



# **Guide For Parents, Guardians, Educators & School Counsellors On Domestic Sex Trafficking**

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## Introduction

Thank you for purchasing this manual. My name is Timea Nagy, and I am a survivor of sex trafficking. This manual is written by me with parents and a school counsellor who have experienced this first hand.

Why do you need to know about sex trafficking in Canada? Because it happens here. It doesn't matter where you live. It doesn't matter how much money you make. It doesn't matter how safe your school is. Traffickers target young girls typically between the ages of 12-21 because that is a stage of life when youth experience incredibly vulnerable personal growth. As youth are going through these formational years, they are trying to figure out themselves and the world around them, and our job as parents is to help them navigate these years.

I expect that, as a parent, guardian, educator or school counsellor, you want to be equipped with knowledge and tools to better understand how to protect your children and students. And – worst case scenario – if the youth in your life is caught in a similar situation that I found myself in, you would want to know how to help. So, in this manual I am going to give you some insight into what Domestic Sex Trafficking is, how to better identify red flags, and how to respond if your youth is exploited.

It is not my intention to scare you (or your youth as they come to learn what trafficking is!), but to equip you with knowledge and tools that can prevent your child from becoming a victim of human trafficking.

This manual will also help parents and guardians realize helpful ways to engage with a youth who may be trafficked and returns to your family after being exploited. It is extremely important for you as a parent to feel supported and properly guided while you are trying to help your loved one integrate back into your family life.

For all the parents who are currently dealing with this issue, I want to emphasize this: None of this is your fault. You are trying to do the best you can as a parent. Parenting doesn't come with a textbook, and there is no way to do it perfectly. As long as you love your child and would do anything in your power to protect them, you have done nothing wrong. In later sections, as you come to better understand indicators of trafficking and identify your family within much of this narrative, please do not blame yourself. These indicators are not listed to make you feel judged, blamed or shamed. These indicators are listed simply to help you understand this crime better.

Most importantly, it is absolutely not your fault that your child has been trafficked. And I need you to understand – and believe – this. My mom became sick about three years ago; on her deathbed, she begged me to forgive her for being a “bad” mom, for raising us alone and being

poor. That is when I fully understood how trafficking impacts the entire family with feelings of guilt and shame. As a survivor and a daughter, I have to tell you that it was not my mom's fault. She did the best she could. She gave me everything and much more than she ever received from her mom. The fact that I was trafficked can only be blamed on the ones truly responsible: MY TRAFFICKERS. They are the ones who sought me out. They are the ones who recognized that I was vulnerable. Instead of offering a legitimate job, they were the ones responsible for deciding to exploit me. My exploitation was not my mother's decision; I was exploited because of the callous decisions my traffickers made. So please remember that every time you feel guilty or ashamed.

I also realize that you may not be a "parent" in the traditional sense. Perhaps you are a grandparent, aunt or uncle who is responsible for parenting a family member, or maybe you are a foster parent or legal guardian of a child. If this is the case, the child in your care is sure to be going through loss and grief, so we encourage you to consider these extra layers of vulnerabilities when learning about the ways pimps and traffickers target youth.

Educators and school counsellors, you see youth for a significant amount of their day. As positive role models in the lives of youth, it is crucial for you to better understand what trafficking is, how to identify it, and how to intervene when necessary. I encourage parents, guardians, educators and school counsellors to work together as a team to ensure the safety of youth, to better prevent sexual exploitation from occurring, to intervene appropriately when you are concerned, and to rally around survivors as they heal.

Please be prepared emotionally before taking time to read this manual. This material is difficult to process if you are a parent, and it is especially difficult to read if you are the parent of a child who has been or currently is being trafficked. As difficult as this material is to read, I urge you to read until the end, even if it must be done over the course of a couple of reading sessions; I will explain and highlight many things that will help you better cope with the challenges you might be facing.

## Timea's Story

I was trafficked twenty years ago from Budapest, Hungary. My mom was a police officer, and I was raised in a very strict environment. Regardless of the fact that my mom was a police officer, I grew up in a very troubled home setting. I was surrounded by mental illness, alcohol abuse, and domestic violence. I was also sexually abused at an early age by family and a neighbour. By the time I was 19 years old, I had extremely low self-esteem and self-worth.

When I left home, we were about to lose our home and become homeless. I came to Canada in an attempt to make money to send home so that we would not lose our apartment. I felt that it was my responsibility to get our family out of financial crisis. When I arrived in a new country only to realize that the job was not exactly what my recruiters had promised, I didn't fight back. I had nowhere to go and no one to talk to. I was sexually assaulted immediately upon arriving; I thought it was all my fault and I did not ask for help.

I was away from home, I hadn't told my mom exactly where I went, and I didn't know how to get myself out of the situation. I felt it was too late. I was already in another country, and in an attempt to keep me under their control, I had been told that I owed my traffickers a lot of money. I was told if I didn't pay it back, they would hurt my mom and brother.

I was scared. I blamed myself. However, they said that if I did what they asked me to do, they would not hurt my family, and that I would make enough money to pay back my debt plus more to make what I would need for myself and my family. I didn't fight back. They took me to a strip joint and said that all I had to do was walk around in a bikini and give lap dances. Of course, that wasn't the case by the time we arrived.

Once I arrived at the club, I was sexually assaulted by the club owner. Afterwards, I was told to put a dress on and start working right away. The minute I was assaulted, I lost my old self. I stood in the middle of the office, completely naked, still trying to clean off my body from his "discharge" while trying to process what just happened to me. I was given a stripper dress and shoes, and as I was packing away my jeans and t-shirt I bought with my mom just two months prior, I also packed away my feelings, who I was, and where I came from. I felt dirty and I felt like another person. Someone else took over my body. As soon as I saw myself in the mirror, I transformed to "Allison" the dancer and left his office. I went into autopilot mode without realizing at the time that I was doing so. Twenty years – and many (many!) self-help books later – I can reflect back on how I adapted to survive. I went into survivor mode. I shut my feelings down as deep as I could. I put up a wall so I wouldn't feel anything that was about to come at me. And I'm so glad I did. I worked in the clubs for the next three months, with barely anything to eat, and threatened, beaten and violated physically more times I can remember.

I was a machine and I was a zombie at the same time. I was also extremely afraid of them and the threats they made. The biggest threat was directed towards my family; I was told that if I didn't do what they said, they would hurt my family and they would also tell them that I was a prostitute. I felt that I could never, ever let my mom find out what happened to me. So I did exactly what they asked me to do. I worked twenty hours a day, never talked back, and gave them my money. Even though I paid off my debt, they still took my money for all kinds of reasons and with all kinds of excuses.

Once, the police raided my club and they took me to the police station to question me. They asked if I was okay and if I needed help. However, they were not very friendly and they seemed pretty judgmental, so I did not want their help and I did not feel comfortable enough to share my troubles with them. I was concerned that if my traffickers discovered that I said anything, they would hurt my family and my mom would learn about everything. So no, I did not ask for help.

Why am I telling you all this?

Because you are a parent, and I know that if your child was in my situation, you would not only want to know, you would want to help. And now that I am 41 years old, I know for sure that if I would have talked to my mom all those years ago and told her what kind of trouble I was in, she wouldn't have been mad at me.

But I didn't realize that at the time.

## *Where I Am Now*

Fifteen years after being trafficked, I started speaking to small groups of law enforcement, then small church groups and social agencies. I realized that people who knew about human trafficking wanted to help but did not know how. I also realized that many human trafficking cases had been misidentified or put into the wrong category simply because there were not enough resources and proper information was not available.

Since 2009, I have been touring across North America speaking and training on the subject of human trafficking. I have been honoured to train over 40,000 officers and law enforcement personnel. That being said, **the work is not nearly over yet**. We have a long way to go, and in many ways we are just beginning.

Along with speaking and training, I also founded an organization called Walk With Me Canada Victim Services. This organization was dedicated to helping survivors of human trafficking. Before conducting educational presentations and awareness campaigns we had 2 cases. After speaking to about 5,000 local police officers our case load skyrocketed up to 89 cases in 18 months. The results speak for themselves. With training, police officers are able to effectively identify victims of human trafficking and together we are able to help them escape from a life of emotional and physical trauma. The organization closed in 2015 due to lack of funding. I then established Timea's Cause Inc. ([www.timeascause.ca](http://www.timeascause.ca)), a for-profit organization that focuses on Education in North America.

While working on the front lines, we realized that it wasn't only the victims who needed help – parents also required assistance. There was no education, no awareness and certainly no guidelines for parents to know how to protect their children from this crime. Our goal is to help you become more educated, increase your understanding about what human trafficking is, and realize how can it happen to Canadian children. Our goal is for you to better identify the red flags and indicators of sex trafficking by reading this short manual.

