

# Niagara Regional Police Service

Human Trafficking Unit (HTU)  
Police Services Board Meeting  
March 2024

# Human Trafficking Unit Overview

- The NRPS Human Trafficking Unit (HTU) is part of the Special Victims Unit umbrella and is located at NRPS HQ.
- The HTU is comprised of the following:
  - 3 - Full Time Detective Constables
  - 1 - Detective Sergeant
- Officer salaries are funded with Provincial Grants
- Provincial Grant funds are also used to pay for the salary of one (1) HT trained Victim Services Niagara personnel

# What is Human Trafficking?

- Human trafficking is an act of power and control.
- Usually for sexual exploitation or forced labour.
- Charges under Sections 279.01 and 279.011 in the Criminal Code of Canada.

# Ontario Anti-Human Trafficking Strategy

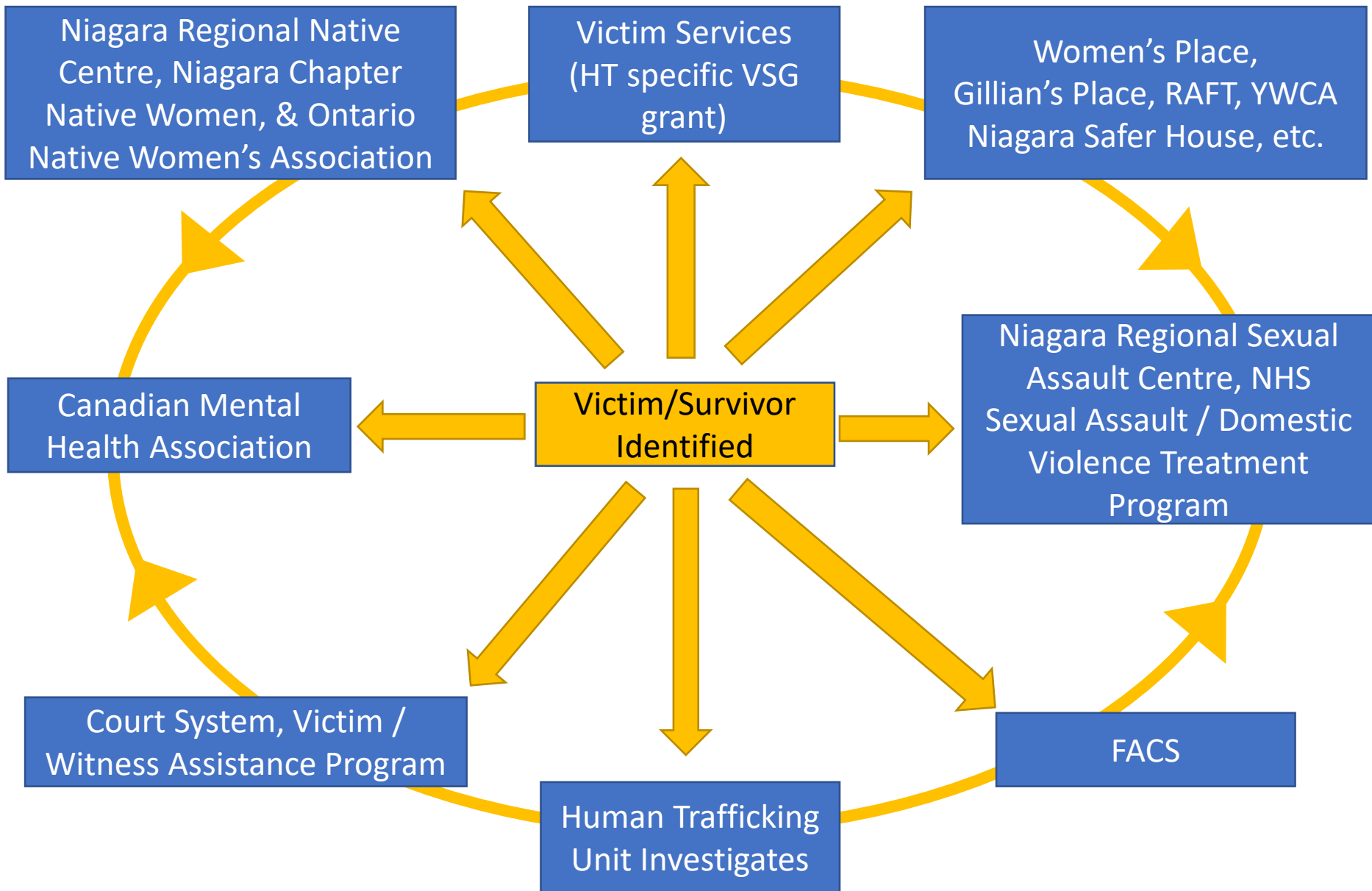
- Raising Awareness
- Protecting Victims
- Supporting Survivors
- Holding offenders accountable

# Niagara Region Anti-Human Trafficking Response Protocol

- Is a collaborative community driven protocol
- Developed between the NRPS and community partners (14 total)
- It sets out each partner's respective role, responsibility and available services.
- Ensures the most appropriate services, assistance and safety planning is provided to victims and survivors, immediate family members, and witnesses to human trafficking.

