



# Operation Love Bomb:

Utilizing the power of art as a crime prevention tool.

Report prepared by:

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## What is Love Bomb?

The Love Bomb Project is a unique and innovative Crime Prevention/Awareness tool that breaks all social and cultural barriers to assist in combating Sex Exploitation and Human Trafficking. Shameless Hussy Productions and Cpl Harvey with the RCMP have partnered on this project since 2015, which has resulted in over 60 shows across BC, Alberta and Saskatchewan.

Love Bomb itself is a rock show in a play that follows the story of a mother in search for her missing, teenaged daughter. In her search, she comes across the newest You Tube sensation, Justine Chambers. The lyrics to Justine's hit song, *Missing the Point*, hit close to home for the mom, and she follows the clues to uncover more of the mystery surrounding what happened to her daughter. Don't be fooled by the fictional characters that are depicted, because a large majority of the content is pulled from real life cases. The writer, Meghan Gardener, put in an exceedingly dedicated research effort, working with police and Crown prosecutors to create the most realistic version of events she could. Many of the circumstances in the play mirror what victims had gone through in the landmark R v Moazami case out of BC. This is just one more example as to what makes this play such a poignant and well received crime prevention tool.

## How Does it Work for Crime Prevention/Awareness?

Due to the important topic that is covered during the play, there is always a talk back session at the end of each show. This provides the opportunity for local resources relating to sexual exploitation and human trafficking to share information and awareness on the topic. Anyone who works in outreach or law enforcement understands that getting the message out is one step, but ensuring the message is received is a challenge in itself, especially considering the content. The very unique medium of the play has proven its success in touching **all** audiences and provides the platform for a very engaged discussion on this dangerous issue that continues to infect communities across Canada.

Other Topics that come up in talk backs to assist in educating youth and parents are:

- Internet Safety (Security settings and sexting)
- Drug/Alcohol use, and safety protocols
- Laws about consent
- Warning signs to look for if you or a loved one may be being groomed
- What is the definition of Love Bomb?



In addition to the talk back portion, a study guide is also used, and provided to educators in advance of the production to prepare students for the play and often used after to debrief the content brought forward.

## Who is the Target Audience?

Human Trafficking is a multi-billion dollar industry, second only to drugs worldwide. Much like the drug industry, victims of Human Trafficking, including sex trafficking, come from a variety of backgrounds and socio-economic statuses. Experiences have shown throughout Canada that it does not matter if there

is a bicycle or a Mercedes Benz as the family form of transport, the predators in this industry do not discriminate. Victims are drawn into this industry as young as 11 years old, and the average age of a human trafficking victim is 14-15 years old. As such, the primary target is youth, anyone who has a youth in their life, or anyone that works with youth. Ultimately, the more people that we can reach, the more of an impact we can have and the more people we can keep safe.

## How is it Funded?

Like many important projects, funding is a constant challenge. The various partners involved work together to secure the funding required to reach as many people as possible.

Funding for tours to date have been the result of community funding, business sponsors at the local level, as well as various grants. Seeing the impact that this project has had to date, Shameless Hussy Productions and Cpl Harvey continue to look for new ways to fund and expand the project until every Canadian has the tools they need to stay safe.

## Summary of the Project to Date:

This unique partnership between Cpl Sue Harvey and Shameless Hussy Productions first toured in the fall of 2016. Since then, the project has expanded, performing over 60 shows, in 38 different communities, across 3 Provinces (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan). These tours have touched communities North and South, big and small. The following is a breakdown of the tours:

### **South Peace Region, BC** (Fall 2016)

8 shows in Fort St John, Dawson Creek, Tumbler Ridge and Chetwynd

### **Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island, BC** (Spring 2017)

13 shows in Surrey, Vancouver, Abbotsford, Duncan, Victoria, Saanich and Lytton

### **Highway of Tears/Haida Gwaii, BC** (Fall 2017)

21 shows in Williams Lake, Quesnel Fraser Lake, Burns Lake, Vanderhoof, Fort St James, Prince Rupert, Queen Charlotte City, Masset, Nass Valley, Victoria, Duncan and Courtenay

### **Voices Against Violence Conference** (Winter 2017)

2 shows in High Level, AB

### **Western Canada, BC/AB/SK** (Fall 2018)

20 shows in High Prairie, Peavine Metis Settlement, Alexis, Enoch, Edmonton, Alexander, Maskwacis, Goodfish/Whitefish Lake, Saddle Lake, Leader, Creighton, Regina and Surrey.