We are grateful to have **Yvette Jalbert** and another mom (who does not want to identify herself) share their experience and message with other parents. In later sections of this manual, they will outline their daughters' stories, highlight some of the behaviour changes they noticed, and share their own feelings and reactions. If you have any questions for Yvette, please feel free to contact her through our organization. She would be more than happy to answer any questions or concerns that you may have. Most of the parents we have worked with have felt that they were alone in their struggles and experiences. We hope to change that by releasing this guide.

## What is Domestic Sex Trafficking?

If you are a parent who has a child being trafficked, I urge you to read the following sections regardless of how difficult it will be to get through. The following sections detailing trafficking will help you understand how your child became involved, and how they have had to adapt to their new lifestyle. It is especially important to understand the trafficking lifestyle so that you can better understand what accommodations need to be made for trafficked victims and survivors after being rescued.

### *Defining Human Trafficking*

Human Trafficking is a broad term that refers to the exploitation of individuals at the hands and for the exploitative benefit of others. The internationally recognized Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons (commonly referenced as the Palermo Protocol) defines trafficking as:

**“the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.”<sup>1</sup>**

Human trafficking is a very lucrative and profitable business. Unlike arms or drug trafficking, the services of a human being can be sold over and over and over again.

Human Trafficking thrives on anonymity and has gone unnoticed because it is truly a ghost crime. Victims rarely come forward without extensive prompting, and little training has been provided to law enforcement, social services, health providers, and the general public, making it very difficult for individuals to recognize potential signs and indicators.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/what-is-human-trafficking.html>

## ***Types of Exploitation***

According to the Palermo Protocol, trafficking can include any (or a combination) of the following types of exploitation:

- Exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation (sex trafficking)
- Forced labour or services (labour trafficking)
- Slavery or practices similar to slavery
- Servitude
- Removal of organs

This manual will focus on the prevalence of sex trafficking in Canada.

## ***Domestic Trafficking***

Domestic Trafficking refers to the exploitation of victims within a country's borders.<sup>2</sup> Domestic trafficking in Canada almost always involves exploitation in the sex trade.

Despite misconceptions that domestic trafficking only happens in developing or “poor” countries, domestic trafficking happens all over the world including Canada. **Domestic human trafficking is more prevalent in Canada than most would like to believe.**

**In Canada, over 80% of victims are young girls and women born and raised in Canada.**

### **Victim Profile:**

Typically 12-25 year old girls and boys from a variety of backgrounds including small towns, urban centres, single-parent homes, foster homes, or group homes. Many victims are misunderstood teenagers and runaways. (Please note that the age can be younger than 12 and can be older than 25. We are averaging based on reports and based on our own experience with victims.)

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<sup>2</sup> Domestic trafficking does not require its victims to be citizens of the country where exploitation occurs; domestic trafficking simply refers to the fact that international borders are not cross. Therefore, an immigrant in Canada recruited and exploited in that same country could still be considered a case of domestic trafficking.

### **How are the victims deceived?**

They are mainly deceived by “**The Game.**”<sup>3</sup> This is a term used by an American pimp named Don “Magic” Juan<sup>4</sup> in the 1970’s and is currently a term used to talk about forced prostitution and domestic sex trafficking. *The Pimp Game* is the name of a “training manual” written by Mickey Royal for traffickers in North America. The strategies from *The Pimp Game* have been adopted by pimps around the world. *The Pimp Game* teaches recruitment methods including how to find the most vulnerable victim, how to groom and condition them, how to make the most money from a victim, and how to break them into sex slavery.

**Pimps** should be classified as **Traffickers**. Pimps are known to lure/recruit their victims, control their earnings, use violence and threats, move and transport their victims, and hold them against their will. As you continue reading this manual, you will learn more about “The Game” and the tactics pimps and traffickers use to recruit, groom, and exploit victims.

### **Where Do Victims Work?**

We say this next statement carefully, based on our experiences with our cases and information we received from our survivors: *Every single Canadian born survivor we have come across was trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation.* This is not to say that domestic trafficking does not include forced labour or other types of trafficking; however, the domestic victims we have supported thus far have been exclusively exploited in sex trafficking.

Victims of sex trafficking, most of the domestically trafficked victims can be found in:

- Brothels
- Hotels/motels
- Condominiums/apartment buildings
- Massage parlours
- Exotic dancing/strip clubs
- Hidden apartments
- Above stores/local businesses

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<sup>3</sup> “The Game” is also sometimes referred to as “The Life.”

<sup>4</sup> Don “Magic” Juan created an empire by living off the avails of young women across the United States. He is incredibly influential in hip hop music and popular culture, and he regularly makes guest appearances in music videos and at celebrity events. The Annual Players Ball, first started in 1974 in Chicago as a birthday celebration for Juan, attracts pimps and celebrities alike. Attended by musicians like Snoop Dogg and Too Short, this event recognizes pimps by presenting awards like the Pimp of the Year, Player of the Year and Mack of the Year. The event is still held annually.

## The Mindset of a Human Trafficked Victim

### *Understanding the Mindset*

“The Game” is a term used by the pimps and females who are involved in today’s domestic human trafficking and prostitution scene. The prostitution “game” has changed over the past 10 years as the Internet and technology in general have played major roles in the sex trade – both in targeting and recruiting victims, as well as the ability to advertise and sell sexual services. The majority of females in the sex trade are no longer attracting clients by standing on the street, and pimps do not wear the stereotypical “pimp clothes” often portrayed in film and music.

Many books and “training manuals” have been published (either in paper copies or found online) on how to be a pimp. Many pimps interviewed by police reference these manuals and credit them for instructing them on how to find and exploit girls.

Pimps are actively recruiting girls as young as 12-13 years old, and sometimes even younger. Unless there is adequate awareness and education about domestic trafficking and the signs of a trafficked female, victims will be constantly mistaken as independent escorts or victims of domestic violence. Trafficked victims are threatened, beaten, brainwashed, isolated, housed in horrible conditions, poorly fed, and in some cases drugged. They are forced to service customers upwards of 10 times a day while they are working out of hotels, motels and condos. Many also are sexually assaulted by their pimps and customers, and violent sex is often used to initially break then maintain control of a victim.

The conditioning of victims is highly relevant and important to understand. The most common technique used by pimps to lure girls is to use emotional manipulation; these techniques are often referred to as the Loverboy, Prince Charming or **Romeo** techniques. Pimps will use a variety of techniques to befriend a victim, will often appear to be their “boyfriend,” will paint a picture of a beautiful future for the both of them, and then will use his influence over her to persuade her into the sex trade.

Trafficked victims typically perceive themselves as “girlfriends” of their pimp, and they are usually treated very well in the beginning stages. Victims are then isolated and broken into the game over a period of time. That time frame depends on the type of pimp and the vulnerabilities of the victim. Victims are often coerced into a lifestyle in the adult entertainment industry on a “temporary basis” then manipulated to move more deeply into the sex trade.

Once “broken,” victims can be forced to have sex with multiple customers daily. Refusal to

comply with any of the rules laid out by the pimp may result in psychological and physical abuse. After such abuse, a pimp will usually tell the victim that he had to discipline her out of love because he just wants to teach her how to make a lot of money for both of them, for their future home and a better life that they will build together. After a period of time, victims naturally fall into a state of learned helplessness. They feel compelled to follow the rules because they can see no way out of their situation and they fear the consequences. This can be due to a combination of personal shame, threats, violence, and a continuous lack of control, all leading to an overall feeling of helplessness. Basically, they come to accept their situation and try to make the best out of it.

Many wonder **why victims don't just leave or seek help** when they speak English and are familiar with the customs and cultures of their home country. Pimps often use emotional manipulation to recruit and condition their victims so many trafficked victims will not realize they are being exploited. Many victims identify their pimp as their "boyfriend" and will say that they are in love. In this sense, their mindset is very similar to a woman in an abusive relationship. Victims of human trafficking are complex. **Consider what you know about victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, and kidnapping. The combination of all these factors is only the beginning of the mindset of a domestic human trafficking victim!**

## *The Lifestyle*

Pimps may control many girls within their stable<sup>5</sup> and will transport victims from city to city. **Pimps will operate out of a variety of venues including hotels, motels, apartments, condos, houses, brothels, and massage parlours.**

Moving victims from location to location is used to isolate them and create a sense of dependency on the pimp. Pimps move their victims so their girls cannot make friends or establish enough trust with someone to ask for help. At this point, the mindset of the victim is filled with shame, knowing that she is in a horrible situation and the belief that there is no way out. She may be upset and angry with everyone at home, and she is told on a regular basis by her pimp that she is nothing but a “ho.” Striking fear and helplessness into the victim, the pimp will tell the victim that as a “ho,” the police will not care about her or help her and he will tell the victim that the police will arrest her for being a prostitute. She believes that no one will care if she dies and no one will believe her if she goes to the police. Many pimps will take incriminating pictures or videos of the victim, and the victim ultimately becomes afraid of her family, friends and the police seeing this evidence. Completely isolated from her old life, the victim has nowhere to turn.

