



Key Findings I Host City Connections

National, Vancouver, Toronto, & Consensus Findings

In April 2026, [Ally Global Foundation](#) partnered with the [Students' Commission of Canada \(SCC\)](#) to bring 33 front-line-facing organizations and four survivor leaders together. Host City Connections brought together organizations from Vancouver and Toronto working across child and youth safety, anti-trafficking, public safety, health, victim services, and community systems. The purpose of Host City Connections was to connect and prepare service providers in Vancouver and Toronto who would be expecting a high service demand during June and July, 2026 as it pertained to child exploitation. The group looked honestly at what children and youth were facing, identified where risk may increase during the upcoming summer surge period, and strengthened practical prevention before harm escalates. SCC's [Hearing Unheard Moments Initiative](#) was utilized to support collaboration through safety.

The strongest finding was seen in alignment across sectors and cities. People were naming the same pressures: online exploitation, system strain, frontline capacity, and public awareness gaps. They also universally noted the importance and efficacy of coordinated, community-based prevention. Anti-trafficking organizations shared how their work was strengthened through networks of youth services and, likewise, youth services shared how connection to anti-trafficking organizations expanded youth's access to needed, targeted support and the knowledge base of their staff.

National Findings

Across the national conversation, participants were clear that prevention cannot sit with one sector alone. Child and youth exploitation needs a coordinated response across community organizations, public safety, health, schools, victim services, youth workers, anti-trafficking organizations, and survivor-informed leaders.

Public Safety Canada's presentation confirmed that Canada's historical federal approach is already built around prevention, protection, prosecution, partnerships, and empowerment through the National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking. It also confirmed federal coordination through Public Safety Canada, the Federal FIFA 2026 Taskforce, and federal-provincial-territorial work to strengthen readiness.

The national findings through Host City Connections conversations were:

- Organizations are preparing, but capacity is uneven.
- Frontline workers are already stretched, and surge periods add pressure to systems that are already managing high acuity.

- Online exploitation is a major concern, especially grooming, sextortion, recruitment, and child sexual exploitation through digital platforms.
- There is strong agreement that public messaging must be practical, calm, accurate, and youth-centered.
- Survivor-informed and trauma-informed practice must remain central.
- Participants want clear referral pathways, shared resources, and coordinated communication before the summer period.

Vancouver Findings

Vancouver's findings were strongly grounded in frontline youth work and practical safety planning.

The clearest theme was the need for visible, trusted, community-based youth support during the summer period. Participants spoke about youth support tables, outreach teams, relational workers, transportation support, and accompaniment to services when needed.

Vancouver participants also identified the need for:

- more staffing during high-traffic periods
- clearer after-hours referral pathways
- better coordination between community services and crisis systems
- low-barrier safe spaces for youth
- practical public awareness that does not create panic
- support for youth who may not approach police or formal systems first

The Vancouver finding is simple: the city has strong frontline relationships, but those relationships need operational support to hold during a surge period.

Toronto Findings

Toronto's findings reflected strong anti-trafficking, survivor-informed, victim services, and systems coordination expertise.

Participants emphasized that exploitation pathways are changing quickly. They identified online grooming, housing instability, newcomer vulnerability, relationship-based coercion, and social isolation as key areas of concern.

Toronto participants also emphasized:

- stronger coordination between police, victim services, youth agencies, shelters, and anti-trafficking organizations
- survivor-informed training and messaging
- better public education on what exploitation actually looks like
- practical resources for frontline workers
- the need to avoid duplication and build from existing local expertise

The Toronto finding is that the expertise is already there, but stronger coordination and shared pathways are needed so young people do not fall between systems.

Consensus Findings

Across Vancouver and Toronto, there was clear national consensus:

- Child and youth exploitation prevention must be treated as a shared community responsibility.
- Major events do not create trafficking, but they can increase pressure on vulnerable systems and create conditions where prevention matters.
- Online exploitation must be treated as a core child safety issue, not a side issue.
- Frontline workers hold critical knowledge and need to be part of planning from the beginning.
- Public messaging should be practical, calm, and grounded in reality.
- Youth are more likely to seek help from trusted adults and relational community supports.
- Survivor-informed practice must shape training, communications, and response pathways.
- The work should continue beyond the Summer 2026 period.

Final Summary

Host City Connections made one thing really clear: communities are already doing this work. Frontline workers know where young people are vulnerable, organizations are responding every day, and systems are trying to keep up with risks that are changing quickly, especially online.

What came through across both cities was not a lack of effort. It was the need for stronger coordination between the people already carrying this work.

The next step is not more awareness alone. It's making sure young people can reach support earlier, frontline workers have practical tools and connections, and communities have clear pathways that actually work in real time.

The message across Canada was consistent: protect childhood, support the frontline, and strengthen the systems around the people already doing the work.