**Acknowledgements:** The Love Bomb Team would like to acknowledge the following partners who have assisted and contributed to the success of the various tours to date:

- E Div Indigenous Policing Section
- Abbotsford Police Youth Section
- 'E' Div Strategic Prevention Services Unit
- Sgt Stephanie Ward and the 'K' Division Indigenous Policing Section who have become

invaluable partners in the expansion of Love Bomb in Alberta

## Results and Feedback:

The various tours have reinforced the partners' original assessment that Love Bomb surpasses all cultural and socio-economical barriers in order to provide a very important awareness to the communities. Audiences of all different demographics, communities big and small, have connected with the characters and in turn realized how the young person in their life (or them as the young person themselves) can make decisions to protect against the predators out there. In fact, the talk back sessions throughout have engaged in discussions of numerous, yet very much related issues, such as cyber-security and ways to protect the various predators that lure through computers.

The involved partners weighed the success of the tours heavily on the feedback of the schools and parents, but also on the feedback from the subject matter experts that joined along the way. The following is feedback received by both subject matter experts, and other stakeholders who are working toward combating Human Trafficking in Canada:

*“As someone who has been involved in the field of human trafficking for almost 6 years, I found that "Love Bomb" was a very true representation of how recruitment / grooming of our youth occurs in our local communities. It was also told in a fashion that all people, especially the youth target audience, could relate to. Youth are not always interested in listening to an authority figure speak, which can often result in crucial information not being processed by them; however, with "Love Bomb" not only were the youth interested in the play itself, they were interested enough to stay after the play to ask questions, and some were interested enough to come back out for a second show with their families. I think that nothing can speak to the power of "Love Bomb" any more than that.*

*I have found that school districts often shy away from having an actual human trafficking talk in their schools because they view it more as a sex education talk and less as a safety education talk. With plays like "Love Bomb" available as a resource, there is no longer the need for a traditional talk to occur, as the play very effectively bridges the gap, if not more so.”* -**Cpl Jassy Bindra the Human Trafficking Coordinator for BC and Yukon**

*“Voices Against Violence was by far the best conference I have attended. The presenters were extremely informative and had a unique way of keeping the attendees engaged. The highlight of the 2 day conference, for me, was Love Bomb. As someone who has experienced exploitation and trafficking I was blown away at how realistic this representation was. It felt like they had written my experience into a play and I was instantly connected. I was so moved by it I went to see it a second time! I'd love to see this show performed all over Canada so we can bring awareness to our youth and our communities.”*

**-Alicia Jean, Victim Service Advocate for the Centre to End All Sexual Exploitation**

*“This presentation was ‘POWERFUL’ to see! [It is] a must see for all service providers, community, parents and youth!!!”* - **Anonymous attendee of the VAV Conference**

*“I am very familiar with the topic, but I felt the presentation was new which allowed it to be presented in a more realistic fashion. By “entertaining”, the audience, it was enjoyable to sit through the show but at the same time the story that was being told was very somber and scary, but real. For someone who isn't in touch with this subject, it would have been very easy to understand and connect with the reality of the story. Great show!! I see the benefit of the talk back and I think it is a great opportunity for the local*

*detachment/ police to communicate with the public on the issue.” -Detachment Commander from North District BC*

*“This was an amazing presentation that really draws attention to a troubling, but very real part of our world. As a family member to a child that was groomed by North Preston’s Finest and then moved to [another location in Canada\*], I believe this presentation is very important for all to see. I believe this should be shown to [child protection] staff as it reminds everyone just how vulnerable the children we work with are. If you haven’t been touched by trafficking, you need a presentation like this to make it very real.” - Anonymous attendee of the VAV Conference*

## Prospective and Future Tours:

### Winter 2019

Love Bomb is returning to Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland in early 2019. Working in partnership with members from the ‘E’ Division Indigenous Policing section, this tour will focus on communities big and small primarily in the Northern part of the island, while also making stops in the Fraser Valley.

### Fall 2019

Current plans for the fall include stops in Alberta and Saskatchewan. However, with demand growing, the tour may include other stops across Canada. TBD

## Contact:

For more information on the play please visit [www.shamelesshussy.com](http://www.shamelesshussy.com) or contact Renee Iaci at [Renee@shamelesshussy.com](mailto:Renee@shamelesshussy.com) or Cpl Harvey at [susan.harvey@rcmp-grc.gc.ca](mailto:susan.harvey@rcmp-grc.gc.ca).