Many victims will live with the pimp, but this is not always the case. Some have been known to continue living at home with their family, interact with her friends and attend school – all while being exploited by her pimp.

In most cases the victim’s identification will be controlled by the pimp or the “Bottom Bitch.”<sup>6</sup> Even if a girl manages to escape her pimp, she may try to return to collect her identification. Victims often have nothing but work clothes (i.e. outfits for the adult entertainment parlours and for receiving clients) and some very casual gear for travel. They may not even have a proper winter coat. Victims are constantly watched and their interactions with others are highly controlled. Another newer rule is to refrain from speaking with other girls because **a common trend is for girls to actively recruit others for their pimp.**

Some pimps will “brand” their girls. The most common method is to have the pimp’s name, nickname or symbol tattooed on the victim’s neck, chest, or possibly on her legs. This is to signify that she belongs to him. If she is working in a club, other pimps will see that she belongs to another pimp. The tattoo will likely be a homemade tattoo, and it will mainly just be a name (like “The King”) or a symbol referring to the pimp’s name (e.g. a crown). The pimp will often

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<sup>5</sup> A term used by pimps who have multiple victims under their control; a “stable” is in reference to all of their victims.

<sup>6</sup> A “bottom bitch” is a term used in the Game to refer to a female under the control of a pimp or trafficker who is given more responsibilities including recruiting other victims, keeping an eye on them for a pimp, etc.

have the exact same tattoo on his own body. This identifies him to other pimps and girls in the Game.

Victims are constantly told that they are worthless and that only their pimp would put up with them. They are trained to believe that they are better off with their pimp because only he understands them and is willing to take care of them and protect them. They are conditioned to believe that all others (family, friends, police, society in general) would judge them harshly and treat them worse than their pimp ever could. This is a powerful belief for most victims and must be considered during any interaction.

Every pimp makes sure that the girls are on a tight schedule. One of the beliefs is that a girl with too much time on her hands is more likely to become a problem. Also, a busy girl makes more profit for the pimp.

Victims work long hours from the venues we listed above. However, they can also be seen in public places such as convenience stores:

- Convenience stores: these are one stop shops for condoms, coffee, energy drinks and food.
- 24/7 fast food locations
- Cheaper hotels and motels like Comfort Inn, Super 8, etc. These places usually do not require a credit card or identification for room reservations and will take cash.
- Beauty salons getting their hair done or their nails maintained.

Victims who are trafficked are often forced to endure the following:

- Work unreasonably long hours a day; victims are expected to provide sexual services to around 10-15 men a day to meet a “quota” their pimp has set for them.
- Sleep very little.
- Eat minimal food.
- Interactions with others (phone calls, visits, etc.) are monitored and controlled.
- The trafficker must know a victim’s whereabouts at alltimes (if they are allowed to leave at all).
- Not allowed to ask questions.
- Must turn in all money to the trafficker (if they even get to see the money they earn...).
- Must work regardless of sickness, illness, or menstruation.
- Can’t call the police, or do not feel comfortable talking to police.

## *How “The Game” Is Successful*

- Pimps are often considered to be “boyfriends,” so there is an emotional attachment and often economic dependence.
- Domestic sex trafficking victims will often not see themselves as a “victim”; sometimes they will not even know what human trafficking is.
- Human trafficking is often misidentified as domestic violence, sexual assault, or even independent escorting.
- Being in the sex trade is often seen as a short-term “choice,” one made to help their boyfriend/pimp or to achieve a future he has promised.
- Victims are forced to have sex with multiple customers daily.
- Pimps may also force their victims into other exploitative situations like stripping or working in massage parlours.
- There is a continuing cycle of helplessness, threats, violence, fear, and shame.

## *The “Zombie Stage”*

Once victims get to the point where they realize that they will never be able to keep their money, and that they were totally misguided and lied to, their body and mind will start the process of shutting down. They *will* begin to accept that there is no money and they *will* go to work.

They will accept and internalize all the lies that are being told to them by their pimp or trafficker. They will believe they are a criminal because the traffickers tell them that they are. Victims are often threatened by the traffickers with stories of being arrested and sent to jail. In a very twisted way, victims become almost grateful to their traffickers for housing them, feeding them, and giving them a sense of “community” or belonging.

This is why trafficked victims are similar to **kidnapped victims**. The trafficker becomes the “caregiver.” There is also a special, weird, twisted bond between them (trauma bonds). These bonds can be so strong that by the time the victim is rescued, they do not know whose side they are on anymore. They do not know if they are supposed to protect the trafficker or go against them. This behavior is very similar to **Stockholm Syndrome**. The relationship between the victim and the trafficker is also similar to **Domestic Violence**. It is not always easy to seek help or call the police on a “loved one” who has “done nothing but try to help you (and your parents, children, etc.) through hard times,” even while they are abusing or molesting you?

Things can go in two totally different directions from this moment based on the individual and on the trafficker's personality:

### **Escape**

The trafficked victim can get to the point emotionally where they decide to fight back and/or try to escape. If they escape, it is highly unlikely that they will go to the police. They will probably reach out to someone they are familiar with and ask for help from someone that they think they can trust. This might not always be a family member or close friend if a victim is still struggling with feelings of shame; it could be a social worker, teacher, health professional, someone from a religious institution, or other. Some victims will get to a point where they think that going to the police cannot be possibly worse than what they have endured at the hands of their trafficker. As law enforcement officers are becoming more aware of trafficking, some police services have units dedicated to investigating trafficking. As part of their investigations, they may have visited a number of women in the sex trade industry to establish lines of communication and support; some victims may confide in a police officer who has made previous contact with them.

### **Become one of them**

Some victims may decide that it is better to be the abuser than the abused. At this point, they start to move up the ladder and become a recruiter or a worker for the traffickers. This usually happens after being with the trafficker for a longer period of time.

## *Timea's Thoughts*

The most common questions police officers and prosecutors are asked during court is “Why didn’t she just leave?” I was asked the same question during my court case. The defense lawyer got a real kick out of this one. He went on and on for about twenty minutes questions why I never called the police. For some reason, the fact that I never called for help made me less credible and more “messed up” in the head. Needless to say we lost the case. Regardless, let’s look at that question.

So why don’t many victims just call the police or ask for help? Consider how elephants are trained in some parts of the world. Often a baby elephant is tied to a post for the first couple months of its life. This rope only allows the elephant to move in a small circle around the post. Every time the baby elephant tries to get up and walk away, it realizes that it can only go so far. They will try for a while but eventually the elephant learns that it can only stay within a certain area away from the post. After this training period, the rope is removed, and the elephant continues to stay in this area and never leave the circle.

This is very similar to how traffickers exert control over their victims. For the first little while, victims are constantly threatened, beaten, brainwashed and continually told that if they leave, they (or their family or loved ones) will be harmed or killed. They are reminded constantly that someone is watching them. They will even go so far as to show very recent pictures of their family members back home to make the victim realize how powerful they are, or to prove that they have connections everywhere. They will tell the victims over and over again how they cannot trust the police. Victims are told that the police are corrupt, the police can’t (or won’t) do anything, the police can’t save their family, and the police will not save them.

## **Parenting & Human Trafficking**

In the next section we are going to share a few stories with you. The first is written by a survivor of domestic sex trafficking; the second and third accounts are provided by two mothers who have experienced parenting daughters who were trafficked.

### ***Michelle's story***

My name is Michelle, and I grew up in an affluent suburb of Toronto, Ontario, Canada. At the age of fifteen, I was recruited through the social media site Facebook and groomed to become a sex trade worker. I was blackmailed, sexually and physically abused, extorted, brainwashed and ultimately scared senseless into earning unrealistic amounts that my pimps demanded I make for them.

I became a victim of human trafficking all while living under my parents' roof, attending high school and working a part time job – like any other typical teenager. I interacted with friends, family members, teachers, co-workers and members of the community daily. Yet, due to the fear my pimps instilled in me that shook me to my core, I would never dare cry for help not wanting to risk the consequences my pimps insisted I would face.

Finally, in 2011 I was put in contact with Timea Nagy and her team at Walk With Me, and along with some police assistance I was able to escape and rebuild my life away from my pimps. Although I was physically removed and safe, emotionally and mentally I was broken. I chose to re-enter the sex trade independently, but due to being in such a fragile and unstable condition, I was preyed upon and revictimized. I met a “Romeo” pimp and was once again pimped out and broken down for another year. Once again, through Timea Nagy and Walk With Me along with the most amazing, intelligent, and caring detective, I was saved. This time, I had the closure of having my pimp brought to justice.

