

CHILDREN LEADED THE CHANGE TO END CHILD SEX TRAFFICKING IN CANADA, CAMBODIA AND THE PHILIPPINES

Children innovating, creating and expressing

Canada, Cambodia, and Philippines

One Child is a Canadian child and youth led organization which addresses the sale of children, child sex trafficking, online child sexual exploitation, and the sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism (SECTT) in Canada, Cambodia and the Philippines. The organization does this through prevention education, advocacy, survivor care, and survivor empowerment. In 2005, children and youth came together and founded OneChild based on the observation that children were being left out of conversations on the issue, being treated in a tokenistic way, and not being seen as partners and leaders on this issue.

A major objective for OneChild is to open pathways for children to have their voices heard and work in an intergenerational partnership with adults. To do this, children are provided with the education, training, skills, tools, mentorship, exposure and networks to lead on the following activities:

- In 2005, child-led presentations and workshops on SEC were delivered in high schools and elementary schools. This became the country's first steps to prevention education on child sex trafficking in schools. Over 40,000 children have been reached.
- In 2005, OneChild initiated and led a successful campaign to influence Air Canada to take action on the sexual exploitation of children. Children created public service announcements, started a petition, and approached Air Canada with the request for them to screen their videos on their domestic and international flights to raise awareness on SECTT and sex trafficking, as well as Canada's extraterritorial legislation. In 2006, the company disseminated the videos to 22 million passengers, and the initiative was presented as a best practice at the World Tourism Organization's meeting of the Task Force to Protect children from sexual exploitation. This was the first time any company in Canada had taken action on SECTT. Following this initiative, Air Canada worked with adult-run agencies to provide training to all of their flight attendances, fund the work of child protection agencies, and worked with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Joy Smith Foundation to return victims who have been trafficked to other cities and provinces. Other airlines such as Air Transat and West Jet also began disseminating content and training their staff.
- In 2010, OneChild along with the International Bureau for Children's Rights and Plan International Canada launched the first-ever, nation-wide campaign against SECTT that brought together airlines, airports, travel agencies, tour operators, consulates, embassies, law enforcement, and children. As part of this campaign, four members of the travel and tourism industry were trained on the issue of SECTT, by children and adults. Additionally, to ensure wide awareness-raising billboards and brochures, designed in partnership with children, were used by travel agencies and tour operators.
- In 2006, OneChild's child members launched a fundraising campaign to help fund the operating costs of a rehabilitation center built and run by the PREDA Foundation for sexually abused and sex trafficked children in the Philippines. Members also raised funds to assist PREDA in building a new center for these children, as their current center was working over capacity. Children raised \$180,000 in their schools and communities across Canada and the US. The new center- the Victoria Home for Girls has housed over 270 girls who have also received individual and family therapy, formal and informal education, vocational skills training, medical assistance, legal assistance, and human rights training. OneChild also collected school supplies, clothing and toys for the children.
- In 2013, child members raised funds to support a prevention education and leadership program for 61 at-risk children in Cambodia, as well as therapy, legal and social and legal support for 188 child victims and witnesses, as well as anti-trafficking training for local and foreign law enforcement, court officials, judges, government and embassy officials and NGOs.
- Using social media, OneChild child members have protested against brands that glorify "pimp culture." For instance, when a furniture brand used the advertising slogan "Pimp my room", members successfully demanded that the advertisement be taken down and an apology given. Another example is a prank show on Canadian TV which showed a friend setting up her friend to believe that she is being sold. After this episode was aired child members wrote to the TV station, got the episode pulled and received an apology. In another example, when a clothing company popular with pre-teens and teens launched an advertising campaign to sell a nude-colored clothing line, the company used the slogan "Send Nudes." Child members teamed up with survivors of sex trafficking, law enforcement, and other groups to protest this campaign. They participated in a video addressing the company, commented on the company's social media, and wrote a letter to the company.
- OneChild child members have also created videos, visual arts, and public displays on the topic of SEC.
- OneChild child members have established OneChild groups in their schools to raise awareness and fundraise on the issue of SEC.
- OneChild members have held information sessions for their communities.
- Members have met with elected officials such as their Mayors, and written letters to the Minister of Children, Community, and Social Services to discuss the Ontario government's commitment to educating students in schools about sex trafficking
- OneChild is currently developing a nation-wide awareness campaign aimed at children to commemorate National Human Trafficking Awareness Day on Feb 2022. Children were consulted on the design of the campaign, the advertisements for social media and participated in its implementation by speaking to the media and running an awareness campaign in their school.
- As a part of the Youth Advisory Squad program, 10 children received in-depth training on SEC and how to be activists against it. Each child is required to run a project in their school to raise awareness, advocate, and/or fundraise. Children are still in the process of coming up with their ideas, however they have expressed giving presentations in their schools, and running info sessions in their communities.

As a result 81.000 children have been reached whether through support activities or awareness raising programmes.

The organization also engages children in street situations, children with disabilities, children in other institutions, including children deprived of liberty, ethnic and religious minorities, LGBTIQ children and children who have experienced violence ie. sexual abuse, gender based violence, bullying and cyberbullying.

Student Reflect youth-led organization

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