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REPORT

Peel Police Service Board

For Information

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Cross-Reference File Class: _____

Date: April 24, 2024

Subject: 2023 PERSONS AT RISK ANNUAL REPORT

From: Nick Milinovich, Deputy Chief, Investigative and Emergency Services Command

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Peel Police Service Board receive the 2023 Persons at Risk Annual Report, as part of the annual reporting requirements.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- Child Abuse and Neglect
- Elder and Vulnerable Adult Abuse
- Family and Intimate Partner Violence
- Youth Crime Report
- Internet Child Exploitation Safety and public awareness.

Discussion:

The purpose of this report is to provide the Board with a summary of distinct fields related to Persons at Risk. The reporting categories set out in this Report relate to the following five (5) areas:

- Child Abuse and Neglect** – reporting area, Special Victims Unit
- Elder and Vulnerable Adult Abuse** – reporting area, Community Mobilization and Well-Being
- Family and Intimate Partner Violence** – reporting area, Family and Intimate Partner Violence
- Youth Crime Report** – reporting area, Youth Engagement
- Internet Child Exploitation** – reporting area, Internet Child Exploitation Unit

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Background

One of the core responsibilities of the Peel Regional Police (PRP) Special Victims Unit (SVU) is to conduct thorough investigations into allegations of child abuse (children under 18 years of age) by caregivers, a category which includes, but is not limited to parents, babysitters, teachers, daycare providers, child youth workers and foster parents.

In recognizing that child abuse can have serious long lasting traumatic effects on the victim, SVU pledges to be sensitive to the needs of victims while providing assistance and support during investigations, working cooperatively with The Children's Aid Society of the Region of Peel (Peel CAS) and community partners.

All investigations in SVU are conducted in accordance with the PRP Criminal Investigation Management Plan and the Region of Peel Child Abuse Investigation Protocol.

The Enhanced Violence Against Women Protocol spear headed by the Peel Committee Against Women Abuse (PCAWA) came into effect in 2018. Peel Regional Police were actively involved in the protocol's development. The protocol assists member agencies in providing a consistent, supportive, and inclusive response to reduce the systemic barriers that exist for survivors of violence in the Region.

Certain designated offences are mandated by the Solicitor General and has been since 1995, to be investigated in accordance with the Ontario Major Case Management System established guidelines. Officers within SVU are trained to a level that meets or exceeds the necessary investigative skills; they receive on-going training, participation in courses such as:

- Sexual Assault Investigators Course
- Major Case Management Course
- Power case Course
- Investigating Offences Against Children Course
- Shaken Baby and Advanced Head Trauma Conference
- Forensic Interviewing Course
- Search Warrant Course
- Advanced Search Warrant Course
- Preparation, Engage, Account, Closure and Evaluation (PEACE) Interviewing Course
- Phased Interview Model for Suspects (PIMS) Course

Child abuse investigations where young victims suffer serious, life-threatening injuries are usually complex and will often hinge on medical evidence. Over the last several years, SVU has on average, investigated ten (10) of these serious child abuse cases per year.

SVU liaises and works collaboratively with numerous social services and community agencies within the Region of Peel. The Region of Peel Child Abuse Investigation Protocol guides these relationships. Participating agencies include the following:

- Trillium Health Partners
- Peel CAS
- Crown Attorney's Office
- Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board
- Ministry of Attorney General – Peel
- Every Mind
- Peel District School Board
- William Osler Health System

The Protocol communicates the required reporting, investigative and legal responsibility processes related to incidents of child abuse with the goal of ensuring the safety and well-being of children in Peel Region. The Protocol directs that the PRP and the CAS, working together, investigate incidents of a criminal nature jointly.

Findings

In 2023, SVU received **287** consults¹ requiring assistance directly from the Children's Aid Society. The consults/referrals for assistance were for information and/or a consultation on an incident they were investigating, with some of these incidents leading to a joint investigation. The review of referrals is an ongoing joint process between PRP and CAS to maintain and refine the reporting criteria and achieve a consistent method of evaluating occurrences.

Calls for Assistance Received from the CAS

2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
708	509	725	377	287

CAS Consultations - Breakdown

Incident Type	2023
Total Non-Joint Investigations	161
Total Joint Investigations	126
Physical Assault Investigation	72
Sexual Assault Investigation	54
Total Consults	287

Child Abuse Investigations

In 2023, there was an 18.18% decrease from 2022 in the number of investigations involving Sexual Offences against Children. There was also a 10% decrease in the number of Physical Assaults against Children from 2022. There were 7 neglect investigations, which is an increase of 1 case from previous year. Overall, there was a 6.3% decrease in the number of total victims from 2022 to 2023.

The table below lists the number of physical, sexual and neglect investigations undertaken in the Region in relation to children (<18).

ABUSE TYPE	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2022-23 variation
Sexual Offences Against Children	306	238	302	318	292	- 8.18%
Physical Assaults Against Children	694	695	435	502	475	- 5.38%
Neglect	1	1	8	6	7	+16.67%
Total Investigations	1001	644	745	826	774	-6.3%

¹ In 2023, SVU collected statistics for the total amount of CAS consults, via Referral Forms received (from CAS). The total does not include other methods of correspondence between CAS/SVU; including emails, phone calls and faxes from the CAS.

Child Abuse and Neglect Statistics & Methodology

ABUSE TYPE	2023
Sexual Offences Against Children	292
Physical Assaults Against Children	475
Neglect	7
Total Investigations	774

Methodology:

- Victim report violation codes: Aggravated Assault, Assault, Assault with a weapon, Attempted Murder, Sex Assault, Sex Assault with a weapon, Invitation, Interference, Sexual Exploitation, Child Pornography, Making Sexually Explicit Material Available to a Child
- All victims were under 18 at the time of the offence.
- The relationship between the offender and victim excludes spouse, girlfriend/boyfriend, ex-girlfriend/ex-boyfriend, intimate relationship, spouse and separated or divorced.
- Reports were excluded where the offender/culprit was under 18 years of age (Youth on youth assaults, bullying, high school fights)².
- Neglect related occurrences (Fail to provide necessities and Abandon child) numbers were extracted using Criminal Code section numbers (215(1) and (2) and 218). 1 occurrence under s.215 was removed, as the victim was not a youth.
- The count reflects the number of victims, not the occurrence numbers (Many reports have multiple victims)
- Unfounded reports were excluded.
- The data pertains to all investigations within PRP, not just SVU.

Below is a detailed breakdown of the sexual and physical offences against children (not including Neglect related offences):

ABUSE TYPE	2022	2023
Aggravated Assault Level 3	2	5
Assault Level 1	323	317
Assault With Weapon/Causing Bodily Harm/Choking	171	148
Attempted Murder	6	5
Invitation to Sexual Touching	4	9
Sexual Assault	221	160
Sexual Assault with Weapon/ Cause Bodily Harm/Choking	1	4
Sexual Exploitation	4	6
Sexual Exploitation of person with disability	1	NIL
Sexual Interference	85	111
Sexually Explicit Material to Child with Intent	2	2
Total	820	767

² Sexually motivated incidents involving youth on youth were not excluded, as this was included in the previous year's data.

Proposed Direction

The proposed direction of SVU is to continue with our goals and objectives to protect and support children by conducting thorough investigations into allegations regarding child abuse, through full co-operation between the Peel Regional Police, the Peel Children's Aid Society, and the community.

SVU key goals and objectives:

- Promote public safety in the areas of child abuse and sexual assault.
- Identify and successfully prosecute offenders.
- Educate and increase public awareness of community concerns.
- Provide assistance and support to victims.

Strategic Plan Alignment

Goal: 1. Achieve Community Safety and Well-being in Collaboration with Partners

Priority: 1.1 Identify and respond effectively to citizen calls for service and community crime trends

SVU contributes to the achievement of the community safety and well-being with a focus on crime prevention and response. Members of SVU strive to protect and support children by conducting thorough investigations into allegations regarding child abuse, through full co-operation between the Peel Regional Police, the Peel Children's Aid Society and the community.

SVU key goals and objectives:

- Promote public safety in the areas of child abuse and sexual assault
- Identify and successfully prosecute offenders
- Educate and increase public awareness of community concerns
- Provide assistance and support to victims

Additionally, SVU members are in communication with our external stakeholders on developing trends and which situations and problems require additional supports and strategy.

Equity and Inclusion Considerations

Members of SVU continue to develop understanding and awareness related to differing beliefs, which enable us to provide culturally sensitive services to all individuals that live, work, and visit the Region of Peel.

- a) The Religious and Cultural Guidebook (Equity and Inclusion Bureau) is utilized as a resource for our members, when conducting investigations where religious or cultural beliefs might play a role or impact the situation in some capacity.
- b) Management Action Plan for 2023 incorporates a re-emphasis on Front-line Policing, adoption of Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) model within the parameters of the Special Victims Unit.
- c) SVU will commit to CSWB approach and intervention to investigations, through engagement, with external agencies (VSOP, Peel CAS, Chantel's Place, Embrace and Hope 24/7), education and enforcement, when addressing the root causes of crime and social disorder.
- d) SVU investigators continue to work cohesively and proactively with CSWB in relation to investigations where the root cause of the situation is based upon Mental Health and Addictions.

SVU adopt a philosophy and a concept focused on increasing community safety in partnership with the community by reducing crime, victimization, and social disorder.

Organizational Wellness/Occupational Health and Safety/Risk Management

- a) Given the sensitive and graphic nature of investigations, members assigned to SVU are designated as “high risk” and are subject to the Wellness Check-In Program. PRP is committed to the well being of all our personnel; and,
- b) Established protocols and partnerships maintained with social services and community agencies contribute to ensuring that PRP can respond professionally to incidents of child physical and sexual abuse.

Conclusion

PRP SVU continues to work collaboratively with our community partners within the Region of Peel. The Child Abuse Investigation Protocol has been recognized as a standard for the province and is a working document that is a testament to our commitment to children and families within the Region of Peel.

ELDER AND VULNERABLE ADULT ABUSE

Discussion

Background

This report provides information about the mandate of the Peel Regional Police (PRP) Elder Abuse and Vulnerable Adult Coordinator and the number of related investigations undertaken in adherence to Ontario Policing Standards LE-021. PRP Directive 1-B-701 (F) also provides instructions and guidelines and serves to educate members of the existence of abuse and neglect of elderly and/or vulnerable adults. It also provides instructions for what action is to be taken when encountered.

The role of the Elder and Vulnerable Adult Abuse Coordinator includes:

- Act as a liaison for all frontline officers and all PRP bureaus when they require assistance in the investigation of Elder/Vulnerable Person Abuse.
- Provide assistance by referring members of the community to external partners and community groups. These groups work collaboratively with the Elder Abuse/Vulnerable Person Coordinator to provide support and resources for Victims, People in Need, Family Members and Caregivers.
- Coordinate training programs, conduct lectures, and disseminate information to members of this service and the public.
- Review all police occurrences identified as “Elder Abuse” or “Vulnerable Person Abuse” which is any occurrence involving a person 60 or more years of age or who is considered a “Vulnerable” (18+) person, who has been the Victim, the Accused or the Complainant of abuse or suspected abuse

- Review police occurrences that involve personal injury or threat of personal injury, loss of property, general mistreatment of older adults or vulnerable persons. These occurrences could be both Criminal and Non-Criminal in nature.