Throughout the years, not only was I victimized but I also witnessed hundreds of other girls who were in the same position as me. Girls checking into hotels, their pimps waiting in the parking lot. Overhearing physical abuse. Girls broken down, walking with their heads down, too scared to make eye contact. All the while having people going about their daily activities, oblivious of the abuse that is occurring right under their noses. From the information you have read and are about to read, I hope you are filled with valuable knowledge about how children can be better protected.

### ***Yvette and Ashley Jalbert's story***

In the following sections, Yvette Jalbert will share her daughter's story. Please note that this is an extremely emotional story. For your own wellbeing, please ensure you have emotional support around you or have someone with whom you can debrief. We want to share her story with you to personalize the fact that this happens to daughters across the country and also to personalize some of the indicators and warning signs of trafficking. In Ashley's case, she disclosed to her mom that she was working in the sex industry, but in many cases a child/victim will not disclose their experiences.



### **Ashley**

As a child growing up, Ashley did not know her biological father. She had issues with this part of her life but kept a smile on her face and seemed to focus on building friendships. Getting up in the morning to go to school was never a problem for Ashley. She couldn't wait to get to school to see her friends. She loved going to Canada's Wonderland and spending time at Cedar Park in Oshawa as a child. She received quite a few attendance awards throughout her school years. She struggled with certain subjects but persevered. She always enjoyed playing sports; soccer, basketball, jogging and swimming. Her family was very important to her as well.

When she was 13, we moved back to Sudbury. I thought she may have a difficult time trying to fit in at a new high school but not Ashley. Within a couple of days, she brought home a new friend to introduce to her family. I was relieved that she found a nice friend so quickly. Ironically, this new friend was a babysitter for her biological father's family. The two young girls hit it off right away

and Ashley was introduced to a few other girls who hung around together.

During this time, I met a man with whom I fell in love and we ended up moving in together and combined our families. We had 5 kids between the two of us: his 3 teenage sons, my Ashley, and my son Brandon who was 7.

I should have seen certain red flags at that time. My boyfriend would pick on Ashley and their relationship wasn't the best. A time came when her group of friends set up a date for Ashley to meet her dad; Ashley's dream of meeting him came true. I will never forget her excitement and nervousness. Her girlfriends came over to help her get ready for her big date meeting her father. He introduced her to his family and other children. Ashley's life was now whole, and she suddenly became close to her half-sister.

Ashley experimented with drugs, but she continued to reach her goals and remained in school. Rarely did she miss a day of school, and by grade 12 she managed to reach the point where she was heading for the honour roll. She had a wonderful group of friends that you could refer to as her "clique" and she had a second family. One of her goals was to build a relationship with her dad. The dreams she had for a relationship with him didn't end up the way she expected. He seemed to be too busy and the relationship with her half-sister was bittersweet. There was jealousy, but Ashley still loved her. She always wanted a little sister and they were only 2 years apart. We could see that Ashley wanted to stay close to her because she was the closest ally to her father. As time went by, I saw trouble brewing although she was still doing well in school. Ashley's group of girlfriends started to become a little distant because they could see Ashley changing as she become closer to her sister. She was being introduced to some not so good people, yet she still had an outgoing and bubbly personality.

I recall a day when Ashley was 17. I was visiting my mother down the road. Ashley called me in a panic. I rushed home and brought her into the clinic. The doctor made Ashley a referral to a gastroenterologist. She needed surgery in a timely fashion. The day had come for her surgery in North Bay. It was extensive surgery and I was worried, but Ashley was strong. She was sent home after four days only to be rushed back for emergency surgery because complications set in. This is where Ashley's life changed for the worse. She remained in the hospital for a month and a half due to many complications. She needed three emergency surgeries. She had her own morphine pump at the age of 18. I voiced my concerns to the staff, but I was told she needed it. She was finally released and allowed to finish healing with in-home care. She lost a lot of time from school due to her illness, but she planned on returning. I watched my daughter become addicted to the pain medication she was being prescribed. I called the surgeon in North Bay with my concern that she was addicted. The surgeon cut her off right away. Ashley's strong will and determination was

still there, and she returned to school to complete grade 12. During this phase, she started spending a lot of her spare time with her half-sister who had been into drugs for quite a while. They proceeded to go downhill together.

Ashley's step-father being the hard core verbally abusive person he was became worse with her. She always remained respectful with him, but his bullying got out of control. They ended up in an argument because Ashley had had enough of it. In August 2008, he threw her out. Her half-sister was in Toronto exotic dancing, so she followed her there. I was worried sick. I was furious with my husband for throwing her out of the house. I now lost the ability to keep my eye on her and keep her close. I would call her every day and try to convince her to come home, but she was tired of being thrown out and was determined to make it on her own. We kept in contact, but I was concerned because she told me that she and her sister were living with some guys and their mother and she was dancing at some club down there. I felt helpless.

My birthday was approaching, and Ashley told me she was coming to visit me. On November 21 she came up to spend the day with me. We went out for breakfast at Tutti Frutti. We were having a nice Mother/Daughter time. We started talking about her job. She told me how she was making a lot of money. She proceeded to tell me how she goes to spend time with this older man. My mouth dropped and I stopped eating. I said to her, "Ashley that sounds like prostitution." She responded, "No, Mom. I don't have sex with this guy. I just spend time watching TV or I have dinner with him. They drive me there and pick me up. They protect us." I knew right then that my suspicions were correct. I got up from the table and said to Ashley, "Ashley, we have to go." We got into the truck, and I looked at her with fear and said, "Ashley, listen to me. They are prostituting you out." She again said, "Mom, they protect me. I'm not having sex. They put our money all together in a pot, then we will split it at the end of the month." I said, "Ashley, if you say no, they will start beating you. Just stay home. Don't go back." She replied, "No Mom. I have to go back. I can't leave Brittany down there." Ashley was 20 years old. I couldn't hold her here, and she returned.

I was constantly worried and continued to call Ashley on a daily basis. On one occasion, she called me crying and told me she was getting her stuff together and planned on coming home. Then one day I called her, and some guy answered her phone. I asked to speak to Ashley. He said, "She's busy." I lost it and said, "Who the hell do you think you are answering my daughter's phone that I bought her and telling me she is busy?" He replied, "She's busy. She will call you back" and he hung up on me. By now I am panicking. Ashley called me back about a half hour after that. I then called my friend. He told me that we must go down and get her. I called Ashley back and told her that we were coming to get her. She yelled, "Mom, don't, they will shoot you."

Within the week, she came home in the middle of the night. I was glad that my husband was

working night shift. We made a snack and tea and went upstairs and cuddled on my bed. She said to me, “Mom, I love you.” I responded, “I love you too, Ash. Talk to me.” That’s when she told me, “I should have listened to you. They were beating me, dragging me by the hair across the floor. They put a gun to my head and up inside of me because I wouldn’t do what they told me to.” She told me how she was scared that they were going to find her. She was terrified and wouldn’t leave my side. She kept walking around the house looking out the windows. This went on for over a month. When Ashley had escaped, she left her sister down there. During this time, her sister returned back to Sudbury. Ashley slowly started going back out but I could see she was returning to the bad crowd. Then a man started calling the house. Ashley started making trips back and forth down south. On one occasion, she went missing and I called the police.

In May 2009, I sat down to do my books for the business and realized we had been defrauded. My husband was home when I discovered the loss. He automatically started yelling and called the police. He then called Ashley to come home. Everything happened so fast that I didn’t even get the chance to speak to my daughter. The police came in at the same time as Ashley. She was honest and admitted that she cashed cheques, but she didn’t have the chance to say any more because her step-father had the police arrest her and she was gone. I told my husband, “You could have at least let me talk to her before you called the police.” Ashley was released from jail two days later.

My mother and I went to bail court to have her released. A strange incident happened while we were waiting for Ashley to get her belongings. My mother and I were standing outside the jail doors waiting for Ashley. We watched a tall man park his SUV on the street at a meter. He got out but didn’t put money in the meter. He ran up to the door, passed us not knowing who we were. He whipped the jail door open, yelled through the hole at Ashley, “Come on, let’s go” in a very demanding manner. When I witnessed this, I opened the door, looked up at him and said, “Who the hell are you?” He changed his tone and said, “I’m a friend of Ashley’s. I’m here to pick her up.” I replied to him, “I am Ashley’s mother and I’m here to pick her up. She is NOT to be associating with anyone who is in trouble with the law.” He left the courthouse. My mother and I were very concerned about his mannerism with Ashley and have since learned that this guy is involved with human trafficking. Of course, we didn’t know that at the time.

She stayed at my parent’s house because my husband wouldn’t allow her to come home. That’s when she told me that the reason she stole the cheques was because she had a gun put to her head behind the club one night and they wanted \$5,500. She told me that she tried to tell the police, but they didn’t believe her. One laughed in her face. In July 2009, we bought a new house and moved. Ashley was struggling with an Oxycontin addiction but was trying hard to get clean. She went in to detox a couple of times. We had been doing our homework and found a rehab facility in

Montreal where Ashley wanted to go. The last time she went into detox was the time she realized she needed severe help. Her half-sister followed her into detox. While in there, her sister called an older man she knew.

