



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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The committee met at 2 p.m.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — We'll officially get our hearings underway again for this afternoon. Thank you all very, very much for coming.

I think we'll just do some general introductions, and I'll start by asking members of the committee to introduce themselves. We'll be hearing from at least six witnesses this afternoon so we've got quite a busy afternoon. June, we'll start with you.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Peter. I'm June Draude. I'm the MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) from Kelvington-Wadena.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Arlene Julé, MLA, Humboldt.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Peter Prebble. I'm the member of the legislature for Saskatoon Greystone.

Mr. Yates: — I'm Kevin Yates, the MLA for Regina Dewdney.

Mr. Harper: — Ron Harper, MLA, Regina Northeast.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — We've got two MLAs who will be joining us but are not here yet. Don Toth, who is the member from Moosomin, and Carolyn Jones, who is the member for Saskatoon Meewasin.

And our staff people here are Randy Pritchard, who is our technical adviser, and Margaret Woods who is the Clerk of the committee. And we have also with us some staff from *Hansard* who are assisting us.

And I think we'll move . . . I'd like to also introduce a couple of other members in the legislature who are present and, Arlene, I'll turn it over to you to do that.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Yes, we're welcoming today Rudi Peters who is the MLA for Battleford-Cut Knife, and also Greg Brkich. And Greg is the MLA for Arm River. So they're interested legislators and that's really very heartening to have you here with us this afternoon, gentlemen.

And we just welcome everyone here, people that are observing as well as those people who have taken the time and the commitment to give their presentations this afternoon.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — So our first witnesses are with Saskatoon Communities for Children, Kathy Grier and Sandi LeBoeuf. And we welcome you very much, and we just invite you to introduce yourselves further and proceed with your presentation.

Ms. Grier: — Thank you, Peter. My name is Kathy Grier. I've been with Communities for Children I think since about 1997. How I got involved with this is I'm a lawyer with Saskatoon city legal aid. I've been there for 10 years, and for about the last 7 years I've worked almost exclusively in youth court doing young offender matters.

And I was very troubled by the number of occasions I dealt with young people, increasingly younger people who are involved in the sex trade. And I would see them when they were arrested, came into court usually charged with communicating for the purpose of prostitution. Often drug charges such as possession of marijuana or some other drug — Ritalin was very common — which was discovered when they were searched upon arrest. Often assault charges, things of that nature.

So we were finding that the kids who were coming into our office or before the courts were getting younger and younger, and about three or four years ago we had a real stream of 12-year-olds. And the really frightening thing about them was not so much that they had criminal charges, because Saskatchewan has an astoundingly high rate of criminal involvement for young people or certainly charges in any event, but the degree of their involvement in the street life and the degree of their . . . and extent of their addictions problems.

These were 12-year-olds, many of whom are undersized because they're malnourished and not well cared for, so they'd look like 8 or 10 and they were using drugs I'd never even heard of, and supporting their drug habits by working on the streets.

Most of them are from what we typically call broken homes. The vast majority, over 90 per cent, are First Nations youth not originally from Saskatoon. And the majority of them have been victims of abuse, sexual and physical abuse, prior to their involvement on the street.

So I became very concerned with my inability to assist these people. We were warehousing them in custodial facilities because of the belief, and a well-intentioned belief that it was unsafe for them to be released back into the community because their lives were at risk.

We had no resources for them or the very few resources that were available during just were not able to meet their needs and also were not intended for children that young. I think probably the committee members are aware that most of our rehab programs and other services in this province are intended for older people so it's virtually impossible to get a drug or alcohol treatment for somebody under 16. So that's how I became interested. And then a friend of mine was a member of the committee and I asked how to join and she said show up. So I've been there since.

I am currently the Chair of the changes to legislation subgroup. I did provide just today some written material that gives some background on that subgroup. We had originally formed several years ago in '97 under a different Chair to address concerns about how do we effectively enforce criminal sanctions, mostly against johns, sexual offenders.

At that time it was . . . a member of the local prosecution's office was the Chair. And so working with community corrections, police, prosecutions, myself from Legal Aid, the John Howard Society, other groups, we started to examine what was happening in the courts and on the streets and having a look at what might be done to change some of the things.

We thought that what we should address were perhaps amendments to the Criminal Code because that was sort of the primary area that people were looking at in terms of enforcement and prevention.

We had some assistance. Laura Bourassa, who I believe is still with policy and planning from Justice, came to meet with us, reviewed at that time some proposed amendments to the Criminal Code which have now been enacted, and went through what was in the Code now, then, and the proposed changes to talk about how it might be effective.

And our consensus at that time was that the laws that were out there — certainly the criminal sanctions — should be effective and that there was nothing that we could make in terms of a recommendation to change those laws that we thought would be worth pursuing.

The difficulty was enforcement. And I would suggest the difficulty remains enforcement.

The other thing that we did and I think that was in the summer of '98 . . . I say the summer of '98 and I'm pretty sure that's right but I don't keep good records. We did go through a consultation process with Social Services and Justice when they were reviewing the feasibility of putting some legislation into place in Saskatchewan similar to the Alberta legislation to get the kids off the street.

At the time the working group as a whole, and the subgroup, felt that we did not support that concept for Saskatchewan. Our major concerns were: the notion of arbitrary detention of young people; our belief that unless the young person is committed and involved in the rehabilitation, the healing process, it will not be successful; and our well-founded belief that we did not have the services in Saskatchewan to support that kind of legislation and without that that it was just setting it up for failure.

We disbanded that subgroup for a while but we reconvened just over a year ago. Again we were frustrated because, even though there had been amendments to the Criminal Code, which theoretically should facilitate enforcement and prosecution of sexual predators, that just was not happening.

And I do not have the statistics but prosecutions and Saskatoon City Police were providing information to us and also Egadz, who was monitoring the court process, that demonstrated that we were still seeing more incidents of women and girls appearing before the courts charged with communicating charges than males. That women and girls who were charged would quite often be held in custody as a result of . . . usually because of their addictions, lack of residence, sort of social issues that affected their criminal charges, whereas johns or tricks were often released by the police, came into court a few weeks later. If they pled guilty, they received fines.

The fines are going up; they're higher than they used to be. When I started you got fined a hundred dollars if you were a trick and you got charged. Now they're 500, 800. The prosecutions office has been steadily trying to increase that penalty as a deterrent effect.

Some of the other charges that were available that have more serious consequences, we just weren't seeing them in the courts. It seemed to be very difficult for the police to enforce some of the provisions that would allow them to lay sexual assault charges which are much more serious offences with much more serious penalties.

And I think, I think they've only successfully prosecuted maybe two people in Saskatoon under some of the more serious provisions, so it's quite clear that that's not been successful.

So we decided to look at this again. We invited Fred Dehm, who's the regional Crown prosecutor, and we had, I think, it was Bill Hargarten from Saskatoon Police Service to come to our group and talk to us. Yet again, the feeling was that there are lots of laws in place but the difficulty is enforcing them.

So we didn't feel we were really in a position to make any recommendations as to changes in the laws, and the difficulty is not a legislative one. The difficulty is the evidentiary provisions that the justice system requires in order to be . . . in order to safeguard the rights of the accused, in order to ensure the proper administration of justice, and in order to result in convictions and protect also the rights of witnesses and victims.

So those seem to be the areas where the law falls down. For example, the police tell us — and I tend to agree with them too — their most effective method of procuring charges and convictions is to use undercover stings. So they put men out to pick up young girls. They use undercover policewomen. The trouble with undercover policewomen is they tend to look 18 or older. They're not attracting the sexual predators that we're concerned about. It would be totally inappropriate to put a young girl out there and use her as bait, so to speak. So the police felt that they were quite hampered in that regard. And the result is yet again, we are ending up with more women and girls being charged and fewer of the predators.

If indeed the police are able to lay a charge. For example, if an officer, undercover or otherwise, were to see a young girl wave a car over or be stopped by a vehicle in an area such as the stroll, and if they were at the scene for instance to get from that young child information that would indicate that there had been a discussion for the purposes of sexual transaction, communicating for the purposes of prostitution, they then have enough to lay a charge.

But then the question arises, what is the likelihood of conviction? And I address this a little more in my paper, but that's one of the things that prosecutions have to look at when they proceed. What is the likelihood of conviction? And they don't need a 100 per cent guarantee, but they need to know that there would be some success at the end of the day if they proceed with the charge.

The difficulties are that these young girls and boys are victims, they're transient, they don't have a great deal of support, they tend to make poor witnesses if they show up at court at all, and it's very difficult to get them to court. So the likelihood of success is quite low and that's one of the things that prosecutions takes into account.

And also I think the police sometimes may take that into account in determining whether to lay charges. So it is clear that it is a very difficult area in terms of enforcement.

Of course the standard in criminal law is quite high. The prosecution has to prove all the elements of the offence beyond a reasonable doubt. They also have to ensure . . . or the court has to ensure that the rights of the accused are protected. Prosecution's role is to protect society and also to protect the witnesses. Especially if you look at serious sexual assault charges, that is a very difficult procedure for a young person to go through a court proceeding. There's a real fear, a genuine fear, of re-victimizing the victim by having them go through . . . they had to be prepped for court so they have to tell their story several times to the police, to the prosecutor; they have to go to court, face their . . . face the offender, the person who has harmed them.

And the legal process does have a number of safeguards — more and more as time goes on — to address those issues, such as the use of videotaped statements, when the . . . in certain circumstances when the witness isn't available; the use of screens to protect the child so they don't have to actually be face to face with the accused. But the reality is that these are very difficult prosecutions and they just do not go ahead that often. And most of them I think just don't get off the ground at all because there is no witness, there's nobody willing to make a statement at the first instance, and there's no support.

So we think that — the subgroup — we felt that more could be done to ensure that . . . And you have to appreciate, I'm a defence lawyer myself so I can see both sides of the issue here. But certainly in this area my position is very strongly in favour of the rights of the victim.

I think that prosecutions and police could be more creative. And I actually will talk a little later about some of the initiatives that have been begun by the police and others in the city which show that creativity.

But I cite in my paper an example of policies. There has to be political will — is the word I used, it might not be a great term, but — to proceed with these things. And I am personally aware, as is any other defence lawyer, of hundreds of cases where it's really questionable — you know it could be a stolen property, whatever the case may be — questionable whether there's a likelihood of success but charges are still laid. People are arrested. People are held in custody and have to argue for their release.

And I think that there should be more emphasis placed on that. Don't make this easy, make it difficult. Go with it in the beginning. Sometimes as a result of that, people do plead guilty because of their circumstances, like they're not going to get released or the witness is there, different circumstances arise. I think that the prosecutions office could — well Department of Justice, I guess, public prosecutions — could adopt a policy.

We've discussed this in a subgroup. It's fairly well known that the province of Saskatchewan has a zero-tolerance policy on domestic violence. And a similar type of policy I think could be implemented in these types of cases. Domestic violence, which

is partners, so the accused could be male or female, the victim could be a male, female, or a child, or all of the above — the charges will be laid when the police are called; the offender is arrested and held in custody. As a general rule they are not released unless there's a condition that they not contact the victims.

If, for example, in a spousal abuse case, the victim wishes to have contact with the offender, the victim has to come to court before a judge, convince the judge why it would be safe and appropriate to remove that condition so that there's contact.

Even if the victim advises the prosecutions office in writing or in person that they don't want to proceed with the charges — and there's a hundred and one reasons why they might want to do that, often it's fear, sometimes it's just that it would make life easier — but in any event even if you went into the prosecutions office, said I don't want to proceed with this charge, they will not drop the charge. They have zero-tolerance policy.

And these are also charges that will not be referred to alternative measures so that the offender would be able to avail themselves of . . . alternative measures means that the charge will be dropped in the end and there will be no criminal record. Under no circumstances, even the slightest assault, in those circumstances would they refer them to alternative measures.

So they have that policy in place, they adhere to it very strictly, and I think that this is an area where a similar type of policy should be looked at. And it's province-wide. And it has been very effective, I think, in that area.

The other area that we think there are some shortcomings is assistance to victims. And I must confess I'm a little hazy on some of the details here. I do know there's a victim assistance program so that a victim of a sexual assault or physical assault can be assisted through the court process.

There's also the victim assistance program at Saskatoon Police Service as well, and I think other police services in the province.

My experience of that though is that it's not enough. If you have one victim assistance worker in the city of Saskatoon, they just cannot assist to the extent required. These are types of cases where right upfront, like at the time of the incident, someone should be brought in to assist the victim, the child, and the child's family. Guide them through the legal process. Hook them up with medical or other needs — counselling, whatever is required. Be available throughout, because it could take six months to a year before a matter went to trial, or longer. To reassure them. To encourage them. To let them know that it's safe.

I once represented a young girl — this was years after the fact — who had been procured when she was nine by some older girls. And she thought that she was the accused. So she went through that whole court process thinking that she was the one who was in trouble. And four years later she still didn't understand that she had been the victim, because nobody treated her like a victim. They treated her like . . . from her perception

in any event, she felt she was bullied and abused by the system.

And I think there's a fair bit of that. People do not understand. They are afraid, especially street kids, that something's going to happen to them, that they're going to get charged or they're going to get arrested.

So they need a great deal of assistance, and not just this is where the judge sits, this is where the prosecutor stands, and that's where you sit. They need a lot more help. And I think that's an area that could be readily augmented so that there's more assistance and these prosecutions could be more successful.

In terms of, we also looked at provincial legislation, municipal bylaws. We were grasping at straws. Saskatoon has some incredibly hilarious old bylaws. From 1937 there's a curfew bylaw, which says that anybody under 15 shouldn't be out on the streets or other public places after 10:30 without a parent or guardian.

And I mean it's old and it's not used, but it is there for the protection of children. It provides that the police will warn them and take them home or to a children's shelter, which is an interesting concept. Maybe they did have a children's shelter in 1937. We have one now, but it's not a place where the police can take a child who's in need of protection.

There's also an even older bylaw, street use bylaw — and they're all still in force — which provides that the city can close streets to vehicle traffic. There's lots of different circumstances in which that could take place. But given that in Saskatoon the stroll is in a really high density residential area with lots of young children, that might be an option to look at too where the city could close certain streets at certain hours to vehicle traffic, or just in total. I mean lots of cities do that, but of course they augment it by building benches and flowerpots and things too in the area.

Child and family services legislation. We were quite pleased with the changes that were provided there.

I think actually, other than the increased fines for offenders, for people who sexually abuse children, a lot of those changes really stated the obvious. I think it was obvious that a child who was sexually exploited as a child and needed protection, I don't think anybody would disagree with that. But a clear legislative statement of intent I think is beneficial and it flags it. And social workers, teachers, police, and others should be able to avail themselves of that.

Protective intervention orders. This is one of my pet peeves. I do work in family services court, and in 10 years, I've only seen one of those orders. And I don't know why they're not used more often. The court can order that a person stay away from a child. And the standard that's required in order to obtain that is so much lower than the criminal standard of beyond a reasonable doubt. I think it's even less than the balance of probabilities that you ordinarily find in civil court.

The time that I watched, after the judge had heard all the evidence about the danger the child had been placed in by a

violent person who was actually abusing the mother in that case and also very cruel to the child, the judge made the order and it happened right away. And then, there are penalties for failure to observe those orders, which include incarceration.

And I think that there should probably be some education so that more social workers, police, others involved with children and youth are aware of the availability of that provision. It doesn't have to be an application brought by the mother. The Department of Social Services can make that application, and it's a relatively easy hearing to have brought forward before the court.

And the court that it goes before, of course the court's fundamental role is the protection of children. So they do not give a great deal of benefit of doubt to the person who stands accused of — accused might not be the best term — but who is alleged to have been a danger to a child. And certainly somebody who has been procuring children, somebody who is purchasing the sexual favours of a child would clearly be a danger.

We also looked at sort of what we call the nuisance factor to keep predators out of the stroll, enforce traffic laws. If you're driving too slow for the speed limit, you can be ticketed for that. If you are loitering or trespassing or mischief charges, interfering with the use and enjoyment of property, that's a Criminal Code matter. They are just . . . we suggested that the police, if they were able to maintain a high profile in this area, just make themselves a nuisance, and they're all perfectly valid charges, perfectly valid tickets, that that might deter people from entering these neighbourhoods and preying upon our children.

In terms of recommendations, that's a real difficulty for us. Sandi, I asked — I begged Sandi to be here with me because she has so much information about what's going on and what's available. But I think after much deliberation, our subgroup determined that one of the greatest needs is education — that members of Communities for Children, we weren't aware of the legal resources that were out there. And that police and prosecutions need to be educated of the need to be more creative and more diligent in enforcement. That the community needs to be aware of what the laws are, and that the children and their families, in particular, need to understand what their rights are. Because, of course, not all legislation is for punishment.

The primary goal of laws, actually, is to regulate affairs between men; I think is what the old code is. And sometimes it's to help you and sometimes it's to punish you.

But I don't think that the kids on the street understand that they have rights. They have rights not to be sexually abused. They have rights to go to school. They have rights to be safe. They have rights to a home. They have rights to be fed and clothed. They don't know that. And that seems pretty simple, but I think that's a reality.

We were going to set up some meetings in the community geared towards young people. We wanted to find out what they knew, what they needed to know more about and get some

information out to them. Because of a review process that we're undergoing with Communities for Children, there's actually some former street-involved youth who are getting a lot of that information for us. So we've sort of put this project on hold because we think they'll give us more information so that we're better prepared to do this.

I'm a member of the Youth Justice Committee in Saskatoon, which is provincial court judges, prosecutors, Social Services, lawyers, Egadz, tribal council, Metis Nation — I've already put that group on notice that their help is going to be required. There's also mental health professionals involved. And they've all indicated that, when I tell them I need them to come out and do this, that they're willing to do this. So that is certainly one of our short-term goals.

Our other concern is that no matter what any of us do that we need the resources. And as I told Peter — more money, more money. But we do not have proper rehabilitation facilities and treatment facilities in this province. We do not have enough alternative education programs for kids. And we do not have enough resources for families.

A very big issue for a lot of the families of children involved in the trade here in Saskatoon is their inability to rent affordable housing. In some cases, \$65 per month would make the difference between their ability to live on the east side of the city where there's not this issue as opposed to the stroll area. And yet that's almost insurmountable. People are taking money from their food budget to pay for rent. And they're not pretty places that they're living in.

Children don't go to school because they don't have the money for books and clothing, and a whole bunch of other reasons. We also need to augment the health services available for these families.

One of the ideas that has come up is some compensation regime for these children and their families, because they are victims. And we did have . . . I mean we have victim assistance funds — I'm not sure where those funds go. We used to have criminal injuries compensation. Certainly they're victims of crime. And we don't envision sort of a, you know, one-shot-hand-you-a-thousand-dollars-because-your-nose-was-broken kind of thing, but something more structured that would assist people to make their lives better. So we think those are some of the things that have to be in place before any serious changes can take place.

Before I turn it over to Sandi, I just wanted to mention that one of the really promising things in Saskatoon is that so many people at community level are now aware of this issue and trying to do something about it. And we can organize all that we want but we need to be able to refer people onward.

Some of the members of the Saskatoon city police, Egadz, and some others — I was recently invited to some meetings — they recognize that when they arrest women and children for communicating charges that they're not being effective.

So they are looking at a proposal that would involve at the time of arrest, instead of not necessarily charging them or maybe

even if they are charged, setting up a group of us who would assist. There would be an elder, a peer counsellor, a lawyer, Egadz street outreach, Social Services, somebody from Health probably, and find out what their immediate needs are. They need a doctor. Do they need a place to stay? Do they need somebody to go advocate at Social Services so they can get more money for rent, clothing, what have you? And so that's an initiative that is from the ground level, the street level, and I think that's pretty impressive. It's still in the early stages, but I think it has a lot of potential.

And those are the sorts of things that people are doing. But there again our issue is how do we get people the resources that they need. We see ourselves as resource brokers and try to . . . we also have some involvement from a treatment program too and we want to try to fast track these people because we see them as people in crisis.

So those are the directions that I think we're looking at.

Ms. LeBoeuf: — I'm Sandi LeBoeuf; I'm the Chair of the working group to stop the sexual exploitation of children.

Actually Kathy has said probably most of what I had wanted to say. There are just a couple of additional things that I would like to mention. And probably a couple of the things that I'm going to say is something that Kathy's already said, so bear with me.

Basically our subgroup was set up or developed to explore the existing legislation in Saskatchewan regarding children in sexual exploitation. And we did that in order to determine if the current legislation needed any changing, and also to take a look at the Criminal Code laws to see if there was anything that we could do about helping to change that.

What we ended up finding is that current legislation should be sufficient to deal with the issue. And again, one of the major issues would be the enforcement of that particular law or legislation. So I think that it's very important that we focus on helping to ensure that the enforcement is happening.

We recognize that community needs to strategize and find ways of utilizing the Criminal Code. And I apologize; I didn't hand anything out to you, so you won't have anything there.

It's easier for the police to charge and prosecute children as opposed to charging and prosecuting johns, and we need to take a focus I think away from charging children, from prosecuting children, and focus on charging johns.

There are insufficient programs to deal with the social issues. Children aren't on the street because they choose to be. It's not a fantastic life that you really want to get into. And when you're nine years old, you don't have the choice anyway about where you're going to be.

So we need to recognize that they're not there because they want to be; they're there because they have to be. And we have to look at ways of setting up programs, setting up different kinds of things so that they don't have to be there and they don't have to be faced with those kinds of decisions.

I just want to mention the Alberta legislation because I think that it's something that a lot of other provinces are looking at. And I think for us it's a major issue. And I get emotional when I think about this because to me it's very, very personal as well. I have had family who have been on the street and I have family now who are on the street.

And when I think about the possibility of a 12-year-old cousin walking down the street and being picked up and thrown into a safe house for their own good, the picture of residential schools come back. And I think about my brother who was walking down the road on the reserve and the grain truck came along and picked him up and threw him in the truck because they have to haul them off to residential schools.

And it's frightening. I don't want to see that happen to the kids that are out there. I recognize that there's a need to protect the children who are on the street. However, the thought of just picking up kids and throwing them someplace for their own good is a major issue that . . . It really bothers me that that's a possibility here.

I think that when I look at Alberta and when I compare the statistics with Alberta to the statistics within Saskatchewan, and Saskatoon more specifically, there are a higher number of children on the streets in Saskatoon than there were in Calgary and Edmonton. There are a higher number of Aboriginal children on the streets here in Saskatoon as well. And again, more specifically because the stroll is located in a residential area.

I'm horrified to think that there would be some children walking home from Princess Alexandra School, perhaps a little bit later, maybe after school, maybe they had to stay for after-school functions and just happened to be walking down the stroll at 7 o'clock at night. I would be horrified to think that they could just be picked up and taken and thrown into a safe house because they happen to be out there on the street.

