



Anti-Human Sex Trafficking

#200.51

Adopted:	February 28, 2023
Last Reviewed/Revised:	N/A
Responsibility:	Superintendent of Education
Next Scheduled Review:	2025-2026

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Catholic Church proclaims that human life is sacred, and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. This belief is the foundation of all the principles of our Catholic social teachings. We believe that every person is precious, that people are more important than things, and that the measure of every institution is whether it threatens or enhances the life and dignity of the human person.

With respect to human sex trafficking, the church declares, “It is an open wound on the body of contemporary society, a scourge upon the body of Christ. It is a crime against humanity”. Pope Francis

Human sex trafficking is one of the fastest growing and most lucrative crimes worldwide. It is predatory and devastatingly damaging to victims, survivors, their families, and communities. Human sex trafficking can include grooming, recruiting, harbouring, sextortion or controlling a person's movements using force, physical or psychological coercion or deception for the purposes of sexual exploitation.

The Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board (“Board”) is fundamentally opposed to and has a zero-tolerance policy on human sex-trafficking of persons in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion.

The Board will show compassion and exercise all available resources to assist students who may have fallen victim to or are survivors of human sex trafficking.

APPLICATION AND SCOPE:

The Board will ensure that:

- All members of the community – trustees, administrators, teachers, support staff, students, parents/guardians, parish, volunteers, and bus drivers will work collaboratively and diligently to help protect all students from predators who engage in human sex trafficking or grooming activities.
- On-going staff development and training take place at a system and school level regarding human sex trafficking awareness, signs of sex trafficking, reporting protocols of expected or confirmed sex trafficking activities and interventions.
- On-going partnerships with local parishes, police services, and community agencies are in place to support the Board’s goal to create safe and welcoming environments that protect students from being trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation.
- Academic, social, emotional, and spiritual supports will be provided for students who are victims of and have been traumatized because of human-sex trafficking.
- Curricular and program links, as well as strategies, are integrated within the Religion and Family Life Programs, and the Ontario Curriculum documents.
- The Board will work collaboratively with the Ministry of Education to develop a performance measurement framework. This framework will monitor the effectiveness of training (for example, whether staff feel they are more aware and more able to safely identify and intervene in situations where a student is suspected of being trafficked or trafficking) and whether the protocols respond to the needs of students.

The administrative procedure and supporting documents will provide a consistent school response which is necessary to provide education, reporting of, and support for students who may become victims of human sex trafficking.



REFERENCES:

- PPM 119 Developing and implementing equity and inclusive education policies in Ontario schools
- PPM 128 The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Board Codes of Contact
- PPM 166 Keeping Students Safe – Policy Framework for School Board Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocols
- Bill 157 Keeping our Kids Safe at School Act
- Bill 212 Education Amendment Act (Progressive Discipline and School Safety), 2007
- O. Reg. 265 Duties of a Principal
- O. Reg. 474/00 Access to School Premises
- Government of Canada / Public Safety Canada
- Ontario's Anti-Human Trafficking Strategy 2020-2025
- Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association – Submission to the Ministry of Education on Anti-Human Trafficking
- Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017
- Ontario College of Teachers – Duty to Report
- Catholic Social Teachings

DEFINITIONS:

2SLGBTQIA+: Is an acronym used to identify an individual who identifies as two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual.

Board Employees: An employee who works with students is defined to include administrators, teachers, early childhood educators, educational assistants, child and youth workers, social workers, psychologists, speech language pathologists and other professional and para-professional staff who have regular and direct duties with the Board's students.

Caregiver: A caregiver is defined to be either a parent/guardian or any other individual(s) who is/are charged with the responsibility for overseeing the care of a child who is a minor.

Grooming: Sex traffickers carefully and methodically work to gain their victims' trust, create a degree of dependence, and subtly promote the idea that selling sexual services is normal, acceptable, and necessary. Ultimately, successful grooming results in vulnerable people cooperating in their own exploitation and abuse and believing they have made the choice to do so independently.