He picked them up at detox, drove to her sister's house and they convinced Ashley that needles weren't that bad. Her sister injected Ashley in the neck, and it went bad. Ashley took a taxi back to detox where they put her in a bubble room. She almost overdosed. Ashley's boyfriend lived in Toronto. He called to tell me that he had called the detox and found out that Ashley had almost overdosed the night before. He was livid with Ashley's sister for injecting her. I called the rehab to confirm it. I spoke to Ashley and she said to me, "Mom, call that rehab and get me out of this city." Her boyfriend rushed to Sudbury while I was packing her bags. We drove her to Montreal that day. Ashley did well. She finished her 3 ½ month treatment and returned home. She relapsed quickly and started hanging around her half-sister and her friends. She was being threatened and I could tell she was becoming frightened again. She was found dead, a month to the day that she returned home from rehab. At the time I didn't know what human trafficking was. At the time they ruled Ashley's death an "accidental overdose." Our family received hundreds of tips from the community saying she was killed by her traffickers. The police didn't re-open her case.

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*Ashley Jalbert*  
*1989-2010*

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## ***Indicators & Red Flags Seen With Ashley***

### **Pre-trafficking behaviours**

- Loved and cared for her “fur babies” (cat and dog).
- Good relationship with her family except for her step-dad.
- Attended family functions.
- Avid in sports, soccer, swimming, jogging.
- Healthy friendships combined with unhealthy friendships including half-sister.
- Experimented in drugs which then became worse after surgery.
- Perfect school attendance.
- Followed house rules and helped with chores on a regular basis.
- Healthy appetite.

### **Behaviours While Trafficked**

- Lost some interest in her fur babies.
- Was worried for her family.
- Suicidal tendency.
- Distanced herself from her decent friends.
- Change of friends (individuals involved with drugs/alcohol).
- Frequent mood swings, distracted when trying to hold a conversation.
- Unexplained absences.
- Loss of interest in sports and working out.
- Argumentative due to her withdrawing.
- Loss of appetite.
- Strange phone calls to family home. Strange men calling.
- Would be terrified when she escaped. Looking out the windows and voicing her fear.

### **Behaviours After Being Trafficked**

- Interest in her fur babies returned.
- Interest in sports and working out returned.
- Fearful for herself and her family.
- Interest in rekindling her relationships with her family and friends.
- Nightmares.
- Anxiety, insomnia.
- Appetite returned.
- Determined to get clean and healthy.

## **Yvette's Behaviours and Feelings After Ashley's Trafficked Experience**

- Feelings of guilt.
- Feelings of anger.
- Feelings of anger toward my husband.
- Educated myself on human trafficking and gang related activity.
- Over protecting my daughter from verbal/mental abuse.
- Over protecting my daughter.
- Major concerns about who she was going out with.

### ***A Message from Yvette to Parents***

Follow your gut instinct! If your gut is telling you something is wrong, then something is wrong. Do not allow others to discredit how you are feeling. No one knows your child better than you. You are your child's one true advocate. Be their voice when they cannot find one. Be their strength until they find their own. NO MATTER WHAT, be there for your child!!! Keep the lines of communication open no matter how upset you may become with them. They will remain vulnerable to predators until they begin to heal and develop a feeling of self-worth. They are lost, and you are their anchor.

### ***"Elizabeth's" Daughter***

Another Canadian mom has chosen to share her experience with sex trafficking. She would like to keep her daughter's identity safe, so we will not be sharing their real names. We thank her for her courage in letting us share this story in addition to some of the red flags, indicators and behaviours she saw in her experience.

In 2014, Walk With Me received a call while we were still operating our front-lines organization. "Elizabeth,"<sup>7</sup> the mother of a 16 year old girl, called us because she believed her daughter was being trafficked by her daughter's new boyfriend. Thankfully, "Elizabeth" was educated and knew the warning signs, but unfortunately she could only detect it when her daughter was already involved. With the help of the local law enforcement and several organizations, her daughter is now on her road to recovery. Her traffickers were brought to trail, but very light sentences were given. The family had to move and relocate to get away from the shame and guilt the community has placed on them.

"Elizabeth" was gracious to help us write pre- and post-behaviors for this manual to assist other parents.

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<sup>7</sup> Not her real name to protect her and her daughter's identity.

## ***Indicators & Red Flags Seen With Elizabeth's Daughter***

### **Pre-trafficking behaviours**

- Loved and cared for her pet snake (her most prized possession).
- Good relationship with siblings and family.
- Attended family functions.
- Loved her art.
- Healthy friendships.
- Didn't smoke, use drugs or alcohol.
- Regular school attendance.
- Followed house rules.
- Healthy appetite.

### **Behaviours While Trafficked**

- Lost all interest in her snake (this was the biggest red flag for this girl!).
- Distanced herself from family.
- Distanced herself from her friends.
- Change of friends (individuals involved with drugs/alcohol/school truancy).
- Dressed provocatively/increased promiscuity.
- Secretive/decreased communication.
- Unhappy/frequent mood swings/distracted.
- Unexplained long absences.
- Random explanations for bruises and cuts on her arms and legs.
- Loss of interest in her art.
- Argumentative.
- Truancy from school.
- Introduction to smoking, drugs, and alcohol.
- Eating habits – loss of interest, loss of weight.
- Strange phone calls into family home – hang-ups if we were to answer the phone.
- Facial piercings.
- Would isolate herself when home – she would remain in her bedroom.

### **Behaviours After Being Trafficked**

- Loss of interest in her snake remained.
- Loss of interest in her art remained.
- Fearful for family.
- Isolation from family and friends.
- Memory suppression.
- Long periods of absence.
- Suicidal ideas.
- Self-harming behaviour – cutting/burning arms with cigarettes.
- Emotional/mood swings – angry, crying, laughing.
- Lack of self-worth or value.
- Anxiety, depression, insomnia.
- Nightmares.
- Distracted/unfocused.
- Increase in loss of appetite.
- Secretive.
- Argumentative.
- Increased alcohol/drug use.

### **Parent's Behaviours and Feelings**

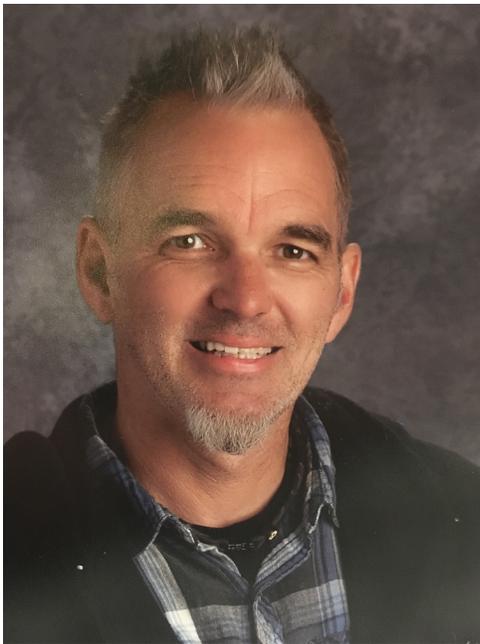
- Feelings of guilt
- Feelings of anger
- Feelings of failure that daughter was not protected from harm.
- Desire to over-protect child (putting a child in a bubble/smothering).
- Wanting to educate myself as much as possible on the subject of human trafficking; wanting to understand why and how this happens.

## **The Role of Educators and School Staff**

In the following section, Doug van der Horden, an advocate and Adolescent Care Worker (Counsellor) with the Limestone District School Board in Kingston, Ontario, provides greater insight into human trafficking and how those within the education system can be better equipped to understand, identify and react to human trafficking concerns.

### ***Meet Doug van der Horden***

I have been advocating and educating the public and local service providers on the issues of human trafficking since 2007. After spending a number of years working one-on-one with federal inmates as a Chaplain, on the streets as an Outreach Worker, and now as a High School Counsellor, I discovered the horrific realities of this crime. Being a family man and having a daughter around the same age of victims who get lured into sex trade, I could not stand by and do nothing. I quickly began knocking on the doors of local agencies, the legal community and local police services, to determine the level of collective knowledge on the issue of human trafficking.



It did not take long for me to discover very few people had human trafficking on their radar, so I began to educate and surround myself with like-minded people to move forward with strategic initiatives. I was a co-founder of the organization “Alliance for Action” which focused on public awareness, education and advocacy, and the organization was in existence for roughly five years. I have spent considerable time and effort building relationships with the general public, law enforcement, legal community, education system and local service providers to help identify and consequently build bridges to address the gaps in services for victims of human trafficking. I continue to accept any opportunity to share my knowledge and understanding of the issues surrounding human trafficking.