Social programs are needed to help with the issues that these children and these families have to deal with. There are many more programs offered in Alberta and there have been many more programs offered in Alberta over the past several years. In Calgary and in Edmonton both, there were several safe houses set up well in advance of any kind of legislative changes.

There were safe houses for all levels of people, young people on the streets as well as older women who had been on the streets. So there has always — I shouldn't say always — but for a number of years there have been a whole range of services offered to people who were on the street. We don't have that here.

So if we're looking at duplicating services such as they are in Alberta, then we're going to look at millions and millions of dollars now. The cost is going to be just astronomical if we even want to have something comparable to what they have. And we've got to recognize that they've had these services in place for a number of years.

There are differences in terms of where the stroll is located. In Edmonton and Calgary the stroll is not located in a residential

area such as there is here. And the stroll here is located, again, close to three schools, so that means that there will be a large number of children who will be on the street who will be close to the stroll, near the stroll. My office is half a block away from the stroll and I see kids walking up and down the street all the time. And it's to and from school usually or to and from some sort of function so there's going to be a lot of kids out there at all times.

I guess one of the things that I had mentioned before I just want to mention again is that the scooping of young Aboriginal children is reminiscent of the residential school times. And I really don't want to see that happening again. And I really think that we need to take a look at our past failures and to me that was a past failure. I think that the provincial and federal government are paying enormous amounts of money now because of those kinds of things that have happened. We're trying to heal our families now. And it's costing a lot of money. It's costing a lot of time and a lot of effort.

We do need to look at alternative ways of dealing with the children who are out there. We need a continuum of services. We need all kinds of services. Right now we've got all different kinds of organizations that are working within communities for children. And we're finding even with all of our organizations who are involved that that's not enough and that we need more. And we need to focus.

I know that our organization, the SCC (Saskatoon Communities for Children) family centre looks at working with families. We don't have a particular focus working with children who are out there, yet the working group that I'm on, that's our primary focus.

And it's heartbreaking when people come to me and they want to ask for services for perhaps a young girl who's 13- or 14-years-old and we don't have the mandate. And if we continue to work with all of the families who come to us to ask us for those kinds of services, it's difficult to say no, that we can't work with you because this is our primary focus. We do and have been working with families and with children who have been on the street, although that is not our focus. But I think that we need to be able to offer, and I don't speak specifically for the family centre, but we in general need to offer more services to young people who are on the street. And that's all that I have to say.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Thank you very much, Sandi and Katharine. Katharine, you certainly made the committee a lot more aware of some of the very ingenious . . . or genius ideas that your working group has come up with as far as legislative changes go and I was really very impressed. It took obviously some deep thought and a lot of discussion. And I think that some of those ideas are worthy of looking at a little bit more, and maybe we might be able to apply some of them. So thank you for that kind of work, it's valuable. And Sandi, thank you also for your presentation and your views on legislation also.

We're going to just open up some questioning for committee members, if committee members would like to question these ladies. Don Toth.

Mr. Toth: — Yes, thank you. As I've been listening to your presentation this afternoon, I see we have another group in before the committee. Now we've heard from a number of different groups, working in different facets in regards to the . . . either the child sex trade, working directly with children on the street, or working in other avenues, maybe not directly with children on the street. And some of the concerns that have been raised are the difficulties they have in dealing with different departments, be it Education, be it Social Services, be it Justice, and the fact that there really isn't an overlap and there's an inability to basically work and co-operate together.

I guess my question to you is, what efforts are being made to try and bring all the groups that are . . . have these concerns under one umbrella so we have one solid voice versus fragmented voices coming from different viewpoints?

Has there been any . . . has your group consulted with some of the other groups that are out working with children to see if you can come up with some kind of a common denominator that you can . . . an umbrella you can work under that might make it more effective and also give us, as legislators, something that we can look at in our recommendations as saying, here's an area where we've got everyone kind of co-operating on a program, with ideas, with some legislation, to put some teeth into the laws that will effectively address the problem with children on the street.

Ms. Grier: — You're quite right there — a lot of different groups doing a lot of different things, although there are also a large number of umbrella groups in Saskatoon. Not perhaps specifically focused on this issue, but trying to work more closely together, such as the intersectoral committee which is various government departments. And the heavy hitters always seem to be Education, Social Services, Justice, and Health, plus their community-based organizations.

Communities for Children has an incredible cross-section . . . actually the exciting thing about Communities for Children is you have all of us public servants plus the community people and we are able to, I think, access not just those members of our working group, but others.

For example, on changes to legislation we brought in prosecutions who don't regularly sit at that table. When we thought this year that maybe we needed to get a better understanding of what the kids' needs are, we brought in some front-line workers from Egadz and Social Services.

I don't know why there is such a difficulty in forming one umbrella group on this issue. And maybe that's something we should look at because I don't even know how many groups Sandi's involved with but I can think of four offhand that I'm personally involved with that are all looking at this. And we seem to be going in a similar direction but we also all seem to somehow be restricted by our various mandates. And Sandi had raised that as well. So how we get around that I'm not sure.

And often, where that comes into play is you get a lot of people very passionate about the issue around the table and want to make a commitment and make a plan or proposal, but we all have to go back to somebody to get approval. Maybe just for

the program itself, or it may be for funding so . . .

Mr. Toth: — Well I guess that's the reason I raise the question is because everyone has, if you will, the same goal but in reality a different view as to how it should be handled and at times, an address . . . they may have just a little different idea of how you address this certain problem of children on the street. And so as legislators, we're sitting here . . . at the end of the day the recommendations that may come out of the committee, we may find half of the groups applauding us and half of the groups criticizing us and we're all trying to achieve the same thing.

And I think that's the common denominator we're trying to reach and come to a conclusion on.

Ms. Grier: — Yes, I think that's one of those realities of political life. But my experience over the last three or four years is the groups are converging more and more. And certainly my recent experience with members of the vice squad just really brought that home. We're all on the same page all of a sudden. And we're all working towards the same results so. I mean, other provinces . . . like doesn't British Columbia have ministry of the children?

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Yes they do.

Ms. Grier: — I mean it strikes me that between this issue and FAS (fetal alcohol syndrome) and others, there's a grave need for that here.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Yes, yes, and I think that's a very good point.

Committee members, forgive me, but I'm going to be a little tougher in terms of the chairing process because we have six witnesses and it's 2:45 right now. So I'd ask members of the committee to limit themselves to a question each. And this is a very important presentation so I think we . . . obviously we need to have questions but we're going to have to restrict them.

I know Ron, you'd like to ask questions, and Kevin, you as well. Go ahead, Ron.

Mr. Harper: — Thank you. And thank you very much for your fine presentation this afternoon. Very informative. I have four questions here but Peter tells me we can only ask one so I'll have to make a pick here.

I suppose, the question I have for you is if somebody was to come along and say you're empowered to solve this issue, what would be the first thing you would do?

Ms. Grier: — The first thing? I would make more money available to families for better living conditions. I think that is . . . it just strikes me that when people have to struggle so much with daily existence, they don't have the time or energy or the mental capability to address their other issues, so start there.

Mr. Harper: — That's my one question.

Mr. Yates: — I have difficulty paring it down to one question as well but I'd like to ask you your comments regarding the

adequacy of legislation and the provisions that exist. You think it's a matter of enforcement versus actual inadequate laws, the way your paper talks about it. Yet we still have the scenario where it seems the children are the ones that continue to be revictimized, both on the street and then through our processes.

Now what do you think of the idea of a summary conviction offence under provincial legislation. We can't change the Criminal Code directly that had minimum fines of several thousands of dollars for those who wish to abuse children on the streets, and that money being then funnelled into programs to help those children.

We've talked to various groups about those particular types of ideas and I'd like some feedback on your concept of . . . if you think that would work and you know, I've used the term minimum of \$25,000 before or whatever, but just . . . the minimum, the amount is really insignificant. The fact that it be a significant deterrent to those who would use those services on the street and in fact, then provide those who are creating the problem having to pay for at least a portion and some accountability on the other side of it and what your thoughts are on that issue.

Ms. Grier: — Well, I think that the money should clearly be earmarked for those types of services for the young people. Victim fine surcharge is attachable to all Criminal Code convictions in this province. I haven't figured out myself where that money goes but it strikes me that anybody who is fined, either under provincial legislation or Criminal Code, for an offence involving sexual abuse or attempted sexual abuse of children, that it should be earmarked in a special fund.

And of course if you had the wherewithal to take a civil lawsuit against your abuser, which many people do successfully, then you would get compensation, damages that would allow you to make your life better, to set up, whether it's counselling or a monthly allowance or whatever the case may be. But it would require a lot of thought and administration, but I think that's a very good idea because you're quite right, the money should go to pay . . . Those who are responsible should pay for the reparations. So basic sort of restorative justice process.

Ms. LeBoeuf: — I think the difficulty though is that there is legislation already in place. The difficulty is using it and charging the offenders. There have been — what? — two people that have been charged? Two males that have been charged in the past two years and that's it.

Ms. Grier: — That's just under the one provision.

Ms. LeBoeuf: — Under the one provision.

Mr. Yates: — Is there no . . . (inaudible) . . . Act provisions.

Ms. Grier: — That's Criminal Code.

Mr. Yates: — Very strong and higher onus under the Criminal Code than under the . . . (inaudible) . . . Act.

Ms. Grier: — Yes. I mean The Child and Family Services Act provisions are an alternative that I don't think are often

considered and that's where education of police and other professionals would be handy.

Ms. LeBoeuf: — But there's provision there for up to a \$25,000 fine.

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

Ms. Jones: — Thank you. I'll try to be brief. Recognizing the federality, I guess, of the Criminal Code and being a subcommittee on legislation, have you approached any of the federal Members of Parliament, and if so, what were their responses to requests for amendments?

Ms. Grier: — We haven't done that. When we first started there were a number of the sort of the prostitution-related offences. Those amendments were about to come into place and the advice that we got from policy and planning and others in the legal field was that they seemed to be more than adequate to address the situation.

The problem seems to be not necessarily the Code provisions but the evidentiary concerns in pursuing conviction.

Ms. Jones: — It's still under federal control though.

Ms. Grier: — Well that's actually partially under the Criminal Code, partially just the common laws. The charter of course is a major factor there. And that is something that we can't do anything about nor is it necessarily something that we do want to because those rights and guarantees are there for everyone. And although in this particular case it may seem inappropriate that they're available, on the other hand there are lots of other cases where you want them.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you both for your presentations. And so I have to decide too which question I'm going to ask.

Sandi, since we've talked with you before, we've met with a number of witnesses, quite a large number of witnesses, and always the Alberta legislation — often the Alberta legislation — comes up. And people have quite strong opinions one way or another.

I don't want to . . . I'm not defending or whatever, I'm just wondering; from your perspective, we've heard so often that a number of the children that need a safe place are out on the street, that they are being abused by sexual predators and sometimes it's family members.

So for us, as a concern, our committee, we want a safe place for these children as well. So what do we do with them? Where do they go and who is responsible for them if we can't send them home then?

Ms. LeBoeuf: — I think that often there needs to be other kinds of services that are available for family. Now that doesn't necessarily mean that you keep the sexual offender in the home. Often we can ensure that the sexual offender is kept out of the home or away from the family, that sort of thing. But that child needs to be . . . needs to have some sort of support. Often they can get the support at home as long as the sexual offender is

away. You have to take a look at what's happening within the home. There has to be an assessment done around what's happening there. How much support is there?

I know that Saskatoon Communities for Children are in the process of doing an evaluation at the moment. And there was a focus group that was conducted, and there were several people who were on the street, several who are off the street now and who we had done some questionnaires. And one of the things that was asked was what were the barriers to leaving the street? And one of the barriers was that the young people felt that there was no support. They didn't have the family. There was nothing available for them.

And I think that we need to be able to set up support systems for those young people, and that could include family. I don't think that you need to remove the children from the home necessarily if you remove the one particular person that might be the offender. It depends.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Thank you, Sandi, and thank you, June. I know this is very, very hard for committee members because you can just tell they're ready with a follow-up question and unfortunately the time is constrained. So I just wanted to mention one thing and then I'll ask my question, so that's the way that I handle this so I can get to say more.

Katharine, when you had mentioned the help, the \$65 that would often provide an opportunity for young families, perhaps a mother that has to work the streets to support her children to get out of slum house or home, a slum home and over to the east side where it's much better, when we were talking with the Saskatoon police they'd talked with us about a sort of a pilot project, a help program. And that they're actually trying to find the money within their budget to assist here. So they know that they can't do it, you know, on a continual basis. But they're hoping too that there can be an interagency, an intersectoral co-operation from all departments to recognize that if some things are working for the betterment of people, that maybe we should all get together and co-operate financially as well as morally. So . . .

Ms. Grier: — That was the initiative I was talking to you about. I wasn't sure if they had made a presentation or not, so . . .

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Yes. But thank you for mentioning it. I guess I just wanted to ask you, Katharine, one more question. I have a real problem — and I'm sure that many people do — with legislation as it stands, and why one part . . . it's being enforced only . . . the enforcement is only charging the children. And you'd touched on that. I mean you said we need to focus on the sexual offenders rather than focusing on the young children when we're looking at the legislation that talks about communicating for the purposes of.

So why haven't we been able to reword that legislation, and sort of say something like attempting to communicate for the purpose of child molestation? I mean why can't that be changed and have the focus put on if there's an adult that is for instance in a car with a young child and identification is asked for, if the

person that's an adult in the car cannot supply identification that links him with the child or the child with the adult, and there's no . . . you know, there may be a further attempt to communicate with the child's parents or with their guardian or to find out where the adult is from. And if there is no further link made, then it could be deducted that if this person is found in an area where there are children out on the streets and that it's an area where johns continually go around the block and pick up children that, you know, if you had it worded in a different way . . . because the way it's worded right now it says, communicating for the purpose of prostitution. Well that implies that the woman is the prostitute or the young girl, and it hasn't got anything in that legislation that's worded that would focus on the adult offender and focus on the responsibility lying with that adult offender. So do you know if there have been any attempts to change the wording so that the focus can be where it should be?

Ms. Grier: — Well of course that particular provision is just one of many that is focusing on sexual offences. There are a whole slew of provisions sort of starting at section 150 in the Criminal Code that have to do specifically with sexual exploitation of children. They all have various qualifiers. They're usually . . . There is involvement of a parent or person in position of trust, so you have to fall within one of those categories; invitation to sexual touching; there's quite a broad range. But they also have fairly specific requirements that must be met in order to obtain a conviction.

I think the difficulty would always be that the type of provision you're talking about is almost what — I can't think of the term right now, I had it a minute ago — absolute liability offence, in the sense of you are presumed guilty until you demonstrate otherwise. There are very few of those provisions in the code any more because they usually don't survive Charter challenge, although this might be an area where that would be questionable because of the need to protect children.

And also you often have to . . . in order to be successful in those sorts of things you often have to establish a state of mind in the accused, that their purpose was an unlawful purpose whether it's the exploitation sexually of the child or otherwise. I think there are probably a number of provisions that might sort of touch on that area and perhaps that is something that needs looking at. You know, you can't transport children across borders — there's just a whole lot of provisions in the code that could be looked at, I suspect.

But again, it's always balanced again. I think whenever they're looking at amending Criminal Code legislation they have to balance the rights of the accused. So that's an issue.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Okay, thank you. And I just wanted to tell you I appreciate your informing us about the zero tolerance in domestic violence because I think that if we look closer at that and draw some parallels here we may be able to find some legislation that will do justice for our children.

Ms. Grier: — There's also another thing I just thought of. They're talking about drug courts. There's already one in Toronto, for example. But the federal minister of Justice talked about establishing drug courts. Those are places where you

bring people in where they're charged, and in this case it could be women or girls. But instead of, you know, conviction, sentence, on your way, they work within the court system with the other resources such as Social Services, Health, addictions, whatever, to assist people.

And maybe that's something that could be looked at here too. Because our committee, our group does believe that you need to also heal the offenders, that just Criminal Code sanctions will not be sufficient.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — All right, thank you.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Kathy, I want to ask you one question as well and then unfortunately we'll need to close this portion of the hearing. But it picks up from where Arlene left off with respect to, one of the things that we're struggling with as a committee is how do we . . . You know, we agree with you. I think it's fair to say that committee members agree with your assessment that the problem is one of actually getting . . . of the laying of charges and successful prosecution. It's less . . . the problem is not primarily with the actual provisions in the Criminal Code as it pertains to penalties.

Now the reality is that we're not getting the many charges being laid against johns who are seeking sexual activity with children under the age of 18. And even fewer as it pertains to children under 16 because the police are not able to conduct police stings in a way that allows policewomen to look like they're under 16. So the johns in our community are getting away with picking up underage kids with very little risk of arrest.

And I guess what I'm searching for is a mechanism that we can use that would allow the police to conduct . . . When the police see a child being picked up by a john, we've heard from the police time and again that that isn't — even if they believe that child is going to be molested — that just seeing the john pick up the child is not sufficient evidence to be able to proceed with an intervention. You know, we've heard that from the Regina police, we've heard it from the Saskatoon police, we've heard it from the Prince Albert police.

So the question that I have is, do you have any suggestions about a change to the law that would not violate the Charter of Rights but that would allow a policeman or woman to stop the car and instead of just asking for the name of the driver and the licence, the driver's licence and the registration, and determining whether there's alcohol on the breath of the driver, and then if there's not and if the child in the car says nothing, then basically the driver goes on. At the best the child is removed from the car.

But how can we change the law in a way that would allow a police officer to conduct a full investigation of what that john is doing, what the relationship is between the john and the child, and if there's no established relationship, no proven relationship of a familial nature or the john is the coach or whatever — in other words not a john — but if there's . . . in other words, if there's no good reason why the man in the car has picked up the child, to then be able to take that man down to the police station and conduct a full investigation?

I mean, is there any mechanism that we can put in provincial statutes or in the federal Criminal Code that would allow a police officer to do that without being in violation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms?

Ms. Grier: — Well I'm just talking off the top of my head, but a couple of things that came to mind, and I don't want to police bash here but I don't necessarily buy that argument that they can't stop and investigate because certainly the police can and do stop and investigate a lot of people for a lot of reasons.

Car's dirty, licence plate is clean — could be a stolen car. You know, they stop and check people a lot of times for a lot of things.

And when I talked earlier about nuisance factor, I think the police do a fair bit of that and that's part and parcel of policing. I suspect the concern is of course some sort of legal action. How often that would happen, I don't know. I suspect that if it was a totally outrageous situation, yes, some fine citizen might take the position that their rights have been violated and rightly so. But maybe you have to weigh that.

I do know that a lot of my clients who are First Nations people get stopped for reasons that escape my understanding and quite frankly I suspect have a lot to do with the colour of their skin. So I know that it does happen.

The other thought that came to my mind when you were speaking is I'm vaguely aware from reading the paper and other things that there's interest in passing legislation that would grant police officers a certain immunity from acts undertaken in the course of an investigation. So I'm sure that means like good faith investigations and acting in accordance with accepted principles and this might be one of those areas that could be looked at. So that if they, you know, if they believed that a child is in need of protection, that . . .

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — I too have many more questions but we need to bring this to a close, and I want to thank you both very much for an excellent presentation. It's very, very helpful to us and we really appreciate it.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Thank you, ladies. Thanks for coming.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — We aren't going to break, ladies and gentlemen, because we do have a heavy afternoon. So I'm going to call forward our next witness who's Gary Beaudin. Gary, welcome. Please come forward and make yourself comfortable. Nice to see you, Gary.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Welcome, Gary. Gary, were you with us . . . I think you just came a few minutes ago, so maybe we'll just go through some introductions with committee members and yourself, if we could start from this end of the table.

Ms. Draude: — Hi, I'm June Draude. I'm the MLA from Kelvington-Wadena.

Mr. Toth: — Don Toth, MLA from Moosomin.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Arlene Julé, MLA Humboldt.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Gary, we know each other. Peter Prebble, Saskatoon Greystone.

Mr. Yates: — I'm Kevin Yates, the MLA for Regina Dewdney.

Ms. Jones: — Carolyn Jones, MLA Saskatoon Meewasin.

Mr. Harper: — Ron Harper, MLA Regina Northeast.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Gary, could we just ask you to give the committee members a little bit of background about yourself, and then feel free to proceed with your presentation.

Mr. Beaudin: — Sure. I'm from actually a small town in Alberta. My mother is First Nations and my father is Metis. I grew in the system, on assistance and poor. And I just use that loosely because to me it's not a shameful thing. It's just who I am. I credit my personality and where I am today because of that.

But moved back to . . . I moved to Saskatchewan to follow my older brother when I was 18 and finished high school here. I went to Kelsey and started working with the youth at that point. Worked for the Boys and Girls Club of Calgary after that for a few years. Moved back here.

I started to, probably after about three years, started to work with kids in cross-cultural adoption breakdowns, mainly male youth, around 15 or 16 years old. Did that for about three years.

Moved back here. Was a program coordinator at Egadz for two years. And in the past four years have worked for the Saskatoon Tribal Council in basically in an in-home support program.

My perspectives are a little different. I've spent the last four years in homes in our community and in our inner city, not so much on the street but basically right in the home. The program I was coordinating recently was dealing with families that were at risk of apprehension and families that had basically just had kids apprehended or families that were involved in violence or crisis situations.

It gave me a real unique perspective of, you know, our community, especially of Saskatoon. Most recently, I've been hired as the director of the Saskatoon city centre project. It's on Avenue F and 20th Street. It's a youth wellness facility that will be open from 8:30 in the morning till, for now, 10 o'clock at night offering holistic programming and a variety of different programs to youth in the community, any youth that can get there. And that's where I am today.

And that's who I am in a nutshell, briefly.

The issue, for me the whole issue around, you know, what's happening in our communities and what's happening with kids being exploited — I have my own opinions about, you know, certainly how we should approach dealing with johns and pimps and things like that. And I quite often look to my peers and, you know, you guys are the ones out there on the streets, you guys are the ones dealing with this, you know, in the outreach bands

and that sort of thing. I really respect what they have to say so I often look to them and really respect what they have to say.

I also from my own perspective, spending so much time in the homes, have really noticed a lot of commonalities, and one of the commonalities is that today we're dealing with the manifestation of the residential school. And the issues . . . the parents that I've been working with for the past four years and the kids that I've been working with for the past 12 years have been the same thing over and over again. They're survivors of sexual abuse.

They're quite often grandchildren or children or actual people that have gone to residential school and we're seeing so many commonalities within the home — you know, violence and depression, you know, anxiety disorders, medical health, diabetes, typical things like that are all starting. We're seeing as result of children being forced into residential school, elders and older people with feet problems and circulation problems as a result of having to wear, you know, certain type of shoes or work, you know, in the school for years and years and years in the kitchen.

