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## REPORT TO VICTORIA FAMILY COURT AND YOUTH JUSTICE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2022

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**SUBJECT**     **Capital Region Action Team in-school programming**

### **ISSUE SUMMARY**

To set a direction for family court and youth justice projects for the 2022-2023 year.

### **BACKGROUND**

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and dissatisfaction with programming, the Capital Region Action Team for Sexually Exploited Youth ("CRAT") has not been offering programming. Given the Committee's focus on renewal, the CRAT Sub-Committee should assess needs and goals with its current surplus and to determine whether programming can again be offered. CRAT's current balance, held by Oak Bay, is \$13,693.29.

Children of the Street ("COTS") previously provided programming in regional schools, attending for up to two weeks at a time, doing approximately three presentations a day, with the occasional evening presentation targeted towards parents or community members interested in what the presentations contained. It has recently been booked in the region directly through specific schools, but not in a coordinated, multi-day manner, and not funded by the CRAT budget.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

#### *Alternative 1*

1. That the Committee's membership be canvassed for interested persons to sit on the Capital Region Action Team for Sexually Exploited Youth Sub-Committee;
2. That the CRAT Sub-Committee be tasked with the following, and report back at the November meeting:
  - a. To consider options for in-school programming in the areas of youth exploitation and youth safety online; and
  - b. To determine whether Children of the Street programming should be resumed for potential funding, including whether for the 2022-2023 school year, the Committee should set aside funding for such programming.

#### *Alternative 2*

1. That the Committee defer consideration until January 2023.

### **IMPLICATIONS**

Current CRAT Sub-Committee Chair, Bill McElroy, has found that since COTS was taken over by its new non-profit parent, the programming quality declined. CRAT last booked COTS in 2019 for regional schools, organized donated hotel rooms, and paid honoraria and expenses; however, costs continued to increase to around \$3,000 per year, more than the \$1,500 per annum allotted to CRAT's work. In discussion with COTS, presenters have changed since 2019, and programming is offered online or in-person. Programming can also be tailored to the needs of a particular community, to target specific issues (such as online extortion).

COTS offers a series of workshops:

Workshop Name	Grades	Content
Taking Care of Others/Ourselves	4 to 9	Interactive, two-presenter workshop teaching youth the tools to keep themselves safe from sexual exploitation, primarily related to human trafficking.
Safer Space	4 to 9	Interactive workshop to keep youth safe while using apps and social media, with a particular focus on “sextortion” attempts.
Redefining Masculinity	12 (on pause)	A workshop designed to challenge young men to speak out against male exploiters and “locker room talk”.
Youth Art Engagement Project	Multiple Ages	A social justice art project for high-risk youth

Given CRAT operates now a sub-committee of the Committee, and both CRAT and the Committee have a cash surplus, locating a service provider and soliciting interest from the School Districts and schools should be a priority for 2023.

### **CONCLUSION**

It is recommended the Committee solicit interest from its members on participating on the CRAT Sub-Committee and take steps to assign a scope of work to renew CRAT’s programming goals.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. That the Committee’s membership be canvassed for interested persons to sit on the Capital Region Action Team for Sexually Exploited Youth Sub-Committee;
2. That the CRAT Sub-Committee be tasked with the following, and report back at the November meeting:
  - a. To consider options for in-school programming in the areas of youth exploitation and youth safety online; and
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Submitted by:	Steven N. Carey, B.Sc, J.D., Senior Manager, Legal Services & Risk Management
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