



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 17, 2017

Pedophile treatment claim could lead to false sense of security

WINNIPEG, MB – Beyond Borders ECPAT Canada has serious concerns with a program that claims it can cure pedophiles of their sexual attraction to children. The program referenced in recent news accounts is run by the Royal Ottawa Hospital's Sexual Behaviors Clinic.

When pedophilia is viewed as an illness it implies that a person is not responsible for their actions, but rather is simply an illness to be cured. The Criminal Code of Canada rightly places responsibility with the offender – a person who is responsible at law and commits an offence should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. Offenders are responsible for their actions, including when they commit sexual violence against children.

“Criminal law deals with wrongdoing and crime is a matter of personal responsibility”, said Beyond Borders ECPAT Canada Senior Legal Counsel, David Matas. “It cannot be excused as a form of illness.”

“Claims of a cure risk creating a false sense of security when someone completes this treatment program”, said Nicole Merrick, Beyond Borders ECPAT Canada President. “While I think we would all like the comfort of saying that pedophilia can be "cured", we have seen nothing that supports this assertion. Parents, the community and young people themselves must remain vigilant. We must all continue to take steps to protect children from sexual predators”.

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Beyond Borders ECPAT Canada is a bilingual national advocacy organization advancing the rights of children everywhere to be free from sexual abuse and exploitation. We are a registered charity without political or religious affiliation. Beyond Borders ECPAT Canada is the Canadian representative of ECPAT International, a global network in more than 80 countries dedicated to ending child prostitution, child sexual imagery and SECTT - the sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism.

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