And this starts in the home but it spills out into the street. The children that we're seeing out there are children of, you know, grandchildren of these people and children that have gone to the residential school. And they're out there with broken spirits, dealing with a whole lot of issues. They're out there dealing with, you know, hunger.

And, you know, we look at our social assistance rates. I see families every day that take from their basics to pay their rent just to allow them to live in the place that they're in today. If they could afford to live somewhere else, they would.

Because I think I don't have to tell everybody here, but a lot of the housing in our community in that area is dishevelled. It's not very good shape. The homes are unsafe. The windows don't lock. The sidewalks are unsafe. There's a lot of broken windows. The heating systems don't work. We have backed-up plumbing in the basements. We have children playing in broken glass from the past tenants. We have a lot of those types of housing type of issues.

I see every day families that, you know, they can't afford to live in a place that's half decent. They cannot afford it. Their basic rent does not allow them to do that. Rates haven't gone up for years. So what they'll do is they'll take from their food budget. They'll take from their food budget to offset the cost of their rent, which allows them to live in a place that's reasonably decent. At least, you know, will keep them from getting evicted.

If you take from your food budget, your kids go without. And the kids end up using services in the community such as the Friendship Inn and various services like that. But the reality of it is that kids don't . . . We know, especially with addiction issues that the parents have, aside from that, the kids are . . . they're hungry. They're trying to survive. They're doing what they can to survive. Never mind runners and shoes and pants and things like that that other kids have. Whatever they do is just survival mode.

I understand the child that breaks into the car and smashes a window and takes a purse out. I'd do the same thing if I was hungry. We have to think like that. And, you know, I've had to get rid of my own value judgments as well and think, yes, you know, let's punish these kids and let's get them into Kilburn or wherever, facilities, youth facilities — you know, treat, treat, treat, treat.

Again it's not . . . It doesn't help. We just have to take on an understanding and understand where they're coming from. What would you do if you were hungry? What would you do if you needed to survive or feed your little brothers or sisters? And that's the mentality, and of course they're very vulnerable.

The program that I'm in right now is a partnership with the city, Saskatoon Tribal Council, Saskatoon District Health, and Metis Nation of Saskatchewan. It's a partnership that formed a few years ago on lots of different people's initiatives. But what it is, is to bring services to that area, to that community, to break down the barriers of the children having to get services outside of their community.

Our community . . . like, that area is a beautiful area. It's very old. At one time there was all kinds of services there. They've seemed to withdraw recently over the past, you know, 10, 15 years. Even basic services like library services are in Mayfair and Cosmo but we don't have any of those type facilities there. We don't have recreation programming — steady, consistent recreation program in the area. Health services are there, but they're also not . . . they're not as consistent as they would like to be, as we would like them to be.

So what happened is the partners have decided, okay, we're going to bring more services to that community. We're going to have a facility with a multitude of services. We will have two primary health care nurses to deal with the types of basic health issues that our families are dealing with in the homes — scabies and lice and ringworm and all those types of things that can go untreated.

Lice, for example. Just give you an example. Okay, well we've got lice, let's treat it. Let's go and get the lotion and let's wash everything up and treat it. We have to take into consideration that maybe we can treat the kids, but can we afford to wash our clothes and wash all the linen and wash all the other clothes and wash everything that, you know, you're required to wash when you have lice? So it's just a circle — that kids would continue to bring it back to school.

Infections. A lot of our families are intimidated to go into, you know, the doctor, or they're afraid of institutions because of the residential school residue so they will not go to utilize health services in our community. They end up waiting until it gets out of hand and then they go to emergency, which is very costly in the health care budget.

We have several, several families that are dealing with diabetes and that's starting to become very prevalent amongst Aboriginal people. It's a really high percentage and again a health-related issue that results in complications and having legs amputated and various things like that.

So what we've done is we've brought some nursing services to that area. We'll have a couple of nurses available to work with the kids, establish a trust with the kids, and to be there when they're, you know, they're doing activities and things like that. And then once the trust is established in the kids, hopefully they're going to want to come and talk to the nurses and we can get over some of those barriers.

We have a gymnasium. The gymnasium basically will be a lot of different types of recreation, structured, unstructured programs. We'll have crafts. We'll have after-school programs. We'll have eating programs. We'll have karate, we'll have gymnastics, ballet. We've got a multi-purpose room you know for things like that. We'll have a kitchen. Hopefully we'll be doing some collective kitchen type of work with the families. We'll have two classrooms.

Right now we're working with . . . right now presently with the Catholic board of education, eventually hopefully the public school system, to establish a storefront school or a drop-in type of program that's going to be structured the way the kids want it structured to meet more of their educational needs.

Now a lot of these type of programs are going to be very new for the community as far as right there and in front of the kids, and we're expecting a huge response. I see this as a real preventative type of thing. I see this as a . . . you know we're going to be open all day and we're going to open as late as possible as we can right now. And given the alternative, the kids are going to come in.

We know they're going to come in. If we can offer them a safe place and they can trust their counsellors and our recreation workers and our people we have in there, we know they're going to come in. It's just, you know, a matter of time. We're not going to duplicate any services. We want to build and enhance on any services that are already out in the community as well as working with any other agencies.

I'm not exactly sure how many kids we're going to get but I expect it's going to a large number of kids and it's going to have an impact on the community. One of the things that we've really tried to do is, you know, talk to the old kids. We have a youth council forum and to talk to them and find out what sort of things that they want to see in the building and they've given us a lot of input.

We also have some counsellors that are available and we have elder services available as well everyday when possible. The way I've been taught by the elders is that we can provide . . . we can certainly provide food, we can provide shelter to the kids, but we also have to provide some spiritual food to them as well, be it whatever they want but it needs to be there.

And because a lot of the kids are out there, but they have broken spirits. They're out there every night and they do. They're have their cold and there's something that's keeping them out there but they have broken spirits and we're trying to address all of those issues. It's not going to be the end all and the fix all of everything, but we're going to be working with some really young kids. We know that. We'll be working with some very young children, four, five years old. Older sisters and

older brothers that are taking care of, you know, four-year-olds that bring them into the facility as well. Probably still in diapers sometimes. So I mean that's it, you know, that's basically a lot of the services we'll be getting into.

I could rattle on all day but if you guys have any questions.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Okay, thank you. Committee members, are you ready with your questions? One question each. Are we going to be limiting them, Mr. Prebble?

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — I think we should stick with the one question limit and I really regret that but I do want to make sure we accommodate everybody.

Mr. Harper: — Thank you very much for your presentation. As I understood you, you're saying that you're looking to developing a sort of a one-stop shopping centre for services for the community? Where is the funding coming from to provide this shopping centre, the production of it and the maintenance of it and the . . .

Mr. Beaudin: — Well actually it's done. Like we're up and running on the 19th. We'll have a grand opening; we're on Avenue F and 20th Street.

The partners have gone out and of course got their own funding. Like we've got some funding from Heritage Canada and the city of Saskatoon, of course, for facility operation, facility . . . you know, the structure itself. All the partners have gone out and done . . . and Health as well; Metis nations have gone out and done their own recruiting of funding. We've kind of pooled it

And they've also put a lot of their own resources from their own departments into the building, kind of like, for example, addiction services has provided us with a fulltime addictions worker that they have on staff to now work within our facility and to do things in a way that's suited best to the kids. Do things in a different way. Do things in a, you know, not necessarily such a treatment focused thing but in a more of a preventative way as well, which the kids really need. We're going to get them young, so. Does that answer your question?

Mr. Harper: — Sure does, thank you.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Thank you. Other committee members with questions. Kevin.

Mr. Yates: — Yes, I would like to focus my question back on your initial comments about some of your background and in fact, you've been in many of the homes that these kids involved in the streets are living in. When we're looking at the issue of adequate housing, is it an issue of developing adequate housing in the inner city, or in other parts of the city for these people, or is it an issue actually of putting . . . increasing the housing rates and social assistance or will that simply result in landlords jacking up the rents. You know, the self-perpetuating problem that if more is available, more will be charged, and it doesn't result in any improvement for the actual people in the scenario.

Looking at the environment, is it a need to build adequate social

housing in the community or is it a need to actually increase the rates.

Mr. Beaudin: — I think by doing both you'd start to solve part of the problem. The reason why several of the families live in that community . . . There are a few reasons. One of the reasons is because when you come in off-reserve, or wherever you come from, or if your . . . I'm speaking of course from an Aboriginal perspective, that bias, but if you come in from another community and you're off assistance on-reserve, and you're on assistance in the . . . within an urban environment, and today you have this much money to live on. If you look at Saskatoon with their zero per cent vacancy rate, where can you go in our community.

So to shop around . . . I mean, first of all, there's obviously some racial issues with families trying to live in just regular apartment buildings anywhere else in the city. They're not . . . generally not welcome because there's a stigma attached to several Indian people that they abuse alcohol and there's violence in the homes and people don't want that living in their apartment buildings. So there's . . . you know, when they go to show the apartment, you know, there's a bias there.

But when you've got this much money where can you live in our community. Well, if you look around, go to that area, there's several apartments that are affordable. Some houses with five or six dwellings in them, and they're affordable. So that kind of . . . that funnels . . . that has a funnel effect, I have nowhere else to live. If I have this much money a month to live on, where can I live? It's the way it's set up is that . . . that it so happens that in that area, the housing that's affordable is just matched, just quite effectively matched to what people can afford on assistance.

If you give people more money then they don't have to live . . . they have a broader . . . they don't have to live in that area, they have a broader area. I can go look in Sutherland, for example, where if my kids are playing out on the street they might not be propositioned by a pimp or a john. You know, they may be, but not that much.

So those are . . . We start to change the restrictions. They're not stuck living in an apartment that again, you know, is falling apart but also is not a safe place. So assistance goes up, assistance rates go up. People don't have to borrow from their basics and they can afford a much nicer place to live. They can live on the east side of the city or wherever. They're less restricted to having to live, you know, in those areas.

Those areas, there's a high turnover. I mean, the apartments sometimes, you know, within three or four months there will be three or four families live . . . you know, have gone through one suite and that's because that's all they can afford. But that's because, you know, it's tolerated, and it's a common thing. You see it all the time.

I don't know if that answers your question.

And certainly, you know, project housing and those type of things is . . . subsidized housing is certainly helpful, of course. But I mean, those two issues you know, go hand and hand.

Mr. Toth: — Yes. Thank you, Gary. Just a couple of points here and a question is one of . . . a while back, we had a presentation. And when we talk about adequate . . . Kevin was just talking about adequate housing. I know that's a real problem in, especially, our two major cities right now.

But what is adequate when it comes to clothing? And one of the presenters we had a while back mentioned that a lot of the children she deals with are running around with Nike shoes, Nike clothes, what have you. My kids didn't have all of that. Adequate was a lot lower than that. And I think if we use the word adequate, we better style ourselves a little bit as to what's affordable and yet nice.

And sometimes the name brands aren't necessary. They're the most expensive. But what we've heard is we tend to . . . you see that and then you're short on food. So there's a concern there that's been raised and a question.

The other thing you mentioned was — and I raise this as a question — is you said something about a schooling program and I'm wondering — you probably heard then of the Opening Doors program? Are you partnership . . . are you be . . . or are you a partner in that Opening Doors program or is this another separate program?

Mr. Beaudin: — No, we're not part of that program.

First, like the Nike issue. To me, if I see a kid on the street with a pair of Nike shoes, I mean, that doesn't mean anything. I can not label that child and say whether or not he or she has money. I mean, he could have . . . who knows where he would have got them.

Adequate? I don't know. I mean, the kids that I've dealt with and the children that I know, certainly they want anything nice, like anybody else. But generally they just want to eat and they want a safe home and they want something . . . they want a reasonably safe environment and a safe home and they want some stability in their lives. That they don't have. We know that.

Whether or not they're walking down a street with a pair of Nike shoes . . . It's really difficult to make some sort of an assessment or hypothesize based upon, you know, like if a kid's wearing, you know, decent shoes or not. I know the kids would rather have food, would rather have shelter, and would rather have, you know, some stability in their lives than clothing.

The clothing certainly is an issue. I mean, for people who . . . you know, if you observe or drive through the community, you know, if you see a kid wearing a pair of Nike shoes and wearing a really nice sports jacket, you might think wow, why doesn't . . . it kind of blames the child. It blames the . . . we're focusing on the kids here. We're focusing on well, you know, that child is . . . how can he afford to wear those Nike shoes? Why doesn't he take his money that he gets and go buy food? But . . . (inaudible) . . . kids don't get any money.

Their literacy . . . like, their literacy level right now is . . . every year, like, the kids drop . . . like we see some kids come in with, you know, a grade 3. We have hundreds and hundreds of kids

out of school right now in that community. We know how many are getting to school and are having, you know, various types of problems. But we don't know any . . . how many are not getting to school. Nobody can keep track of that.

Nobody can keep track of it because they're not . . . we can't find them. We don't know where they are. They just exist out there somehow. Those are the kids that are, you know, with their . . . that are being exploited. Those are the ones that are usually being preyed upon. It's a huge factor.

To me, you know I see kids walking down the street all the time with nice clothes, and, you know, kids from the inner city, kids that I know. It doesn't mean anything. It just . . . it means it's possibly they may have saved up everything they had just to buy that so they looked . . . so they fit in with their friends. Again, you know teenagers are teenagers; those are, you know, value judgements to think maybe that a kid wouldn't want that, you know.

When I was a teenager I wanted nice stuff too, but whether I could afford it or not. My mom, you know, sent across to me the message was that we can't afford it and, you know, that was taught to me. But a lot of our kids don't know that. I mean they don't . . . it's just another perspective; they don't know.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — All right. Carolyn, did you have questions?

Ms. Jones: — Yes. And thank you for your presentation. Just a quick comment in defence is that we've heard many times that part of the reason kids aren't in school is because they don't feel that they belong and that clothing different from other kids is part of that. And I mean we've heard that young people sell their bodies for a pair of shoes. So you know certainly that's an issue and I make no judgement on them wanting, those children wanting exactly the same as the other kids in school.

One thing that is a little bit befuddling for me though is we've heard a couple of times about, you know, another \$65 would get you on the east side. On the other hand, part of the success of what you're trying to do is working with people in a community. And it seems to me that the only . . . I mean if that's the goal and I believe that it is, to provide services not just to Aboriginal or First Nations people but to everyone in that community who needs it, if you take them out and isolate them in a predominately white community on the other side of town, is that kind of . . . will they then have access to the services? Will they use them? Or are we only going to be exporting so-called healed people out of the community?

I'm just finding that a little bit . . . We've heard that twice today I believe, about an extra \$65 will get you an apartment on the east side of town. I'm not sure if that's good when you're trying to work hard, you know, to do something positive.

And I'm not making a comment on the issue of rent. I mean you're right. Riversdale is a beautiful old community and if it wasn't for the negative aspects, it would all be bought up by other people who would fix up the nice old houses and live in them, I guess. It's a very complex thing. But my concern is, if you export the very people that you're trying to deal with and

assist, is that good or bad?

Mr. Beaudin: — Well I guess, I mean if you head east of 20th Street, you're on the east side. But I guess when I say that I don't mean, you know, anywhere a specific community in our city. You can bring decent housing to that area and if you do that, it's going to come at a cost. And the cost will be higher than what our families can afford.

So if you can have . . . if you have a house that's, you know, in really decent shape and safe and you don't have to have . . . if you can put one family in there, the odds are it's going to cost more than what families can afford. So if we move families to, you know, whatever various parts of the city, sure you take that, you know . . . a lot of the families will not feel comfortable in a middle-class community, a middle-class neighbourhood, we know that. And they may not even be accepted in that community.

But the fact remains that, you know, where they are today they're still living in unsafe environments and we have to deal with that. I don't know how many times I've gotten on the phone to landlords to advocate on behalf of families when basements were flooded and the family has been living in raw sewage for four days, and their stove and their cooking stuff is all in the basement where, you know, the sewage was. And they've had to live in that.

Of course many of us would think, well geez, why don't they just phone and advocate on behalf of themselves. You have a phone?

Well then they can go downtown and go to their advocate or go to the renters' rights and go to their MLA or go to whoever and have them advocate. Well can you afford to get downtown? First of all, are you feeling confident enough to go down there and do that? But can you afford to get downtown? What if you have three kids and one of them's an infant, one of them's a toddler, and the other one's getting out of school at 3? Do you have bus fare to get downtown to do that?

All those things we take for granted. Do you have child care to get your kids in child care so you can go down and advocate on behalf of yourself?

So what ends up happening is it goes on and on and on. It just perpetuates. And the families continue to live in that. And pretty soon we have health issues because of it. We have kids with infections and various things like that because they've been living in this. Pneumonia, TB (tuberculosis), things like that. We're starting to see TB in our community.

Or if you take from your basics to pay your rent, what's left only allows you to buy pasta and carbohydrates. And if you're a diabetic, we know that's pure sugar and that's not vegetables and that's not a good diet for a person with diabetes.

So I mean you're right, it's complex. It just interlinks into each other issue. So certainly by doing this we're going to bring library services and literacy services and these type of things to that community. It's not going to be too far. We're going to get rid of barriers. We're going to get rid of transportation barriers.

We're going to get rid of institution barriers by having a facility that's not like an institution, that's not run like an institution. So the families when they come in, they'll be greeted with a handshake. The kids will be . . . we want to be child-centred, focused on children, what their needs are first. Think like a child; think like a grade 9 kid with a grade 3 literacy level, you know. Try and think like that and run programs that work like that. Have teachers that come in and focus on not just literacy and numeracy, but focus on . . .

You know, the kids are bringing in . . . we talk about kids in our school system. I mean a very, very, very small reason for the kids not going to school would be that they don't fit in because they don't have the clothes. That's not the issue. The issue is they're not going to school because they have so many other issues within their lives that school's down here on the priority list.

If you've been in a home where there's been violence, abuse, and alcohol use all night, you're not going to get to school the next day. You haven't slept all night. If you don't have breakfast, you're going to go to school hungry.

If you're abused, you're going to go to school with anger and resentment and you're going to act out. And then you're going to be disinvited from school and you're not going to go back to school; you're just going to get lost in the system and start utilizing social services on your own when you're very young.

So I mean it just, you know, we have certainly the kids that aren't attending school. I mean, one of the issues is, part of it is that they don't fit in. But their behaviour and their issues, their personal issues don't allow them to fit in. The teachers need to be social workers, need to be guidance counsellors.

And basically all of us do that work with kids, especially these kids. They're coming in with incredible adult-type problems. Addiction issues at seven years old, addicted. And when you're addicted you don't think clear and you do things that you need to do to make money. You do things to feed your habit. You go out and you're used by people. And that's what happens.

After a while school is not an issue. What does that mean? What does that mean? Tell the kid, you need an education, you got to be somebody. Well what does that mean to them? What do they want to be? They want to survive generally, just to live every day so they're alive, not dead.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Gary. And I just want to sort of follow up on what you were talking about with the education issue. So many of the witnesses that we've talked to in the last few months have talked about the need for integrating services between health care, education, justice, and all the rest of it. And then I think some groups even call it intersectoral collaboration. That was just not a handle. And I see what you're doing is that, like you're trying to provide that service.

Well when it comes to education, I think that within the school system, the community schools, we've had representation from that group talking about what happens in the community school that are . . . they also are trying to address that concern.

Now we have so many different agencies. Everybody that we've talked to and everybody that's in this room is here because they care about children. And we've got so many people vying for our dollars, and vying for our attention, and vying for the meetings we should all be going to to help children, that after a while we're just meeting each other in the doorway and nobody knows where they're going to or where they're coming from.

And so after a while, wouldn't you be better off to take some of those bucks that you've managed to gather up and go to your community school, or go some place and say, here's some dollars, let's add it to an existing program. Let's bring in somebody and see if we can't do something, rather than trying to start another something.

Mr. Beaudin: — Well certainly. But, you know, of course when you . . . if you want to do things like that you're also dealing with, you know, do you have access to the school facility all night? Late, you know. But can you get in there and do that? Will they allow you to do that? Do you have a gymnasium that's . . . I mean, do you have, you know, a kitchen that's big enough to accommodate that? Do you have enough program space?

Certainly we know that, but we wanted to have something that was central that all the kids in the community could come to. And so it's not just King George but it's King George, it's Princess, it's all the, you know, the whole community.

And we also had to design a facility that . . . not try to get into an existing facility, but design a facility that would work for the needs that we knew that we were going to have and we have now. So the idea wasn't to reinvent the wheel and to come up with a new program that's going to, you know . . . Instead of duplicating, just putting money into the schools, we've invited the schools to work with us instead.

So in a sense I mean this whole project has been a lot of partnering a lot with everybody, intersectoral committee, with integrated . . . you know it's an integrated services model, it really is.

And I think, you know take for example Nutana, and that's a huge project and it's worked quite well. And they've taken a lot of different services and put them under one roof, and that's very similar to what we want to do.

And I mean, I can't respond to how the money should, you know, should be distributed as far as, you know, when you say people come to you and ask for money and things like that all the time. I can say we're just trying to create something that is with partnering with as many different departments as we can be and this is, you know, is quite a huge undertaking and has been.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Well, Gary, congratulations on your new position by the way, and on the opening of the centre.

I just want to ask a question with respect to the first part of your testimony as well. It really builds on the question that Kevin

asked you. But I guess we've heard frequently that there's a connection between poverty and children being on the street. And I guess I wanted to ask you specifically: do you think that there is a connection between the current level of social assistance rates and children being on the street, not in school, being sexually abused on the street? Do you see a direct connection?

And if so, how much of an increase in the social assistance rate structure does there need to be to address that problem? And how much of the problem will be . . . Nobody's suggesting that kids are on the street simply because of poverty, but to what degree do you think addressing the . . . if you think that there's a connection.

And I'd be grateful for advice on what sort of an adjustment do you think is required in the rate structure, and what sort of a difference that would make in terms of the issue that we're mandated to look at, which is trying to stop the involvement of children in the sex trade.

Mr. Beaudin: — Well certainly I think there's a certain connection between, you know, children out there and with . . . out there and their situation and poverty and assistance rates obviously. It may not be obvious to everybody, but to me.

Like a lot of the building in our community that's happened over the past five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten years. New housing starts have all been middle-class, middle-income, higher-income, single-family dwellings, townhouses, and things like that. The availability of apartments and things like that to the families are . . . this hasn't been happening much. So keeping that in mind, they can't afford to . . . also been purchase, a lot of purchase, but not rental. There's been a lot of purchase.

So I mean we would have to assess, you know, what the average cost is of a, you know, a half-decent apartment or a half-decent townhouse. And to look at, you know, upping the rates to at least where it's more of a competitive market for families where they can pick a little bit and choose where they live. Because I know people, you know, given the choice will obviously just go where it's safe and affordable and where they can afford.

