

Social Return on Investment (SROI) Case Study: Safe Communities Innovation Fund NIGHT SAFETY CENTRE

Fast Facts

Overview:

- In the first two years, the Night Safety Centre had 172 contacts with women involved in sexual exploitation
- In year 3, 2,649 contacts were made by the Centre Partnership as it evolved from a central location
- Of the men accessing 'Below the Belt Drop-in', 15 per cent are HIV positive
- Adding one more evening to the 'Crossroads Drop-in and Outreach Van' resulted in 210 more contacts (compared to the same time period of the previous year)
- Over three years, the project helped to prevent victimization in a minimum of 29 situations

Social Return on Investment:

- For every dollar invested in the Night Safety Centre Partnership, there was \$1.78 in social value created by the program

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"As part of my healing process, I went back to visit the place where I used to be involved in exploitation, and dealt with it. I found empowerment in realizing I am not a victim anymore." – Program Participant

The Value of Annual Investment

The Night Safety Centre Partnership provides individuals who are involved in sexual exploitation temporary safety from violence, respite from the street, basic needs, supportive listening/counselling, and referrals. This allows clients to build a positive relationship with the Partnership staff, which is crucial to the transition out of sexual exploitation and increases reporting assault and victimization to police. Clients of the Partnership have increased their personal safety, reduced their isolation, and gained positive supports. The protective factors will position them to improve their situation and change their lifestyle positively.

Social Value Created

Each act of victimization deepens the trauma experienced by those who are sexually exploited and further entrenches them in their current lifestyle and cycle of poverty.

Providing the opportunity for needle exchange and access to condoms prevents future costs to the health care system as well as emotional stress for the individual.

The activities of the Night Safety Centre Partnership support sexually exploited individuals to reduce the level of risk in which they place themselves. As a result, individuals are less likely to be victimized and/or re-victimized. Furthermore, the Partnership's clients protect themselves from other risks, such as infectious diseases resulting from drug use or unprotected sex.

Participant Outcomes

The Night Safety Centre Partnership assists vulnerable participants to:

- Reduce exposure to the elements
- Reduce sense of isolation
- Prevent the transmission of sexually transmitted infections
- Reduce incidents of relapse (addictions and sexual exploitation)
- Reduce entry to the sex trade

Valuing Change: Social Return on Investment

Although the initial intent of the project was to support sexually exploited women after an act of violence and assist police in reporting the event, it became apparent that the clients wanted more basic services and support, such as food or warmth. The Night Safety Center and its partnership group utilized these opportunities to build a connection with clients and offer other supports in addition to these basic services.

Theory of Change

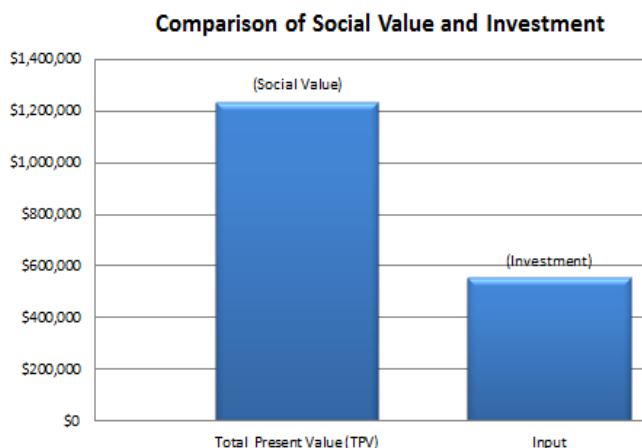
If individuals who are being exploited in the sex trade or are victims of assault are provided with support services during night hours, then they will have the opportunity to protect themselves from further instances of violence, and will have options to end their involvement in prostitution, addictions, homelessness, and the criminal justice system.

Over the course of three years, 2,810 contacts were made with sexually exploited individuals. The Night Safety Centre Partnership was available to intervene in situations that may have escalated with fatal results. The following is a breakdown of the cost per contact.

Funding Year	Number of Contacts	Annual Investment	Investment per Contact
Year 1	18	\$165,594	\$9,200
Year 2	143	\$256,341	\$1,793
Year 3	2,649	\$135,341	\$51
Total	2,810	\$557,324	\$198

The above chart illustrates the social value generated by each annual cohort of participants. Although the investment per client is quite high in the first year, the social return on investment ratio (below) indicates a positive social return. In year 2, the social return increased by 64.1 per cent. This is mainly a result of being in contact with more clients.

Funding Year	SROI Ratio
Year 1	1.05 : 1
Year 2	1.79 : 1
Year 3	2.51 : 1
Average	1.78 : 1



The Value of Annual Investment

It has been determined that with an investment of \$557,324 over three years, nearly \$1.24 million in social value was created over the three years of the program and forecasted four years following.

Preventing 29 incidents of sexually exploited individuals from being victimized (assaulted), created \$208,136 of social value. This accounts for 16.8 per cent of the total social value created. The majority (55 per cent / \$681,344) of social value, however, is created by maintaining the safety of individuals and by supporting and encouraging their contribution to society over the course of their lifetime.

Looking Forward

The Night Safety Centre and its partners envision a variety of services that serve the needs of individuals who are sexually exploited. Services spanning the spectrum of support (e.g. basic needs, harm reduction, exiting the sex trade, and recovery) are required for our community to see a reduction in sexual exploitation.

The partnerships that resulted from this initiative serve to strengthen and build an integrated service response to the rise in sexual exploitation and human trafficking. The extent of the dehumanizing exploitation and trafficking of people has yet to be fully understood. Technology and the stigma associated with prostitution have created an underground industry that keeps the vulnerable hidden. The Night Safety Centre Partnership hopes to shed light on these issues and support those in need of help.