# HT Protocol Partner Agencies

- Victim Services Niagara
- Canadian Mental Health Association Niagara
- Niagara Regional Sexual Assault Centre
- Centre de Sante Communautaire Hamilton/Niagara
- Ontario Native Women's Association
- Family and Children Services
- NHS Sexual Assault / Domestic Violence Treatment Program
- YWCA Niagara Safer House
- Niagara Resource for Youth (RAFT)
- Gillian's Place
- Niagara Chapter Native Women
- Victim/Witness Assistance Program
- Niagara Regional Native Centre
- Women's Place



# HT UNIT Statistics/Caseload

- Consistent increase in number of investigations, arrests and charges since the creation of the HT Unit.
- Creation of HTU in June 2019 with two Detective Constables
- Creation of a full-time Detective Sergeant position in January 2021
- In August 2022, through a Provincial funding, staffing increased from two Detective Constable positions, to three.

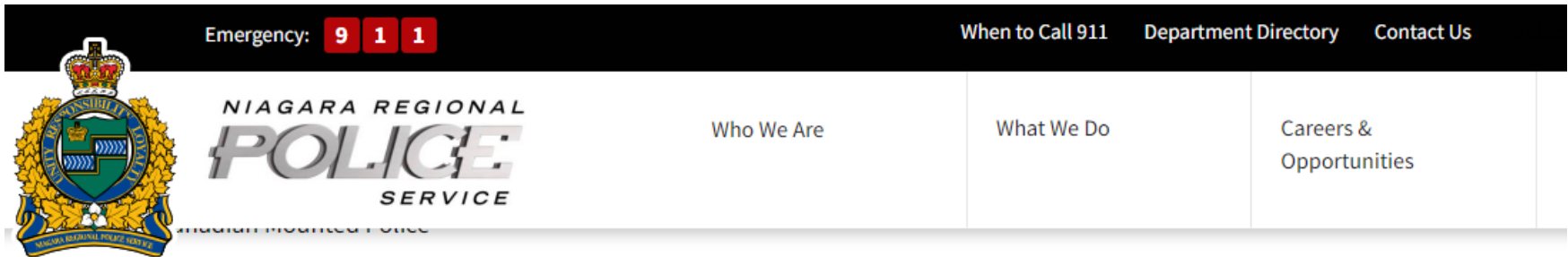


# Project Rift

- Proactive measure to identify offenders seeking sexual services from persons under 18 years of age. Goal of the project was to create community awareness and proactively protect youth from being future victims of Human Trafficking sexual abuse
- Involved partners that included OPP-IJFS, Halton, Barrie, Windsor, Hamilton, and Durham police services, RCMP, BEST, CBSA and HSI, and the NRPS ICE, DVU, and Child Abuse Units.
- **In total 13 people were arrested, and 39 charges laid.**
  - **Obtaining sexual services for consideration from a person under 18 years**
  - **Invite/counsel etc, sexual exploitation of a young person**
  - **Agreement to commit a sexual offence against a person under 18 years**
- Media release:

[NRPS Human Trafficking Project Leads to 13 Arrests – Niagara - Niagara Regional Police Service \(niagarapolice.ca\)](https://niagarapolice.ca)

# Project Rift – Media Release



Niagara Regional Police Service Chief Bill Fordy states:

***“These arrests showcase the dedication of our members in ensuring some of the most vulnerable members of our community are protected, sending a strong message that the predatory behaviours associated with human trafficking will not be tolerated in Niagara.***

***We are committed to fighting human trafficking through intelligence-gathering and working cooperatively with law enforcement and community partners to support victims and enforcement efforts. Integrated resources, the sharing of information, a victim-centred approach and community partnerships are crucial to law enforcement’s effective response to this kind of crime.”***

The investigation remains ongoing by NRPS detectives. Anyone with information about this incident is asked to contact the investigating officers by calling 905-688-4111, option 3, extension 1009544.

Members of the public who wish to provide information anonymously can contact Crime Stoppers of Niagara online or by calling 1-800-222-8477. Crime Stoppers offers cash rewards to persons who contact the program with information which leads to an arrest.

[Click Here for Crime Stoppers Online](#)

To learn more about how to prevent and identify Human Trafficking and Internet Child Exploitation click the links below.

[Human Trafficking](#)

[Internet Child Exploitation](#)

# Questions?

Human Trafficking Unit

Detective Sergeant Tara Ryan

Detective Constable Dustan Picken