Inflation rates continue to go up, and we know that — it's old news. But you know, the assistance rates have not gone up and it just . . . like I said, people just continue to just take from their basics. And if they didn't have to do that, if they could afford . . . and what? Exactly how much? I mean, I don't know. I mean that's hard to say. I think that's a study isn't it? Another committee? You know, that's an issue on its own. You have to strike up a committee for that, decide how much.

But the way things are going with the cost of gas and, you know, everything keeps going up, groceries — it just keeps going up. Assistance rates haven't gone up at all. It's just . . . it's getting bigger and bigger and bigger. So I mean the gap is getting further. And so, I mean how much I think is just a matter of looking at it and deciding what's available and what a decent home costs, what a decent rental apartment . . . you know, you can get a decent apartment for.

I know people that are renting half . . . you know, fairly decent places with one bedroom for \$550 a month. And if you've got four kids, you know, you're not going to fit into a one-bedroom apartment.

So I don't know if that answers your question, Peter, but I certainly see there is a definite relationship there. And I think it would make a difference overnight — I really do. Because, you know, I don't have to live there. You know, I can afford it now. I don't have to live in that place. I don't have to live in that apartment where there's people shooting up in halls.

I don't have to live in that, you know, that place where there's cockroaches because there's sure a lot of cockroaches and mice in these buildings. There are a lot. I don't know, some people don't even know that in Saskatchewan — mice and cockroaches and rats. Well we have them. They're there. I don't have to live there because I have enough money now that I can live in a . . . I can pick and choose. I can go and live in another area or another house that's decent. I don't have to live there.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Gary, we have committee members obviously quite intrigued with this discussion with you because they're asking for the opportunity to ask one small question. We have two more questions from committee members, and then I'll make mine very short because . . . All right, go ahead, Ron.

Mr. Harper: — Very brief. In your opinion, the children that find themselves working the streets, are they all on Social Services? Or their families?

Mr. Beaudin: — In my experience the families that I've dealt with in the past four years — I've come in contact specifically with Aboriginal and a small percentage of non-Aboriginal families — in our family support program, 98 per cent of the families, just off the top of my head, were on assistance, income security. Another, oh boy, about 65 per cent of them have been involved with family services, have family service involvement. Very high, high, a very high amount.

Mr. Harper: — Then what you're saying is those that are on Social Services are also working the streets?

Mr. Beaudin: — Oh no, I wouldn't say that, but they're sure at risk.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Gary, I just wanted to commend you on the work thus far that you've done in your entire life. And I certainly can pick up that you've walked somewhat of a difficult walk, but an interesting one, and obviously you're making the very best of it and that's commendable.

Gary, I just wanted to point to one of the comments that you made that I'm sure reflect where a lot of people that are living in poverty would like to be. It's a place that they'd like to be where you are now. You've mentioned that you don't have to live in that any more, that you're making enough money now.

So obviously I imagine it was . . . and occurred to you and other members of this project that is taking place now, that it's necessary to have some initiatives in place whereby there are

educational opportunities that would lead towards work projects, teaching people to work, teaching people that they can feel success and to possibly even get into sort of an entrepreneurial mindset where they can create their own work and rejoice in the feeling that that gives you. I mean it gives you a very good, satisfied feeling about yourself when you can create, rather than have to think that you're always going to be dependent.

So I'm just wondering whether or not . . . I just don't know for sure, from what you have described, what the extent of the services are — you've pointed out the different kinds of services — but to what extent you will go in order to have ongoing educational opportunities. You've talked about children who, you know, maybe have a grade 3 education so obviously there has to be some basic education that might come out of the circle centre project.

But are there any initiatives in place for work activities that will lead people towards sort of self-supporting, supporting themselves?

Mr. Beaudin: — Well yesterday I bought a cash register. Yesterday I bought a cash register, and my thinking was that by setting up this cash register in one of our rooms, that if we have a group of 14- or 15-year olds and if we can get them in that room and say you guys want to learn how to run a scanner and a cash register? One of our staff works at Safeway part-time. She says, I'll teach them.

By doing that we're starting to give them some skills right away. We have a commercial kitchen. We can teach them how to flip burgers and give them some of those physical type of skills that allow them to enter into the minimum wage market. I'm being sort of a smart aleck here but just some of those basic skills — cooking and, you know, collective kitchens.

Of course we want to strive to do that, but again it's going to take a lot of work because you're dealing with kids and children and families that are, you know, have a lot of other issues.

Depression, you use that . . . you know I can't say that enough because a lot of our families I saw, you know they were fatigued . . . to depression as a result of sexual abuse. Women with undiagnosed pelvic inflammatory disease that goes on for years and starts out as just a small infection, untreated. Things like that, that we see in our communities, in our families, in our parents and stuff. And so, it's certainly enough to do that, but it's one aspect of, you know, offering the services to them. You have to . . .

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Referral services, I'm sure you've thought of other community organizations and agencies that are in place right now that might be able to assist you. For instance, when you diagnose some of these . . . something like depression, you recognize that Tamara's House is there.

Mr. Beaudin: — Absolutely.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — And so have you spoken with a number of community agencies?

Mr. Beaudin: — Yes. We've done a whole lot of talking to as many agencies as we could. I am very aware and connected with Tamara's House myself as well, and know those type of services.

But we've kind of made plans for the future too. I mean certainly we can offer some basic literacy- and numeracy-type program for kids at a certain level. But where do they go after that? You know, do they . . . so we've connected with Joe Duquette in Nutana to say okay, you know . . . (inaudible) . . . or wherever, the next step, okay.

Some of these kids have been removed from the school for so long that they may never ever get back into a regular school program. And that's a scary thought, but it's a reality so we have to prepare for that. Some of them may only be comfortable in a small learning environment and they may never get back into a huge school, like Mount Royal. They'll never get there. So we have to recognize that and kind of plan for that, to look at them you know, based upon their needs, smaller needs.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Okay. Thank you very much, Gary. You've been a source of information and inspiration for us and we thank you very much for coming today and providing us with your understanding and your knowledge. Thanks a lot.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Excellent presentation, Gary. Thank you.

We're going to take a five-minute break and then our next witness will be Sister Germaine, Sister Germaine Roussel. So Sister Germaine, we're looking forward to hearing from you right after the break.

The committee recessed for a period of time.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — We're going to resume our hearings at this time and if we could have Sister Germaine Roussel come forward, please.

Sister is with the Grey Nuns in Saskatoon, and we ask you to just please feel comfortable in going ahead with your presentation.

We do have to mention though that we have now had a couple of more people indicate that they would like to present their findings and so on to the committee, and so we have to limit the presentations to no longer than 15 minutes.

Sister Germaine Roussel: — Thank you for the opportunity of saying a few words. I haven't really prepared a formal presentation, but I'd like to support some of the points that have been made.

First of all, I believe there is a very strong connection between our kids on the street and poverty. And there's one question . . . I don't want to discuss this in particular with anybody, but I'd like to know if there's anybody around this table are still living at the 1982 budget? Are you living on the same budget today as you did in 1982? And why are we expecting our poor people to do so.

I've been with poor people all my life and usually in the days past, that's about 20 years back, housing was completely covered by Social Services, like electricity and all the utilities. Today, they're not. They're capped. And our people are going hungry.

And I think there's a very strong connection between hunger and prostitution or sexual abuse on the streets.

One of the things I think that we need, besides all the other services, we need addiction people in our schools and our streets and any other places like . . . (inaudible) . . . here I was happy to know that they will have it. We need addiction services. That's a very large, huge problem right now.

For the people that are going in the justice system, another point is a hope that for our kids, especially for our youth, that you're going to be using the principles of restorative justice rather than the criminal or whatever other, the straight justice we have now. We need restorative justice.

The principles are very clear. I haven't got them here but I have them in the . . . at home. And our Native people especially have really good principle on restorative justice and it should be the only one used when it comes to juvenile delinquency.

And the laws . . . and one of the things that I've noticed . . . I live right on the stroll and I've noticed a lot of things, and I wish that and I think somehow if you could have laws — I don't know how it would have to be done — so that our policemen would have the right to protect our children that they know are at risk.

We see now something a little bit new on the stroll where young girls are being dropped off three or — the other day there was three — dropped off at the corner of the street and a few minutes after, maybe 10 minutes after, and the cars came to pick them up. Well I knew those children were at risk but I know the police can't do anything. They talk to them, they see them, but they can't pick them up, they can't . . .

Is there a . . . would there be a place, some place in the restorative justice system, they could pick those children up and find out where they come from and why they're there? I don't say that we incarcerate them but could there be laws? I don't know the justice system enough to know if that could be. And those are the four points I wanted to bring to the commission.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Thank you very much, Sister. Are there any committee members that would like to discuss this further with Sister or ask any questions? Thank you very much for your . . .

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Oh, I'm sorry, I do have one question. I'm sorry, I was waiting to see.

And, Sister Germaine, I wanted to ask you about whether you could share some of your observations about what you see happening on the stroll — that many of us would not see because we're not living there — in terms of the ages of the children involved, how many children are involved, and what you see happening in terms of the johns, and whether you have

any observations on what you would like the committee to recommend in terms of action around the question of johns.

But your observations on the stroll generally and the realities that children are facing on the stroll I think would be invaluable.

Sister Germaine Roussel: — As far as recommending on the johns, first of all, I think that they . . . when they are caught or the licence numbers are given and that, I think it should be followed up. And I know we have some people that are doing that.

We have less children on the stroll just now because as I say now they're hiding them more. They're bringing them in and they're picked up in no time. Which we didn't have five . . . three years ago. That's something new that's just started.

And the police are very, very faithful to pass sometimes every half-hour. So much so that sometimes when we have visitors they say well what's going on in the place, you always have police cars going by. So the police are really doing their part, but I think they have their hands tied somehow because they know the kids, and some of them I know them by name, but what can we do about it? Who do we report to? What happens to them? That's one of the . . .

The number of . . . the children right now are less on our stroll because the city has put lights on. They've put restriction on the speed limits and so on and so forth. We've had real good co-operation from the city. But what's happened, they've dispersed just further down.

And then what do we do with our ex-prostitutes. I'm working with a group of them right now; we have three on our committee. And what they need is housing. They can't go back to the family. And we'd need housing very badly; they could use it tomorrow. We could fill it up with people that are off the street or wants to get off the street if they had a place to go. So we certainly need social housing built around the place that could be reserved for that. That would be immediate.

How are we going to get housing? I don't know. We're going to start advocating as soon as we have our plans up. But we are working with people that have been on the street and the committee is very strong.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Thanks, Sister Germaine.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Sister, could I just ask about the ages of the children that you saw dropped off?

Sister Germaine Roussel: — I saw some as young as five, six. I've seen a three-year-old, about three years old. The man was maybe 25. He was almost dragging her along and every five minutes, not even that because within . . . I watched it for about three blocks, and at least every half block, he'd take a cigarette that he was smoking and have the kid smoke it. I saw that with my own eyes.

I saw drugs exchanged right in front in our kitchen window, giving drugs to the kids. Another night there was a man just

across the street, he took out the light from over his door and he was handing out drugs to all the children that were passing by. I saw that with my eyes. What can we do?

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — So it seems to me like what you're saying is now there is an arrangement being made for children to be picked up; a prior arrangement.

Sister Germaine Roussel: — Yes, and Social Services knows about it. I talked with one of the Social Services. He said yes, we know that this is going on.

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

Sister Germaine Roussel: — Usually it's girls or older girls; they're sisters or cousins that do that.

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

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Thanks, Sister Germaine.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — If we could call forward Karen Ponto. Karen is a concerned citizen that has come to address the committee today. And we thank you for coming forward, Karen, and we'll just ask you to go ahead with your presentation.

Ms. Ponto: — Thank you. I appreciate the opportunity to talk to everybody today. Just to give you a little bit about my background as well, I'm a registered nurse. My concern as well, I also do volunteer work at the sexual assault centre in Saskatoon and do crisis intervention in that particular capacity.

And in the last several years I've had the opportunity to deal with many different families, children, parents, grandparents, concerned citizens as well, and many of the agencies available. What I've seen a lot of is that our children seem to be falling through these cracks. In the event of any kind of reporting with child abuse, when the first contacts if not made to the centre, and it is again a requirement by law, has to be reported to the Department of Social Services whenever there's any concern or disclosure or witnessing to child abuse.

Part of the problem that I've found occurring quite a bit is that the people on the front lines in this particular department, one of them being the Department of Social Services, there seems to be a long time between actually getting the children any kind of intervention. And it can actually be used or qualified as crisis intervention when some of these interventions may be actually months later down the road from when, you know, the incidents have actually occurred. To me this is absolutely deplorable that our kids are not being able to ascertain any kind of assistance.

During this time again, there's not the time to get any medical intervention should any of these children require any treatments for infections. We do know that the majority of children that are molested, about 98 per cent of them, there's actually no penetration, so in that event, we still need to have some of the kids looked at medically. But there's nothing really present to be able to deal with that.

One of the particular cases that comes to mind, the child, after making a disclosure, it took five weeks to even be able to get an interview. And the route that was taken was putting the child, a five-year-old girl, in with a six-foot-four male police officer from the moralities division.

To me this is quite inexcusable, and this happens time and time again. To expect a child to make any kind of spontaneous disclosure after this amount of time, and again you know, the only . . . you're not given any counselling at any time during these . . . like will the departments provide for either the parents or for the children that . . . again, you're not allowed to talk to the children because you don't want to "taint the evidence." You don't want to coach them, you don't want to lead them, and so therefore the parents are not allowed to talk to these children. And they again will not, you know, after this amount of time, speak spontaneously, you know, in that kind of an environment.

The child protection centre is available downtown. But again, when this is sometimes not available for months, and the children don't know why they're there or who they're talking to, and you know, a five-minute interview is not sufficient to determine any kind of investigation. And if a child does not spontaneously disclose, which I don't think we can expect any child in that circumstance to, nothing is being provided for the families for any kind of assistance.

And again, quite often what happens is that then these children that are at risk and in dire need of child protection, are being left alone with these abusers. And again, it's a repetitive cycle that needs to be broken, and until we get some laws into place, that's part of the problem as well is that the child protection laws that we have in existence right now are very deficit. They don't have the teeth; the police do not have the authority to go in.

Again, that's something that we're seeing time and time again, is that it's the people also on the front lines that don't seem to have the expertise. We have . . . very poor, whether it's child psychiatric help available to children, we have very few child psychologists. In fact the ones that I'm finding that we've had to deal with, they don't have the basis or the background or the expertise to deal with child abuse. There's such little intervention that we have available. That when these children have gone through these abusive processes, that we do not have any facilities out there that are available to these children to provide them any kind of assistance.

And any kind of child psychiatric thing that we're having, we're have to ship our children out of province. And that's not the answer, you know. The time delay is one problem we're seeing and again part of the problem is too — with the department, that's quite a frequent comment that comes up — is because of the maybe lack of training, trained personnel within the actual Saskatoon city police. Or if there could be some sort of integrated thing between the city police or the RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) that is specialized in this unit dealing with these children and with the families.

We need to have somebody specifically there that can assist them, because putting children in with a stranger you know and

into these sort of intimidating interviews is no way to, you know, going to have a child elicit or forth come with the information that we need to assist them. And again it's usually over a period of time that this occurs.

We've found to the point, that people that . . . when children do make abuse disclosures — because that's usually not just normally a one-time thing — it may be to a friend. And especially if it's somebody that is, let's say within a family member, they're very sometimes hesitant to disclose or do something with this. But if we had something that was in place, some sort of a counselling centre, again encompassing a child speciality centre.

You know we've got so many resources but they're so fragmented. We've got a child protection centre. We've got the pediatric emergency department. We've got the sexual assault response team. But we don't have really that much in place for the pediatric, for the children. And we need to I think somehow integrate a better pooling system for this.

And what happens is that when these women or family concerned members do make these . . . you know, reach out for help, there's nobody there that can assist them. And if the parents or concerned family members feel unable to protect their children and are getting almost in a sense re-victimized by the system again, they're very hesitant to approach.

And I've heard that time and time again. Why should I? I've already reported it. I haven't gotten any help. The children are getting worse. The children are in fetal positions. You know, we need to have something. I mean this is happening, you know, once every 17 minutes.

One of the statistics that we have in Saskatoon is phenomenally high, most . . . for child abuse is very, very high. And what we're seeing down the road, 20-some, 30 per cent of calls or stuff we're dealing with are adult childhood sexual abuse survivors. So we know that it's perpetuating, and again it becomes a vicious cycle.

And again, I think something again within the . . . you know with the officers and stuff like that, a lot of these children tend to come out of domestic violence situations. One of the problems there too is that there's nothing really to protect the women or the children coming out of these situations.

There's something we have presently called an emergency intervention order but it can very easily be removed within a matter of weeks. These were initially designed to protect the women and children, to get them into a safe environment — whether it be a safe house, place, whatever — allow some counselling, that sort of thing to occur. But when these things can be evacuated within weeks, you know and then these children are returned back into abusive households, I mean we haven't accomplished a thing.

And there are different states throughout United States. There's also different provinces that when they do have the legal means to protect these, you know, women and children in these situations, they go ahead. The charges are laid you know, instead of having to force a woman to come up or having to

force a child to you know come into some sort of a prosecutory environment and make disclosures.

And we have to look at better things that are available in the systems. Right now there's, for supervision or anything like that, there is very little available to these children. The Department of Social Services has only a couple rooms available. One of the other problems children find is that within the court system themselves, is that the judicial bench judges, they do not have the training, they do not have the background, and they do not understand what our children are going through.

So they're allowing these children in the same situation, leaving them status quo because they don't understand. And part of the problem too is that there's nothing. When you try to go forward and move in any kind of legal sense with these cases, is that there's nobody there that's able to evaluate or help the families through.

You will have psychologists making recommendations that are contrary to every known standard available out there to assist children that we know would work. And when they make things . . . because they're not sure or whatever and leave the children in the same environments, there's nothing also within the legal or the judicial system of the family law court right now to actually oversee these people.

So you can actually have people coming in with a variety of different opinions on how to deal with these kids that may have little or none, no experience. And then the judicial system having even less, is allowing these things to go through. And again the kids are falling through the cracks.

One of the other things I've encountered as well is with some of the judicial stuff as well is the social workers or people that are supervising or to be observing the kids, documenting their behaviour, seeing what kind of patterns the kids are eliciting with parents. Right now there are actually kids like teenagers. They have no background. They have no professional background or training with children whether it be in psychology, nursing, psychiatry, what have you.

These people are hired off the streets. These are lay people. And when we've got lay people that are untrained, and again you know maybe as young as 18, 19-year-olds making life-determining situations that are being then presented to the judges, it makes me wonder what's the point of this thing, you know, that again there's nobody in there, you know, they're kind of guessing at what they should be doing.

And I mean we don't have to reinvent everything. I mean there are so many provinces and states that have gone forward in these capacities. You know we don't have anything other than the child protection centre, but if somebody had to go to the hospital, we're not equipped primarily to deal with all the things because you have to deal with more than just, you know, medical things. You have to deal with the family, the spiritual aspect, and the emotional aspect.

And we know that every time a sexual assault occurs on a child or any member, it affects 36 people right off the top of the bat. So it affects the family; it affects the friends. And we have to

look at, I think as well, what are we going to do for not only the family itself because that's who these children are being entrusted to — whether it be the parent or a guardian — and they have to have the resources to be able to deal with these children.

And right now there's just nothing, you know, in there. One of the other problems that is of quite a concern is for example in the Saskatoon District Health. Right now if there's any child that needs any kind of intervention, whether it be medical services, psychological intervention which stands to follow after being through an abusive situation a child has gone through, is that they will not provide any services to these children if there's any kind of different things, where there's outstanding legal matters, whatever.

But there are actual policies in place that restrict these children from getting help, which I think we have to look at removing because they're tying the hands of people that can assist some of these kids. But yet, you know, we've got policies saying, well you know we're not sure about a parent or we haven't quite gotten that point or we haven't got the evidence we need. But there's nothing actually put into place when a child's made disclosures to actually protect that child.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Karen, I'm just going to ask the committee members if they would like to further question you on any of the comments you've made. We are all really cognizant of the fact that our time is so constrained right now, but are there any questions?

Okay. Well, I'm going to thank you then, Karen, and I know that the committee members will certainly have the opportunity to talk with you further if they feel that they want to do that. I've got your phone number here and so we're going to have to I guess leave it with that right now.

But thank you so much for bringing us your views.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — So our next presenters are Alice Farness and El Hrytsak. Would you like to come forward?

I know you're representing Renewing Our Community Committee and we're very delighted to have you here. Thank you for coming.

Ms. Farness: — Thank you so much. I have a little bit of paperwork for you but I didn't make quite enough copies, so you're going to have to share them or we'll make more for you.

First I should tell you a little bit about Renewing Our Community Committee and how we came into being.

Back in 1998 my mother, who's Francis Petit, president of Senior Citizens Action Now, been involved with the Senior Citizens Action Now group, we were fed up with the vandalism in Riversdale. We were in business there. We have a community hall; our hall is there. And we were seeing the vandalism. So we called a town hall meeting to deal with vandalism and to see if other people were also facing the same problem.

What came out of that was a group of people from the Ukrainian senior home on 21st Street, across from the beautiful Ukrainian cathedral, came in in tears about the john traffic, the needle problem, the drug problem, the prostitution problem, the vandalism, the noise, the damage, the mess, the danger that they were all in. And they were in tears, crying that they needed help to deal with this problem.

So when we listened to the whole thing, we decided you can't deal with all the problems that are happening. So what we have to do is start with one little slice of the pie. And since El Hrytsak lives right on the stroll, I also live on the stroll, these people live right on what was known as the stroll, 21st Street, we decided we would tackle that.

Now our target from day one, right off the bat, was to deal with the john traffic. We felt if you can get rid of these slimeball men, and I'm going to be very . . . I'm not going to be graphic, but I'm going to be very . . . they're slime balls, they're scum, they're garbage. If we could get rid of the customer, we could solve the problem of the . . . the problem would solve itself.

So what we decided to do different than everybody else, is we decided that we would go out and start taking licence numbers. Now when we first got out on the stroll and doing our patrols, our street patrols, of course to get media attention to warn these guys that this is what we were going to do, we had to say some pretty nasty things.

I mean, you know, the one thing about media, they love you if you say something they can really tear you apart. And that's what we did, and we got the media attention that we wanted. We brought public, right across the nation, you know, exposure to what was going on. Where there were many, many, many, many thousands of people, and I'm sure none of you realized that the problem was there, that we were trying to deal with. You didn't know it. But, you know, we brought it to the forefront. We weren't going to go away.

And so what we did is we started patrolling, taking down licence numbers, turning the licence numbers over to the police. Now when we first started, I was pretty naive. I would see this lone male come through and I'd think oh, no, no, he's not going to do nothing, I won't take his number.