The Elder and Vulnerable Adult Abuse Coordinator is the policy centre for the following PRP directives:

<u>Issue Number</u>	<u>Subject</u>
I-B-701 (F)	Elder and Vulnerable Adult Abuse

Definition:

Elder abuse/vulnerable adult abuse refers to any act or behaviour that harms or threatens to harm the health or well-being of an elderly or vulnerable adult. The abuse is often caused by someone in a position of trust or authority that the elderly/vulnerable adult relies upon for their basic needs. Forms of abuse include, but are not limited to physical, sexual, financial and psychological abuse and neglect, whether active or passive.

The age of 60 years has historically been used by P.R.P. as a benchmark for collecting data with respect to incidents involving possible or actual elder abuse, and is the standard amongst police services throughout Ontario.

Persons 60 Years of Age and Over

2021 population estimates for the City of Brampton and City of Mississauga are as follows:

Total Population 1,374,445

Source: Statistics Canada; 2021 Census of Population.

2021 population estimates for age cohort over 60 years estimates for the City of Brampton and City of Mississauga are as follows:

Population 60+ 283,455

Percentage of population 60+ 20.6%

Source: Statistics Canada; 2021 Census of Population.

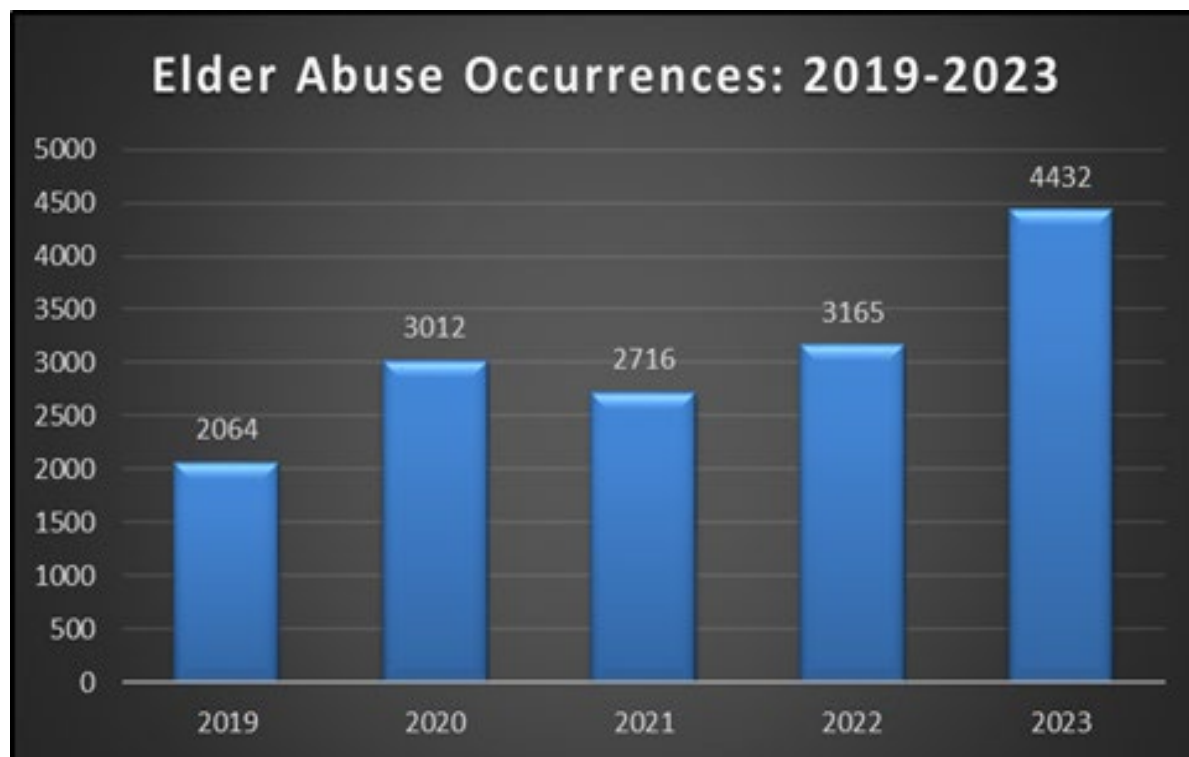
Findings

Between January 1st, 2023 and December 31st, 2023 the Elder Abuse Coordinator reviewed **4432** Police occurrences involving Elder person(s) / Vulnerable adult(s). This was a 40% decrease from the **3165** occurrences reviewed in 2022.

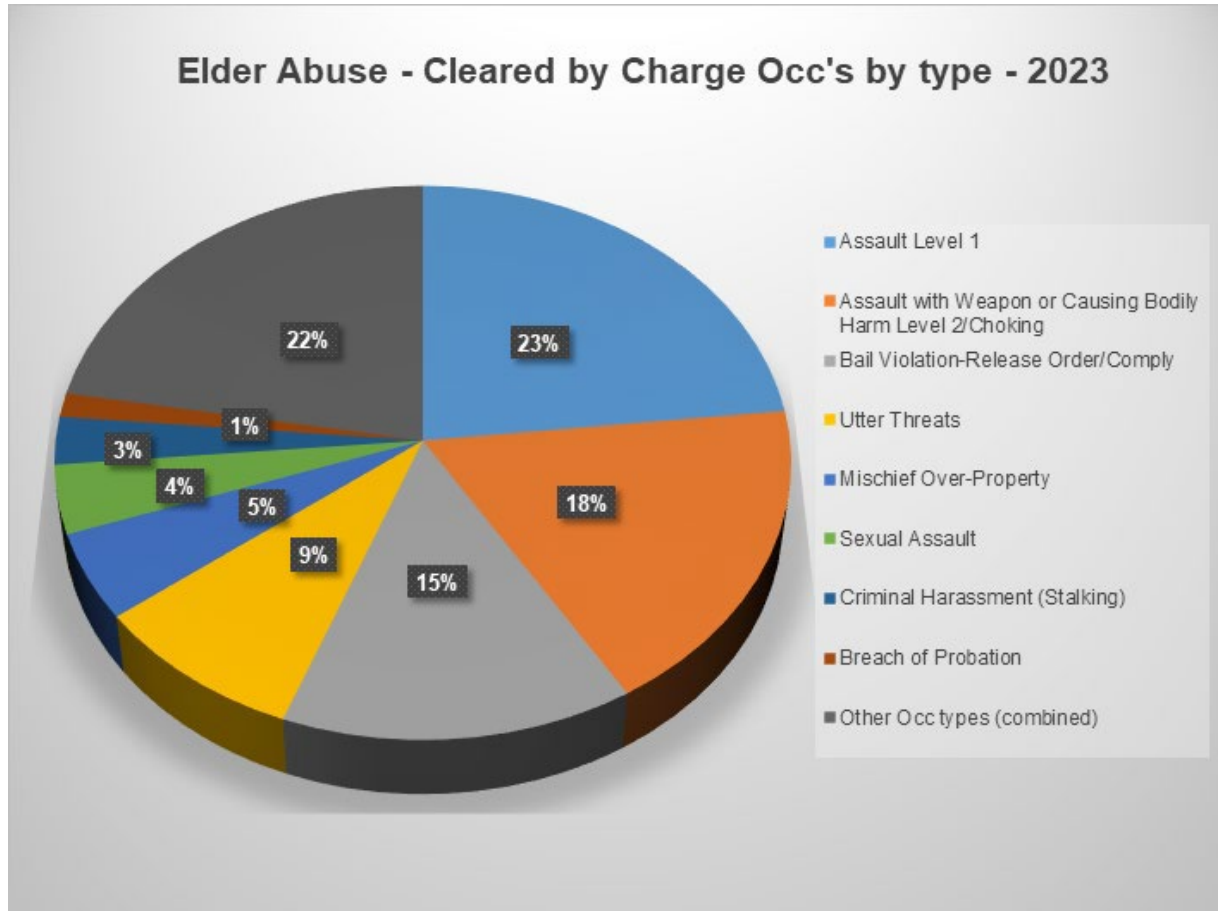
These **4432** occurrences were resolved as follows:

Occurrence Status	Count of Occurrences	%
Complete - solved (non-criminal)	2659	60%
Cleared by charge (includes charges recommended)	576	13%
Open/still under investigation	484	11%
Insufficient evidence to proceed	399	9%
Unfounded	160	4%
Clr other: Departmental discretion	107	2%
Clr other: CSC identified - vic/comp request no further action	36	1%
Victim/complainant declines to proceed (no CSC identified)	6	0%
Clr other: Death of CSC (not suicide)	2	0%
Clr other: Incident cleared by other muni/prov/fed agency	2	0%
Clr other: CSC under 12 years of age	1	0%
Total	4432	100%

Number of Incidents Identified as Potential Elder Abuse 2019 - 2023:



Breakdown of the 576 incidents cleared by charge - 2023:



COMMUNITY REFERRALS

Upon review of the 4432 occurrences, the Elder Abuse Coordinator provided 280 consultations to community members to offer education and resources. Of those consultations, the Elder Abuse Coordinator made 27 direct referrals to Social Services, Public Guardian and Trustee and to internal Peel Regional Police Bureaus. This included referrals to COAST and the Divisional Mobilization Unit for follow up and continued support for elder and vulnerable persons within the community.

PRESENTATIONS

In 2023, the Elder Abuse Coordinator provided 6 internal training sessions to various PRP personnel including Officers attending the Mental Health Course, New Recruits and Divisional Mobilization Training.

Externally, 31 virtual and in-person presentations were delivered to community members comprised of emergency medical services, community agency workers, long-term care service providers, residents, and caregivers, elders living in their own home, volunteers and neighbourhood associations. The presentations were designed to educate the participants as to the issues surrounding elder abuse and vulnerable person abuse.

SENIOR SAFETY CALENDERS

The Elder Abuse Coordinator worked with Corporate Communications in developing a Safety for Seniors Calendar. This calendar included information and resources in relation to Senior Safety and Elder Abuse. Seven thousand calendars were distributed to various seniors groups and organizations within the Region. The Senior Safety Calendar is extremely popular with Seniors, and demonstrates to the Public one of the many ways that Peel Police is dedicated to making the Region of Peel, “A Safer Community Together.”

ELDER ABUSE COMMITTEE INVOLVEMENT

The Elder Abuse Coordinator sits on three committees in the Region of Peel that impact Elder and Vulnerable Persons. The role of the Coordinator on these committees is to provide interpretation, direction and guidance from a police perspective on issues tabled. It is also an opportunity to engage stakeholders and partners.

- Law Enforcement Agencies Protecting Seniors (L.E.A.P.P.S.)
- Peel Elder Abuse Prevention Network (P.E.A.P.N.)
- Vulnerable Person Registry Committee (V.P.R.C)

Strategic Plan Alignment

Goal: 1. Achieve Community Safety and Well-being in Collaboration with Partners

Priority: 1.1 Identify and respond effectively to citizen calls for service and community crime trends

Equity and Inclusion Considerations

Addressing elder abuse in Peel Region requires a comprehensive approach that considers equity and inclusion. Here are some key considerations:

1. **Respecting Different Cultures:** Peel Region has people from many cultures, each with their own views on aging and family. It's important to understand and respect these differences when helping with elder abuse. Support should be sensitive to different cultural needs.
2. **Language Help:** Some elders might struggle to get help because of language barriers. Offering support in multiple languages spoken in Peel Region ensures everyone can get the help they need.
3. **Making Services Accessible:** Some older adults have disabilities or mobility issues. Services like hotlines or shelters need to be easy for everyone to use, including those with disabilities.
4. **Involving the Community:** Work with community leaders, religious groups, and others to talk about elder abuse and how to stop it. This helps reach out to older adults who might be isolated or at risk of abuse.

