



## NATIONAL CRIME PREVENTION CENTRE

Building the Evidence – **EVALUATION SUMMARIES**

**2007-ES-13**

# NDAAWIN PROJECT

The Ndaawin Project was a culturally-based intervention aimed at preventing the sexual exploitation of children and youth in Winnipeg. Sponsored by *New Directions*, a multi-service agency for children, youth, adults and families, the project offered services to Aboriginal children aged 8 to 13 living in the Lord Selkirk Development in North Winnipeg.



The Ndaawin Project consisted of five program components:

- *Risk Assessment Tools Program* to identify children who are at risk and the actions required to help them;
- *Child and Youth Program* to enhance children's awareness of the risks of sexual exploitation and to increase their capacity to take action;
- *Prevention Curriculum Program*: an Aboriginal-specific program developed for use in schools and community organizations to help prevent sexual exploitation of children;
- *Parent Support Program* to provide support to parents whose children were vulnerable to exploitation through prostitution;
- *Community Development Program* to increase community awareness of risks to children and to aid in the development of community-based services to prevent exploitation.

Integral to the Ndaawin Project, the Advisory Council was composed of community and service agency representatives who helped staff by providing expertise, guidance, networking opportunities and linkages with relevant organizations.

## Project assessment

A process and outcome evaluation was conducted. The results were derived primarily from qualitative information including observations and interviews.

In total, 29 children participated in the Prevention Curriculum program: 18 completed the pre- and post-test measures and 21 children participated in focus group session.

A cost avoidance analysis was conducted, which compared the costs of the program to the costs to individuals and society when young people become involved in prostitution. The intent was to determine how many children would have to be successfully dissuaded from becoming involved in prostitution to justify the cost of the program.

## Key findings

The process evaluation showed that:

- There were implementation difficulties, including longer periods of time to develop the program activities than expected, and changes in project direction;



- Most elements of the project reached the target population of children;
- The prevention curriculum was seen by stakeholders as a valuable culturally-specific resource for addressing sexual exploitation with children;
- The Parent Support Program was not implemented successfully, probably due to the stigma attached to the issue of sexual exploitation;
- The Advisory Councils should have been devoted to organizational aspects such as roles and responsibilities, regular meetings, and timely and consistent communication.

The outcome evaluation showed that:

- Children who participated in the Children's Club (part of the Child and Youth Program) engaged in substantially less risky behaviour;
- Staff and management of the project felt that the Children's Club helped children build self-esteem and develop learning strategies to ensure their own safety. This was also shown in the pre- and post-tests relating to the prevention curriculum;
- Children felt a greater sense of support from the adults in their lives after the project, and an increased sense of self worth with peers;
- Project staff found that the children's behaviour had become more respectful and their outlook more positive as the project progressed;
- The cost avoidance study found that the Ndaawin Project would pay for itself each year if it prevented two children from entering the sex trade.

## Lessons learned

Lessons learned included:

- Programs designed to prevent the sexual exploitation of children through prostitution should plan to reach children between the ages of 8 to 13, since many individuals become street-involved by the age of 14, and Aboriginal youth tend to enter prostitution even earlier;
- Prevention programs should ensure that staff members have the necessary skills and experience in program development. They also need to allow enough time for program development;
- Project management staff must understand the evaluation requirements. Sharing information could help to create mutual understanding and collaboration between the project management staff and evaluation team.

## Conclusion

The Ndaawin project helped reduce the risks of sexual exploitation for the children who participated in the program. The project helped them increase their self-esteem and self-worth, and they engaged in substantially less risky behaviour.

It is critical to reach out to parents and families, to educate them and to provide appropriate support for preventing the sexual exploitation of children and youth.

*For more information or to receive a copy of the final evaluation report please contact the National Crime Prevention Centre at 1-877-302-6272, or visit our website at: [www.PublicSafety.gc.ca/NCPC](http://www.PublicSafety.gc.ca/NCPC).*

*The cost-avoidance study is available through most libraries. Its title is "An Examination of the Fiscal Impact from Youth Involvement in the Sex Trade: The Case for Evaluating Priorities in Prevention," by Linda DeRiviere. It appeared in Canadian Public Policy, Volume 31, No.2, pp. 181-206.*

*For more information, you can also visit the site web of New Directions at: [www.newdirections.mb.ca/ndaawin/index.html](http://www.newdirections.mb.ca/ndaawin/index.html).*

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