Sure enough, we go up the street and see him two or three times and, lo and behold, he scoops up a prostitute, right under my nose. After that, we never gave any man, any lone male, never, who comes on to 21st Street, the benefit of the doubt. Ever. We see him, his licence number is recorded. His licence number is taken to the police and we turn them over.

And I say, this whole pile of information — and there's one book that I couldn't find — has all been turned over to the police, along with pictures. If we had a chance to take pictures, we took pictures. We have the negatives. They can be developed if anybody has lost them at any time. But what we did is . . . and we have volumes of, what, about a hundred and fifty one-hour tapes. If El goes out, we take the tape recorder and we record everything we see.

Now we record all activity going on the street. We turn in what

are known as booze cans. You guys know what booze cans are? Okay. None of you know what a booze can is. Well, a booze can is a place where somebody may have . . . likes to sell booze. Okay? So you can go in there and you can have your drinks, but you pay for them, and they're cheaper than what they'd be at the bar. But along with that, you can probably get drugs and it's quite likely you can find prostitution. It's quite likely. In fact, we're pretty sure.

So anyway, what we did is we would watch these places and we would take the licence numbers of the vehicles that turned up there. And you'd be amazed at who would turn up there, people that . . . well-known people. And that's where the problem is and I'm sure that that's why the problem with trying to deal with the johns really seems so distasteful.

Because the typical john that comes in there is middle-aged, affluent, driving a big car, probably your neighbourhood real estate agent. And I've got proof of that, you know, things like that. There's lots of things that we know too much and we've got it on tape. And we've even had a chance to confront some of these guys while the tape recorder is playing and have had them admit it, what they were doing. And they knew what they were doing, you know. So there's things that we know and the police know.

The thing is, everything that we know has gone to Tim Korchinski, Len Watkins, Randy Huselman, Grant Opst, and Len Watkins. We worked very closely with vice. Everything we've done, everything we see, regardless of what it is. What they do with it after they get it, we don't know, but that's the way we've started tackling it.

They got to know my van, any of the men coming in there. Now what we've taken to doing, is we stand a sign up at the corner when we're out on patrol saying that all licence numbers are being recorded and turned over to police. Well you'd be just amazed. We've got john traffic going through. We put the sign up there. One trip through 21st Street is clean, there isn't a soul on that street.

Now we are going . . . now, I notice that everybody that was here today is certainly on a paycheque. We are not. We have footed this all out of our own pocket; we have had no subsidies, no donations, no nothing from anybody. We've done this on our own. Mr. Brundy called us self-appointed.

Well if that's what it needed to take to clean up 21st and to protect the children . . . everybody wants to protect the children, but nobody wants to do it in a direction. Let's get these signs. We started a web page. Somebody said that the Calgary stroll and the Edmonton stroll were not in a residential area. Well that's incorrect, because they are.

Calgary . . . and we named ours kind of after Calgary. When we first got started the Calgary people who were doing exactly the same thing as we are, started a web page. They called theirs the Calgary ho down. What they did is start reporting on the web licence plate numbers, their disclaimer, their stories about what was going on. So when I brought that up . . . when it was brought to my attention, I brought it up, and I thought that's a good idea you know, a good thing to do. So we decided we'd do

exactly the same thing. And I have . . . I run the copy off of our web page.

We decided we would do the licence plate numbers, we started with that. It doesn't mean too much to a lot of people. We will add them. So we did that. And then what we did is an update. So what I've been doing now lately in our update is putting all the newspaper stories that come through of the johns that have actually been charged and have actually been convicted, and contrary to what somebody else said, there's been quite a few in the last little while. All at once . . . (inaudible) . . . and published and if you pick up the paper any day, you're going to find another story about it. And we've got them all here and I have them for you on here.

So that's the direction that we thought we would go with dealing with the problem of protecting the children. When we see somebody on a street corner . . . And when we first got started Tim Korchinski asked me, do you ever see any small children out there? And I said, you know, in honesty I have to say no, I don't. And Tim says, we don't either, okay.

So if we do . . . and I did one day. I happened to be down by my store and I saw this old man driving a truck, and a well-known licence number, following two little girls. Well you know what, I didn't just turn away and walk away. I pulled up behind him and I followed him, and when he stopped to talk to the girls I pulled right in behind him and I stopped there. You know what, he took one look in his mirror and he was gone like a shot. But you know, too bad old man, I've got your licence number, I've got the description of your vehicle, and it's gone to the police. Plain and simple. We don't just turn around and . . . you know, at any time during the day if we're going downtown and we see something that we don't think is quite right, we fall in behind and have a look.

We've ruined the business on 21st street. Needless to say the girls, a lot of the girls that were out there were not very happy with us. We've even had rocks thrown at us; we've been called names. I mean we're taking away . . . every time we prevent a pickup, I think, you know, I've saved you from one more disgusting action that you have to do for some man because he's got lots of money. But every time I think we prevent that, what she says, you've just cost me 40 bucks.

So they, you know, you're running into a problem where you're saying it's kind of a two-fisted, kind of a two-handed kind of thing. On one hand we prevent the pickup, but on the other hand it's cost her 40 bucks. But on one hand I'm saying, I've saved you from one more degrading, disgusting act.

And anybody who thinks that buying another body is not the worst form of slavery, it is the most horrendous, the most horrible form of abuse there is. And especially if it is happening to anybody — anybody — it doesn't matter whether you're . . . I guess it's worse if you're young, but it is worse . . . I would imagine it's horrible for anybody. Just because that man coming in there has a big car and lots of money and can afford to buy me doesn't mean he has the right to enslave me. And that's the thing we have to look at.

We have to make laws, we have to make the police be so

vigilant — not vigilante — vigilant. We have to watch what's going on. We have to know what's going on. And we have sent in reports even on police, that from the start they were going through there. When we do our reports we put this car gone through this time, this car there, where the cars were. You know, four cars at the Venice House having coffee and 15 minutes later these four car numbers at the Granada House having coffee, well, you know. And we put those kind of things in our reports. Everything that we see we put in our reports.

And the thing about the police being able to stop these men. When we got them out there, when we got the stop signs in place, when we got the barricades in place, when we had the police, certain policeman doing a wonderful job, doing things that they had to do, all at once our street started to improve, things started to clean up.

And you know, the majority of these vehicles — either they have a headlight out, they have a brake light out, they don't have their seatbelts on — the excuse that they can't stop anybody is a lamebrain excuse. It's just that they don't want to do the paperwork. They just don't want maybe going from point A to point B when we've seen them, you know, let somebody go by who's run through the stop sign. We see it, so we know they see it. And I don't believe the excuse that they can't just stop somebody and check them out.

If they think that John has a child or a young girl in the car that shouldn't be in that car, then he has every right to stop him. And they . . . I'm sure they can . . . there's all kinds of excuses.

We say these men that are out there, they've caught them with drugs. We've been instrumental with quite a few things like . . . when we're out we've turned in drug houses, addresses that we suspect that the neighbours in different communities, especially on 19th Street and 21st Street, have told us that we know they're dealing drugs out of that house. We immediately . . . that goes into our report and goes to the police. We even make phone calls and say hey, you know, we suspect something is going on. In fact there was a big drug bust. The police then can pay more attention to that house.

And as I say the booze cans where people go and buy illegal liquor, it's bootlegging. Where they go and pay for their drinks and there is all kinds of other activities going on that house, we turn them in on a regular basis. We've turned in . . . there's bootleggers, there's a lot of people in our city who will provide alcohol for the whole month to a senior citizen at where a 26 will cost you 19.95, he will sell it to them for \$30. But he'll sell it to them on time, and then at the end of the month when their pension cheque comes, they go and they collect the money from the . . . they cash the senior's pension cheque and they start again. It starts all over again with the drinking.

And we know these for a fact. I know the people. We know these things are going on. And, you know, there's things like that that are going on that can be dealt with and can be changed.

Now on one hand we want to protect the children but we don't want laws that say pick the children up and take them to safety. You can't have it both ways. Either we're going to deal with protecting these children or we're going to continue on having

committees and talking and talking and doing nothing, or we're going to get some laws in place that have some teeth. That we see a child in danger. If I saw a child, a little child crossing the street was going to be hit by a car, I wouldn't hesitate to grab that child and remove it from the street.

And I don't think if anybody sees a child maybe going to be picked up by some john, that you don't have a right — the responsibility, not a right — the responsibility to phone the police and see that that child is picked up or to see that that john is arrested. Or you take that licence number and you turn it into the police. You just don't turn your head and say, well what can I do? We can all do something.

If we suspect, if we suspect our neighbour is a drug dealer, we don't just sit by and let it go on. We turn them in. We make, we get . . . we do that. We don't sit there afraid of doing things, and that's what Renewing our Community is doing. We poked our nose in places. We kind of got stomped on every once in a while, but we have no qualms about going out there on patrol. This kind of weather is kind of nice. It's cold.

But there's still — the 21st Street, El is right on it and I just live right off of it, there's still guys cruising around there. Seven o'clock the other morning I was going out to pick El up and there was a girl on the corner. No he wasn't ready. What I do is I turn around and I park. I kept the lights on her. And of course nobody is going to pick her up, so she left and went home, hopefully where it was a lot warmer and to where she was a lot safer than standing on that street corner.

Now I've heard . . . I'm going to wind it up short because I could go on forever and ever but you've got the information in here. I look at Mr. Prebble. In Riversdale, our own constituency, our own Mr. Romanow, our own Premier, and this has gotten out of hand. It didn't just happen in one day or anything. It's happened, and I really think you have to go back to your government and our three coalition members, you know, whoever they are, and start dealing with this problem.

I don't believe that throwing money is the answer. I think there's . . . I don't think it's the lack of money and in fact I know it's not. The money has got to go where it's meant to go. Housing, definitely we need improvement. But we've heard the city slam-dunk. We've heard the provincial government, Social Services, slam-dunk today. We've heard the landlords slam-dunk today.

But the thing is, money must go where it has to go. If you've got X number of dollars for groceries it means it should go for groceries. It should not go for cigarettes, booze, VLTs (video lottery terminal), or bingos or anything else. And even though those are things that everybody would like to do, if you can't afford to do those things, you can't afford to do them.

You can't expect the taxpayer to come back and give you more to do those things. You must get out and get a job and earn it. If you earn it for yourself you can throw it away, but when the taxpayer is footing the bill you can't throw it away. The money is meant to go in proper places, and the thing is what's happening with a lot of people, it is not going where it has to go. Maybe there's not enough, but I think for some of them.

We asked the girl on the corner one day, we stopped to talk to them. We stop and talk to them once in a while. I asked her, what would it take to get you off the street? Tell me, what would you . . . if I could go and offer you \$10,000 a month, would you go off the street? And she stood, no, I like what I'm doing, she said. And I sat there, well you know, if we could do something for you like that. So money is not necessarily the way to save these people.

We have to get our police forces not being afraid of who they might find — and I mean we've got news stories here — and not being afraid of who they might find when they stop that car. They can't be. We've got to stop the feeling sorry, you know, of not being too busy to do something. If we're going to stop it, we have to do something. We just can't talk about it forever and ever and ever.

You know, we had an old man . . . I had a man, and his own nephew is a policeman, living in my suite. He's dead now. These girls were coming to see him all the time. When — after they moved Peter out of my suite, and his nephew is Constable Waldener, Bruce Waldener, and I'm in close contact with him — these prostitutes that were coming there had extorted over \$200,000 from this old man, when they moved him out to Capri Place. He lived 14 years in a suite behind my house.

He never once asked me for help. And it wasn't my place as the landlady to say do you need any help? They would smash his windows; we'd fix them up. We'd wonder why, you know. But it wasn't my place to interfere. But he would come running in to borrow money and he went to the bank. They took him to the bank one day — \$100,000 cheque in one shot. Nobody did anything about it.

Those are the kind of things that happen. So it's not necessarily just money that will solve the problem. We have to do something.

Anyway I'm going to make it short. I've left you this. I've run them off so you'll have the news stories and what have you.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Thank you very much, Alice. We appreciate what you have brought to the table today. And just going to ask any committee members if you have comments or questions. Don't?

Mr. Toth: — Yes, just a quick comment. Certainly it takes a fair bit of effort on your part . . . probably not a lot. I think I can remember the news item a number of years ago where you started the issue.

Ms. Farness: — . . . many late nights and the most of it starts going about 11:30, 12 o'clock at night, so when you work all day and you end up on the stroll, out there patrolling, taking licence numbers down.

Mr. Toth: — Yes, the comment I was . . . I was just going to make a couple of comments here, and then a question. You made the comment about the fact that you've got the johns off of 21st Street. And the thing is what we've been hearing, we've been hearing even from girls on the street that many a times they're on the street firstly because they've got little brothers

and sisters at home, and there's nothing in the cupboard. So that's an easy way to get a quick dollar. So that has been one of the things that's been shared with us.

And the other problem is okay, you get them off the street but you're sending them home to maybe their parent who's put them on the street. And what kind of treatment do they get when they get home?

And the question I would have to have at the end of the day is well, they're off 21st. Does that necessarily mean they've gone home, left the street completely, or have they moved into another location where people haven't really been as vigilant?

Ms. Farness: — We have not only patrolled . . . I should have let . . . we don't only patrol 21st. We also do 19th, 18th, 20th, around the bars downtown, just watching, taking licence numbers of people that . . . And normally we see the same vehicle, the same licence number several times during the night. And I always said I wondered why it was always so many lone males. You know, have we got a . . . that's all we ever see. You know, during the day the street'll be clean and all at once at night you go down there and all these lone males, around and around and around.

Well you know they're not going from point A to point B. They're not just going home. What are they doing in there? Not just curious, they're looking. And especially when they've run through back alleys and what have you, we know what they're . . . From the start we were pretty naive but after a little while you got to know them and you got to recognize the same licence plate numbers. And especially the farmers — the farm licence plates, very easy to identify, these big dual-wheel trucks coming through there, and you know. So it's not only . . . they haven't just moved, they actually . . . the john traffic is not there.

And they're very scared. They're very worried. You can see their attitude. Like sometimes we'll be going by and somebody will cover his face so we don't get a look at him, because we've probably seen him before. Maybe we even got his picture. But they still continue to come in there. It's like . . . these men, it's like somebody just dragging them back all the time and I don't know what it is. We need attitude change is what we need.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — A lot of people will indicate or will call that an addiction. I mean an addiction to . . .

Ms. Farness: — That's what it appears because we'll see the same guy over and over and over. In fact, we've got one we call . . . nicknamed the Pedophile Henry. And we've caught him. We've caught him on tape. We've caught him. We've turned him into the police. We've turned his picture into the police and they know him very well.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — So if you were in the top authority in the country, Alice, what would you do with him?

Ms. Farness: — Oh, I'd string him up by the balls.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — In reality, Alice, what would you do with him?

Ms. Farness: — In reality I would make laws so, so, so rigid . . .

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — What would those laws be, Alice?

Ms. Farness: — Well the first law that, I wouldn't give any of them the benefit of the doubt. Right off the bat any lone male in a known area who is going in there had better have a darn good reason for being there, okay.

Secondly, just for being there . . . I mean it's pretty hard to convict them because you can't get anybody to testify against them. That's the tough part. But the ones that they have been . . . they've been catching as you will read it in the news stories there, the ones that they have been catching, they've been fining pretty good — 500, a thousand — really, really big fines for anybody caught communicating for the purpose of prostitution.

And of course the public exposure. I think publishing their names is the best thing. We were after that a long time ago — publishing their names right on the front page. What's happening now is the stings that happened a year ago are just coming to court now, so we're going to be seeing a lot more of the names being published and the newspapers' stories being published of the guys they caught, because on some of those stings they've caught three and four and five of them.

And in fact Len Huselman, or Len Watkins, said one day it was kind of . . . no, Randy Huselman said, that they were going to get El and I to be on the stroll because he just picked up a prostitute one day and he was trying to make a deal with her. And of course they can't do certain things and just then El and I came by and hollered scumbag john at him, and he made a deal with her and he arrested her. So he said, you were instrumental in helping us, you know, distract from him being a policeman is what it was, the whole idea behind that.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Are there any other committee members that would like to ask a question? Okay. Yes, we're really having to I guess move on, Alice; but I thank you very much, both you and El, for coming forward today and giving us all of this information about the work that you've been doing. I mean it's often been said that community needs to get involved. And I'll tell you, you are involved.

Ms. Farness: — Yes, and we're not going to get uninvolved. The thing is we're hearing all about the children — one more little comment — but nobody has ever mentioned the seniors who are living in fear; the seniors who are being harassed all night by the vehicles on their driveway, by the people being fed and needles and all the rest of it. Nobody's talking about this is a . . . (inaudible) . . . who's in tears and that hasn't even been . . . as if it's not even considered.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — In Regina we have had that brought to our attention, and I'm glad that you did here in Saskatoon, too. So thank you very much.

Ms. Farness: — There's seniors that are suffering.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Our next witness . . .

Ms. Farness: — I think El has a few words to say.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Oh, El, did you have comments that you wanted to make?

Mr. Hrytsak: — Yes, I thought you were going to . . .

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Oh, I'm sorry, El.

Mr. Hrytsak: — That's why I put my name down . . . (inaudible) . . . used up all my time.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — My apologies.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — No, El, we'll hear from you then please. I'm sorry, I didn't realize . . .

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — I apologize, El.

Mr. Hrytsak: — Will you be doing this tomorrow as well?

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — We'll be doing it tomorrow as well but why don't you go ahead now and then just . . .

Mr. Hrytsak: — Okay, I can do mine tomorrow. If you run out of time, I can do mine tomorrow. Is that okay? I'll be here tomorrow anyhow.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Why don't you go ahead now. Just so that Rusty knows . . . Rusty, you'll be up next in terms of the order.

Mr. Hrytsak: — Okay. My name is El Hrytsak and I've been alcohol and drug free for 34 years if I stay off it until August 15 of 2001.

I'm a member of Renewing Our Community Committee; Senior Citizens Action Now; Greek Orthodox church, the businessman's group, and the cathedral; Ukrainian-Canadian Congress, that's the social services end of it and that; Ukrainian Catholic St. George's church; and also Ukrainian Museum — we work with a lady out of there that has to work in a museum on a daily basis; LAP, that's the Pleasant Hill Local Area Planning Committee.

I was a single parent in raising two children from the time they were 11 and 13. My son's a professional hockey player; my daughter works for Social Services in Vancouver; and I am self-employed as a renovator of housing.

I remember coming to the city in 1952. Prior to leaving home, and I know that . . . that's east of Wakaw, and I know that you people were out in the community. I remember back that, you know, prostitution wasn't something that was firsthand, and the only thing that I ever remember hearing about was there were some girls that lived in Wakaw that were promiscuous. That was 20 miles away so I wasn't really in fear of anything there. But that's something that I . . .

But when I came to live in Saskatoon in 1952 I lived on Avenue C South, kitty-corner across the street from the China Lamp. And I was going to Bedford Road Collegiate and I got to know

Dixie Gold on a firsthand basis because she was the corner prostitute. And our landlord used to take her and bring her into the house into his suite. There was a suite in the house, attached to the house. He used to bring her in and he used to bring a Trotchie girl in there, and I came to know that this was prostitution right around the corner from Roxy Billiards and the China Lamp.

And about a week or so, or a couple of weeks later or whenever it was, this Trotchie girl, she eventually rolled the landlord. He worked for the railroad. He got paid every Friday; he was a section man. His family was in Poland. And she ran downstairs and hid some of the money in an old antique tub in the leg. She rolled up some into the leg. Then the police found the trail of money going to the back alley and things like that, you know. And then my sister, when she was cleaning in the bathroom, she threw the rag under the tub to get the dust and the rag caught the leg and the money came rolling out.

But these are some of the things that come in line with the prostitution. And nowadays it's a little different. I'm finding Bulova watches on the stroll right across the street from my house. I find expensive pens or pencils or a pen and pencil sets. Things that the prostitute takes with her when she leaves — I'll call it a john — a john's vehicle. And this is what they take when they're leaving. They either grab the wristwatch off the arm. They take the stuff out of the glove compartment.

And one real estate agent that I watched with a neighbour of mine, he had stopped to let the prostitute out. She got out of the car and she took off running and then the door opened and the real estate agent ran after her. And we found out that she had taken his cellphone, but he couldn't catch her.

So these are the things that I've become very familiar with. This has been going on for six years in that area and when you start watching things, then you start to notice on a regular basis. You start making mental notes. I started recording notes on paper and then I went to a tape recorder because I wasn't quick enough.

And even with the tape recorder now, I had to set up a system because if you don't do it quick enough, soon enough . . . I could read off a licence plate — like I know that STP 918 is a grey truck. It's a Dodge with rear dual wheels and it's a diesel. And I know the guy that drives it. He used to work at Intercon and I know he's a regular john and I know he picks up the prostitutes on a regular basis.

In fact we followed him one day to the St. Paul's Hospital and he said that she wasn't feeling good. And apparently she took an overdose at the Barry Hotel and she told him she was sick and she needed some money, whatever. So he drove her to St. Paul's and he was waiting for her there. And we went and approached him and talked to him. And as soon as we talked to him, he took off. He didn't want to wait for her anymore.

But these things we find on a regular basis. We know that the girls, when they get a john into a vehicle; they grab, a lot of times, they grab a hold of his neck and they pretend they're kissing him. They pretend that he's their long-lost relative or their date or whatever it is. And these things we follow on a

regular basis.

And in this game, you either support this or you don't support it. There's no standing on the fence. I don't approve and I don't agree with the bleeding-heart approach because it doesn't work. Because I'm going to bleed all over the place and I'll bleed all over you and we're going to get no place. This is a tough business.

My life has been threatened on several different occasions. I've gone to court now — the very latest one was Monday morning. If I'd known that this was going on Monday morning, I would have been here. I went to court.

Bonnie Herman was charged for pulling a knife on me and threatening to stab me with a knife on the stroll. And this was . . . I wasn't doing anything on there, taking licence numbers. I was travelling from point A to point B. I was going to a local area planning committee meeting on how to straighten out our community when this happened. Anyhow, she never appeared in court and when we went to court two times after that, she never appeared.

The third time that they thought they were supposed to have her in court, she pleaded out to the charges and she got two months or whatever it was. She got picked up for something else that she did and she pleaded out and she got two months with time that she's already done. I never even got to see her. I never got to plead my case. I wasn't able to get out of my system what's been bothering me now since the time that she threatened to stab me.

And these are some of the things. I got hit with a rock in the head. We were driving down on 21st Street and a prostitute saw us coming with the van. She recognizes the van because the outreach vans let the prostitutes know who we are and that we are ruining their business.

Now I came here today. I have nothing to gain. I don't get paid for what I do. It costs me money for what we do. But I love my community. I've always been donating my time, my free time, to work in the community as a volunteer and I don't get paid for any job. I don't expect to get paid.

