

Indo-Canadian child sex abuse targeted - \$100K grant to tear down language barriers announced

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Lessening the effects of child sexual abuse in Calgary's Indo-Canadian community will be the target of a \$100,000 grant announced Thursday by Human Services Minister Manmeet Bhullar.

"What this is really about is to say, how can we start having conversations about some of the most difficult and challenging and uncomfortable issues there are in our world," he said.

"How can we start having those conversations with new audiences?"

"In my readings, there are some studies out of India that show 54% of children in India are sexually abused ... and that concerns me incredibly because if that's what it shows in a government study, then who knows what the real numbers would be."

The money will be used by Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse to remove barriers for members of the Indo-Canadian community seeking help, specifically around language and culture, along with improving awareness and increase prevention.

"Trying to talk about this is the biggest difficulty," said Arvinder Sumal, a director at the Canadian Sikh Network, which is partnering with CCASA on the project.

"It doesn't matter if it's an Indo-Canadian community or another type of community, when you're a minority every minute, negative item is amplified."

Members of the Indo-Canadian community can find coming forward especially difficult, said Bhullar.

"I can tell you there's a great amount of discomfort and resistance to having these very dialogues," he said.

CCASA executive director Danielle Aubry said one in three girls and one in six boys in Canada will be sexually abused by the time they turn 18.