a year.

These kids are actually coming to this program and they're paid to be in the program. I'm telling you it's a program; the kids that come into the program, we sell it to them that this is a job. You show up, you get paid; you don't show up, you get deducted; you keep not showing up, you get fired — welcome to the real world.

But for many of these kids we keep saying, well, you need to go back to school, you need further education. School's not an answer. They're still dealing with some life issues. They want to work but they've got no skills.

Many of the kids have no real sense of normalcy, what you nor I or other kids their age would be consider to be normal activities. Work in Ronald McDonald's, flipping Wimpys, you know, all these different kinds of things — these kids have no idea. This is just a foreign matter to them; something that's unattainable just from living from within their own little world.

And again, you know, poverty becomes a major issue in this. The area that families end up having to succumb to live in; what's available for these kids that aren't in school. They have no social acceptance from the kids that are fairly functioning. So they don't even know what it's like to be involved in a team. Just every little thing just becomes abnormal.

And then Peter's question and yours, if I could, I have this that I brought and I was hoping to read it and I think it ties to this. This was written by a young lady that we've known for a number of years now. She wrote this back in January of 1993 and it kind of sums up what we're talking about here, and what some of the fears are coming from some of these young people

who are caught up in this lifestyle.

And we see this a lot with a lot of young people. They either do poetry, drawings. They have a great amount of creativity in them, and other outlets to try and help them cope. And this is one way she does it.

Anyway she entitled this: "A Cement Sidewalk — My Home."

Ever since (the) age (of) thirteen, I've been on my own. I've seen Toronto, Vancouver, and Saskatoon. I've always depended on a cement sidewalk. For you see I'm a hooker, the streets provide for me. Ever since (the) age (of) thirteen the streets have shown me how to get my own money, for food, shelter, (and) clothing and when my drug habits came about, it was the streets who provided me with the money to support my habit.

I never new the meaning of hope. I grew up with a lot of abuse, neglect and hurt. On the street we do need help but you have to understand that when we get offered support, help and love, we're scared. We sometimes run because we never had anyone there before, so we figured it's the (only) normal way of living of the street with nobody there but yourself. So why all of a sudden change my life to let an unknown outcome maybe even a disastrous one be (a) part of my future.

If I let you guys help me, please, if I make a mistake bear with me, after all I have just given up my life on the streets for a life of, well, a life of the unexpected, I know you guys mean well and I appreciate everything your doing. I hope together we can put my life back together.

And she signs this, Child of the Night. This young lady is 23 years old; in a great many aspects she's 10.

And you know, money does unfortunately make the world go around, and the issue of poverty is key to this whole thing — families living in poverty, despair, in terms of housing, being able to eat.

And we come up with the bandage solutions of a food bank which, and it's no slight to the food bank, but then these young people and the family members are getting pressures put on them to find a job.

Well it's pretty hard to go and find a job when you're spending four hours standing in a line waiting for a handout of food. And there are those that won't go because their pride just won't allow them to go and stand in line for those four hours to accept that handout of that food.

So I think one of the bigger issues, and it's not an easy one to tackle, is the whole issue of poverty, which this issue is obviously one of the most horrific outcomes of poverty, in my opinion.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Don, Bill, on behalf of all of us we really want to thank you for being part of the hearings today. Thanks a lot for your presentation.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Thank you very much for coming.

Our next witnesses have just indicated to our staff that they would like to give their testimony in camera. So we will do that. And I want to apologize to those of you who are here and were expecting this to be a public session, but I feel there's a need to respect the request of the witnesses.

So I'm going to . . . first I want to thank everyone who is here and who's come this afternoon. I'd invite one of the members of our committee to adjourn the public proceedings and then we'll move in camera.

Mr. Harper: — Mr. Chair, I would like to adjourn the public proceedings of our committee.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Thank you for your understanding in having this end earlier than we'd been expecting.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — I would just like to make a motion . . .

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — . . . a committee member for us to go in camera.

Mr. Yates: — I move that we go in camera for the remainder of this afternoon.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Is that agreeable to everybody? Agreed.

So we're going to move in camera. Randy, I'd ask that you close the doors. Sandy, thank you.