Conclusion

Elder Abuse continues to be a priority for Peel Regional Police with the continued growth in our aging community. The Elder Abuse Coordinator will continue to represent Peel Regional Police with various community partners and social agencies to provide the necessary resources and education to support seniors and vulnerable adults. This priority population will continue to be supported by the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan “Community Safety and Well Being Together” by focusing on a Plan to implement strategies and initiatives identifying and supporting victims, offenders and priority populations (1.4)

FAMILY AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Background

All police services in Ontario are required by Adequacy Standard LE-024 to implement one or more models set out in the Ministry guidelines for the investigation of domestic violence occurrences and to ensure that the police service has access to trained domestic violence investigators. Peel Regional Police (PRP) continues to meet organizational needs and has developed and implemented a specialized Intimate Partner Violence Unit responsible for undertaking, managing, and reviewing all Intimate Partner Investigations.

The Peel Regional Police Intimate Partner Violence Unit (IPV) plays a key role in ensuring compliance with both internal and external legislation governing this Service's response to matters involving Intimate Partner Violence.

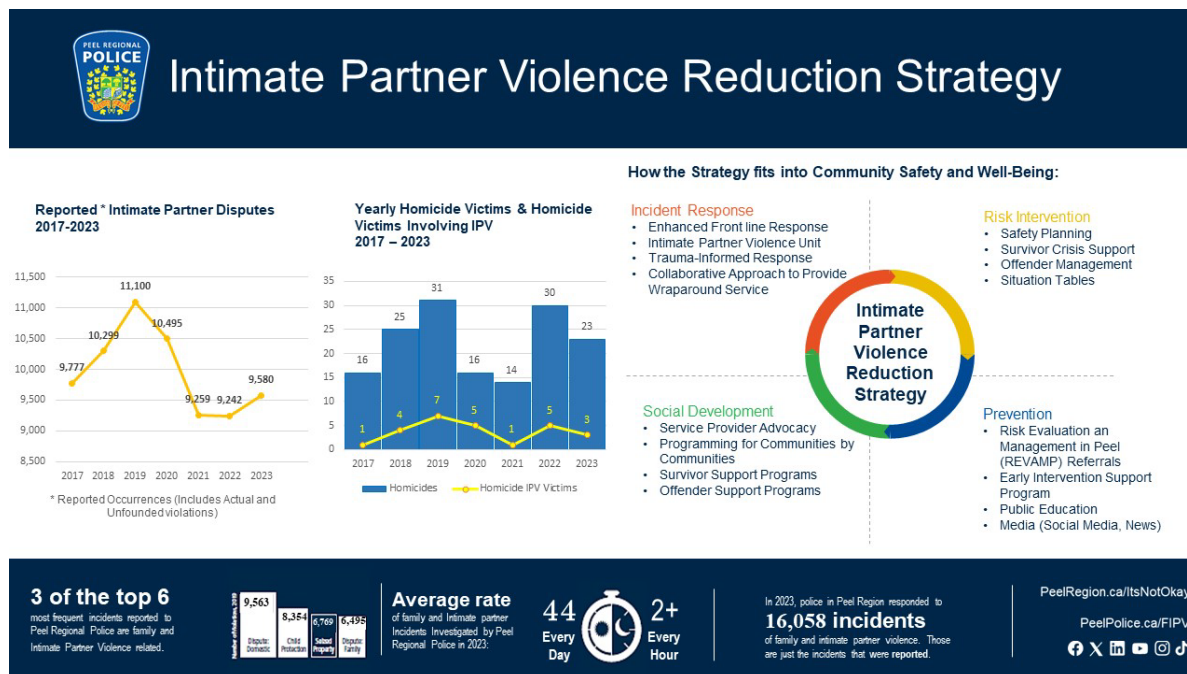
The IPV Unit consists of 57 Detective Constables, 8 Detectives, and 1 Detective Sergeant. The IPV Unit is located within the Safe Centre of Peel at 60 West Drive in the City of Brampton. The Safe Centre of Peel, led by Catholic Family Services of Peel Dufferin is based on the Family Justice Centered Model. Safe Centre of Peel includes organizations that specialize in high-risk crisis support, housing, family services, child welfare, education, settlement, multi-cultural, legal and employment. This partnership works in collaboration with 17 victim support agencies.

IPV is the policy centre for the following PRP directives:

<u>Issue Number</u>	<u>Subject</u>
I-A-602 (F)	Criminal Harassment
I-B-718 (F)	Project Guardian - Pilot Project
I-B-713 (F)	Intimate Partner Incidents

Family and Intimate Partner Violence is one of the top priorities of PRP and aligns with the priorities of the Community Safety and Well Being framework. CSWB has been invaluable in ensuring service alignment to the communities' needs and interests.

Intimate Partner Violence Reduction Strategy



Findings

Intimate Partner Violence calls remain the number one call for service for PRP and are considered to be of the highest priority. Frontline Uniform officers are the first responding officers and once the offence is deemed as Intimate Partner related, the IPV unit is contacted and IPV investigators take carriage of the investigation. The victim is transported to the Safe Centre of Peel where an interview is conducted by a specialty-trained investigator from the IPV unit in a soft interview room. Upon completion of the interview, the victim is immediately referred to our community partners providing them with wrap around support services.

The mandatory charge guideline, as directed by the Province, is strictly adhered to. Where reasonable grounds exist to believe that a criminal offence has occurred, within an intimate partner relationship, officers shall lay charges. PRP continues to be in compliance with the mandatory charge guideline of the Province of Ontario. PRP has comprehensive directives that provide guidelines to intimate partner investigations. These directives include detailed steps on how domestic related investigations are documented to ensure that officers are conducting thorough investigations.

The partnership with The Safe Centre of Peel has strengthened our community by providing single location services that are coordinated, responsive and accessible to those who have experienced Intimate Partner Violence.

The development of the Intimate Partner Violence Unit has provided:

- Enhanced relationships with our community partners creating a more collaborative information exchange.
- A more effective and efficient service delivery.

- A reduction in work load for front line personnel.
- Overall, better monitoring of high-risk offenders.
- Enhanced and compassionate care for survivors.
- Increased and immediate access to supports and services for survivors exposed to Intimate Partner Violence.
- Less barriers and built positive relationships between PRP and the community.
- Robust referral process for survivors of Intimate Partner Violence.

Statistics

There were 1066 referrals made to the Safe Centre of Peel from the IPV unit between January 2023 and December 2023.

2023 Regional IPV Report

- There were 9,580 occurrences with the Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) violation code in 2023.
 - May to December 2022 – 6,256
 - May to December 2023 – 6,662 (This is a 6% increase from 2022 during the same time period).
- 3,466 IPV Occurrences were cleared by charge in 2023 and were eligible to be assigned to the IPV unit.
- 2,642 IPV Occurrences were assigned to the IPV Unit.
- There were **3 IPV related homicides in 2023**.

Charges Laid on IPV Occurrences

- In 2023 there were 7,435 charges laid by the IPV Unit.
- There were 9,446 charges laid on occurrences with an IPV violation code.
- There were 2,011 IPV related charges that were laid on occurrences that were not assigned to the unit. When the IPV Unit is unable to take carriage of a call, Divisional officers take carriage of the investigation.

Top 5 Charges Laid on IPV Occurrences

- Assault - 266
- Utter Threat to Cause Death or Bodily Harm - 264.11a
- Assault with A Weapon - 267a
- Fail to Comply with release order - other than to attend court (Form 11) - 1455a
- Chokes, Suffocates or Strangles - 267c

NICHE Violations

- There were 9,580 intimate partner dispute violations in 2023.

Domestic Violence Investigator Training

Members of the IPV Unit receive three days of extensive specialized training in relation to Intimate Partner Violence. The training included trauma informed response, interviewing and anti racism training. The training has provided an opportunity to build a trauma informed response that has produced a more thorough investigation, decreased potential for future harm and provided overall better victim care and management.

The Domestic Violence Investigator's (DVI) Course is offered to front line officers and those in investigative bureaus who are exposed to these types of investigations. Upon completion, officers are awarded the DVI designation. PRP currently has **939** officers with the DVI designation.

Safety Issues

Peel Children's Aid

PRP takes a precautionary approach in dealing with matters where a child is likely to be exposed to Intimate Partner Violence. These incidents are reported directly to the Peel Children's Aid Society (CAS). Peel CAS address a variety of service needs for children and families experiencing struggles with Intimate Partner Violence. They conduct child welfare assessments and provide ongoing work with families, youth and children who have experienced and been exposed to Intimate Partner Violence; including intervention plans and referrals to other agencies for support. CAS has two Domestic Violence Teams solely dedicated to providing support for children who have been exposed to Intimate Partner Violence.

Project Guardian – Support Link

In December 2017, Victim Services of Peel (VSOP) launched Project GUARDIAN, which replaced the previous personal alarm system (Domestic Violence Emergency Response System - DVERS). Project Guardian is a pilot project sponsored by VSOP. This project provides victims who are at high risk of life-threatening violence with a portable, personal Global Positioning System (G.P.S.) locator device. Each recipient is provided with a small pendant. When the recipient is faced with immediate danger of physical harm, he/she depresses the SOS button on the pendant. This automatically calls Northern 911 Emergency Centre through 2-way hands-free voice technology who in-turn notifies the appropriate police service. Criteria and suitability for the program is determined by VSOP.

In 2023, 16 clients were offered services to the program and 5 new clients were enrolled. There were 2 alarms and 4 false alarms triggered. The program continues to be piloted through 2024.

REVAMP- Risk Evaluation and Management in Peel

Every court jurisdiction in Ontario must have a functioning Domestic Violence high-risk committee. The REVAMP committee identifies, monitors, and manages high-risk intimate Partner Violence cases. The goal of the committee is to enhance the safety of victims, their families, and the general community.

The committee is comprised of a Peel Domestic Violence Assistant Crown Attorney, a Victim Witness Assistance program manager, and representatives from PRP, Peel Probation and Parole, Victim Services, and the Children's Aid Society.

- In 2023, 296 cases were reviewed and monitored, and there were 65 new referrals.

Public Education and Awareness

Delivering education, promoting awareness, and facilitating access to appropriate resources both within the service and in the community is a high priority for PRP.

The IPV Unit provided the public with information regarding Intimate Partner Violence and identified community agencies that provide assistance and support to victims and their families.

- PRP brought awareness to the IPV Unit upon its development through the 2023 FIPV Campaign.

IPV Campaign - 2023 FIPV Social Media - #BreakTheSilence

PRP collaborated and formed a partnership with the Region of Peel, the City of Brampton, City of Mississauga, Town of Caledon, OPP and community organizations to develop and strategize a public education and awareness campaign "Break the Silence" to generate awareness and increased access to information and resources related to Intimate Partner Violence (IPV).

The social media strategy garnered **over 180,000 total impressions** through organic social media across all platforms, with Peel Regional Police's social media achieving the most views.