We pay for our own cellphone. We pay for our own gas. We've lost two or three windows in the van now, a prostitute throwing rocks. I've got damage done to my car.

Because I live on the stroll, they know me. They know me. Like, if you spent every day with me you'd get to know me and this is how they get to know us. My mother's house has had beer bottles thrown at it; eggs, rocks. Prostitutes attack my mother's house. My brother was visiting from Calgary and he got beat up. The two pimps came along and they stopped our vehicle. They threw him down, then kicked him in the head while I was trying to phone the police. There's just different things. There was an attempted robbery on me. Different scenarios.

I came home last night at 6 o'clock. I just had no . . . wanted to have a quick supper and be able to go and fix a furnace that was acting up in my son's house and a prostitute came up. And I

pull . . . parked the car in front of my mother's house, she comes up to the door and she's yanking on the door, you know. So I get out of the car and I said what do you want. She says open up. I said just take your hands off my car and she says well, can't I come with you. I got on my cell phone and, while I'm leaning on the roof of the car, calling the police at the station, she's standing there waiting for the results.

So finally, when the phone was answered, the sergeant said what's the problem. I said I got a prostitute here that she wants to get into my car; she's causing a problem in the community here. And he says well, what exactly is she doing and what is your name and what is your phone number and everything else. Well then, when she got the drift of what was happening, she says: "Oh, whatever." And that's her favourite saying, oh whatever. Another favourite saying is you don't know my circumstances.

Now I am not against the prostitution, about the prostitutes. I'm not against them. I don't hate women. I don't support johns either and I don't hate them. I'm trying to get our community back in order.

Mr. Morris Cherneski, that passed away here a few months ago, he worked on the committee with us. The problems that we had at the Ukrainian museum . . . they have artifacts there that go back to the 1800s. They defecate on the property. They urinate on the steps. They throw beer bottles, their cigarettes. They mark up the walls with lipstick. They cut the drainpipes open with knives. There's . . . I could go on and on, but the thing is gives you a little bit of a picture what's going on.

We have gone to City Hall. We asked the outreach vans not to stop in front of the museum, not to stop in front of the senior citizens' because they're afraid. They keep doing it. They're doing it in spite. It comes to the point that we are working against each other. All the hard work that we put into removing the prostitutes off the street, they work just as hard to reinstate them and to re-establish them on their corners. And this is what we don't agree. I come here with such frustration today that I didn't even want to come. Because you know why? Because I don't know if this is going to work. And it's not only me, it's the senior citizens living there that pay the taxes, respect the laws and look after each other.

Now do you explain to a senior citizen that lives on the second level of the senior citizens' home and she wakes up in her bed and there's a man standing in her bedroom. And he says, give me all your money. Well she did everything that he told her to and for four days after, she never even told the caretaker. Because she was afraid for retribution.

Now these are the people that are left behind after the prostitutes go to do their tricks. The prostitute comes out there with her pimp and she goes and does her trick, I record the number, and I watch when the car comes back. And the pimp, he hangs around, he goes block around block around block. Egadz van comes around, they service his needs, they give him a coffee, they give him a sandwich, they even drive them to the 7 Eleven to buy cigarettes. I've witnessed it. I will swear my testimony on a Bible any time to what I say here today, that this goes on.

And he comes back and I notice that the vehicle stops in a different area, maybe half a block away, and the pimp gets out and they go on their merry way. And this is a recurrence. The Egadz van servicing the corner house, across from Sister Roussel's, the Grey Nuns. There's a house there at Avenue O and 21st Street. A regular real estate agent lives there that owns the house. It was a common party house. There was prostitutes living downstairs, prostitutes living on the main floor.

They're causing a problem for people that are coming to Larson House. They sit on the boulevard of the Larson House, young kids come along, they give the young kids cigarettes. They light their cigarettes, and everything like that goes on.

Now at one time I know that what a person did if they wanted to improve their life was go and buy a lunch can and look for work. There was nobody standing around on the street corners and the sandwiches come, and the coffee comes, and the free use of a cellphone comes. And then the outreach van is driving down the street and they pull over and stop and a car coming down the street with four or five people in it, each one holding a bottle of beer, they reach out the window to the van and they grab a couple of sandwiches, and they take their condoms and stuff like that. Like this is what goes on in the community.

I told my neighbour Stu Magil, he drives a Blue Line cab, and in the summertime when he leaves his door open to get some fresh air on a hot day, the prostitute walks right in and she asks him if he wants to have fellatio, if he would like to have fellatio. When I spoke, I said the wrong words at the . . . I don't know how politically correct we've got to be here today, but I spoke the wrong words on a 650 NTR (news talk radio) station and she shut it off, you know. I don't blame her, because people don't want to hear this. But we have to watch this at times.

The outreach vans stop at the booze can on Avenue I, in the 200 block on Avenue I. The prostitute goes in, the van waits for her, and she comes back out. Now, they don't live there. They went there for something. They either went there for drugs or they went there for whatever. And they come back out and they carry on their merry way.

Now another thing is the outreach vans stop on our street and they're servicing . . . At the same time they're servicing the prostitutes and the pimps, we've got kids running up on bicycles that are five and six and seven and eight years old. Now if these people, if they really care about the children, this will stop. These kids are watching what is going on. Girls are standing around smoking their cigarettes in their short skirts and the kids are poking each other into going and looking. And they're laughing, you know.

And I see the kids on the street, in the alleys and stuff like that. And I said you know, you've got a sandwich there, you didn't get a chance to wash your hands. Oh, he says, that's okay.

And they call them hos like the Americans do. They kids call them hos.

And this goes on on a regular basis. And you know that we have asked city hall to remove this type of behaviour in our community because we don't agree with it. And I know that this

prostitution has gone on to be called the sex trade. But the thing is, is glorifying it or using a bleeding-heart approach is not helping the situation.

If somebody's standing on my foot, if I can bear it long enough . . . If I can't, I'm going to say ouch and I'm going to . . . You know, non-confrontational approach does not work for these people. These people are hardened street criminals. They carry knives.

The rotary district van was supplying them with surgeon scalpels at one time until we brought it to the attention of the police department and the police department said it was true. And they said it's got to stop.

Now you picture this. We're driving down 19th Street . . .

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Sorry to interrupt, but could you try to wrap up in the next couple of minutes. And the only reason I say that is we've got four other witnesses to hear from after yourself. I really do want to make sure we fully hear you but we also, unfortunately with every witness, we're going to need to limit the time. So forgive me for interrupting.

Mr. Hrytsak: — Okay, I'll just wrap it up real quick.

We're driving down 19th Street, which is two-lane traffic on both sides. There's no stopping on either side. Now an Egadz van will stop in the middle of the traffic lane and the kids from across the street are going to come running over, a couple on bikes, two or three on foot, and all this traffic has to come to a screeching stop because they're going to service these kids in the middle of a traffic street. They do not obey any of the traffic laws.

The john vehicle, the john traffic that comes out there, they watch the behaviour of the outreach vans and they do exactly in turn what these outreach vans are doing and it becomes a free-for-all. And then nobody wants to obey any of the laws out there.

We have . . . people have set up shop. They're fencing out there. I have a neighbour that's fencing because it became lucrative. And I told him; I said if you continue this, we're going to have to look after you.

And I don't believe that throwing more money at this is . . . throwing more money at these people is going to help.

Some of the senior citizens asked the girls, why don't you quit what you're doing? It's 6 o'clock in the morning. I'm on my way to church and I see you don't look ill . . . you don't look well. She says, well I'm tired. If you did what I did, you'd be tired too. The senior citizen says to her, well why don't you quit. She said, do you think I'm crazy to work for minimum wage when I can make 3 to \$400 at what I'm doing in one night.

Now you take a rotary district van, a district health van stopping on the corner of Ave S and 19th St and the guy that was renting the house was John Tompolski, he's a landlord that I know, he owns about 23 houses, he's retired from the railroad as a

engineer. He was renting a house to a guy on a the corner and then he said that he had to boot him out because he said, district felt, the district health van delivered 2,500 needles in a box at one time. The guy was loading the syringes up with Ritalin and he was selling them to the prostitutes working on 19th St at \$20 a throw.

And he told the prostitute that they cannot inject in front his garage, his double garage there, because they were throwing the needles into the . . . they had to fence the area off because they were going into the fir trees.

Pleasant Hill School right across the street. The outreach vans are stopping on public school property, in the parking lot, and they're servicing the prostitutes and the pimps in the hidden corner. And as soon as they leave, the johns' vehicles just can't wait. When the vans appear it's like a snowstorm. It's like a flurry of vehicles, buzzing around, one around . . . they're almost running into each other. You know, each one is trying to get a first-hand look at which one he might pick. He wants to get, of course they think; their way of thinking is the younger and maybe the better looking. And that's what they go for because we can see which ones are left over.

And I'm not speaking against them. I know these girls need help, you know. But throwing money . . . they need the proper kind of help. They don't need the kind of help that this . . . we're duplicating, we're going to throw more money at this, get more organizations, we're duplicating the service. There's too many services out there already that are not doing the right thing.

Now I hope that we are doing the right thing. And I hope that you people could see it, that you could see our point of view. That we are trying to bring a community back to surface and let these people be able to go and poke their hands in the ground, in the garden and work their gardens again. Because they haven't been able to because they're afraid to go outside and then they're afraid of what's in the dirt.

And our mode of living there, you know . . . a lot of times I come home for supper. Before I can sit down, I sit down to have supper and I can't eat supper because I have to go out and I have to clean the stroll up first. Because there's a prostitute standing on Ave L, there's one on Ave J, and the vehicles are just buzzing back and forth.

And I'll give you a number; I only brought one number with me.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — We really will have to bring this to a halt.

Mr. Hrytsak: — Okay, this is the last thing I'll tell you. On a Friday night from 12:30 a.m. to 1:30 a.m., through the intersection of Ave K and 21st St, that's vehicles going either way counting taxi cabs and police cars and outreach vans, 285 vehicles in one hour. And nothing is open except the Fas Gas station on 20th St.

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

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — We'll hear from one more witness and then we'll have a five-minute adjournment. But Rusty would you like to come forward and give your presentation?

Welcome Rusty. It's really nice to have you here.

Mr. Chartier: — I'll make it quick. My personal opinion has been for years that we are going in the wrong direction. This is . . .

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Do you want to introduce yourself, and introduce your colleague, and just take your time and relax and we want to properly hear from you. So . . .

Mr. Chartier: — Well and time is running out. Rusty Chartier, and I belong to the environmentors co-op and the Core Neighbourhood Youth Co-op.

Ms. Kreuger: — I'm the co-ordinator of the Core Neighbourhood Youth Co-op.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Welcome. It's nice to have you with us.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Your name?

Ms. Kreuger: — Oh, Audra Kreuger.

Mr. Chartier: — Anyhow, I worked in the police service for 30 years or just about 30 years, and back in 1960 when I was just starting. I was born and raised on a homestead at Loon Lake where there's a big Aboriginal community and that, and over those years I got to know the Aboriginal community, the honesty and . . . no problems or anything.

And I jump ahead quickly here to 1960 when I started in the police service. And in towards the middle '60s we started seeing a migration of Aboriginal people into the city. And I often had to deal with these people and I always had the sense they were outreaching — talk to me, I'm your friend type of deal, saw many of those things — and then we started to understand in that service that these people were brought in here, put into a rented house, and basically left to stagnate. Nothing was done for them except they were given shelter and food.

But any of you, go and sit in a room someday for hour after hour, day after day, month after month, with no outreach from anyone else, and now we're seeing this, you know. In that home then you saw fighting, you saw drinking, addiction, sex, having babies. Now we're into the third generation of those same kids.

In those 30 years that I was on that service I never saw any outreach or preventative programs for these people because we're speaking of the majority of these people as being Aboriginal.

I, in my work, dealt with prostitution and that was my yearly job for a number of years, to go out, get the city's tax, and then that was it until the next year. Anyhow, we're reaping the problem we made back in the '60s and the late '50s. Myself and

Owen Fortosky —who is now a councillor in Saskatoon here — said you know, we've got to do something about that, give these kids some esteem, self reliance, and that. We started up the Core Neighbourhood Youth Co-op with the help of the city and the provincial government. And I'll have Audra explain how this works, but just last year and I don't know, have you heard from the Saskatoon youth resource development network at all?

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — They're presenting tomorrow, Rusty, but we haven't heard from them yet.

Mr. Chartier: — Oh good, good, because the main findings on that thing is that these kids who are victimized, usually in the evenings, where do they have to go if they want to go somewhere? Under bridges, along the riverbank, and everything like that.

We as society . . . if you and if you came from Windsor, or the men we'll say, needed a place to stay some night, you've got the Salvation Army which is kitty-corner from us where we have a building donated by the city of Saskatoon where we have our Core Neighbourhood Youth Co-op where kids make money doing things.

I'm going to forego a number of these things I was going to get to, but the main findings of the Saskatoon youth resource development network is that kids had nowhere to go at night, just the street or in hallways, riverbanks, under bridges. This is all year round.

The second thing they wanted is a little bit of money. That's what the Core Neighbourhood Youth Co-op does. These kids do things to make money.

We are not the only one that has a program like that. If you go to Ottawa Carlton, they started, in 1991, a police youth centre which is exactly the same thing. They don't have one facet that we do and that's allowing kids to make and grow things and make money at. But they involve kids. They reduced crime by 50 per cent — and that's since '91.

Wynyard, Saskatchewan — we've got another police officer who started the same thing with a building, out of the old fire station at Wynyard, Saskatchewan, doing the same thing. They're reducing their crime rate terrifically.

So instead of more tougher and harder laws and that, let's start getting these people, young people, involved. Because I was a young person myself, I know what I wanted. And kids are no different nowadays than when I was, 60-some years ago, and what I wanted and needed.

So I'll have Audra explain what the Core Neighbourhood Youth Co-op is. And I might write a deal for this panel because I feel that for so long we've been reacting and not preventing and we've got to get back to that.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Thank you. Very, very thoughtful comments. Audrey.

Ms. Kreuger: — Audra, actually.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Oh, Audra. I'm sorry. I apologize.

Ms. Kreuger: — Thanks for letting us speak today.

One of the things I think that we need to remember is the fact that we need to build community and that these people are a part of that community. And I respect what the people had to say beforehand, but I think the sooner we realize that the better; then we can move forward.

I think one of the things that the Core Neighbourhood Youth Co-op does is work with youth to empower them and to give them options and to give them the confidence to make choices.

I think one thing we have to realize as well is we're all not born with the same life chances. I mean my situation is very different from the kids that I work with. They're mostly Aboriginal and they're from the Core neighbourhood. So they see these things every day. Their parents are sometimes alcoholics or uneducated and they've been in this cycle, well, since the '60s.

And I mean, if you take people anywhere across the world and you oppress them and you take away from them the things that they have pride in, they're going to enter into these sort of cycles of addiction. It's all over the world. I've studied international development in university and it's the same issues all over.

And so one of the problems I think that is happening as well is we don't put enough time and energy into preventing and building community and youth. And that's one thing the Core Neighbourhood Youth Co-op tries to do and there's not enough programs like it or they're not nurtured in the way they should be.

That's one of the problems that the Youth Co-op has had is getting substantial funding and getting a commitment from the city to have the building so we can work to involve more youth. That's a huge issue.

I don't know if anyone has any questions about it. It's an environmental youth co-operative. So the kids come there and it's their place. It's where they have ownership and it's where they can make some money. I'm not sure why the majority of young women enter into prostitution, but I would say that's one of the reasons. One of the other reasons, I think too, is because they, older brothers and sisters, do see empty cupboards. Well this is a means for them to generate income and it's doing it through building skills and commitment to community and ownership over that community that they're growing up in.

I think when you transplant a group of people into an urban setting and give them . . . not give them, not allow them to do anything or take ownership or have pride in themselves, these problems occur.

So I mean I think it's a huge problem and we can't deal with it by looking at one group, seeing prostitution and seeing that as the problem. It's the symptom of a huge problem and it's only going to increase because the majority of prostitutes — I'm guessing; I don't know — are Aboriginal and that population is

going to be 30 per cent in the next 15 years, of Saskatchewan. So what's going to happen then? I think it's a huge issue that we have been dealing with very poorly.

Mr. Chartier: — Could I just add one little thing? Thirty seconds.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Certainly.

Mr. Chartier: — This is a huge building we've got . . . and there is no reason why we couldn't have, just like the Salvation Army which is kitty-corner from us, where a kind of a hostel system was built with Quint who operates out of that with the two governments — municipal and that — and these kids that have these victim problems in the evening have a place to go other than the street and that. And this is what governments should be putting a little bit of money into. And what's stated before, that money isn't because we have found these kids, Audra just had a group of them, that were making what — 130 or \$40 over a weekend for little jobs they we're doing. And they don't need . . .

Ms. Kreuger: — They're so full of pride and they're so happy to receive paycheque. It's not money that someone's given them out of pity; they have pride. I mean food banks and handouts are not the answer. If someone just gives me money, especially as a youth, I don't learn that there's two systems for getting money and one of them is to work and to have pride and confidence in what you do and ownership over it.

And another way is to enter into a cycle of dependence where you just . . . you're in the cycle. You have huge amounts of time on your hands to engage in whatever kind of activity you like. And that's the problem.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Well thank you both. Are there committee members that have questions? Don.

Mr. Toth: — Actually I just want to make a quick comment and that is the fact that I'm pleased to hear that what you're offering us is an outreach. And we have had a number of groups that are offering programs now because personally — and I've said this for a number of years — we can put a lot of laws in place and we can deal with the johns, but at the end of the day we still have a lot of hurt kids that needs have to be met. And I don't believe governments can do it alone.

So I want to commend you for the work you're doing and there's where we may need to work at building partnerships.

Mr. Chartier: — The laws are there. I worked in it. There's enough there to look after the problem. You've got to get back to the systemic problem. Just like in the paper, the racism, which is another big problem. And we had a letter from an ex-councillor in the paper, very racist type of . . .

Ms. Kreuger: — Those aren't white girls on the street.

Mr. Chartier: — Yes, you know, so we've got a lot of systemic problems that we have to deal with as attitude, as was mentioned before.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Can I ask a question? One of the themes that has emerged during the hearings is the idea of creating in some ways what you're doing, which is alternative employment opportunities for youth who are on the street, where they can make money in a positive way. And I mean that's what your co-op has attempted to do.

What sort of capacity do you have to expand your services in, you know, in Saskatoon? I mean could you deal with 70 or 80 youth for instance? And how many youth . . . Maybe you could explain how many youth you're working with now and how many youth you think you could work with if you had a bit of extra resources.

Mr. Chartier: — That's the problem. Audra has to turn kids away from . . .

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — You're turning kids away.

Ms. Kreuger: — Turn away the kids because there's only one and a half of us employed and I have to . . . Well, three of the hours of the day that I'm paid for is spent with the kids and the other three is office and administration, so the program can't grow. It's merely . . . We just try to keep our heads above water. And it's, well it's horrible to turn away kids at the door when we can't provide adequate and safe supervision.

As well I need time to go out into the community and find those community members to work with as well. Because that's another issue too. A lot of the people see those little Native kids running around on the street and just expect them to steal and destroy, when they're potentially productive members of the community that can be working along side with them. So we try to work with business members in the Riversdale area to reduce those kind of issues.

And their potential . . . They're a workforce. I mean Saskatchewan's going to have huge problems with that in the next years as well . . . is an unskilled workforce.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — How many kids are you working with right now?

Ms. Kreuger: — Well it varies. We can probably manage about maximum 10 kids, if there's a lot of volunteers there.

Oh but throughout, over the course of a month there's probably 30 to 40 different kids that come through the doors.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — So would they on the average make about \$150 each of them when they're with you?

Ms. Kreuger: — No it depends. These kids were older. We deal with kids 5 to 18. So the kids aged 12 to 18 have more money-making ability because of the projects that they're able to engage in.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Okay. Could you name those projects for us?

Ms. Kreuger: — Okay, we build composting bins out of recycled pallets. We have a gardening project in the summer

where we grow organic herbs and vegetables and market those. We do recycling in the community where we'll go pick up recycling. We build birdhouses.

Mr. Chartier: — Veracomposting.

Ms. Kreuger: — Oh yes, veracomposting, and we also do services in the community. Like one really good thing that has happened is Social Services has allowed us to put together their brochures. So it's piecemeal but the kids are doing it and they get a good percentage of money.

And actually another thing we did too was go work at the Sundog Craft Fair. We did all the recycling, collected all that, and the kids took care of the food court.

Oh and another good money-maker is tree banding and we paid out \$1,500 to kids aged 11 to 18 that live in the core neighbourhoods that most of their parents are involved in Social Services somehow. And I mean they have really good ability to make money if we can keep our doors open longer and involve more kids.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Okay. Thank you, Audra. Okay well we'd like to thank both of you very, very much for coming.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — We're going to take a break for five minutes and then hear from I believe three more witnesses. So we'll come together, we'll resume in five minutes.

The committee recessed for a period of time.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Good evening, Doug, thank you for being so patient. We recognize that you have to be on the road pretty soon and we've just had a great number of people that want to give us their witness to talk about this subject. But we welcome you today, Doug, and I think that you heard the introductions of committee members, so if we could just ask you to please feel free to go ahead and do your presentation.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Nice to have you here, Doug.

Mr. McKay: — Thank you, Peter.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Nice to see you.

Mr. McKay: — Well this is a . . . you know, the lady at the back asked me who I represented and I said I represent no one. She said oh, you're a concerned citizen, and I said aren't we all. And then I bit my tongue and I guess I said, well, we're all concerned I guess or we wouldn't be here.

I'd like to bring you a Christmas present, but if it was really Christmas this committee wouldn't be sitting. I was reading an article the other day about a priest, an Oblate priest, he'd been in the North for 50 years. I've spent 10 years in the North. And he met a young artist in the community, John. And he says, John, he said are you ever a good artist. He says, will you do something for me? Would you paint me a picture? And John says well eh, anything for money.

He says well just pretend that Jesus wasn't born in Bethlehem, pretend he was born in northern Saskatchewan. Could you draw me a picture of Joseph and Mary, you know, they get to town, the co-op hotel is full, all the houses are full, so they have to go out in the bush and have this baby. And John says, how much money, and they negotiate a fee. And it was just ever getting closer and closer to Christmas and the priest was saying, well, can I have that picture, John. And finally it was very close to Christmas and finally the priest, who was a pretty intuitive fellow, says John, I get the feeling you don't want this money and you don't want to draw this picture. And John says, well that's right, I don't want to draw this picture. He says, why is that, John. He says well you know, if Mary, Jesus, and Joseph came to our town, no one would say you are not welcome. You could go into any house and you could have that baby. So the whole, I under . . . no, the picture doesn't fit with what I understand a caring community to be.