The committee continued in camera.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Thank you for being so patient. There's just so much discussion around this issue. And thank you for being patient. And we're very appreciative that you're here and want you to know that we care about you.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Bev and Joy, welcome. Do you know the other members or would you like us to do introductions again . . . (inaudible) . . . Well, listen, we'd be delighted to hear from you whenever you're ready to speak.

Joy: — Okay. I'll start. I'm Joy, as everybody knows.

My experience with child prostitution and institutions began at an early age. I was sexually abused as a child, seven years old, and I was rewarded with gifts but not money. I call that child prostitution, child sexual abuse.

It happened outside the home. But I had a lot of anger towards my mother for not knowing. I didn't tell her, but I was angry because she didn't know. As a result I became very angry and a lot of out-of-control behaviour, as I was told by a psychologist. I was out of control and institutionalized in Edmonton. I was put in locked facilities for outbursts. That happened when I was 10 years old. Until I was about 12 I was in and out.

And the street life began when I was 12 years old. I was working on the street and I was caught in the act of prostitution with an older man — about 54. However, I was put back in the institution when I was 12, for prostitution. And I thought that was very unfair because I knew clearly I was just a kid, you know, trying to make a few bucks because there was not enough financial help in the home because my mom did drink and there was some selling drugs to buy more beer, you know. And a lot of that went on.

So when I did start working, prostituting, I found the people that I thought accepted me and where I belonged. I thought this was my life and this is how it's going to be.

I became suicidal. I tried to hang myself with my bra at a young age. And they just said I was out of control. And that's all I knew was I was out of control. There was no help, no sincere ear that wanted to listen of what was really going on.

At the age of 14 I moved to Regina where I assaulted my foster mother. I got 10 months for that in a Y.O. (young offender) facility. By then I knew how to play the system, how to act the way I was told to, you know, just to get by through the day so I wouldn't have to be segregated, you know, so that I could be free to at least watch TV. That was the highlight of the day.

There was derogatory comments made by the staff in the system in Dojack in Regina. One of the staff had said, if you want a dollar you can go stand on Osler and 13th, which is a known place where hookers go, prostitutes.

I ran after that, ran from the facility on a temporary absence and I was segregated without an inquiry. They didn't ask why I did it. I was really angry at the staff who made comments like that. So I basically had to keep my mouth shut and not say nothing.

After the 10 months I was released, and my biggest fear was being free. It was actually kind of exciting to be free, but it was scary too. The excitement was, it was pretty good. But the fear was stronger. I was under youth worker supervision. I think one of the biggest things was that I wasn't prepared to go out in the real world after being locked up as a child, you know, and not being able to grow mentally and emotionally, you know.

A month later I was back in the institution for attempted murder. At that point I think . . . well I know I had no regard for human life or my life. I thought . . . the person I did try to harm was a police officer and I think I resented authorities more than anything. So it didn't bother me, you know, what I done to her. And today I regret it, but also I've learned from it. I had no choice.

So I did 22 months. Well 20. I got sentenced 22 months and I was let out five months early only to find myself back out on the street. So I was put on intensive supervision with a native elder who wanted sexual services from you while I was under his supervision. That was, well, I guess if I was to screw up and I gave him my sexual services, I wouldn't have to go back to jail. And I feared going back after that many months. So I did what I was supposed to and let him do what he wanted.

And I did tell Social Services after I was off my intensive

supervision. They had nothing to say — oh well, she's lying because she's on intensive supervision. After I was done everything I told Social Services, and nothing was done. It was just a write-off, as a wow.

And so I just continued back on the street life until just recently as of October while I was pregnant. I had a lot of police support while I was out there. They knew who I was, knew me by my first name, and stopped and asked me how I was doing — if I was okay; if I wanted anything. And if I had any bad dates they'd ask me if I wanted to report any.

So I did have a bad date. I did report it to Egadz. And the guy was picked up and so I mean . . . After all of this I thought there are people who do want to help, you know, if you just reach out.

My mom was my big support too. Cree Nations, it's where I gave . . . had my second child was in the treatment centre, and the director has allowed my baby to stay in there if I wanted to complete it.

So everything has turned around. But I still do hold a lot of anger because there was no help for me, you know, emotionally, and I think that's what I needed the most.

And that's about it.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Thank you very much, Joy. Did you have anything else that you wanted to add?