Human Sex Trafficking: Human sex trafficking is a form of sexual exploitation and is a crime under the Criminal Code of Canada. It can include recruiting, harbouring, transporting, obtaining, or providing a person for the purpose of sex. It involves the use of force, physical or psychological coercion or deception. Most individuals who are trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation are women and girls, but all people may be targeted.

Sextortion: Sextortion is a serious crime that occurs when someone threatens to distribute an individual's private and sensitive material (written or images) if you do not provide them images of a sexual nature, sexual favors, or money.

School Administrator: A school administrator is defined to be either a principal or vice-principal.

Student Support Staff: Can include but is not limited to a child youth worker or social worker.

Survivor: An individual who has escaped a human sex trafficking situation.

VTRA: Violence Threat Risk Assessment Protocol.

Victim: An individual who is in the process of being recruited or is recruited for the purposes of human sex trafficking.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES:

Purpose

To provide direction for superintendents, school administrators and all staff regarding anti-human sex trafficking expectations.



1.0 Responsibilities of the Superintendent of Education

The Superintendent of Education will:

- Be responsible for staff development training regarding human sex trafficking at a system level.
- Ensure that appropriate ongoing community partnerships are maintained and expanded as needed to combat human sex trafficking activities.
- Make available academic and community support for victims of human sex trafficking.
- Ensure that curriculum plans and strategies for anti-human sex trafficking are linked to the Religion and Family Life Program, and the appropriate Ontario curriculum documents.

2.0 Responsibilities of the School Administrators

The School Administrator will:

- Ensure that all staff participate in anti-human sex trafficking staff development training, as required.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the signs that a student(s) may have become involved in or is potentially being groomed for sex trafficking activities. This includes those students who are trafficking and those who are being trafficked.
- Ensure that all staff and students are aware of their responsibilities of how to report suspected or confirmed sex trafficking of a student(s).
- Ensure all staff cooperate with Board personnel and outside agencies that may be required to fully investigate suspected or confirmed sex trafficking activity that involves a student.

3.0 Parent(s)/Guardian(s)/Caregiver(s)

Parent(s)/Guardian(s)/Caregiver(s) are encouraged to learn how to identify the signs of human sex trafficking. If human sex trafficking is suspected or confirmed, the parent/guardian is responsible for contacting local police immediately. If the matter is an emergency, call 9-1-1.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s)/Caregiver(s) should contact the school administrator who will then connect with the appropriate Student Support Services personnel.

4.0 Staff & Caregiver Awareness Training

The Board will provide professional development and awareness training as required to all Board staff. Staff professional development may include but is not limited to:

- The indicators of human-sex trafficking.
- Which populations are especially vulnerable and why.
- Reporting procedures of confirmed and suspected sex trafficking activities.
- Community resources and agencies that are available to assist students/parents/Board employees with the prevention of sex trafficking.

5.0 Staff Reporting Procedures

Reporting procedures and other important information can be accessed in the Anti-Human Sex Trafficking Protocol through School Administration and Student Support Services.

6.0 Student Confidentiality

The dignity, health, safety, and well-being of students shall be given the highest priority. Every attempt will be made to respect the student's privacy and self-esteem. All who assist in this process must maintain confidentiality.

7.0 Student Reintegration to School (Return to School Plan)

The Board will endeavor to re-integrate survivors of sex trafficking activities back into school in the event there were prolonged absences. The Board is also committed to provide educational opportunities to students who have engaged in trafficking behaviours; ensuring safety of student's directly or indirectly involved. Strategies include but are not limited to:

- Working collaboratively with resources as identified by the student including but not limited to: School Social Worker or Child Youth Worker, School Chaplain / Parish Priest, community mental health workers, Victim Services, Woman's Services, Child Welfare Agencies, Youth Justice agencies or other appropriate agencies to provide the necessary support that may be needed to assist student reacclimatize to a school / learning environment.



- Involvement of representatives as desired by the student, from Indigenous, Black, racialized and newcomer groups to provide support to victims.
- Providing transitional and alternative academic programming to support a safe return to learning.
- Supporting ongoing professional counselling services as needed.

8.0 Monitoring and Review

The Board will review this policy and administrative procedure in keeping with its regular policy review schedule or sooner if deemed necessary to do so.