So with that I, you know, I have a lot of things that I'd like to say and we have no time. I grew up all my life on Avenue L. Had no idea what the word stroll meant, but my mother said, you know you don't go down there. Don't go to the Roxy Theatre, you just don't go down there. But she didn't really say why.

And yesterday I bought a house on Avenue D so . . . I love this town, and I love the west side, and I love those communities. And I've been a teacher at St. Mary, which of course is in the middle. You know, it's the oldest Catholic school in Saskatoon and it's a beautiful school.

And you know, I thought I went there to teach spelling, but as it is some of the kids are not interested in spelling. And so I have to ask myself all these questions. And people say well, you know we've got to get to know the kids, and talk to the kids, and listen to the kids, and . . . but when it comes to sexual experiences of children, I'm not listening, and I'm not reporting, because I don't want to get involved in the reality of sexual abuse because it is so complicated.

And so I'd just like to introduce you to four of my students, and just ask a few questions like, who is John, you know. And before I knew about a John, I remember who's peeping Tom? Like, I remember they used to talk about peeping Toms. And, you know, who is Joe the flasher? I remember people used to . . . I've never met these people. You know, who is the abused child? Because they're not talking.

Children talk in grade 1. Grade 1 teachers hear a lot. Grade 3 teachers, they don't hear anything. If a child writes in their journal last night my mom and dad drank beer and the beer bottles got broken. And the next day if you ask them to expand on that story, they just go back to the previous day, rip out that page because they know that they have said too much.

So I want you to go back to your grade 8 classroom whether it was '52, '62, '72, '82. I think the statistics are pretty clear and this is conservative figure — while I'm not a conservative person — that in your grade 8 classroom there was three sexually abused children. Now if you're absolutely sure that there were no sexually abused children in your grade 8 classroom in whatever community you grew up, all that means

is that in grade 7 there was six. And you were just lucky.

I never knew Dixie Gold but I sure heard a lot about her in Westmount. And so I'm left with these questions after 18 years of teaching: Who is a father who chooses to have sex with his daughter? Who is a mother who chooses to have sex with her son? Who is the . . . when I had these children in my classroom I went, you know, it'll never get worse than this; this is the worst that it could possibly be. And then a couple of years later I had a child, and who is this grandfather who chooses to have sex with their grandchild? You know, that was probably the lowest day of my career.

And I didn't come here with any answers, I don't know anything. I don't know who the first sexually abused child was in the world. I would like someone to tell me how that idea got into that person's head, that it was even remotely possible how anyone could even conceive of this.

But I do know these children because I teach them. I've been teaching them for a long time. And while some people have been speaking and some people want to treat the symptoms of the disease, I'd like to talk about the disease.

And in particular — I don't know anything about prostitution — but if you're 15 or younger and you're having sex for money, and in the case of children under the age of 14 it's almost always oral sex, and somebody gives you 10 or 20 bucks, and as you're getting out of the car you steal his watch or his cell phone, you're not a prostitute and you're not a criminal. You just realized that he didn't pay you enough for what you just did.

And children know what they need. And while I should have been going to a lot of graduations over 18 years, I've probably been to as many funerals as I have to graduations. And the children know what they want and know what they need and they're choosing suicide. Their parents are sitting around and their teachers are sitting around, and they're saying, I don't understand it. There's so much promise in the world, that we've ignored a . . . you like Rusty Chartier, you know, like I believe people like that can only speak candidly once they retire. If we knew what Rusty Chartier knows.

You know, I mean if you're a police officer on the street and it's 30 below and you're walking the street, like probably the only person that would ever talk to you is a prostitute and they became friends. My point is, is that while I don't think we'll ever solve the problem of prostitution, short of legalizing it, there should be no sex trade with children. It shouldn't be called prostitution. It should be called something else.

A poet that I read in university about the same time I was going there with Peter, dedicated his book of poems to children because they forgive so easily. Those poems were read in the '70s and while this problem is age-old, the children are becoming less able to forgive.

So I'm walking down the street going from the university where I've been to the art gallery. My grade 8 boys who missed the bus are walking down the street and they see a car coming down. It happens to be a BMW, and they say we don't like that

guy. Why don't you like that guy? Well he's here after our women.

Let me show you what we do to these guys. And so all three of them, they're basketball players, very agile. They ran out into the street, through the cars, and as the car was close to them, they stooped down and picked up a rock, ran up to his window, threw the rock.

The guy in this \$50,000 car swerved across the centre line. Up comes the finger. Away he goes. Of course there was no rocks in the children's hands. It was just all pantomime. They knew the reaction they'd get. They knew who the individual was.

And in their hearts as young 13 or 14-year-old warriors, they wanted to protect their children but they had no idea of how to protect their children, and they knew if they would have picked up the rock and thrown the rock they would have gotten arrested and so they had somehow figured out just this little, little small protest.

I taught a girl and her name was V. She was the angriest child I've ever taught in my life, and her anger was all directed at self-mutilation in the classroom. On a given day she could laugh; on a given day she could cry. When she got angry she'd pick up a compass and dig at her wrists. Take away the compass, she'd pick up a pencil and dig at her wrists. Take away the pencil and she'd pick up a toothpick.

Confine her to a corner, a piece of carpet with a bookshelf on one side, a desk on the other side, leave her in that corner — I'd sit in front of her — she would go through the carpet and she'd pick up a staple and continue to dig at her wrists. She's the first sexually abused child that I ever met. And after a year of teaching her, in spite of what I thought was intelligence, it never occurred to me that this child was sexually abused.

She was stronger than I was; she was taller than I was. She was in grade 4. All the hockey players in grade 8 were afraid of her and her father was half her size. So even if I came to some understanding that oh maybe all this anger is because of sexual abuse, I could rationalize away and say, well she could pick the man up and break him. There's no possible way that this girl, who can beat up any grade 8 hockey player, could be sexually abused.

Finally I went to a sexual abuse conference. We're sitting around and someone wrote down a bunch of symptoms — and to this day I can't tell if a child of mine is on drugs or off drugs; I don't believe in that, in all these check lists — but at the very bottom of the line, the individual said if your child has not taken off their parka for the whole year, she may be sexually abused.

V. had been in my classroom for two years; she never took her parka off. She didn't take her parka off when we played floor hockey. At the end of floor hockey her socks were soaking wet. And I'd say to her, V. why don't you want to take off your parka? And V., being about 10 times smarter than I was, said I made a bet with my sister that I could wear this parka for 365 days and if I wear it for 365 days I get 20 bucks and it's 322 days. So in my mind it was logical. I never questioned until I went to this conference.

A little while later she disclosed. I don't know who she disclosed to and I'm sure glad it wasn't me. The worst thing an adult can say to a child upon disclosure is that your life's going to get better. What a crock of shit. Her life will not get better.

If the perpetrator is found guilty and he happens to be your father, he's going to go to jail and then there's going to be nobody around to pay the mortgage. Who's going to be pissed off at you now? Your mother and your sisters. So finally V. was sent somewhere. It wasn't two weeks later her sister came in; disclosed to someone.

And V. was a straight D student. The other child was a straight A student. Same reality at home — abuse — but the two children responded entirely opposite. One, anger and defiance and no academic performance; the other one said, well I know if I get A's it's going to go away. If I get A's something good is going to happen to me.

Finally the father gets put in jail and from jail he applies for custody of the other three children. The mother phones me and asks me to move her to the east side so I move her to the east side. The . . . (inaudible) . . . finds out and then finally it was the last child, a little boy, seven or eight years old, had polio, was on crutches, and the father was abusing . . .

I'll just backtrack. I remember one time asking V. . . . No, I asked the mother, were you ever aware that your father was abusing your daughter? No, I was not aware.

Anyway, three or four years down the road of course it turned out that the father was abusing all four in the same bed at the same time, which is kind of beyond me, and it's kind of where I started disliking men as a gender in particular. Couldn't comprehend it, couldn't comprehend the mother, couldn't comprehend anything in the situation.

Next child, male child. Recommended to my program because he apparently perpetrated a sexual crime against a kindergarten person in another school. That crime was he picked the girl's dress up, made a snowball and threw it at her crotch. Now hopefully there was some other reasons why he got recommended there, but anyway he came, had him for three years.

Finally this very bizarre story came out. He had nowhere to go on Sundays. You know, no father, mother, and so he liked to go onto 8th Street and there was a certain theatre there. The person that owned that theatre was advertising on radio and TV, send your children to me for a matinee, three bucks, cheap afternoon. I'll babysit your children. Children would come. I took my own children there, dropped them off.

But in this particular case this individual was sitting in the office watching which children came through the door, were not dropped off, were not picked up, and only had three bucks. And if they came four or five or six, seven Sundays in a row and he noticed that they weren't having popcorn, he'd go out and he'd offer them a bag of popcorn. And if they came again, he'd offer them a bag of popcorn and Coke. Boy or girl, it didn't matter. And if they came again, he became very friendly. In other words, the perfect father figure.

So S., this individual, this young boy got very involved with this man to the point where the man also hired him to shovel the walk, and then invited him home to shovel the walk there. The man had four daughters.

And this individual never touched any of these people, any of these children. This behaviour would go on for two or three years. And then he would call them into their office when they got to a certain age.

And he'd sit down and he'd say, S., you know you've been coming here for three years and I've been good to you, haven't I? Yes, you have, sir. Been like a father to you, haven't I. Yes, you have. Well, S., you know, you have to wake up; you have to have a reality check some time. He said, I no longer want to be your father. I'm a businessman and I've given you a hundred bags of popcorn and 50 bags of drinks. And do you remember that one time we went down to Market Mall and I bought you a pair of jeans when you complained. You now owe me \$362. How are you going to pay me?

Well I'll shovel your walk for you. Well that's not what I had in mind. So you know where that was all going. You know where the end results. This particular individual didn't happen to like young girls; he happened to like young boys. But he also ran a . . . he also represented his daughters in the trade. The police knew about it. Certain teachers knew about it.

Teachers don't talk to cops in any kind of a . . . If I reported a case of abuse against a child, the cops and the social workers take it from there. We don't even ever hear if anybody was found guilty or not guilty because almost always the family's moved to another school. So we're just totally out of the system.

And the cops knew that he was doing this but, because he was such a successful businessman, he was not living off the avails of prostitution. And the good part of the story is finally he sexually abused his four-year-old granddaughter and the daughter turned him in and he went to jail. But before he went to jail he turned all his property over to his wife and the business just continued.

Well I can tell you that nobody in my school liked S. And S. and I ended our professional relationship when he accused me of sexually abusing him while we were skating. I think it happened on this rink across the street. He wouldn't participate in . . . I can't remember what kind of a game it was. We were skating around . . . snap-the-whip? Is that what it used to be? You'd skate and . . . And he didn't want to participate and I said, you know after this we're going to go see the superintendent and the Catholic School Board and we're going to go for hot chocolate and we're going to do this, but you have to participate in this game. No, no, no.

He slipped; I slipped; I fell on top of him. And in S's view I had sex with him on the ice in front of a hundred people and that caused a lot of problems for me because he reported and it went through the whole system. And then every time he moved schools, he'd report to the next principal and then I'd be investigated again. So it's just unbelievable.

So then we come to A., mental age . . . you know physical age 14, mental age 8. Mother dying of cancer; father was abusive; stepfather was abusive; boyfriend was abusive; uncles were abusive; uncles' friends, grandfather's friends. Finally she comes to my classroom.

I'm very careful not to hug this child. When I mark her paper, I mark her paper like this. And fortunately after three or four months — two teachers, five kids, she hugs the female teacher every time she goes home — after about three or four months, I won her trust. She decides I can hug her so I hug her very carefully.

Then I find out her mother is dying of cancer. She doesn't understand what death is and wants to know when her mother's going to come back from death. So we read about death of gerbils, death of grandparents, death of mothers. And my high school principal dies so I decide to take her to the funeral because she's never been to a funeral and having a real hard time understanding this concept of death because everyone's told her that her mother is going to sleep.

So I lost my principal, got in the car, went to the funeral. Was this a mistake? This was a career-ending mistake because upon returning her to her mother, apparently as we were coming home from the funeral, I attempted to have sex with her. So all of a sudden there's all the investigations and the principal's so upset, but he can't tell me that this is . . . so the investigation goes on so they talked to all my children's teachers and asked all my children's teachers, do think Doug's having sex with your students — my children.

Finally one of these teachers phones me. So I'm kind of aware of the fact then go to my union rep. I go to the principal and I said, bring in the cops. So in come the cops. In come the social workers. I think we had 49 people in that room and J. told her story. And of course the story was that if I didn't have sex with her, I wanted to have sex with her. And so I simply said, J. what is sex? And she says, well, that's when two human beings touch and you touched my hand — both in church and in the car.

And then she broke down and she said — and I don't want to say anything to hurt this child, in fact I want to lose my job before I say that this child has done anything wrong. Finally she simply broke down and she says, Mr. McKay, why is it that every man I have ever met wants to have sex with me, which is her reality.

And I said, J., I do not know the answer to that question; what I do know is that you're now talking to the only man in the world who doesn't want to have sex with you. I want to teach you spelling. And we went on from there.

So I have no conclusion. I've given up on teaching which is basically what I wanted to come and tell you. That was five years ago I went to Persephone Theatre. They had a play about sexually abused Aboriginal people and you go back to *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*. I mean we've known the reality. The only reason that it's in our face on 20th Street right now is whoever "Mr. John" is; he's been going to the reserve — now he's here.

And some of the best work I've done has gotten me in the most

trouble. And at this huge Persephone Theatre with all the great artists and the touchy-feely people, symposium after talking, talking, talking. And they were sure that there was counselling available for these children and there would be some healing in the future. And while that is absolutely true, in my worst year we had seven disclosures, grade seven and eight; two were false so that left us with five. But they hired a quarter-time psychologist for the four girls; the fifth girl happened to be Aboriginal, did not want to talk, and got no help. She just went home and never came back to school.

So we have something here important for you to . . . oh yes, I gave you my grade three lesson on sexual education. Written on the classroom board. What is the difference between these two declarative sentences? I want food. I want sex.

And then, I believe, in the male mind there is no difference between those two sentences. But if we were a community of human beings, the answer is consent. Push it one more, informed consent. Next, informed consent with no mind altering drugs in your body. And my law that I want passed, and talked with the Catholic school system for quite a while . . . I'm very angry at the bible, whoever wrote it, why there isn't an eleventh commandment that says, parents shall not have sex with their children. Or the T-shirt that I would like to . . . this committee to design and pass out . . . stop fucking our children, whoever you are. Don't know who you are.

So I'm not tired, I've got more energy than most young teachers with no hair. I love my kids. I don't blame the teachers and I don't blame the system. I go back with the Rusty Chartier 30 years, when for a dollar a year you could be in the gym club, and you could be in the gym club every night at St. Mary's gym. Three hundred and fifty kids every Sunday night. The answer's there. The kids are not to blame.

And in terms of . . . and I don't know a lot about voyeurism, peeping Toms, but from the kids that I know, I know for a fact that no human being wants to sit down with you over a coke, even if they're thirsty, and tell you that their grandfather has had sex with them. So we have no right, as adults, to ask these children any questions beyond basketball. But I do believe that the Salvation Army people and all the do-gooders, in their own small kind of voyeurism, like to go give these people water, like to go give these people food, but while they're feeding them, they want to hear the story, and somehow that makes what they're doing more meaningful. But, it's totally inappropriate, because adults should not be talking to children about sexual behaviour, should be talking about sexual propriety.

In the Aboriginal culture, young girls are taught, when they're seven, about their menstrual period, about their moon time. So when I have problems of kids imitating sexual activities in the classroom, little boys pretending to masturbate, a boy and girl pretending to have sex, I pull in the elders and they come in and they say well, have you taught to your children how to respect their body.

The Catholic Church doesn't have a clue how to teach children how to respect their bodies, because you don't talk about it. And some of the priests I know are so upset because there's ads on the television for feminine hygiene, and they think this is

debasement society. Because well, let's not talk about it; we don't care how women clean themselves; let's not talk about it.

So as soon as you have your report, I'll be glad to read it. For the politicians on the board, I don't know who you are; it's kind of a no winner. Children don't vote and johns are going to change their vote from whomever you represent, so I wish you luck.

Teachers' hands are tied. They want to do more. They can't do more, so they choose not to speak about it.

And one more story about one of my favourite little children. Every day she came to school, little waif of a child. I'm sure if she was living anywhere else, she'd be selling matchsticks at Christmas. She'd run into the classroom in the morning — Mr. McKay, ask me the multiplication question, 9 times 8, 72. Went on for a whole year.

Then summer came. And then it was the start of a new year and she wasn't in my class. She ignores me for the first three or four weeks. Finally, she walks by me. Her new teacher is behind her. And I turn to her and I say, what's 9 times 9. And she said . . . Oh, and half of her head was shaved off. She shaved half of her head. Now in grade 4. And she said, fuck you. And I said okay. And I went on. Go into the staff room.

The new teacher walks in and just goes up one side of me and down the other. How are you going to maintain control in this school if you allow young girls to tell you to fuck off? I can't believe you're allowing that language. Why isn't she at the principal, why aren't the parents in. And I just turned to her and I went, use your imagination, woman. She doesn't like men and she just figured out that I'm a man. And she goes, what are you talking about. And I said well, I think she had a pretty bad experience over the summer. Deal with it.

So I'll have to say that a lot of the women in a situation, in the reality, when you have young sexually abused boys taunting you with sexual . . . I heard a few things here, you know, saying, well they want to stay on the street or it's easy money, I think you said that. You said it was an easy buck earlier, an easy buck. And somebody said oh, they got their money and went on their merry way.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — I don't think I've ever said it was easy money.

Mr. McKay: — So like, you know, it's just . . . it's not easy for these children. And I honestly believe . . . I think I've been to 30 suicides. And I think I know why those children killed themselves. And the parents are running around saying, I don't why these children killed themselves.

I've no simple answers; just move on. I don't think we've been talking about it much as adults, absolutely. And so these children who want to play floor hockey, they want to play ice hockey, they want to play road hockey. They just want to play.

And for some reason or other, no one has been able to explain to me the genesis of the problem. Like how did we get here? I understand maybe after a war all the women are gone; go home,

and there is a young child then. I fully understand that in some societies you used to get married when you were 16, even in Saskatchewan, a mere 40, 50, 60 years ago.

Fourteen-year-olds, 13, 12, 10, 8, they have no interest of being between the legs of some man. And if they happen to bite that person, rob him, all the more power to them. They're simply trying to protect themselves.

But at the same time, if you deprive a nation of work, of meaningful work, the women are going to go out and do anything to feed their grandmothers and their children. And if it ends up being dirty and smelly and stinky, well then the drug is just simply to get over the inhibition of doing it. But you do it to feed your family or get a new pair of jeans.

And when you're 13 a new pair of jeans seems pretty important. We have kids in basketball, soccer, drum groups, dancing, who will quit those activities to get a new pair of jeans because it's so important.

I wish you luck. And I hope I get back to the job of teaching one of these years. But now I'm going to Wollaston.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Thank you very much. Thanks, Doug. If you could just bear with us for a moment now I'm going to ask the committee members if they would like to address any questions to you or engage in some discussion with you in accordance with what you've said today. So would you be willing to hear some questions?

Mr. McKay: — Absolutely. I just thought you wanted to go for supper.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Okay, thank you. Committee members, are there any questions? No.

I have one question for you, Doug. You kind of partially answered it towards the end of your presentation when you said no one has ever told me — I think is what you said — no one has ever explained to me the genesis of this problem, of why. And I'm adding this part to it because I question it too. Where did such a horribly, unnatural, inclination come from that fathers would rape their own children, that grandparents would rape their own children, that mothers would rape their own children?

I mean we can look at, like you said, everything. In the past, historically, we can look at the patriarchal society and we can say well that has caused a disrespect and a devaluation of women. And the zest and the need for power; the need for love. The need for love and it's being expressed in a very sick way.

I don't know. Have you come up with any further understanding of why, predominantly I think we could say, men are sexually abusing their children? Or why uncles or why . . .

Mr. McKay: — Simply because . . . Well I have to go to the residential schools.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — But before that it was happening.

Mr. McKay: — And simply because you can get away with it. Because it's not a crime of sex. It is a crime of power. And we've always been blaming the Catholic church but we now know that the Lutherans and the Anglicans . . . I mean, I've been in the system for 18 years and it was only this summer that I was told . . .

I brought some people down from Wollaston Lake. We went to an art gallery. There was a picture of a room of beds and nuns floating above and then I didn't realize that there were some nuns abusing some female girls. I just never . . . I just never would have thought. I knew the nuns were bad. They were mean. I just didn't know they had gone that same route as some of those priests.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — In all due respect to what you've mentioned about the residential schools, we have heard that a number of times. And I think a number of people in our society are aware of some of the atrocities and the detrimental effects of what happened because of residential schools.

But there is also the knowledge that historically this kind of activity has gone on for a long, long time in the non-Aboriginal community as well as the Aboriginal. That's sort of the area that I'm trying to understand and so on, but I hear what you're saying. You know, you can only understand as much as your thoughts and your knowledge allows you to go.

Mr. McKay: — Some of the best counsellors that I know working in the system, they take a child, bring him into the office. They do the little play therapy and I ask the whys and whats and the wherefores and they say, I'm just taking this child. We're going for tea. We're going to get on with it, like, and they just . . .

And so I know the answer. The answer is healing. I've talked to so many sexually abused individuals who have forgiven the perpetrator. But this society, our justice system, we're into a pound of flesh for a pound of flesh; an eye for an eye. We're so beyond getting to some kind of spiritual healing. And I know that those people . . . the only path is to forgive that individual and move on, but I am not prepared to forgive these at this time. Therefore, I'm an unhealed person, therefore I'm angry, therefore I opt myself out of the system and blame no one least of all . . . I would gladly lose my job if some child comes and says Mr. McKay is having sex with me in the classroom. I'm more than willing . . . in my defence in a court of law I will not stand up and defend myself. I can't.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Peter, did you have any questions?

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — I just have one. I found your comments to be really moving, Doug, and I . . .

Mr. McKay: — Just before you say that. Nobody wants to hear what I have to say, which is another reason I came to this committee. I mean your friends, other teachers. They don't want to hear it.

The two police officers who started the unit in Prince Albert, 30-year veterans, went to this child protection unit. All the cops,

they don't play golf . . . and you know how cops are — they're tight; they have to be tight. But as soon as they move to that child protection, you're not invited to any of the social events any more because the other cops don't want to hear the stories.