I currently work as an Adolescent Care Worker (Counsellor) with the Limestone District School Board in Kingston, Ontario. I spend hours each day with youth from the ages of 14 to 18 years old. I have the unique opportunity every day to hear about their issues, struggles, challenges, barriers as well as their successes. I am present to assist them in working through any obstacles that are preventing them from experiencing success, academically or personally. In this role, I have seen youth who have been sexually exploited and who are now on the healing end of their

journey. After hearing my presentations on this topic, I have had students approach me with concern for their friends. One youth in particular, a student from my school, was contacted through Facebook by a friend who had been missing for months. The friend was attempting to lure her into the sex trade, but it became clear that it was a pimp behind the Facebook messages. Because of the student's education and knowledge on this issue, she came to me. As a result, the authorities were able to retrieve the missing girl and they traced the exploitation back to a prostitution ring in the Toronto area. This issue is everywhere, and our youth are the primary target. Teachers and counsellors in schools must be better educated on this issue.

### ***Teachers & School Counsellors***

As teachers and school counsellors, we have a unique opportunity to see a large number of youths every day for roughly ten months of the year. Because of this, we soon begin to identify what we call their baseline behaviours, attitudes and demeanor. This unique perspective also allows us to be cognizant of when youth move away from that baseline, indicating that something might be “off” or “changing” in this youth's world. Because of this unique perspective, knowing the signs that may indicate that a young person is being groomed or lured into the sex trade is extremely important. To better understand how this happens, it is important to understand vulnerability. Too many youths tell me they would never get themselves in a situation that would lead to any type of exploitation, let alone sexual exploitation; for me, this is where our conversation begins with them.

### **Who is Vulnerable?**

I believe everyone can be vulnerable to falling victim to trafficking predators. So many youths have “seasons” in their young years where they are just unhappy or unsatisfied with their current situation, whether that be at home, in school, with friends, or with their own self (e.g. self-esteem, body image issues, etc.). Therefore, when a predator comes along and offers freedom, money, love, friendship, affirmation or whatever else the youth desires at that particular moment, the opportunity can appear very exciting, promising, attractive, or intoxicating. Even young people who may not meet a typical list of vulnerabilities (e.g. poverty, history of abuse, etc.) can fall prey to an intuitive predator skilled at identifying what a youth is craving in their life. For example, a youth looking for change or excitement can find themselves caught up by an offer from someone they have grown to know or trust.

Every youth has desires and dreams, and predators are skilled at identifying these and presenting opportunities to achieve them. Therefore, I strongly believe every youth can become vulnerable at some point in their early years.

However, there are various serious mitigating factors that increase the vulnerability of a youth being at risk of victimization. Here is a list of some significant risk factors and vulnerabilities. This is not a complete list, but I do believe these to be major contributing factors to vulnerability.

- Youth who have an intellectual disability
- Youth who are in care (e.g. Children’s Aid Society, foster homes, group homes, etc.)
- Youth who have immigrated to this country and may not have extended family support or a large peer group
- Youth who identify as LGBTQ+
- Youth who have experienced sexual, physical and/or emotional abuse
- Youth who are neglected
- Youth with low self-esteem and self-worth
- Youth who are homeless
- Youth who are in a low social-economic class
- Youth who suffer from mental health issues
- Indigenous youth

As teachers and school counsellors, we must intentionally look for opportunities to engage with students who also identify with any of the above vulnerabilities. Understanding the baseline behaviors of the students in our classrooms and schools is critical. I am fortunate to work in a relatively small school, and I often have teachers coming to my office worried about a student who just seems “off” or “not himself/herself.” In order to prevent exploitation or successfully intervene before exploitation become more serious, we should make effort to notice changes in our students over a period of time and address issues with a level of compassion and concern.

## ***Our Responsibility as Educators and Counsellors***

Working in a high School or a junior high school, I can't stress enough the importance of establishing a good rapport with the students with whom you have influence. This goes beyond the classroom into sports teams you coach and extra-curricular groups you oversee.

How easy it is to connect with those students who don't give us any issues or who seem to have similar personalities as us! But, what about the hard to serve youth? The ones who drive us to the edge of our sanity day in and day out! The ones who are chronically late, in and out of class, missing days on end, have terrible hygiene, spew foul language, are inappropriate most of the time and the list goes on. Please do not misunderstand me: I believe *every* youth needs positive, caring adults in their life, but those who appear to be the most difficult need us more than ever. These young people seem to come across as the "less desirables" and tend to fall between the cracks of our education system. Especially with these young people, we must work at building positive, caring and trusting relationships. If not, we will certainly miss opportunities where we would be able to speak into a life or discuss positive steps forward for a youth in need. Too many of these "hard to serve" youth are falling through the cracks of a system and being picked up by the predators who are waiting and seeking them out.

I have adapted a very simple strategy in my own work. Though simple, it has proven to be extremely effective in practice. Based on the research of Raymond Wlodkowski, I practice the "Two-by-Ten" strategy.<sup>8</sup> It is simple: spend two minutes a day for ten days in a row speaking with a student about *anything other than school!* The transformation can be amazing as the student begins to see you as a person – and realizes *you* see *them* as a whole person, not just a student – and barriers begin to come down. The young person begins to realize that someone actually does care about them. You should soon see changes in these students, and you will have opportunities to ask questions and inquire about their lives. You will also be building trust which will be crucial if you start to observe baseline behaviours changing and want to address these concerns with the student or their parents/guardians.

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/sept08/vol66/num01/Assuming-the-Best.aspx>

## ***Concerns to Note in the School Environment***

Some of the signs to look for within a school environment could be the following:

### **Attendance Issues**

- Student may be absent for days at a time. These absences may or may not be called in or approved by home.
- Other students may not know where their friend is or why they are absent.
- Unexplained reasons for absences when student returns to class.

### **Grades Begin to Fall**

- If a youth is being trafficked, they will be keeping hours that are very demanding. Time for schoolwork will begin to vanish, or they will be too fatigued (physically, emotionally or mentally) to do the work needed.
- Student may not be living at home resulting in lack of accountability to attend school or complete homework.
- Student may have lost hope for a future and may not see schoolwork as worthwhile.

### **Changes in Social Circle**

- A victim might start withdrawing from their typical social circle; this can happen for various reasons including shame, pressure from their trafficker, or lack of time to maintain friendships.
- If a victim's typical peer group feels that their friend is "choosing" this lifestyle, they may push that youth away and disassociate.
- Student might spend an increasingly amount of time on their own in the halls and during unstructured time.
- Student might start associating with an older crowd.
- Student may be dropped off or picked up by non-family members who do not attend the school.
- Student may continually check in with someone by phone throughout the day.

### **Drug/Alcohol Use**

- Student begins to engage in drug or alcohol activity for the first time, or there is a dramatic increase in use.

**Physical Signs**

- New tattoos (branding by trafficker), normally on the neck, wrists or lower back
- Bruising
- Signs of cutting (self-harm)
- Very tired
- Change in attire and appearance. May be wearing new clothes that could not be afforded before or a dramatic increase in esthetic appearance (makeup, hair, manicures, etc.).
- Multiple cell phones
- Unexplained money

Of course, many of these signs and red flags can indicate other changes in a student's life apart from human trafficking. However, a better understanding of human trafficking, how to identify it, and potential reasons for change in behaviours or a student's baseline can be crucial to preventing exploitation, intervening in an ongoing situation of exploitation, and better protecting youth.

## **Challenges of the Justice System**

Human trafficking is a victim-centered crime. In order to prove a trafficking case, investigators require evidence to bring before the courts, and currently the burden of proof is often placed on a victim's statement and testimony. Victims don't come forward to report a crime for many reasons. Instead, investigators and law enforcement must be equipped with proper education to be able to seek out victims, build rapport, and when the time is right ask the victim if she would be willing to come forward to make a statement. That could take months, if not years. When a victim gives a statement, she tells her story not just once, but often is required to re-tell it over and over again. Then she must repeat herself in court and then at trial.

While waiting for court and trial, victims often have difficulty accessing support due to lack of awareness in many social agencies and a gap in services providing long-term support specifically to victims and survivors of human trafficking; therefore, she may be unreliable to show up at court because she is mentally and emotionally unprepared to face her trafficker. On top of that stress, victims are consumed with facing other challenges and obstacles like housing, counseling, education, job skills training, and other needs. Without a proper system in place, victims often disappear by the time court happens. Case closed, trafficker dismissed!

When victims and survivors do appear for court, they are forced to face their trauma all over again. If there is very little physical evidence to support her testimony, by the time the court system is done examining her it becomes a "she said/ he said" case. Often the trafficker gets a minimal punishment or walks out of court with time served. It is really hard to explain to a judge and the courts why this victim never left when they perceive that she had the ability to "just leave" and there was no gun against her head or physical restraints keeping her enslaved. It is even more difficult to explain to the justice system why victims do not just run back to family when she is rescued from her traffickers.