Joy: — I can't think of anything right now.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Well if you feel like it, maybe later after your mom talks then you can certainly, you know, say whatever you feel comes to mind.

Joy: — Okay.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — But boy are you ever a courageous young . . . And can you ever speak. You are a courageous woman and you really have a good handle on your life much more than a lot of older, older people do. Thank you.

Bev, we would be pleased and appreciative to hear from you.

Bev: — I want to thank Joylene for that and for her honesty. This is really difficult for me because as a parent, when you have a child out there and you have no one validating you as a parent, it becomes really difficult. And when I hear Joylene like validate herself and her successes, it just gets really emotional for me.

One of the things I've tried to do as a parent is validate Joylene and acknowledge, like, her successes and also her hurts. I realize, like, I understand, you know, like where the out-of-control behaviour came from, you know. It came from, you know, the sexual abuse, my own lack of parenting, my own history — being raised in foster care and being abused by the entire system and being raped of who I am, you know, is a result of my own lack of parenting skills.

I've taken that back and empowered myself. And I've tried not to blame, like, a lot of the system and to own, you know, what I can and help Joylene and, you know, teach her that. But yes, there was like, you know, the sexual abuse that happened in the home. My own lack of parenting in the drug and alcohol that was being practised by myself and by my partner or partners, you know whoever was, you know, was there at the time.

There was like many, many incidences where I knew that I needed to straighten my own self out in order to help Joylene. But when you have systems out there that continuously victimize you, you know, as a parent and blaming you and pointing at you and belittling you and taking away every ounce of self-esteem you have, you know, you quickly learn, you know, to cower over and hide in a corner.

I didn't have the strength, the support, you know, like to help Joylene. I had no one to turn to, you know, and she was on the street. It shamed me. I used to get physically sick because there was, like, absolutely no one out there. Social workers were just . . . you know, continuously blamed us for — blamed me for that.

Often when Joylene would be out on the street, I would take it upon, like, myself to go and hunt her down. I've chased her down alleys, down hotel hallways, and apartment buildings, and stuff. But, you know, like, that's when I would get no support from the police. I'd often go and report her, and the police would kind of take a statement and then like, oh well, just a runaway kid and off it goes in the file. And like I've seen stuff like that.

The justice system, you know, offers no room for growth, no room for healing. Joylene hasn't been in an institution where there has been any positive programming. She's never like had any room for growth there. Sometimes I, you know, I thank the institutions; I was glad when she was locked up because at least she wasn't out on the street.

I remember the incident where Joylene was being charged for attempted murder back in Regina. I just so clearly remember the morning that the police officer from Regina phoned and my partner answered the phone and he told me it was the Regina city police. All I could think of was, well, she's not dead because they would be knocking at the door; who did she kill?

And I just remember not wanting to pick up that phone. And I remember, like, leaving the officer on the phone for, it must have been 10 minutes before I, like, you know, reached out. And like, that whole court process was a battle, like in itself; Randy Pritchard was with us and I knew my child needed help.

And I was already on a road to healing at that point and I remember just really struggling to fight for my child to get well, and nobody listened. I knew what it was I needed but nobody really cared to listen.

When we have . . . Like I don't know why I'm sitting here. Maybe it's to save another family because we'll be okay now. Joylene and I have each other, we have our children, and we have our families. But I don't know what happens to the other people. I don't know what happens to the other women in that

system that don't have the strength and the courage, you know, in finding each other.

I hope you guys aren't sitting here just because it's something for you guys to do. I hope you guys take what we're telling you wholeheartedly and do something about it, because there is families out there, there's moms out there that really need help.

I think what this whole thing needs is . . . Joylene wouldn't have succeeded had it not been for my getting well. We can't heal a child; we cannot take one child off the street, put him in a treatment facility and expect them to get well. You need to heal entire families and we need to, like Don Meikle said, we need to heal an entire unit. We cannot separate them.

Joylene would have never come this far had I not been there for her. And her children are not going to succeed if she doesn't get well. And this is something like her and I talk about, you know, continuously, that she needs to get well so that, you know, we can break this cycle of abuse, the cycle of addictions, and that.