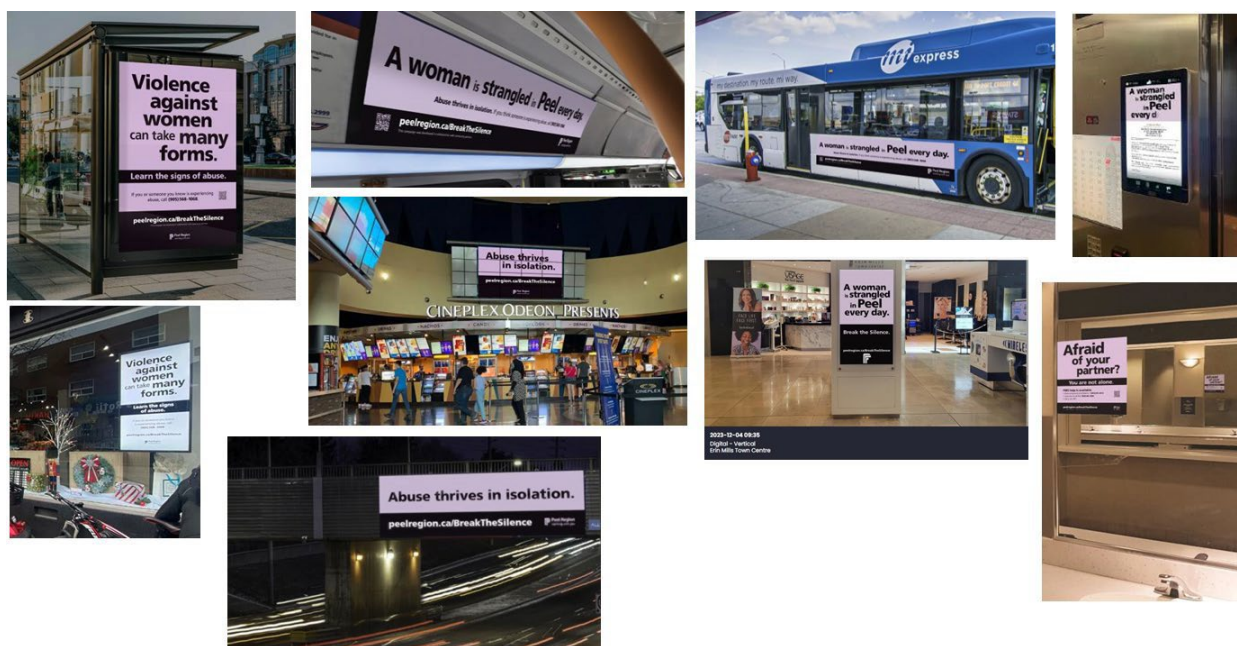


The campaign utilized partnership marketing with InSauga to promote key messages via TikTok, Instagram and InSauga website.

• InSauga Metrics (2023)	
• Platform	• Views/Impressions
• TikTok	• *2,281
• Instagram (Boosted)	• 15,168
• Website	• 1,886,700
• Banner Ads	• 125,001 (127 clicks)
• Total Views	• 1,904,149

*TikTok videos taken down due to community guidelines

Through all Out-of-Home (OOH) advertising tactics, the campaign reached a record high of over 22 M total estimated impressions, with Erin Mills Town Centre ads reaching 10 M impressions alone. This indicates heightened visibility in the community. **



**(source: 2023 Break the Silence campaign evaluation)

Proposed Direction

Continue to take steps that align directly with the Community Safety and Well Being Plan and the Intimate Partner Violence Reduction Strategy.

Safe Centre Response Teams

The Safe Centre of Peel launched a new pilot program called the Safe Centre Response Teams (SCRT). This pilot program is developed through collaboration between the Safe Centre of Peel and Peel Regional Police. This program has been created to respond to verbal family and intimate partner situations. The team consists of mobile support workers with experience in gender-based violence and a specially trained police constable, who will attend these calls for service to provide early intervention help and assist families in accessing supports and services.

The key functions of the Safe Centre Response Team:

- Connect families with existing community services to help stabilize the family situation over the short term and help increase their resiliency over the extended period.
- Help bridge the gap between identifying risk factors and direct intervention, thereby reducing the number of families looking for help being overlooked.
- Ensure a range of existing prevention and intervention services are provided in a timely manner, to reduce the risk of harm and increase the safety of family members.

Statistical Overview (SCRT Calls for Service 2023):

SCRT Calls - 2023	
Event Classification	Citizen Initiated
Call Type	Total Calls
911NONVERB	2
ASSAULT	1
ASSISTCTZN	2
BREACHORDR	1
CUSTODYDSP	1
DISTURBNCE	7
DOMFAM	91
DOMIPV	95
IMPRDRIVER	2
MEDASSIST	1
MHA	1
MISYOUTH	1
MVCDEPT	1
MVCFTR	1
MVCPI	2
OTHER	1
PREMCHECK	3
PROPREMVAL	2
RECVRDSTLN	1
SUICIDAL	1
TRAFIGHTS	1
UNWNTDPRSN	1
Grand Total	219

Strategic Plan Alignment

Goal: 1. Achieve Community Safety and Well-Being in Collaboration with Partners

Priority: 1.6 Support awareness, education, response and advocacy for partners, related to intimate partner and family violence

The PRP Intimate Partner Violence Unit (IPV) will continue to support awareness of intimate partner violence through its participation and support of the FIPV campaign.

IPV will continue engaging and advocating with our community partners through supporting and partnering with them in their initiatives. IPV has and will continue to join with our community partners for the following events:

- “Empowering Change: An Exclusive Screening of Award Winning “To Kill a Tiger” to bring awareness to misogynistic violence;
- “Take Back the Night” that advocates ending sexual, relationship, and domestic violence in all forms;
- “Dress Purple Day” to raise awareness about the important role that individuals and communities play in supporting vulnerable children, youth, and families;
- CFSPD Candle light vigil- to honour women who have experienced gender-based violence and those who lost their lives.
- Armagh House’s “Coldest Night of the Year” Fundraiser to support Habitat for Humanity and their efforts to provide homes for Intimate Partner Violence victims and their families.
- Annual CAS Volleyball Tournament- recognizing Woman Abuse Prevention Month in November this event supports the Seva Food Bank.

Organizational Wellness/Occupational Health and Safety/Risk Management

- a) Given the sensitive and graphic nature of IPV investigations, members assigned to the IPV Unit are designated as “high risk”, and are subject to the PRP Wellness Check-in program annually. The threat posed to IPV members by vicarious trauma from the continuous victim management is a constant concern and will be continuously managed. PRP is committed to the well being of all our members; and,
- b) Established protocols and partnerships maintained with our community partners contribute to ensuring that PRP is effective in responding to incidents of Intimate Partner Violence.

CONCLUSION

The response of PRP to matters of IPV continues to meet, and in some cases, exceed the requirements of established adequacy standards. PRP continues to provide prevention and early intervention through a new Safe Centre Response Team that provides supports and services to people involved in non-criminal verbal intimate partner incidents.

PRP continues to maintain long-standing, collaborative working relationships with several community/social services agencies. These agencies focus primarily on the needs of victims and the families of victims impacted by Intimate Partner Violence.

Beyond formal partnerships, efforts to reduce intimate partner violence through community engagement and media communications, PRP continues with innovative approaches including educating, collaborating, and developing strategies with our external partners to identify and support victims.

YOUTH CRIME REPORT

Discussion

Introduction

The 2023 Youth Crime Report provides insight into crime statistics and trends related to young persons investigated by the Peel Regional Police (PRP). The PRP Corporate Planning and Research Bureau compiled the criminal statistics and PRP Analytics software compiled the Pre-Charge Diversion statistics within this report. Statistics Canada is the source for the Region of Peel population.

The fluctuation in 2023 Youth Crime Statistics reflected in this report correlates highly with the lifting of Covid-19 related restrictions imposed by the Government of Ontario and the Federal Government lifting border restrictions in October 2022.

The Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA) defines a young person as someone between the ages of 12 and 17 years. This legislation includes multi-disciplinary approaches where PRP takes reasonable steps to prevent youth crime, to address underlying causes and provide guidance to those at risk of committing crimes. While recognizing the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Canadian Bill of Rights, members of PRP also respect the interests of victims and witnesses. This ensures accountability through meaningful consequences and effective rehabilitation and reintegration, and reserves the most serious intervention for the most serious crimes with the goal being reduce incarceration for non-violent young persons.

Findings

Population

The 2021 Statistics Canada population data states the combined population of the Cities of Brampton and Mississauga to be 1,374,445 of which 102,930 were young persons. The number of youth has remained constant for the past five years. In 2021, young persons aged 12 to 17 represented 7.5% of the area population.

Youth Crime Statistics

The youth crime statistics include crimes against persons, crimes against property, criminal driving offences and drug offences. The total youth crimes combine's the totals of these offences to compare with previous years for analysis.

a) Crimes Against Persons

Crimes against persons includes offences of Assault, Robbery, Sexual Offences, Criminal Harassment and Threatening.

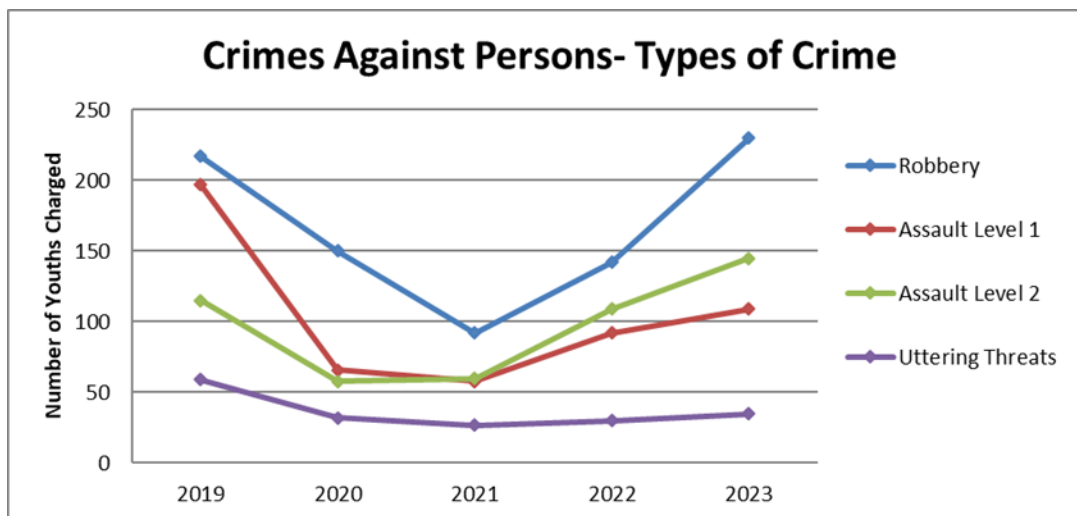


Figure 1

The four most frequently occurring incident types for crimes against persons were Robber, Assault (level 1 and level 2) and uttering Threats. While there is an increase in the number of Robbery and Assaults from 2022 to 2023, the frequency of these offences are consistent when compared to the pre-pandemic years of 2019.

b) Crimes Against Property

Crimes against property include offences such as Break, Enter to Commit an offence, Theft Under \$5,000, Possession of Property Obtained by Crime, Fraud, Mischief and Arson.