## Reflections on Media Influences: “The Bachelor”

Human trafficking is often misrepresented or sensationalized in pop culture (movies, music, etc.), images, and even some lectures and education materials. Therefore, people often do not realize that they can come across a victim of trafficking in their everyday life – at a bank, hotel, restaurant, drug store, and even schools. Furthermore, pop culture and entertainment has influenced our ideas of what is acceptable in relationships.

As an example, let’s examine the television reality show *The Bachelor*. This is a show where thousands of women audition and around 30 women are chosen to compete. Their prize is “Prince Charming,” and the ultimate goal is to make it to the end, be given the final rose, become engaged, and get married. Imagine 30 women competing on this show to find (and win!) their husband. They are so desperate for love that they are willing to be on a reality show and let the entire world see their raw emotions and hear them talking about very private matters. They have a dream and they are willing to do just about anything to achieve it.

You may watch *The Bachelor* and think it’s all very romantic and sweet; or, you may watch and think it’s crazy and desperate. Either way, millions of dollars are spent to make this show, millions of dollars are made by the broadcast network, and millions of people watch it. Our society finds it acceptable (or, at least, entertaining) to watch 30 women, typically between the ages of 20 to 30, move away from their current lives, children, and jobs, for 2-3 months, with hopes of finding their dream life with Mr. Perfect.

They move into a Villa, all 30 of them, and they start dating the Bachelor. 30 women start dating the same man... ONE man! As the show progresses, the Bachelor eliminates the women based on one or two dates. In some cases, the woman who gets eliminated may only have had one or two group dates with this man, but by then she claims that she was already so in love with him and he made her feel so special that she was sure that he was the man of her dreams. When she gets sent home – after mere days or weeks – they show her in the limo that takes her away from the Villa. They show her crying inconsolably, as though she just lost her husband of years.

The remaining contestants continue to go on dates with the same man. Months later, he eliminates his choices down to four ladies who have been living together and dating the same man. They have lived in a highly contained bubble, either in the Villa or exotic trips away; no one was allowed to go home, or talk to family members (that is, unless you make it to the final few weeks where the Bachelor meets – and tries to woo – the remaining contestants’ families...). All they have is each other. But they remain, and in it to win it. They are still fighting for the goal, the dream, and the hope of being married to this man. They will not give up without a fight. By this time, the viewers have seen the Bachelor kissing nearly 30 women, telling each and every one of

them how beautiful, nice, and special they are. Some seasons have shown the Bachelor telling multiple girls that he truly loves *them*. They all believe that they are the one because he makes them feel all very special when they are alone. Towards the end, he is down to three contestants. At this stage, it is the “Fantasy Suite” episode. There are individual dates between the Bachelor and the remaining contestants, and at the end of the night they are given the choice of whether they want to take advantage of the “Fantasy Suite” for the night. Meanwhile, the women are still contestants and know that each one of them are getting this same opportunity to go on these dates with the same man. They know that each of them will have this choice to spend the night with the Bachelor and “sleep over”...

Basically, this one man is dating all these women at the same time, potentially sleeping with a number of them, and all women contestants believe that they are special and will make it to the very end. By the fantasy suite episode, all three women believe that he will choose them. These women are typically well educated, have good professions, and come from wealthy lifestyles. They are typically 20-30 years old. And what does it say about our society that, given the popularity of the show, we find acceptable and entertaining? At the end he (typically) chooses “THE ONE” and he proposes to her.

The others go home with a broken heart, back to their lives, pretty houses, loving family, and support.

When victims are sold a dream by a pimp – a “dream” that morphs into exploitation and often involves “competing” with other female victims – how are we supposed to prove to them that they deserve *so much more* when we prop up *The Bachelor* as suitable entertainment and it influences our ideas of relationship, authenticity, self-worth, and value?

## What Can You Do?

### *Prevention*

While certain youth are more at risk of being exploited than others, all youth need to be made aware of the dangers of trafficking. One of the most important steps you can take is help educate them. I always say this: we are not here to *scare* you, we are here to help you to prevent you from getting hurt and becoming a victim of this horrible crime. Prevention is simple and the first step in making a difference. Knowledge! Knowledge is the key! I don't want you to feel like you have to watch your child's every move from now on, or that you need to keep them home permanently. I would like you to become educated on the signs, indicators and red flags, and I would like you to recognize your child's vulnerabilities. Parents should help their child become more aware of how traffickers and pimps are able to manipulate and exploit our vulnerabilities (feelings, emotions, sense of belonging, etc.) to lure them away from their loved ones.

We encourage you to consider a variety of resources that you can share with the children and youth in your life. It might be helpful to consider a range of formats including books, films, documentaries, and events. Please see our "Resources" section to get started; we encourage parents, guardians and educators to review the resources before showing them to your youth to ensure that they are appropriate for your context.

Rather than just *telling* youth what they need to know, help them to explore it for themselves. Read articles and watch documentaries together. Have conversations. Explore questions. Our teenagers are extremely smart and resourceful; they need to be equipped with information to protect themselves and their friends, and they also need safe outlets where they are comfortable asking questions or seeking help.

### ***If You Suspect a Youth is Being Recruited or Groomed***

If, as you are reading this, you suspect that a child you know is being recruited, the first piece of advice we have is do not confront them directly right away. If the child is already under strong influences of her “friend/boyfriend,” confronting her without a plan or larger support systems (to support both *you* and them) *might* result in her becoming defensive and siding with her pimp (please review the above sections on the mindset of victims).

Parents, if you feel that the child is being recruited, please gather all the suspicions and evidence you have, contact your local police agency and notify them of whatever information you have as soon as possible. This is the stage where if we act quickly and rationally, there is an increased chance that law enforcement can step in and get the trafficker away from your child from other children in your community as well.

Educators and school staff, if you suspect that the child is being recruited, please inform your supervisor immediately and follow your school’s appropriate procedures for reporting concerns about students. Many school districts and police services have School Liaison Officers. We recommend having in depth conversations with these officers to inquire about their knowledge of human trafficking and how they might be a useful resource for prevention and to raise awareness about this issue in schools.

As for how to talk to her, and to prevent future incidents, please ask for guidance from your local trained victim services personnel or search for organizations near you who specialize in providing services and supports to victims and survivors of human trafficking. They should be able to provide you with personal support.

### ***If You Suspect A Youth is Active in the Game***

Parents, if you suspect that your child is being trafficked, your local Victim Services should be a helpful resource. You can contact them to ask for assistance in connecting with the appropriate unit or department with your local police service. Your police service might have a “Child Exploitation Unit” or a “Human Trafficking Unit.” If there is no such department that specializes in human trafficking investigations, cases like this are usually taken up by either Major Crime or Drugs and Vice units. Please prepare your story and prepare a log of whatever evidence you might have for the officers. Please make sure you have everything you need when you meet either Victim Services or the police. Helpful information to provide might include a log of your child’s activities, social media messages, phone activity, or any evidence or clues that has led you to believe your child is being trafficked.

If you are unsure the severity of the situation or are nervous to contact your Victim Service agency, you can find a range of hotlines to call. They will be able to provide you with resources or give some insight into what you are experiencing. If residing in Canada, the Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking is developing a National Hotline.<sup>9</sup> You can also reach out to the Chrysalis Network which provides a national toll-free counselling line (please see “Resources” section for more information). If residing in the United States, please call the National Hotline (National Human Trafficking Hotline, [www.humantraffickinghotline.org](http://www.humantraffickinghotline.org)).

Once an investigation is opened, please stay in touch with a Victim Service support person to help you through the process. Victim Services is able to provide a variety of resources and assistance (sometimes even financial) to help you cope with the situation and the needs your child and your family have.

Educators and school staff, we encourage you to use the above information as needed or to share with parents/guardians as resources. However, we also urge you to comply with your school’s or district’s policies and procedures for reporting concerns about the health and safety of students.

More resources are also available online at [www.TimeasCause.com](http://www.TimeasCause.com) which includes updates on Facebook live events and updated article and video libraries.

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<sup>9</sup> See <https://www.canadiancentretoendhumantrafficking.ca/nationalhotline/> for more information

## **Conclusion**

### ***Timea's Message to Parents***

My heart goes out to all parents, loved ones and friends who have a child who is a victim of human trafficking. We as parents are aware of the typical (yet, difficult) experiences our teens transition through, like puberty, first boyfriends or girlfriends, or experimenting with drugs or alcohol. We hope that this guide has provided the necessary tools to you as parents so that you can help your children make healthy and appropriate decisions. Human trafficking doesn't even cross our "radar" as an experience our children would have to learn to survive. We teach our children to watch out for "strangers" but sometimes it doesn't occur to us that danger is closer to us than we realize. We would never expect our children's peers to be involved in such deviant behaviours as to "sell" their friends to criminals. We need to expand our parameters to include human trafficking as a danger our children may face. Human trafficking needs to become part of our conversations when we speak to our children about the dangers of experimenting with drugs, alcohol and sex. When you notice that your child's interests in drugs, alcohol, and promiscuity have increased, seek counselling for your child; don't assume that this is your "normal" teenage rebellious behaviour or that it "will just pass."