You know it's like how I succeeded was, you know, I had the support of elders — Maria Linklater — particular. I used to take her to Dojack with me to visit with Joylene. And I'd often ask her to do a circle with the girls in Dojack so at least those girls could like have a sense of spirituality, a sense of like identity, because in that facility there was like no native staff. They didn't understand, you know, like anything about getting well holistically and that. So I used to like . . . you know, we used to drive up there sometimes once a month, twice a month if we could, and just share with the girls.

You know, it just breaks me and I think sometimes the Creator put Joylene and I here so that by our own strength we could help other people. But it really hurts, you know, that we had to go through these lessons.

If a treatment facility is to become available, I would suggest that Don and his staff — where is he, is he gone? — be a part of that process. Because had it not been for them for me to vent out on and for him to understand so unconditionally, you know, like where I'm at as a parent, you know, how shameful it is like to have a child out on the street and how sickening that feels that Joylene is like giving oral sex to some gross old man.

Like it's something you don't go sharing at the family support centre. You just don't share stuff like that with anyone. You know, you just kind of suffer in silence, pretend it doesn't happen, and you just get sicker and you stay sick.

You know, another department I think that needs some kind of revision is the Aboriginal unit at Social Services. All that's become is a token brown little system within a system. You just brown people I think that . . . The government is just, you know, hired a bunch of brown people to make other brown people feel okay, but the policies are all the same. That isn't working.

Safe house is a good place to go if . . . And I remember going up against safe house and saying, yes it is a good place for kids to go but it needs like holistic programming, something that is not happening in there.

I think that there needs to be programming for parents of kids that are sexually abused, being sexually exploited, that are like out on the streets, so we do have a place to go where we could support each other. You know, I'd like to help other parents and share with them, you know, my own experiences, what did and didn't work for me.

I'm just so thankful like you know that there has been like many people, you know, that have helped me get strong, stay strong, and stay well, you know. But a lot of people don't have that. A lot of moms out there don't want to see their kids on the street. But, you know, we're the ones that carry the labels of having like bad kids out there.

We do want to help our kids. And we're all not on welfare. We're not all alcoholics or drug addicts. We're not selling our kids, and we don't want to sell our kids. We want to help our kids. And we love our kids. And that's all.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Thank you, Bev.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Thanks a lot, Bev. You don't know how grateful we are — we really are. And we, just in response to your plea to us to please take this issue to heart, we . . . I can assure you that the committee is doing that, just that. We've made a commitment to go beyond party lines. This is an all-party legislative committee, and it's to address the issue that's at hand.

And from what you have been saying to us, there are, you know, some, some social issues that . . . social problems that are hurting people. And all of this results, you know, from it.

But I commend you because I can see the kind of love that's being shared between you and your daughter, Joy, right now. And, boy, you know, it's miraculous — it's just miraculous — and you're pretty wonderful people. And we thank you for teaching us through your presentation.

If it's all right with you, we're going to have some of the committee members maybe just ask you some questions so that you can sort of help us to see more clearly what . . .

Bev: — That's fine.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — . . . what you think and feel needs to be done. As you've mentioned, Bev, there's other parents out there and certainly other young people that need help. And we certainly can't be the help in totality, but we can be one small part of it. And if you can help us by answering some of our questions, it would be super.

So, Ron, do you have some questions that you'd like to start with?

Mr. Harper: — You know, Madam Chair, I really don't have any questions, but I do want to make a little statement.

I just want to congratulate both of you for your successes. You have to be very proud of yourselves because it takes a great deal of strength and commitment to be able to turn one's life around and personally I'm just very honoured to have heard your story

and I want to congratulate you.

I think you've done a tremendous job and if there's ever any way that we, as individuals, as politicians, as legislators can be of service to you, because you've just given us . . . rendered us a great deal of service by sharing your story with us. Because it's your story and the stories of people that have really experienced the front lines of this issue that really enlighten us and give us some sense of direction in this issue.

So, once again, I want to congratulate both of you very, very much.

Joy: — Thank you.

Mr. Yates: — Could I ask one question, and I too would like to thank you very much for your presentation. It's presentations like this that are very moving. There isn't one of us here that doesn't have children. And there isn't one of us who haven't had some difficulty in parenting our children. It is not an easy task.