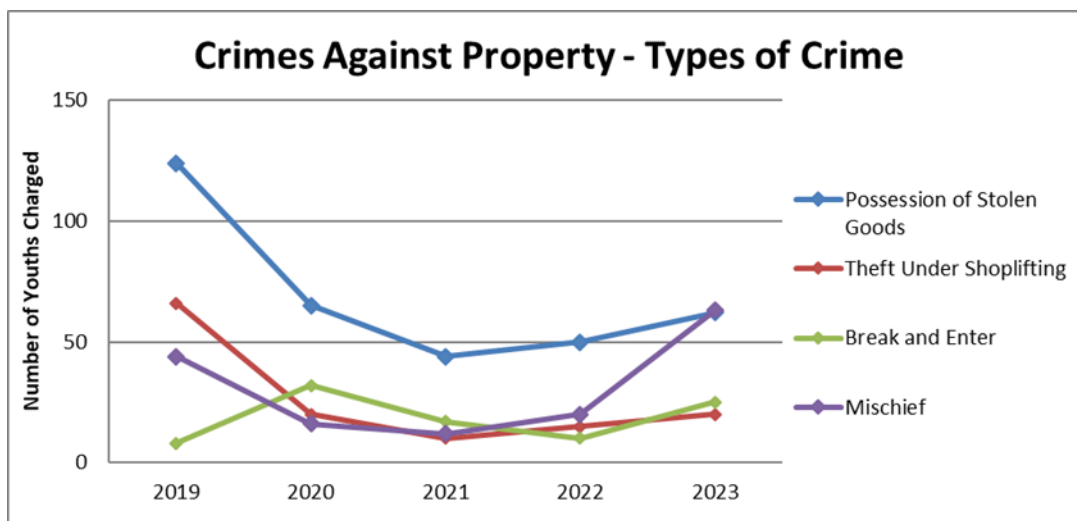


Figure 2

The four most frequently occurring incident types for crimes against property were Possession of Stolen Goods, Mischief, Theft Under (shop theft) and Break, Enter to Commit an Offence. While there is an increase to Possession of Stolen Goods and Break, Enter to Commit, the frequency of these offences are lower when compared to pre-pandemic years in 2020.

c) Criminal Driving Offences

Criminal Driving Offences include Dangerous Driving, Fail to Remain at the Scene of an Accident, Driving while Impaired and Street Racing.

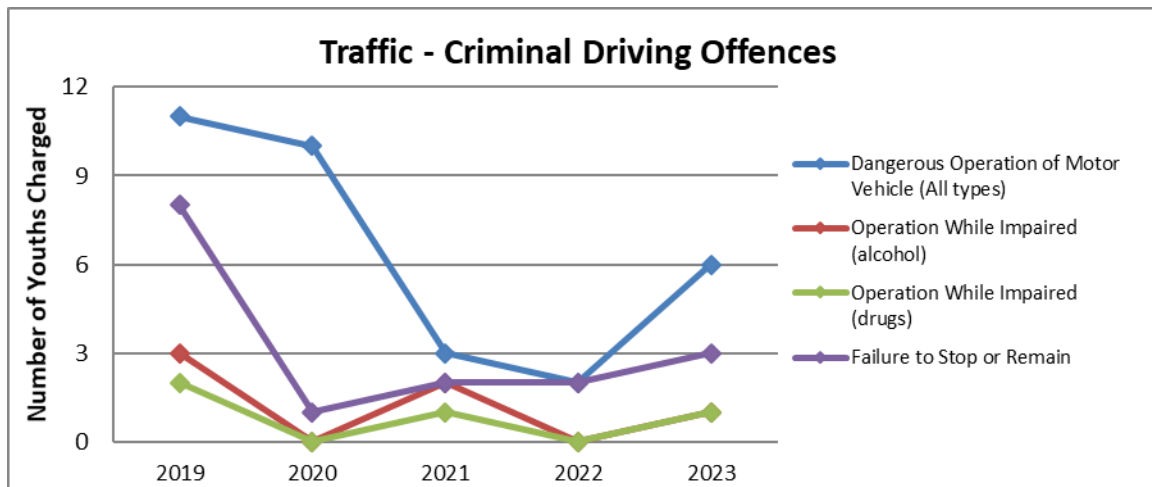


Figure 3

While Dangerous Operation of Motor Vehicle (All types) has increased since 2022 when compared to pre-pandemic 2019 the frequency is significantly lower. The frequency of Operation while Impaired (alcohol) is equal to the frequency of Operation while Impaired (drugs). The frequency of Operation While Impaired is lower when compared to pre-pandemic 2019.

d) Drug Offences

Drug offences includes Possession, Trafficking and other related controlled substance related crimes.

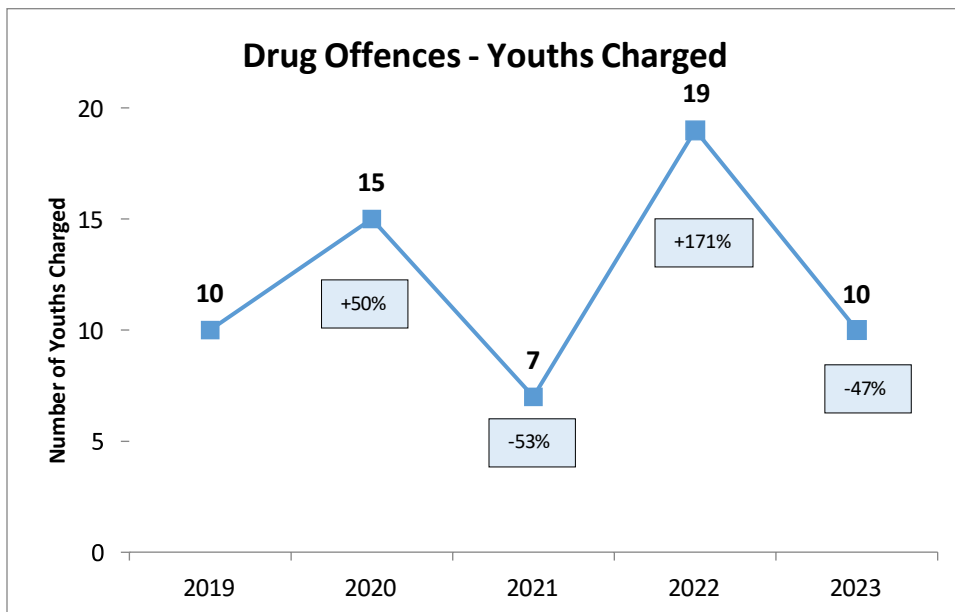


Figure 4

Youth Drug Offences have decreased significantly when compared to 2022. This is 47% decrease is in line with the change in laws for controlled substances.

e) Total Young Persons Charged

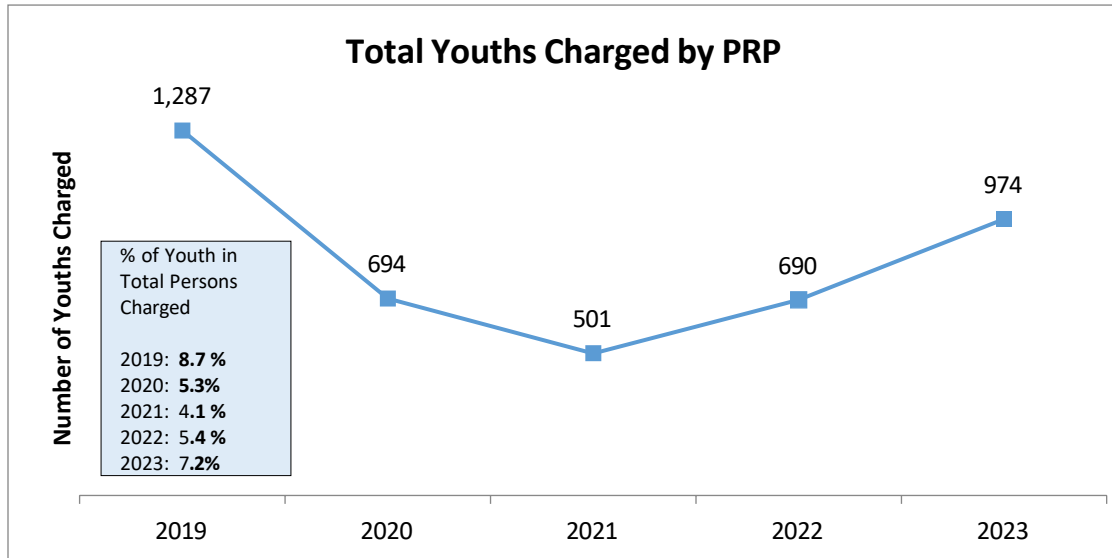


Figure 5

In 2023, there was a 41.2% increase in total youth charged when compared to 2022. The total youth charged in 2023 is significantly lower than those charged in 2019.

In 2023, PRP charged 974 young persons representing 7.2% of total persons charged.

In 2019, PRP charged 1,287 young persons representing 8.7% of total persons charged.

The following chart summarizes the comparative analysis of statistics of both youth and adult offenders, related to 2022 and 2023.

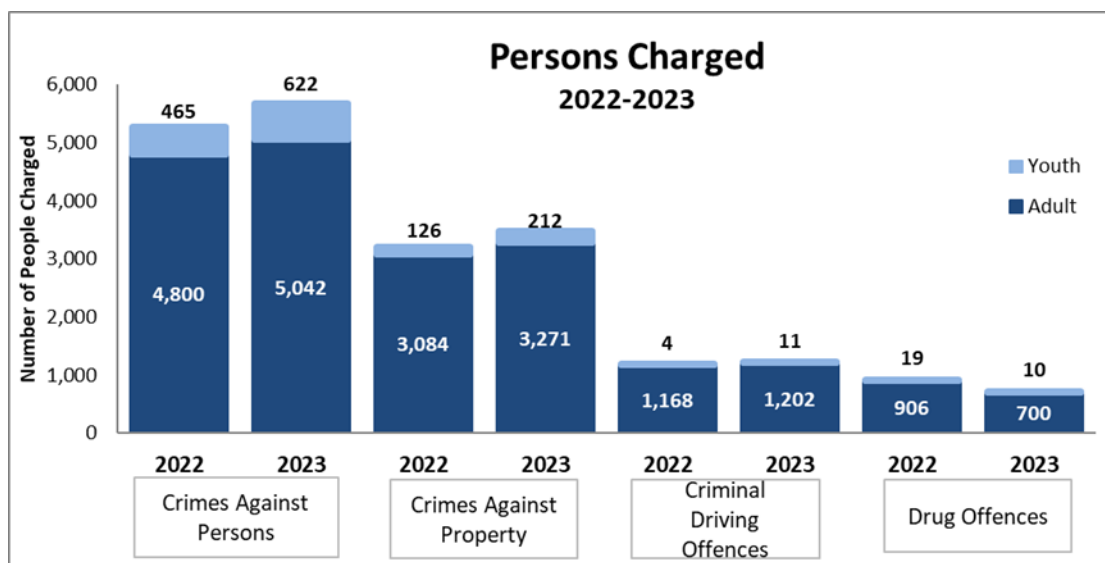


Figure 6

1. Continuing to Work with Young People

a. Local Police School Board Protocol

In November 2021, all coterminous school board partners signed the provincially mandated Local Police School Board protocol. At the root of effective police school board partnerships is a common understanding of each partner's roles and responsibilities. In 2023, PRP Divisional Command teams met with their respective PDSB and DPCSB family of school command teams. To ensure compliance with the Local Police School Board Protocol, PRP and PDSB command teams met to discuss incidents and participate in a case study exercise.

b. Youth Education

The role of pro-active police youth education at the school boards has been paused by the respective school boards. Three key factors affected youth programming: the Covid-19 pandemic, the 2020 dissolution of the School Resource Officer (SRO) program and both the Dufferin-Peel Catholic School Board and the Peel District School Board placing a hold on police community safety programming for the 2022 and 2023 school year.

