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Dufferin OPP receive $120,000 in funding from provincial government

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The Dufferin OPP detachment has received funding from the provincial government to help combat human trafficking in the region.

Dufferin-Caledon MPP Sylvia Jones announced last Thursday (Jan. 28) in a press release that the Dufferin OPP detachment would be receiving approximately $120,000 over the next two years through the Community Safety and Policing Grant (CSP) Program.

The funding is part of a $2.8 million investment over two years from the Ontario government to provide police services across the province with additional resources and tools to combat crime.

?Our police services and their partners play a key role in maintaining public safety. They know what it takes to combat crime and hold offenders accountable,? said Jones in the news release. ?This important investment will help ensure our frontline heroes continue to take action, where and when it's needed to keep us all safe.?

In Dufferin County the funding from the province will primarily be used towards training for officers.

?This funding will be used to provide valuable training and equipment to the Dufferin officers in order for us to be proactive against human trafficking, while supporting victims,? said Dufferin OPP Inspector Terry Ward.

Mary-Lou Archer, a former sergeant with the Orangeville Police Services (OPS) who now works with the Town of Orangeville said that all Dufferin officers will receive an Introduction to Human Trafficking Course and six Criminal Investigation Officers will receive a Human Trafficking Investigator Course at the Canadian Police College in Ottawa.

Caledon Dufferin Victim Services (CDVS) from April 2018 to May 2019 reported 14 female victims (7 were under 18 years) and 1 male victim of human trafficking. CDVS also reported a total of 41 new clients with experiences related to Human Trafficking which resulted in 139 follow-up contacts and 197 safety concerns addressed.

Stats on human trafficking in Dufferin from 2019 to 2020 include:

? Direct new victims: 12 adult females and 3 youth

? Immediate family: 3 adult males, 9 adult females

? Witnesses: 1 adult female

? Follow-up contacts: 85

? In-person contacts: 19

? Addressed safety concerns 153 times.