Bev, is there any one thing that you can think of as a parent that would have been helpful to help you deal with being able to help Joylene at an earlier age or is there anything that you can think of that you can assist us in looking at what we can do for other parents? Is there anything you can think of or any element that would have helped you deal with this issue?

Bev: — I think that the Department of Social Services has to become more compassionate. I think that like, often when . . . in our own instance, and this has been like six years of, six plus years of like this, you know, when we've had workers that have like gotten tired of our caseload. We weren't like people; we were like a caseload so, you know, they kind of exhausted themselves, I guess, or the resources out there. So they just passed on the caseload.

I remember, I can't even remember the worker's name anymore, but she was like moving on to another department and I remember Ernestine Starr saying, I've been sitting on your file — Ernestine is a supervisor in the Aboriginal unit — wondering who should take you on.

It was kind of like funny, but like in that is I think because I was so difficult, I've been labelled difficult to work with. Because I do demand that I have a worker that is going to stay involved as Randy probably remembers. I do, I am very demanding because I know what it takes to get well, you know, and where it is I want to go.

You know, we need compassionate social workers out there with . . . I don't know what kind of training it is that you could offer them. Maybe they need their own . . . like they need to get well themselves. I don't know. Does that answer that?

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. Well it gives me some feeling of the types of things we may need to do. For that I thank you very much.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Joy and Bev, I want to thank you again for your presentation. And I have several questions

but it just seems like there were a lot of places along the way for you, Joy, where you needed help and didn't get it. And, Bev, it sounds like that was the case for you as well.

What's made it possible in the last few months for you to turn things around? What do you think has been the most important things for both of you?

Bev: — In the past few years, Maria Linklater . . .

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Yes she's pretty special.

Bev: — . . . is the greatest gift that's been given to me. Don Meikle in Egadz has been like . . . The last few months, you know, when they entered our lives I think just about a year ago, the Egadz crew I call them . . . and laughing. I used to say some really mean things about Egadz until I needed them. I know there's a lot of community organizations I'd say mean things about them, but none of it is true.

Those are like . . . their agency is like . . . I think single-handedly helped Joylene from detox, to treatment, to parenting, to taking over my parenting. They've given me the option to have my kids over there when I need a break because I do burnout on my kids. I have three teenagers that haven't been as demanding as Joylene has with my time and energy but are still just . . .

Maria taught me like a whole lot of stuff, and I really believe that one of the things she said was like families need to get well together. That Joylene can't just go off to treatment and she's going to come back. There is kids out there that are in treatment but they do come home. I see it, I see it within my own family. You know we do have like kids that are on the street that are addicted or, you know, using drugs and you know . . . this province needs a family treatment facility that is, you know, spiritually oriented, culturally oriented.

Don has arranged for my kids and I to go away in . . . I don't know, in the next few months to Beaver Lodge or something like that. But it's a treatment facility for families, and we have to leave Saskatoon and travel to another province to go. But, you know, that's all right, but you know, I think Saskatchewan needs one, needs two, three, or however many spaces, you know, it needs. I don't think that there should be a money figure put on helping people get well. I think the Creator has . . . should have a, you know, has an unlimited bank account. And that healing shouldn't . . . there shouldn't be a cap on it.

You know, I think there's so much emphasis on, the dollar, you know. Joylene is off the street. She's on her own. We've established her with the help of Egadz and myself, you know. We've been able to furnish her home. Had we not done that, you know . . . It's taken the department six . . . the Department of Social Services six weeks to provide her with a bed. But she's had a bed all along. But she would have been sleeping on the floor. What does that do for your self-esteem?

She has to go without a phone in order for her to live in a half decent neighbourhood away from the Pleasant Hill area which is a stroll, and that she has to take \$30 out of her own food money to go towards her rent because the department doesn't

cover that amount.

You know these are the obstacles I know Joylene faces. She takes part in the mentorship program at Egadz and does get an honorarium that does, you know, supply her with, you know, I guess her smokes and stuff and that.

And, you know, like, I do my best as a parent to, you know, like to help her financially. But I know . . . you know when . . . It worries me that Joylene is going to get into financial stress and I'm not going to be able, like, to provide that for her, and that she will go out there. I ride Joylene really hard on staying off and budgeting and stuff like that. But, you know, when you're given like a \$195 a month to provide for yourself and your child, you know, it doesn't . . . that's nothing. Plus, you know, out of that to pay for her rent.