- In 2019, with a team of 10 officers assigned to the YE Bureau the number of students during a full school year received Youth Education is 136,672
- In 2020, with a team of 8 officers assigned to the YE bureau the number of students during a partial school year receiving YE decreased to 56,536.
- In 2021, with a team of 2 officers assigned to the YE Bureau the number of students during a closed school year receiving YE decreased to 4,380.
- In 2022, with a team of 2 officers assigned to the YE Bureau the number of students following the hold on programming YE decreased to 1,105.
- In 2023, with a team of 2 officers assigned to the YE Bureau during the school board hold, the number of students receiving programming increased 22% to 1,357.

PRP created the Community Safety Certificate program. This certificate program is designed for Secondary School students who are seeking opportunities to learn more about their role in their community. The certificate is recognized by the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board (DPCDSB) and the Peel District School Board (PDSB) and may be used as 20 hours of community service towards the student's provincial graduation requirement.

In 2023, the YE bureau leveraged community partners to identify at-risk youth to deliver the Community Safety Certificate adds depth and relevance to the program, enhancing its impact and effectiveness. This approach not only provides valuable skills but also fosters collaboration and support within the community. In 2023, 114 earned the Community Safety Certificate.

c. Youth in Policing Initiative

The Youth in Policing Initiative (YIPI) is an eight-week summer job placement for youth ages 14 and 18, from priority populations in the Region of Peel. From twenty-five youth to 40 youth and 4 YIPI Team Leaders. The Peel Police Service Board funded 10 YIPI positions and 4 YIPI Team Leader positions. The Ministry of Children Community Social Services funded 30 YIPI positions.

The YIPI program leveraged community partnerships primarily with Sheridan College. The youth involved receive mentorship and professional exposure to a career in policing, while gaining an on-campus experience at Sheridan college, participation in the Dual Credit program to get credit for one college-level course, an introduction to the field of forensics, empathy-based training using virtual reality technology and participate in police fitness testing.

A 378% increase in YIPI applications between 2022 and 2023 is an impressive indicator of the success and growing interest in the youth engagement initiative. With 73 applications received in 2022 and 276 applications in 2023, it's clear that the program is resonating with the target demographic and making a significant impact in attracting participants.

d. Peel Children's Safety Village

The Peel Children's Safety Village (PCSV) continued offering interactive programs to youth from junior kindergarten to grade five. In 2023, the school boards approved of PCSV programming and permitted the respective youth to attend the facility as a field trip off school property. 9,486 youth from kindergarten to grade five attended the PCSV.

To connect the PCSV with the community by utilizing social media platforms there were 201,012 engagement/impressions of PCSV initiated posts on social media platforms.

PCSV continued with community partnerships and safety initiatives including "Helmets on Kids". 131 children received community funded bicycle helmets.

e. Youth Engagement

PRP youth engagement involves various initiatives and programs aimed at fostering positive relationships between officers and young people in the community. These initiatives often include activities such as youth outreach programs, educational workshops, mentorship opportunities, sports events and community policing efforts. The goal is to build trust, bridge gaps in understanding, and provide support to youth, ultimately to reduce opportunities for youth to become involved with criminal behaviour and building a sense of community. PRP create programs that brings together community stakeholders that address hunger needs, professional and personal development while connect officers to youth and their families.

In 2023 there were 20 community based initiatives where PRP engaged with 2,081 youth in the Region of Peel.

f. Pre- Charge Diversion

A significant component of the Y.C.J.A. is the application of Extrajudicial Measures, a means by diverting young people away from the criminal justice system while still adhering to the principle of ensuring that young offenders are accountable for their actions. Legislation directs officers to consider extrajudicial measures when a young person has committed an offence before laying a charge. Where appropriate, PRP refers youth who have committed a criminal offence to the 'Pre-charge Diversion Program' administered by the Associated Youth Services of Peel (AYSP).

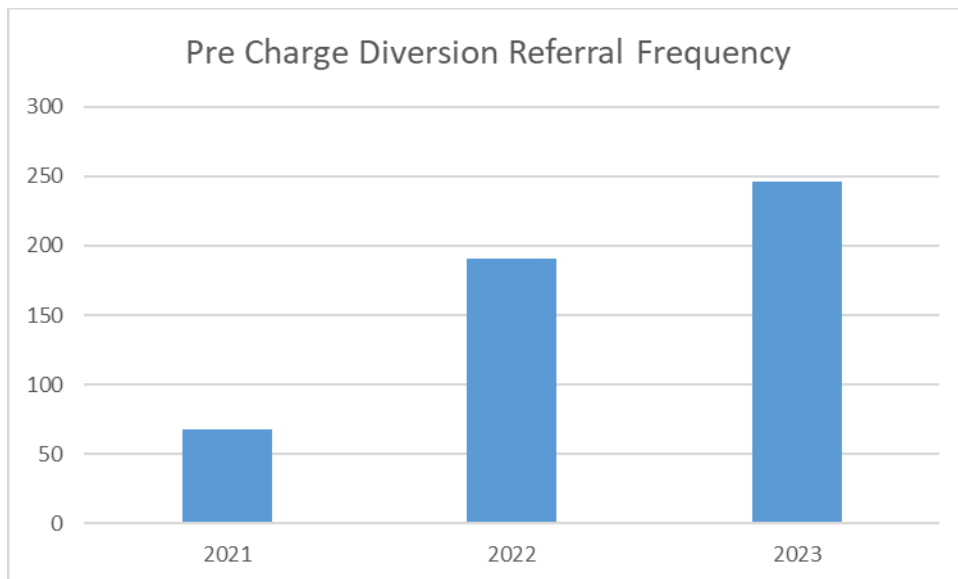


Figure 7

In October 2020, a Memorandum of Understanding between the OHRC and PRP and Regional Municipality of Peel Police Services Board in respect to policy guidance included the objective to adopt and implement all appropriate standards, guidelines, policies and strict directives to address and end racial profiling in law enforcement. Peel Regional Police Directive I-B-515 Diversion Referral Programs reflects the expectations of the community, legislation and the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

The AYSP counsels, administers the performance of tasks and group counselling that help youth to acknowledge and appreciate the significance of good citizenship and behaviours that lead to criminal activity.

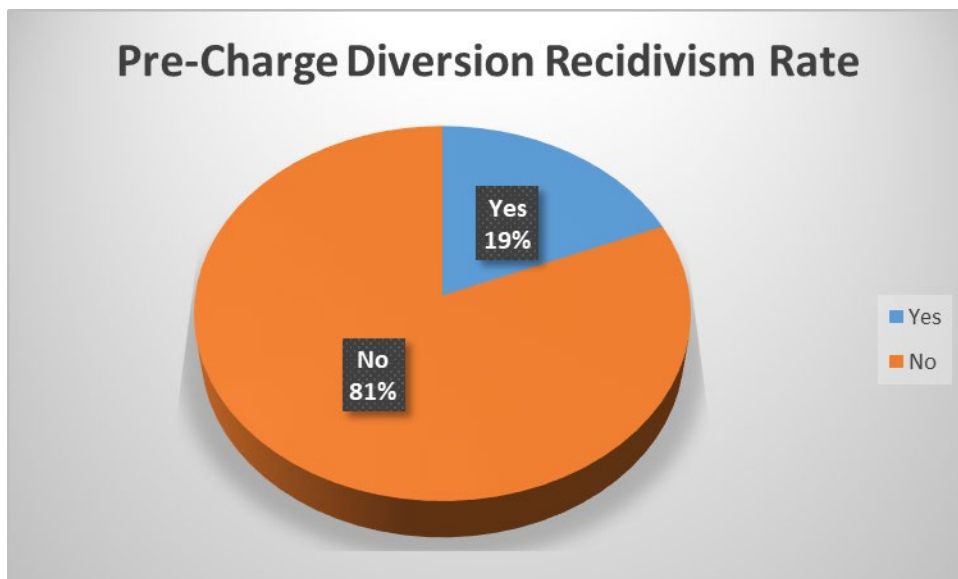


Figure 8

In 2023 PRP referred 246 cases to AYSP, compared to 2022 with 191 cases and 2021 with 68 referrals. This represented an increase in 2023 referrals of 55 cases (or 28.7%). Applying the NICHE driven Youth Crime Dashboard, the Pre-charge Diversion Coordinator examines the frequency of

referrals compared to the use of Cautions by officers. In 2023, officers referred 42% of all occurrences that met the criteria of the diversion program to AYSP.

In 2023, 92.3% of the youth referred to the Pre-Charge Diversion Program, successfully completed all the program requirements.

Analysis is conducted on the recidivism rate of youth in comparison with the same period from the previous year where:

- 81% of the youth referred to the Pre –Charge diversion did not reoffend within a 12 month period.
- 90.1% of the youth referred to the Pre-Charge diversion program completed the program.
- 19% is the recidivism rate of youth who are referred to the Pre-charge Diversion program.

In 2023 the Pre-Charge Diversion program expanded to include a more collaborative approach between PRP and AYSP. Using a Community Safety and Well-Being approach to youth crime and Pre-Charge Diversion, PRP identified a potential growth opportunity in the group counselling stage.

In 2023, 30 youth involved in the Pre-Charge Diversion group counselling stage volunteered to participate in a discussion with police. By expanding the Pre-Charge Diversion program to include a collaborate approach between PRP and support services like AYSP is a positive step. Engaging youth in discussions with police and introducing them to social programs can help build trust and understanding, potentially steering them away from the judicial system.

Strategic Plan Alignment

Goal: 1. Achieve Community Safety and Well-being in Collaboration with Partners

Priority: 1.1 Identify and respond effectively to citizen calls for service and community crime trends

Equity and Inclusion Considerations

The Youth Education Bureau and the PCSV consistently review current presentations to ensure the current equity and inclusion standards of the Peel District School Board and Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School board and PRP are applied.

The 2021 Local Police and School Board Protocol was reviewed at length by internal and external subject matter experts, legal and the coterminous school board partners to meet current and future equity and inclusion considerations.

Technology

The Youth Engagement team relies upon technology for day-to-day activities in 2023. Technology delivers community safety messaging to youth and to manage youth crime data. Filming youth engagement and community safety messaging is being conducted on PRP cellphones. Having this ability allows Youth Engagement officers the opportunity to connect with a wider audience.

PRP updated the www.peelpolice.ca webpage so members of the public may request review available content and book a virtual or in person youth program.

In 2021, in collaboration with Youth Engagement, the PRP Analytics department developed two excel based dashboard programs:

- Youth Crime Dashboard 2019 – YTD
- School Occurrences 2019- YTD

The Youth Crime 2019 – YTD Dashboard to quickly and accurately identifies youth crime trends through analytics. The dashboard is available to all members of PRP. When youth crimes are entered on NICHE it is automatically transferred to the excel spreadsheet weekly. Youth based crime statistics may search by division, method of release including pre-charge diversion, year and criminal offence. The Youth Crime Dashboard assist uniform divisions to create youth crime strategies and assists Youth Investigative Bureaus.

The School Occurrences 2019 – YTD Dashboard quickly and accurately identifies calls for service at local area schools. Data is collected through NICHE and is automatically entered onto an excel spreadsheet which updated weekly. Information on the dashboard includes the nature of calls for service at local school's frequency and will assist in identifying areas where police may be called for discretionary calls for service. Identifying these trends early will allow PRP to develop strategies to investigate offences and offer additional support services to address root causes of youth related incidents.

