

Together, let's combat child sex tourism.

Sex tourism involving children and adolescents is a complex phenomenon.

To learn more about it, visit resp.transat.com.

As a travel advisor, you are at the front line with customers, and you can change things.

The phenomenon involves only a small minority of travellers, of course, and is a difficult issue.

But silence is not the solution when it comes to ending these crimes.

We need to talk about it, and be on our guard.

Transat offers the following guidelines for various situations that travel agents may encounter in their day-to-day work.

A customer wants to know about the “nightlife” at destination, and I’m fairly sure they are talking about prostitution.

Careful! We can't start suspecting that criminals are everywhere. This customer may have a legitimate desire to know about activities and nightlife at a certain destination. You can't rely on impressions or hunches. Simply do your job as a travel advisor in this case.

The customer asks me if prostitution is common at the destination they've chosen, or asks me questions on the topic. What do I answer?

You can't jump to conclusions; the customer may have legitimate concerns about prostitution at the destination. If a customer does mention this topic, though, you have a golden opportunity to raise their awareness by making some general comments that do not imply you are assuming the person is ill-intentioned. For example, you can say: “People believe that sex tourism involving children and teens is not a crime and that they are immune, but it is a crime. Extraterritorial legislation exists, under which Canadian offenders can be sentenced to prison in Canada.” In a few seconds, you are delivering at least two messages:

- Sex tourism involving children and teens is a criminal offence, for which offenders can be prosecuted in Canada.
- Tourism industry players, including hoteliers, are increasingly aware and vigilant (in other words, people can get caught).

You can also give the customer an information sheet.

The customer hasn't done anything wrong, but I have reason to believe there is ill intent. Is there something I can do at this stage? Can I report the person?

You can transmit the customer's name to the Canadian organization Cybertip.ca if you have substantial grounds to believe they intend to commit sexual offence with children and/or adolescents. You can discuss the situation with your supervisor before filing a report. Cybertip.ca is Canada's tipline for reporting the sexual exploitation of children, online or elsewhere, and



is a program operated by the [Canadian Centre for Child Protection](#). A reporting person has the option of remaining anonymous.

The customer says very clearly that their intent in travelling is to have sexual relations with children and/or teens. How do I respond?

These cases are rare, but they do happen. First, ask the customer to repeat the question to be certain you heard correctly and there is no ambiguity. You can then ask the customer to wait a moment while you consult a colleague on the subject; ask that colleague to join you in your office so that you have a witness present who can attest that the question was indeed asked by the customer. At this point you can add that sex tourism involving minors, in the destination country as well as in Canada, is a criminal offence. And that a person found guilty of that offence, regardless of where the acts occurred, can be tried in a Canadian court by virtue of the extraterritorial application of the Criminal Code in cases of child sex tourism. If, once you have given that explanation, the customer clearly continues to display intent to offend, you must refuse to sell them any tourism product. You must then discuss the issue with your manager, to assess whether a report should be made to [Cybertip.ca](#). A reporting person has the option of remaining anonymous.

What does Cybertip.ca do with the reported information?

[Cybertip.ca](#) receives reports via its online report form or through its toll-free line (1 866 658-9022). All reports submitted to [Cybertip.ca](#) pertaining to incidents that appear to be in contravention of the *Criminal Code* (Canada) are sent to law enforcement for possible investigation. Any information regarding a child potentially in need of protection is forwarded to the appropriate child welfare agency. Reports involving child victims and/or suspects are given priority and, in most circumstances, are sent to the proper authorities within 24 hours of receipt. [Cybertip.ca](#) works with all the major child exploitation units in Canada, along with the RCMP, for reports involving international matters.

The customer tells me they've previously been to the destination for the purpose of having sex with children and/or teens, and had no problem booking their trip. Can I report this person on the basis of acts committed in the past?

Travel agents are not police officers. However, if you have substantial grounds to believe the customer is displaying ill intent, or they have explicitly stated having previously engaged in child sex tourism, you must react swiftly and discuss the matter with your supervisor. Following that discussion, you may choose to file a report with the Canadian organization [Cybertip.ca](#).

If I refuse to sell to the customer, can they sue me?

To date, no travel agent has been the subject of legal proceedings arising from refusal to sell a travel service to prevent the commission of a crime.



I told the customer they could be tried and convicted in Canada for sexual abuse of a minor in another country, but they didn't believe me.

The *Criminal Code* has stipulated since 1997 that in matters of sexual exploitation of persons aged under 18, its provisions have extraterritorial application, meaning that a crime of this nature committed by a Canadian in a foreign country is subject to prosecution in the Canadian justice system. You can refer the customer to the [Government of Canada Web page](#) on the topic.

How effective are these measures in catching sex offenders?

Since [Cybertip.ca](#) was set up in 2002, hundreds of arrests by law enforcement across Canada (and internationally) have resulted from various Canadians deciding to make a difference and submit a report about their concerns.

Donald Bakker was the first Canadian convicted under Section 7 (4.1) of the Criminal Code, commonly referred to as Canada's child sex tourism law. In May 2005, in addition to pleading guilty to criminal acts committed inside the country, he pleaded guilty to seven counts of indecent acts involving children under 14 in Cambodia. He was sentenced to a seven-year jail term. Since then, there have been five convictions pursuant to Canadian child sex tourism legislation.

Contacts

Cybertip.ca: [cybertip.ca/report](#) or 1 866 658-9022

To learn more about Transat's many corporate responsibility initiatives, visit [www.resp.transat.com](#).

These guidelines are provided for guidance only. In the case of potentially problematic situations, we recommend consulting local law enforcement beforehand.