Other teachers don't want to hear this stuff. My friends don't want to hear it. My dad doesn't want to hear it. It just it's so abhorrent to them that they actually think that I'm making it up and it doesn't exist.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Doug, the question that I wanted to ask you is that you know we've got two realities going on in our society. We've got a lot of male predators who are engaged in sexual abuse of children, including in some cases, their own, as you've pointed out, who are in effect getting away with it at least on this earth. And then we've got the other reality that you have alluded to by virtue of your own personal experience, which is the horror that you can face when you are unjustly accused of child sexual abuse and we've had a number of high profile cases of that in our community as well.

And we've spent a lot of time on this committee talking about what we can do to deter johns and try to bring to justice men who've engaged in sexual abuse of children. I'm wondering if you've got any thoughts on cautions that you would alert us to in terms of making sure that people are not unjustly accused of sexual abuse?

Mr. McKay: — Well when that individual was stabbed in Calgary and the next day an individual was stabbed in Bedford Road, both principals came forward to the meetings and said it's an isolated incident, trying to pass off the idea to the parents who are taxpayers that the schools are safe. And they're just trying to be politicians or paint themselves rosy because the schools are violent. There is bullying and there is sexual abuse, and I honestly believe in traditional Aboriginal culture there was absolutely no such thing as prostitution. It did not exist — pre-contact.

Why now? But I will have individuals tell me, well don't worry about sexual abuse in an Aboriginal community, because well Indians just always did that. That's the way they are.

Or you go to another conference with a bunch of teachers, and the experts will tell you the act of abuse against children is systemic; it covers all walks of life. And then we go for coffee and five or six teachers will go, well I'm sure glad all the sexual abuse is just happening on the west side. Like as if university professors don't participate in this behaviour.

No I just think, I think we need to bring the abused individuals into the schools. Talk to the kids. I don't think the principals want it. I don't think the system wants it.

But you know, we brought a girl into our school to talk to an after-school group. And someone said something about an individual defecating on their property and how obscene that is. This particular girl — 15 foster homes; sexually abused in 13 of them but only while she was in grand mal seizure.

So in other words, the men were smart enough not to abuse the girl in case they might tell the mother. But then in the grand mal

seizure when the mother happened to be not present and the child, they think can't know — 13 out of 15 fathers. Tried to commit suicide. Became a prostitute save for one teacher who invited her home — of course it was a female teacher — who saved her life. Gave her a new lease on life.

She was walking down the street one day and she saw this house and she remembered that house and she remembered being abused in it when she was eight years old. She's now 22 years old. So she just went up and shit on the step. And she said, when you give shit, you get shit back.

So I understand the concerns of the individual who lives on the strip. But any 16, 15, 14 person is not a prostitute, they're simply . . . And they're not victims, because when you go to a child and say if I give you \$10,000, will you get off the strip? And these children, they want to be free. They'd rather make 40 bucks than take \$100 from you because they don't want charity. They do want an education. They do want to go somewhere.

And there is an illusion of freedom on the strip, but four years later they realize it's not there, but when you're 15 you can handle a lot of abuse. But by the time you're 20 or 40 . . . And so it doesn't matter what those — and that's my point — it doesn't matter what those children are saying. It doesn't matter if they all say we want to do it. I've never met anybody that's got really wealthy off prostitution or drugs. I mean they use it all up just to survive.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Doug, thank you. Thank you very much.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Thank you, Doug, and wish you happy motoring on the road to . . . I think it's Wollaston tonight.

Mr. McKay: — Flying.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — You're flying. Okay, happy flying.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — We have one final witness and that's Loretta. So, Loretta, if you'd like to come forward. Welcome, Loretta.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Good evening, Loretta.

Ms. Morin: — Long wait.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Yes it has been a long wait and we apologize. But thank you for being patient. Have you met the committee members?

Ms. Morin: — Yes, I'm familiar so don't worry about going through them again.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Loretta, before you start, could we get you just to pull the microphone right up to your . . . close to you so that we can hear.

Ms. Morin: — Okay. I'm going to come from two perspectives. One is a professional who has worked on and off throughout the years all across the province, has parented and

just recently learned to do emergency work. The other is a parent that has lived in the community of Saskatoon, has volunteer worked, and been part of the community on and off for about the last eight years.

First as a professional. The amount of child abuse that we dealt with within the home and on the street was just about every single family I was assigned to. Most of the women I worked with were into the prostitution. And I was fortunate to work with them because I could relate to them. For some reason they were able to talk to me.

Most of the women I worked with had grown up in the foster system, had been abused. And because I could relate to that, they were able to talk to me over the years. And I have kept in contact with most of the families I've worked with throughout the province simply because my interest is not just professional, it's also personal to those women.

When I came to Saskatoon, I first moved to Saskatoon, my kids were young. And I was unemployed and we lived here for quite a while and we did quite a bit of volunteer work. And out of that volunteer work we were the First Nations to sit as the Pleasant Hill Community Association. And out of that came the awareness where the streets were headed, and that the children were being recruited for prostitution.

It was no longer 16 and up, 20 and up, 30 and up prostitution. It was clear-cut child abuse being recreated by the parents, by the street in itself.

We had to address the issue of why this was occurring in the schools, in the inner city schools. And it was really apparent to us, because as parents we could see these girls slowly turning to the street life.

Quite a few of these kids I've watched for the last eight years, because my kids are familiar with and know them, know the street. Most of them are dead now, these kids. OD'd (overdosed), killed, moved on to other cities to work, and killed there. Most of them came out of Pleasant Hill. A lot of them came out of St. Mary's as well, and some out of Princess Alexandra.

And as I noticed the numbers climbing, of them, on to child prostitution on the street, we had to address the safety issue. That's why we asked for a safe house in the community. We needed to take a look. What do we do with the children that are being abused by everybody in the system?

The children were the ones that asked for the safe houses. The safe houses we wanted to create for the community were parents wanting to create it; wanting to work and wanting to assure for the safety of their own kids. We as a community have continued to feel that though the work is being well implemented and the creations are occurring, it's always being taken away by professionals. We lose the kids as that creation of what they wanted is taken out of their hands. They revert back to the streets.

A lot of times I ask some of these kids, well why, why are you not . . . you know, this is here now, why do you feel now you

can't go to them? Well those people will take us from our families. And I have worked as an emergency worker and as a parent aid and that fear of still being apprehended, that fear of being alienated from their family, from their siblings — the ones they're trying to protect — is too costly a price for them to pay. They don't want to lose their families. They don't want to see their siblings go into care.

When we worked out ... when I worked with the North Battleford child and family services as an emergency worker, I was shocked to see the amount of criminal activity. We see a lot of it on our streets but do we see it out on the reserves?

I was surprised to see kids being circulated all across the province out of a few reserves to rob. You know. And to have all that stuff come into the cities and go into the pawn shops. It amazed me to find that a lot of those people that were controlling that activity were being handled by influential people on the reserves. It was a very, very touchy situation for us to address that issue. The kids are being recruited — not just for prostitution — but in the criminal activity that goes on in the street. For the drug trafficking that goes out on the street.

When we addressed that issue we had to be cautious because we needed to continue to work with these kids.

I was assigned one boy who shot at a man who came onto his home because he was after him for disclosing the criminal activity that was going on. His life was threatened so he felt he had to protect his family. So he shot three times at the vehicle that came into his yard. The boy was close to suicide, you know. Some kids use suicide as a need, as an outlet, as a cry for help: I'm scared, I'm deathly scared of these people; I'm deathly scared of what's going to happen to me if I get moved out of home, if I get moved off the reserve, if I have to go here, Paul Dojack, whatever.

So we had to address the issue of trying to keep him at home, keep him safe, prevent him from suicide, and protect him from the ones that were in the business. It really further shocked me to find that a lot of the young girls that were coming off reserve were working on the streets in Saskatoon, Regina, wherever they happened to be moving or living. And that they were being recruited and that they were recruiting others.

So when I moved back to Saskatoon and I see some of these girls working on our streets now, and I see the activities going on, there's one issue that no one has brought up here and that's the gang-related issue. The kids out there are petrified of what's going on, and I'm talking from the experience of the kids I know in my area. There's a serious gang-related activity going on in this ... in the community.

It just doesn't come from the Hell's Angels. It comes from Winnipeg, Calgary, Vancouver. Professional people coming into our community that may have left as youths but have gone to work the streets of Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg, Edmonton, returning here and re-recruiting. Because that's what they are — they're addicted now. They're bringing back crack, they're bringing back cocaine, they're bringing back all the drugs that may have only been small amounts before but are huge amounts now.

Recently there's been a few deaths in the community. Males, different ages. And these are some of these people have been beaten badly beyond recognition. These gang-related activities are the alcohol abuse. The drug abuse that are amongst the teens is so prevalent now that it's totally out of control and the kids are petrified of each other. And they beat each other if you're going to say something about what's going on; or if you're not in the gang, or if you're not in the prostitution business or the criminal activity business, you're an outsider.

A lot of people question. Like my kids have gone through the school system here and they haven't done very well. My 18-year-old recently moved to Alberta to get work, not finished her education. My 17-year's not in the school system. Not very many came to the door to ask what's going on, what's happening. And even if we disclose what's going on, what's happening to the counsellors, they don't have very much support to continue to help us.

So as a parent who's struggling to keep your kids in the school system — this is personal to me — you don't teach how to help your kid succeed, when the system is not helping to support you to help your kid succeed. We talked about that at Wanuskewin. You have to teach people to succeed in life.

I wasn't taught to succeed in life. I was taught to live in the system. I had to learn how to succeed and how to survive and how to live on my own once I was out of the system. And how do we do that for our children, you know?

And most of the kids that I know that are out there that are living in the world of prostitution, the world of child abuse, are being perpetuated by their own families. There's one house that was on Avenue H. I was told by the kids in the area what are they going to do about that house. And I said what house? Well the house where the little girls are being prostituted out, where they're raping them, the 17-year olds, the 24-year-old guys and selling them.

They don't have to be out on the stroll. They're not on the stroll anymore. They're in their private homes and the johns are coming to their houses to pick them up, to sell them drugs, to give them booze, the parents. I seen it right across my own street one day.

Those are the issues that we could see happening in the community a long time ago. And that's why we ask for safety networks to be put into place when the kid's hit the age of eight ... the kids hit grade 8 there seems to be a network of safety that seems to almost come to a complete halt. They were okay for a while in the small inner city schools, but somehow that safety net, that safety gap was eliminated and they were on their own. To survive in a system, to survive in the society, they don't know how.

And when we were trying to figure out what to do on reserve with these youths, we figured out that they do need to have a tracking system. I look at my life and all the moves we made and I keep thinking well, just looking at our own life and all the moves we made and all the many school systems my kids have been in, who's keeping track of that? How do we protect our youth except to keep track of them and to keep track and help

and continue to support the families who are really trying to work. There is not much safety networks out there. That's why we created . . . to try and create on the reserves a safety network to keep track of the kids.

When we got in contact with kids that had run away from off-reserve, had run away from their families, it could take weeks with the Department of Social Services, and in another town, to track those kids down.

And when we found them out on the street, it was like oh, what do we do now because there's really no place to take them while they're looking for foster homes, you know. They don't want to return to their parents because there's alcohol and abuse, there's sexual abuse going on. They don't want to return to the life of the reserve now because it's too boring, you know.

So what do we do with the youths that are living out there on their own on the street? How do we approach the Department of Social Services to try and fund these kids to live on their own and to function and to have the safety networks and the places to help raise these kids if their parents can't raise them.

And that's an unfortunate circumstances in some family lives. They are unable or dysfunctional enough not to be able to raise their kids. And the single parents are really struggling to do that, and are really healthy and living a normal life, if their kids run away they've got six other kids sitting at home. They can't go chasing them in the city.

The co-operation between the reserves needs to happen into the city where we have safety networks to do something with those youths. Some of the dollars that have been spent recently on creating some of the things that happen are fantastic. But the kids have learned to use the system well. They have become as professional as their parents that are using them. So how do we teach the kids to respect what's being offered to them, if nobody respects them and nobody is there to protect them when they really want to be protected.

We talk about the johns out there. Well most of them are influential people in the community, you know. How do we protect the kids when they know who's sitting next . . . across to them? When they've been told by the girl who's working goes, so and so . . . that so and so is working with that girl over there over here in this centre, but he's also over there doing something else. The kids don't trust.

I think you need to . . . when you talk about doing CPIC (Canadian Police Information Centre) and C checks on people about who's working with these kids, you need to take that extremely seriously about the history of that person. Because kids can't respect someone who they doubt, even for a second, out there on the street. They may use the system then and then figure that's not what they really want.

That's all I have to say.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Thank you, Loretta, for a very powerful presentation, and I know members of the committee will have questions. So if you'd be willing to take questions we'll go to that now.

Mr. Yates: — I'm going to have to bow out, I'm already late for another meeting but not that I don't have any . . .

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Thank you for staying as long as you did, Kevin.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Ron, would you like to ask your question?

Mr. Harper: — Yes, I have one question that comes to mind. In your presentation you mention that there was gang-related activities on the streets here in Saskatoon. Would that gang-related activity include prostitution and be linked with other communities such as Winnipeg, Edmonton? Is it that degree of sophistication within the gang activities that various communities would be linked through the prostitution trade?

Ms. Morin: — I think that's, historically, that's the way it's always been. The girls have always circulated through the cities but now the circulation is reaching broader with the children where parents actually physically move their family, and then what happens to the kids continues to happen somewhere else.

When I talk about this, I talk from the emotion of the kids I've been talking to out there in the street. There's Winnipeg gangs that are coming to town, who are in the middle of recruiting. The kids who are getting beaten up are being beaten up by people who think they can join these other gangs.

Now, the kids who live in the community are afraid. So what are they going to do? I just recently heard that they're going to create their own gang to protect themselves from the other gangs. That's really scary business because some of these murders that have occurred amongst the youth are implemented out of fear and out of what's going on out there. And some of the girls that are recruiting other young girls, are doing the jobs for other ones that, you know, are afraid to get charged for beating, or raping, or whatever, so they recruit others to do it for them.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Are there any other committee members? June, do you have questions?

Ms. Draude: — Thank you very much. I don't know what question we can ask, that won't just show how ignorant we are about what's really going on out on the streets. But could you talk to us a little bit you . . . I've heard a couple of times today people talk about the number of suicides that's happening with the young people. Now we don't hear about that. Could you talk to me about that? And I know I'm only supposed to ask one question, but I was also very upset to hear you talk about the influential leaders that are taking children around to different reserves, you know, for . . . on this crime, you know, stealing and that type of thing. Can you talk about that too?

Ms. Morin: — Okay. Well to address the first issue, we didn't realize that there was quite a problem. And when the children started being arrested continuously, continuously, in the system, repeat offending of thefts, B and Es (breaking and entering), and that they were showing up in different areas of the province doing this, it became apparent that the kids couldn't drive themselves because they're all young kids. They're all 10, 8,

11, 12, 13 whatever. When they were showing up in Edmonton or somewhere else doing this type of B and Es, it became apparent that there was someone else behind the scene driving these children. Therefore, it would have to be someone else who was taking the items, or taking the merchandise to outlets in different cities. So that's where the police, and you know the RCMP, and the network grew as to where it was going on with these activities.

When I moved to Saskatoon, I noticed a lot of kids were in court again; that some of these kids I had known had been into B and Es, and into other things, and into trafficking, because there's older people involved, they have a less chance of being placed into jail for a longer term of time. So that's why the youths are being used to solicit and illicit criminal activity.

And the other question was suicides — yes, most, a lot of the kids I worked with were all high-risk suicides; high to low and to medium-risk suicides, some of the kids. And it was because they had no idea how to be protected by anybody. The single mothers had no idea how to protect their kids from what was going on. So a lot of these kids who are on drugs out on the street, especially I notice in Saskatoon, are I think going to increase the suicide rate of what's going to be happening here as well.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Thank you. Do you have any other questions, June or . . .

Ms. Morin: — Well I've known quite a few girls who have . . . I think if you go to the hospitals and you look at the amount of kids who have tried to commit suicide or even commented on committing suicide within the school system, the amount of kids that have OD'd recently, and in the past few years is because of a really big number. I'm not going to say a number because I don't know the exact numbers but even just province wide when we look at the amount of suicides happening on-reserve and off-reserve; it's a high number.

And I think we've got to recognize that the kids who have no protection out there are going to increase their chances of suicide because they think that's the last option to protect themselves.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Thank you. Don, do you have any questions? Okay.

Loretta I just want to thank you ever so much for bringing to our attention some of the things that you have in regards to you being very close to the issue with the Aboriginal people. I mean you're very close to the issue and we had, for instance, heard in Regina about gang-related activities from a mother whose daughter was being groomed for the sex trade. And she mentioned it was by gangs and still we talked to other people and they said no they didn't think that that was occurring in Saskatchewan and certainly it wasn't anything to worry about.

But obviously gang-related activity is probably as insidious as raping your children in the backroom of your house, or whenever.

But I appreciate you bringing your knowledge of this forward

because I guess what we have to acknowledge here is we're at a time in our history and our society where God has swept — I mean God save us, God help us — because we are just completely right off the wall and offbeat with understanding the gift of wonder and beauty in each other's lives and in our own life. And somehow we have to, you know we have to raise an awareness I believe, and become more conscious of what our lives are — what a gift they are and how they're meant to be beautiful. They're meant to be an expression of the beauty of the Creator.

And still somehow everything has been tipped upside down and inside out and just absolutely defiled. So with that comment I want to and to just . . . yes, I just wanted to mention . . . I just wanted to ask you, Loretta, I have talked to a number of Aboriginal women who are basically praying right now, and they're praying and they're doing a little bit more than that even. They're feeling that they need a plan in place in order to restore the spiritual value and principles.

And Mr. McKay talked about some of the spiritual values that the Aboriginal people held quite a long time ago. And I guess the truth of the matter is many of us have to. It just seems like it's so, you know when you have all this stuff in your face, it seems like it's an insurmountable thing, but do you know if in fact there are women that you know of that are making an out-and-out-attempt to re-teach spiritual values to the young Aboriginal people? And if so, how do you think it's . . . do you think it's being effective?

Ms. Morin: — I think when we look at learning self-esteem, learning to change your life, the youths that have been so abused need, not just like what you're saying, but they need intensive counselling, yes, but they need that father and mother figure back in their lives. And that's the hope we have that elders can inspire that sense of trust in people again, which most of these kids have lost.

How do you re-create that sense of community, and respect, and trust, and love, in a child that has been so badly abused? It's a tough question, but I know some women and I have been fortunate to get involved and going to the meetings and having been involved with them for a while. Yes, there is a few women out there who know what they're doing — not just as elders but as professionals as well.

And thank God that some of them are being entered into the programs for Nutana and for all the inner-city communities because the kids then have at least a choice of reaching out to someone. Which is slowly beginning, you know. But that mistrust of the whole system after being transferred from one area to another is so instilled, especially if they're being abused within the whole family, it's really difficult to try and reach them at times.

And I talk about this because it's close to my heart. When my kids . . . where I tried to reach my kids in understanding what was going on out there and trying to avoid and prevent the lifestyle was fear. They're afraid to go back into a school system when they know who the gangs are, when they know who's running the prostitution, when they know who's involved in it.

And to me, you can't force a child to go into something that they fear. And they learned that fear. They did not have that fear just come to them overnight. That fear was taught to them. And once kids know fear, it is extremely hard to regain that trust to go back into that. And if they fear the people that are out there, they're not going to. And if they fear to talk, they're not going to.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Loretta, there's an absentee assessment team that has been at work in Saskatoon, and they say from their findings, there are approximately 1,100 children, I think it's between the ages of 9 or 12 and 17 or something, that are truant, they're not going to school. From what you have just said, do you think that most of them are not going to school because they're afraid to go to school?

Ms. Morin: — I would say a lot of them aren't going to school because maybe they weren't functioning at a normal level before, you know, and they found it difficult to reintegrate back. The teens are probably the most that are finding it difficult, especially when they hit 17, 16, they want to go back and finish grade 9 or 10 or 11, whatever. They are the ones that have the most difficulty regrouping back to go into school, you know.

And as a parent, no matter how much you encourage that, you know, if they see it as something detrimental to them, you're not going to draw them back into that system, you know. And I don't know the solution to that because kids have to go back on a trust level, you know.

And some of the parents are being contacted for quite a long time whose kids have been out of school. They too just say, well if my kid doesn't want to go to school then I am not going to force that child to go back to school. If I know Johnny is beating up my kid in the schoolyard repeatedly or there is sexual advances happening or there's gang-related activity happening, I'm not going to keep moving from school to school to school because then I become the dysfunctional parent who's moving my kids all over the place and no one can keep track of them.

It becomes a tug-of-war between the parents and the child, and where does the meeting of the minds occur when the child is willing, you know? And some of these kids who are being sexually abused out there, the parents don't want them to go to school because that's the first contact of what's going to happen if they find out my kid's being sexually abused by, you know, through the means of prostitution.

And I speak of this because we lived on Avenue J once and I saw this little girl getting out of . . . I went to pick up my daughter from a neighbour down the street. It was about 11 o'clock at night, 10 o'clock at night, on a Friday.

This truck drove around the corner and I saw this girl and native man get out of the truck and beside him was — what I thought was his girl — but she was about 7-, 8-years-old, and a white male in the truck. She was screaming her head off and they were pulling at her to get her out of that vehicle and I stopped and I looked and I said, I wonder what's going on here.

And then he walks across the street with his, with that girl

hanging on to his hand — what I assumed was the father — and he said something to her. And I thought he was going to hit her because I started going by and you know I thought, I don't know if I should intervene or not. The guy's pretty big. He was going to hit her and she was screaming no, no, no I don't want to. No I don't want to. So we were only a couple of houses from our place so I told my daughter run, call the police, tell dad what's happening here and I'm going to follow this man. So I followed them for two or three blocks and I lost them. But I know now that it was a john because that guy stayed there for about 20 minutes waiting for him to come back with that little girl.

A few days later when the school started over, that Monday I reported it. And I asked, you know a couple of days later, I asked what happened to this little girl. You know this girl I reported what I thought I'd seen, what was going on, what I assumed was going on. And the person just looked at me and nodded and said yes you were right. And I said but what's going to happen? Well I wasn't told what was going to happen and I . . . you know that's confidential.

But to me it was an inkling of what was happening in that community and you know I started observing and noticing a lot more of that action going on out on the streets. And at that time my kids were fairly young and I thought there's something really seriously going on wrong in this community and what are we going to start doing and looking to see to put a stop to it.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Loretta, I actually do have some questions but I think I'll ask them to you privately and I know the hour's very late and members of the committee haven't had supper. I also know you haven't had supper and people who have been generously late listening to the testimony haven't eaten either. So I think . . .

I want to thank everybody for staying right through to the end.

We're going to resume tomorrow at 9 o'clock in the morning and so I want to invite you all back at that time.

Loretta, I want to thank you very, very much for, I think, an extremely important presentation. And we're going to stand adjourned at this point in time.

The committee adjourned at 7:23 p.m.