To comply with retention policies and secure channels of communication with local area school boards, PRP have utilized Liquid Files to transfer data containing confidential youth records. The YCJA allows police to share confidential youth information with local area school boards. Without the convenience of School Resource Officer's the sharing of information is dependent on electronic means. A review of this process identified key areas of interest for the organization including:

- the need for a secure channel to transfer confidential information
- a means to process to each request,
- a secure channel to share confidential information
- a suitable method to store data while complying to retention policies.

IT services provided Youth Engagement access to the Liquid Files electronic file-sharing program. Liquid Files purpose has expanded to share confidential youth information with school boards. This process is secure and complies with retention periods without creating extra work for personnel.

Conclusion

The PRP 2024 Youth Crime Report lists important data on the involvement of youth in policing related activities. Overall, the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions had a profound impact on the data from 2020 to 2022. With restrictions being lifted in late 2022 the youth crime offences increased however; this is 24.3% lower than those charged in 2019. Through a restorative justice lens, PRP has increased Pre-Charge Diversion referrals by 28.7%. Youth engagement has to meet community needs, youth

engagement has leveraged community partnerships to deliver programs to youth. The 378% increase in applicants for the YIPI program indicates the youth programs led by PRP are sought after. PRP Youth Engagement will continue to form community based-partnerships to contribute to a safer community together.

INTERNET CHILD EXPLOITATION

Background

In 2023 the ICE Unit maintained a compliment of 1 Detective, 7 Detective Constables and 1 Online Luring Investigator for a total of 9 members in the office.

The mandate of the PRP ICE Unit is to locate, identify, and rescue victims of child sexual abuse by identifying, locating, and prosecuting persons involved in the online victimization of children. Both reactive and proactive investigations are undertaken.

As internet crime has no geographical boundaries, the PRP ICE Unit regularly works with law enforcement partners around the world. In 2023, some of those agencies included United States of America Department of Homeland Security (HSI) as well as numerous local and state law enforcement services in the USA, The Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA), local and national elements of the RCMP, Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), and 26 other Municipal Police Services that make up the Provincial Strategy.

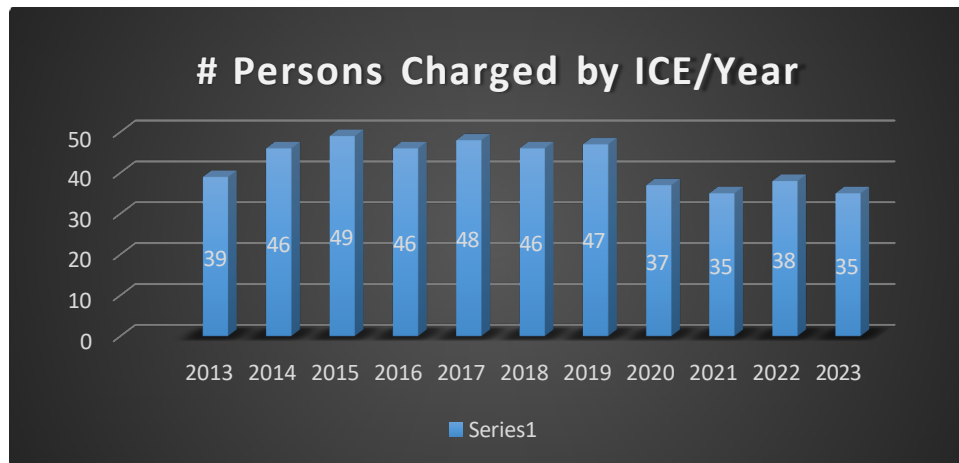
External to the Law Enforcement Community, the PRP ICE Unit works closely with several Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's). One of these is the Canadian Centre for Child Protection (C3P) in Winnipeg, which operates Canada's national tip line for online child exploitation. The Centre also provides resource material that has been federally approved for dissemination in schools. In addition to referring cases regarding online child exploitation, the ICE Unit is the point of contact with C3P who will also refer tips regarding any kind of abuse of children including physical abuse and underage human trafficking. When received from C3P the ICE Unit refers the tip to the appropriate bureaux within Peel Police.

ICE investigations strive to rescue the victims of online exploitation, one of our most important community partners is the Victim Services of Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry, and Akwesasne. Victim Services of SDGA offers a counselling program supported by the Provincial Strategy that is made available to the victims (and their siblings and parents) of child sexual exploitation. All identified victims are referred to this program where they receive immediate service that is paid for by the Strategy.

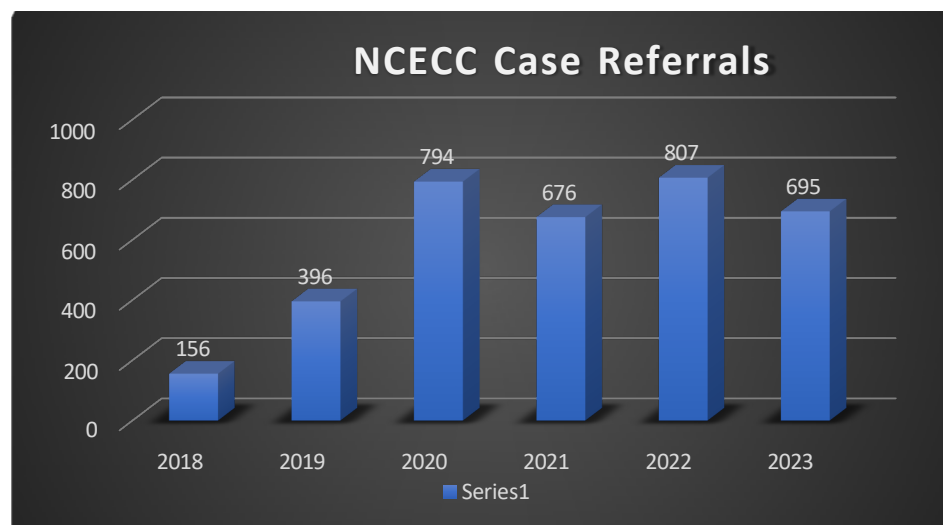
Findings

In 2023, the ICE Unit laid a total of 124 charges related to the online exploitation of children and 35 persons were arrested and charged with ICE related offences. The unit also obtained a total of 109 judicial authorizations in 2023. While looking at the graph below, it is evident that after 2019 there is an approximate 20% drop in the average number of arrests from year to year. It is worth noting that this is

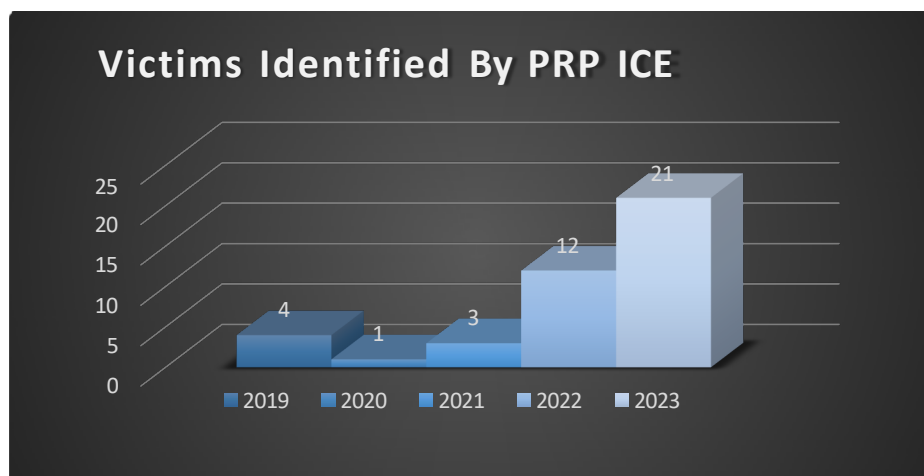
a provincial wide trend, and not something that is isolated to the Region of Peel. This is generally attributed to the increase in the amount of work that must be done on each case due to resource, technical, and legal hurdles that must be overcome with each investigation.



In total, the ICE unit handled 984 occurrences in 2023, 695 of which were from the NCECC (National Child Exploitation Crime Centre) in Ottawa. Referrals from the NCECC mostly originate from NCMEC (National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children) in the United States who are forwarding reports that originate with Internet based companies such as Google and Microsoft, social media companies like Meta (Facebook & Instagram) and messaging applications like Snapchat or Kik. The NCECC is a department within the RCMP Division in Ottawa that acts as the national receiver of incoming cases into Canada from other countries. The total of 695 cases from the NCECC is a drop from the previous year of 807 however it is not believed that this is part of a downward trend. As predicted in previous years reports, this is part of an annual undulation that sees the number of reports rise and fall from year to year as a part of a long-term levelling off. The number of NCECC referrals drastically spiked in 2020 and since then the four-year average number of case referrals is now at 743 a year. While we can welcome the fact that the number of case referrals did not continue to rise at such a dramatic rate, they are still extremely high and represent a serious cause for concern.



Regarding victims identified and rescued, we again saw a dramatic increase over the previous year, in part due to the arrest of a prolific offender who had been abusing children he had access to for a number of years. This one arrest accounted for about half of the identified victims in 2023, so we don't expect this trend to continue increasing at this same rate in 2024. However, the number still represents success in the ICE Unit's approach to triaging cases and analyzing the huge amounts of data seized and processed during investigations.



This is possibly due to new training that the PRP ICE Unit has made standard with investigators since 2021 and 2022. ICE work is very complicated and requires an abundance of training in order to keep the officers effective investigators. In order to be considered fully trained in the PRP ICE Unit, an officer needs to take 5 different courses. It can take between two to three years before an officer is comfortably effective in the ICE world, and even then, the learning never stops. While this process is long, it results in a more effective investigator and has led to greater success in identifying the worst offenders, rescuing children, and most importantly preventing the future victimization of other children which is the ultimate goal of the ICE Unit.

ESD Canine

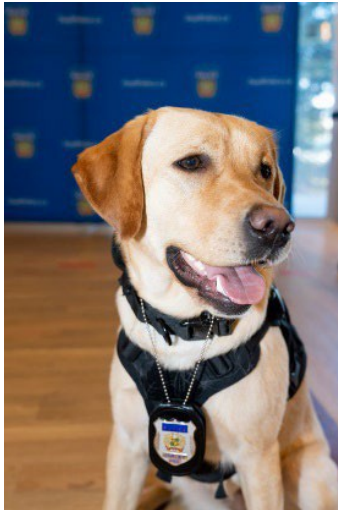
In 2023, the Peel ICE Unit became the first organization in Canada to deploy an Electronic Storage Detection Canine. An ESD K9 is a dog that is trained to detect via scent items on digital storage devices. ESD K9's have been used with great success in the United States since 2013, but no dog had ever been deployed in Canada until last year. Members of the ICE Unit partnered with the charity Operation Underground Railroad in the United States, who have provided full funding for the Peel ESD K9.

Peel ICE's ESD K9 Harley, arrived in January of 2023. For the rest of 2023, Harley attended 25 search warrants and in those warrants she located 52 devices that were missed by officers during the search for evidence. Harley has found devices in about 60% of the warrants she has been involved in which represents a significant improvement in the effectiveness of ICE search warrants. In addition to ICE search warrants, Harley has been used to assist searches for the Homicide Bureau, Robbery, SVU, and various CIB units around Peel.