And I think these words that . . . You know, like some of the financial hardships that, like, Don was saying. You know these kids do come off the street thieving and stealing and ripping each other off and ripping other people off and selling themselves. You know, it's because of that. Because there is no, like, financial aid available, you know. Social Services doesn't touch, you know, kids at 16 and give them, you know, that financial assistance.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — The information that you've shared with us is very, very important. Some really good advice.

I just have one other question that I wanted to ask you and that was with respect to the elder that . . . Joylene you were mentioning that you were under the supervision of an elder that Social Services was paying to supervise you. And that that elder sexually abused you or abused you in some way. Have I got that accurate?

Joy: — Yes.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — And then, to your knowledge, nothing was done?

Joy: — No. Nothing has been done.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — I think that's a matter that we need to look into because that's not acceptable. So I don't know what the best mechanism is for pursuing that, but maybe I'll get some advice from Randy on that before we proceed any further. But I found that to be really alarming. That's a cause of great concern to me.

Bev: — It is, it is alarming. And it's a shame but sadly this happens, like, all the time. One of your own, one of the provincial own MLAs was just recently charged and convicted. This just happens all the time.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Anyway I think this is best pursued outside of the process of the hearings themselves. But I just wanted to make sure that I had the story accurate.

Bev: — I guess, like, there was like an officer called on that. I guess what we waited for was that Joylene get really well and strong. Because there is days, like, times where she was really vulnerable after that incident which is why she ended up back

out on the street.

You know, we waited for her like to get strong before we could pursue so that, you know, she is going to come across well. And this is all just from personal experience, well, she was just a little hooker, she just deserves to be treated as such. And I want her, like, you know, get some . . . build her self-esteem so that, you know, she doesn't have to be hearing those messages over and over.

And to know, you know, that things like that don't need to happen to her. I know they don't need to happen. I'm sure all of you up there, you know, believe that. But if you guys spent some time with Joylene, and, you know, she allows herself to be abused and it's just really sad for me as a parent to know that a lot of this she will tolerate.

And our kids do tolerate that. They tolerate that abuse because that's what they think is acceptable. The institutions and the systems tell them that.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Joylene, can I just ask you . . . you have two children? And how old are they now?

Joy: — Four and a half years-old and ten weeks.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — And ten weeks, okay. And just another question, Joylene. I'm sure it's pretty hard to put your finger on all the things that made you angry during your life or that, you know, you feel angry about, but can you identify an anger right now that you just don't know how to kind of understand or cope with?

Joy: — Can you repeat that?

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Like, what's sort of the first thing . . . what are you most angry about?

Joy: — Being locked up at a young age, at 10 years old. I don't think that's right, you know. That's what makes me the most angry.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — So that tells me that you've identified some things that you don't tolerate about abuse towards yourself. You don't tolerate being abused by, you know, a 10 year old yourself, being in that situation. In a situation where there was such misunderstanding that the best thing that the system could do for you is lock you up, that you wouldn't tolerate that any more. You know, you would let somebody know that you believe that's not acceptable.

Joy: — Yes.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — So that gives us a message as legislators. It tells us that some of the real basic needs that your mother and you have for emotional support is what's most necessary. And although we kind of know those things, or we think we do, it's always so helpful to hear from people like yourself so that it impresses on us the necessity to have holistic treatment centres where your creativity is paramount and you can recognize the beauty of who you are and you can celebrate your life.

And I think that's sort of a better avenue to take than the whole idea of locking people up. And as your mom mentioned that, there's not a lot of creative programming in the institutions that are out there right now. And I think that may have to be reversed and should be.

But further to that, what's one of your dreams?

Joy: — I would like to become an EMT (emergency medical technician).

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — An EMT?

Joy: — Yes.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Bev and Joy, thanks a lot for sharing so much with us this afternoon. And we hope that when you see what comes out of this committee, you'll feel that it was really worthwhile being part of this. It has been great for us to have you here. Thank you.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Thank you very much.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — And God bless, and much strength in the journey ahead. We're really impressed with what you've accomplished in the last while.

Joy: — Thank you.

Bev: — Thank you.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — All those agreed that we adjourn now? Agreed.

The committee adjourned at 3:45 p.m.