In addition to assisting with search warrants, Harley has also had great success providing comfort and assistance to victims who are providing statements to police or are having to testify in court. Harley has

been able to provide support with numerous sex assault and human trafficking victims who have had to re-live their traumatic experiences for the purpose of providing evidence to investigators or testimony to the court.

Since PRP acquired the first ESD K9, Toronto Police and Thunder Bay police have also followed suit and obtained their own ESD K9's, and the OPP is in the process of starting their own home grown ESD K9 program. The PRP ICE Unit is proud to have taken the lead in bringing this new resource not just to Peel Region but to all of Canada.



Investigations and Projects

The most significant investigation in 2023 was the arrest of Alex Clarke in early August, who has been accused of abusing children in his care at the MC Day camp in the area of Port Credit area of Mississauga. Clarke was also a CBSA officer and had applied to work with the Peel Regional Police at the time of his arrest. This investigation required a massive commitment from the ICE Unit in order to quickly take the accused into custody, seize evidence, and identify victims as quickly as possible so that support could be provided to their families and the community at large. The success of this investigation was made possible by the skill and dedication of the members of ICE and supporting officers from the Special Victims Unit, the Digital Forensics Unit, and assisting Uniform officers.

In 2023, members of the ICE Unit also participated in the Provincial Strategy led Project Limestone, which was an online undercover project that took place in September. This project saw the Peel ICE Unit combine forces with ICE officers from York Police and Durham Police in order to more effectively target online offenders searching for children to exploit. By combining investigators from 3 services into one area for a weeklong online undercover project, officers were able to more effectively identify and arrest online offenders looking for children to exploit both on the Internet and in person. Online undercover investigations that would normally last for months were able to be completed in only a couple of weeks, a few days, or in some cases a few hours. Shorter online undercover investigations are obviously much more efficient, easier on the investigators, easier to prosecute, and better protect the public since offenders are taken into custody much quicker. The members of the Peel ICE Unit who participated were able to arrest an offender previously charged with sex offences in the past as well as an offender who was a girl's high school gym teacher.

In November of 2023, the ICE Unit also arrested Steve Waterman, a three-time convicted offender who has been arrested both in Canada and the United States. Waterman was arrested for luring offences and a media release was done in an attempt to try and find more victims that officers believe exist. Members of the ICE Unit also continued with the investigation into Sean Jackson. Jackson had originally been arrested by Peel ICE in 2022 for child pornography related offences as well as for offences in relation to sex assaults and voyeurism in relation to campers at the Camp Kennebec facility near Kingston, which is a camp for people with disabilities. The original Peel ICE media release in 2022 prompted a former camper to come forward with new allegations of abuse at the hands of Jackson in the past. Members of Peel ICE worked cooperatively with Frontenac OPP in their investigation into Jackson's historical offences. This investigation led to the OPP laying new charges of sex assault, sexual exploitation against someone with a disability, uttering threats, and failure to comply with a court order.

In December the ICE Unit also supported Project Juno run by the PRP Human Trafficking Unit. This project was aimed at targeting suspects looking to exploit young human trafficking victims over the Internet. The Human Trafficking Unit utilized the online undercover expertise of ICE investigators to work on discovering, identifying, and arresting suspects who were looking to exploit under aged human trafficking victims. Over a 5-day period ICE, members worked to identify 16 persons who were targeting young human trafficking victims that were subsequently taken into custody by the HT officers.

In 2023, the ICE Unit also continued to support the organization by participating in numerous training efforts. Members in ICE continued to mentor officers and share knowledge both in and out of the organization. Members of ICE taught on the internal Search Warrant writing course, the Advanced Search Warrant course, the Online Undercover course, the Airport Officers Orientation Course, and the Communicators Training course. Members of PRP ICE also provide instruction externally to the Pearson Airport CBSA officers, and the Crown Summer School Cyber-Crime course. The expertise that resides in the PRP ICE Unit is very much in demand and the members of the office are eager to assist officers and partners both inside and outside of Peel.

Proposed Direction

Looking ahead to 2024 there are a number of issues and goals to be addressed.

ICE Unit Expansion

In January of 2024, the ICE Unit was informed that it was granted two additional investigator positions. In the coming year the Unit will be concentrating on the training and integration of new investigators into the office. This expansion is expected to increase the ICE Units online undercover capacity, which is a welcome development after the challenges brought about by the Covid pandemic.

Streamlining digital forensic process

Because the evidence in ICE investigations is almost entirely digital, forensic processes are extremely important to the ICE Unit. It is crucial that we are able to process, disclose, and present evidence in a timely manner so that the ICE Unit can investigate more offenders and also to meet court-imposed disclosure timelines. In the coming year, work will be done to increase the ICE Units digital forensic capability and make those processes more efficient.

Adapting to Ontario Court of Justice disclosure timelines

Early in 2024, the Ministry of the Attorney General rolled out new timelines for the disclosure of evidence. In short, all investigations that are being administered by the Ontario Court of Justice, must have all substantial disclosure completed by 6 months after the date of the arrest. This timeline can be problematic when it can take nearly 6 months just to gain access to a digital device, never mind report on its content for court. Fortunately, the Peel ICE Units disclosure process is already well suited to meet the new guidelines in most cases. However, for cases that are more urgent or involve specific or unique challenges, the ICE Unit will be required to adapt to the new guidelines with alterations to our process.

R v Bykovets SCC challenges

On February 29th, 2024, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in the case of R v Bykovets that an IP address can, in some cases, have an expectation of privacy surrounding it. This means that there will be some situations where a judicial authorization (like a production order) is required in order to obtain the IP address of a suspect engaged in the online exploitation of children. In some investigations, this will add another judicial authorization that officers will have to obtain in order to see the case through. This of course adds more work to each case and the ICE Unit will have to examine how best to manage our work process to minimize the effect of this new decision.

Increase Community Engagement

Investigations and prosecutions should not be the only way the ICE Unit combats online child exploitation. Prevention through education and outreach can be some of the most important and productive crime prevention efforts, since the best outcome is a crime that never happens and a child that never becomes a victim. In 2024 there will be an increase in efforts to have direct engagement with the citizens of Peel Region in order to share valuable knowledge that helps families and young people protect themselves.

Strategic Plan Alignment

Goal: 1. Community Safety and Well-Being

Objective: 1.1 Identify and effectively respond to citizen calls for service and community crime trends.

As an investigative bureau, the efforts of the ICE Unit directly contributes to the achievement of the community safety and well being goal priority of identify and effectively respond to citizen calls for service and community crime trends. The Unit works with the NCECC in Ottawa to use the latest information on relevant trends to make sure we are up to date on how technology and legal issues are evolving. The ICE Unit also uses bi-weekly meetings so members can keep each other up to date on their respective investigations, which creates buy-in with all members of the office on all investigations. Lastly, as a member of the Strategy, we are in constant communication with our provincial partners on what trends are developing and what new problems arise.

Because the nature of ICE work is largely proactive, so is our response to community safety. ICE investigations work to uncover crimes that would often otherwise go un-discovered, and therefore contributes significantly to future crime prevention. In 2023, the ICE Unit saw a record number of victims that were identified and safeguarded through better investigative and analytic efforts. By

apprehending offenders through pro-active measures, we stop them from creating future victims which is the most effective manner of crime prevention. ICE works closely with victims and families to ensure they get the support they need by connecting them to resources dedicated to victim assistance.

Organizational Wellness/Occupational Health and Safety/Risk Management

Given the nature of ICE work, it goes without saying that officer wellness is a high priority. The threat posed by vicarious trauma from viewing child exploitation material is a constant concern and has therefore been continuously managed. The ICE Unit takes part in the Wellness Check-in program that sees all members meet bi-annually with a psychiatrist to ensure they remain healthy and have access to resources should they be required.

The most notable improvement in regards to officer wellness has been the addition of the ESD canine to the office. The ESD canine is present in the office daily and regularly interacts with ICE members, providing a pleasant and healthy distraction from their work. Since the introduction of the ESD canine, the ICE Unit also has a regular stream of visitors who come to visit the dog for their own well-being, which in turn relaxes the atmosphere in the ICE office. Feedback from the doctor who administers the ICE Wellness Check-in program indicates that there has been an improvement in wellbeing amongst the members since the introduction of the ESD canine.

Emphasis is also placed on ensuring a positive and empowered workplace. ICE officers provide input concerning the day-to-day administration of the office which gives them buy-in and makes them invested in its success. They are provided the means and resources to do their jobs, which makes them feel enabled to accomplish their tasks. Open communication and a tight knit supportive team atmosphere have been crucial to protecting the officers' well being as they do their work.

It's important to the wellbeing of the office for the ICE Unit to be a desirable place to work. An office that members enjoy working in provides resiliency from vicarious trauma due to exposure to child abuse material and encourages quality officers to apply for the Unit when vacancies arise.

Organizational Impacts

In addition to funding received by the Region of Peel, there is also funding from the Provincial Government via the Strategy. the Strategy funding covers 70% of the wage and benefit costs of the full-time luring position. It also covers training for all the officers, as well as technology acquisitions and upgrades. The funding received from the Strategy is crucial to making the ICE Unit an effective investigative bureau capable of staying current in a rapidly changing field that protects the public.

The total 2023 budget of the ICE unit was \$1,250,400 on top of \$170,500 that is added by the Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services. The operational expenses for 2023 were \$1,498,483.92 and \$170,500 of that was recovered from the Ministry.

Communications Issues

The ICE Unit utilizes media releases to keep the public current on cases and investigations that meet the threshold of requiring the public to be notified. We have seen the benefit of media releases in 2023

that did result in other victims coming forward and resulted in new charges that likely would have gone undetected without a media release.

The addition of the ESD canine also created some positive media attention to both the ICE Unit and the PRP as a whole. The use of the canine has also provided the opportunity for the ICE Unit to participate in community outreach days in a way we didn't have before. The ESD Canine makes for an excellent catalyst that initiates contact between citizens and members of ICE.

Conclusion

The actions of the ICE Unit are meant to align with the goal of creating better community safety and well-being. Members of ICE routinely share knowledge and expertise through internal training and assistance provided to both uniform and other bureaus.

We address risk intervention by using the Threat Assessment Unit who evaluates our high-risk offenders and provides opinions that assist in detention and sentencing hearings. We also use media releases to alert the public of offenders who may have other victims in other jurisdictions. We also utilize MCM bulletins and ViCLAS reports for cases that meet the threshold.

Regarding crime prevention, ICE cooperates with NGO's that educate and support citizens in an attempt to prevent children from becoming victims in the first place. This combined with closer collaboration with members of OMU will increase efforts to obstruct the efforts of offenders to commit more crimes and target more victims.

Finally, the ICE Unit works to improve social development by working within the Provincial Strategy to advocate with various levels of government and private sector entities to increase awareness of children's safety online and explore technological solutions that help solve cases and identify victims. We also improve social development by working with victim service networks to help victims and their families recover from the aftermath of online child exploitation crimes.

The ICE Unit's mandate is aligned with the Region and PRP priorities for addressing crime targeting priority populations. This direction is a critical step in achieving meaningful change and ensuring community safety.

Approved for Submission



Nick Milinovich, Deputy Chief, Investigative and Emergency Services Command

For further information regarding this report, please contact Inspector Miller-Small at extension 3400 or via email at 2221@peelpolice.ca.