### ***Yvette's Concluding Thoughts for Parents***

As a parent of a child who is a victim/survivor of human trafficking, the feelings of guilt and anger can become consuming, affecting your everyday life. My greatest feeling of guilt was my own belief in that I failed to protect my child from the individual who trafficked my daughter. It took me sometime before I realized and accepted that as a parent, I did everything I could to protect my child. Seeking counselling will help you understand and process your feelings and emotions and will aid you moving forward.

### ***Doug's Concluding Thoughts for Educators and School Counsellors***

How do we begin to address this issue in our schools and approach young people who we feel may be wrapped up in this?

First, we must increase our own knowledge and understanding of the issue. Parents and teachers should work together to address human trafficking as a team. Educators and counsellors should be made aware of what trafficking is, how to identify it, and how to intervene when necessary. Because victims have been groomed and lured into the life, they may not even be aware that they are being exploited. Those who are most involved and present in youths' lives are responsible for growing in awareness and in capacity to address trafficking concerns.

Second, we need to work hard at building rapport with the youth in our lives. Trust is a significant issue with trafficked victims, and they have been psychologically manipulated and groomed to trust nobody. When educators and school counsellors spend two minutes a day, chatting about everyday life and looking for other opportunities to engage on a deeper level with students, we can pave the way and provide the confidence to have important conversations and provide available resources.

Third, understand the resources in your local area. Ask your local police what response mechanisms and resources they have for human trafficking victims. The mindset of a trafficked victim is very complex, and no single person or agency will ever be the answer; it takes a multidisciplinary and collaborative team to support a trafficked person. However, it only takes *one* caring, educated eye to spot that something is not right and start acting.

I hope that in the near future, every school will be educated about human trafficking and the effects it is having on our young people and our communities. If our schools are better educated and aware, they will become a safety net for our vulnerable youth and a place where eyes will see, ears will hear and lives will be saved and changed.

## Resources

### *Hotlines*

#### Canada

The **Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking** is currently developing the infrastructure of its Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline, with a targeted launch in the Fall of 2018. You can visit their website to learn more.

<http://www.canadiancentretoendhumantrafficking.ca>

**The Chrysalis Network: Canada National Toll-Free Counseling Line**

<http://www.chrysalisnetwork.org/>

1-866-528-7109

#### United States

**National Human Trafficking Hotline**

<http://humantraffickinghotline.org/>

Call 1-888-373-7888 ( TTY: 711) | Text 233733

### *Films*

Some of these films are for mature audiences; we recommend that parents and guardians view these films at their own discretion before making a decision to watch with your children.

*I Am Jane Doe* (2017); [https://www.imdb.com/title/tt6398054/?ref=fn\\_al\\_tt\\_1](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt6398054/?ref=fn_al_tt_1)

(At the time of print, *I Am Jane Doe* is available on Netflix in Canada)

*Tricked* (2013); [http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2246924/?ref=fn\\_tt\\_tt\\_4](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt2246924/?ref=fn_tt_tt_4)

(At the time of print, *Tricked* is available on Netflix in Canada)

*Very Young Girls* (2007); [http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1097268/?ref=nv\\_sr\\_1](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1097268/?ref=nv_sr_1)

*Call + Response* (2008); [http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1301130/?ref=ttls\\_li\\_tt](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1301130/?ref=ttls_li_tt)

*Human Trafficking* (2005; tv mini-series); [http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0461872/?ref=ttls\\_li\\_tt](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0461872/?ref=ttls_li_tt)

*Red Light Green Light* (2013); [http://www.imdb.com/title/tt3446098/?ref=nm\\_knf\\_t1](http://www.imdb.com/title/tt3446098/?ref=nm_knf_t1)

Other YouTube video clips available via our website [www.TimeasCause.com](http://www.TimeasCause.com)

## ***Books, Articles & Curriculum***

There are increasingly more books – especially Young Adult Fiction – about human trafficking. We encourage you to search online or visit your library to investigate what books are out there for youth to read. Based on what you have read in this manual, please search carefully for books that do not sensationalize or misrepresent the issue.

### **Conversation Starters**

Two Canadian organizations, **Defend Dignity** and **Restorations Second Stage Homes**, have developed a 6-module resource for teachers and youth workers to talk to youth about sexual exploitation. “**Exposing Exploitation**” comes with a facilitation guide, PowerPoint presentations, and embedded video clips. The six modules include 1) what is sexual exploitation; 2) how pimps target, recruit and condition youth; 3) how online technology is used to lure, recruit and exploit youth; 4) the role of demand in perpetuating sexual exploitation; 5) Indigenous women and girls and sexual exploitation; and 6) how youth can make a difference!

You can request your free copy at <https://defenddignity.ca/youth-curriculum/>

**Educate and Empower Kids** (<https://educateempowerkids.org/>) publish a series of books that you can explore with your kids to start conversations around sex, pornography, healthy body image, using technology safely, etc. Their books are largely available on Amazon or can be purchased through their website.

## Canadian Resources

Canada Women's Foundation. (Fall 2014). "‘No More’ Ending Sex-Trafficking in Canada. Reformed of the National Task Force on Sex Trafficking of Women and Girls in Canada."

<[https://www.canadianwomen.org/sites/canadianwomen.org/files/CWF-TraffickingReport-Auto%20%281%29\\_0.pdf](https://www.canadianwomen.org/sites/canadianwomen.org/files/CWF-TraffickingReport-Auto%20%281%29_0.pdf)>

Carville, Olivia. "A Toronto Star investigation into the dark underbelly of domestic sex trafficking in Ontario." Toronto Star. <<http://projects.thestar.com/human-sex-trafficking-ontario-canada/>>

Cherry, Tamara. (June 15, 2010). "Canada's Sex Traffickers: C2C's Investigative Report." C2C Journal <<http://c2cjournal.ca/2010/06/canadas-sex-traffickers-c2cs-investigative-report/>>

Criminal Intelligence Service Canada. (August 2008). Organized Crime and Domestic Trafficking in Persons in Canada: Strategic Intelligence Brief. <[http://www.cisc.gc.ca/products\\_services/domestic\\_trafficking\\_persons/document/sib\\_web\\_en.pdf](http://www.cisc.gc.ca/products_services/domestic_trafficking_persons/document/sib_web_en.pdf)>

Dorais, Michel and Patrice Corriveau. (2009). Gangs and Girls: Understanding Juvenile Prostitution. Montreal, QC: McGill-Queens's University Press.

Jessome, Phonse. (1996). Somebody's Daughter: Inside the Toronto/Halifax Pimping Ring. Halifax, NS: Nimbus Publishing.

Perrin, Benjamin. (2010). Invisible Chains: Canada's Underground World of Human Trafficking. Toronto, ON: Penguin Books Ltd.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police Criminal Intelligence. (March 2010). Human Trafficking in Canada. Unclassified ed. Ottawa, ON: Royal Canadian Mounted Police. <[http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2011/grc-rcmp/PS64-78-2010-eng.pdf](http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2011/grc-rcmp/PS64-78-2010-eng.pdf)>

## American & International Perspectives

Articles by Nicholas Kristof (*The New York Times*) who writes about both international and domestic sex trafficking: <<https://www.nytimes.com/column/nicholas-kristof>>

Bales, Kevin. (2007). *Ending Slavery: How We Free Today's Slaves*. Berkley, CA: University of California Press.

Batstone, David. (2007). *Not for Sale: The Return of the Global Slave Trade – and How We Can Fight It*. San Francisco, CA: HarperOne.

Bolkovac, Kathryn. (2011). *Whistleblower: Sex Trafficking, Military Contractors, and One Woman's Fight for Justice*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Kristoff, Nicholas D. and Sheryl WeDunn. (2009). *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression Into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*. New York, NY: Vintage Books.

Lloyd, Rachel. (2011). *Girls Like Us: Fighting for a World Where Girls are Not for Sale, an Activist Finds Her Calling and Heals Herself*. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers.

Malarek, Victor. (2009). *The Johns: Sex for Sale and the Men Who Buy It*. Toronto, ON: Key Porter Books Limited.

Malarek, Victor. (2003). *The Natasha's: The New Global Sex Trade*. Toronto, ON: Penguin Canada.

Sher, Julian. (2011). *Somebody's Daughter: The Hidden Story of America's Prostituted Children and the Battle to Save Them*. Chicago, IL: Chicago Review Press.

Williamson, Celia and Terry Cluse-Tolar. (2002). "Pimp-Controlled Prostitution: Still an Integral Part of Street Life." *Violence Against Women*, 8(9), 1074-1092.

<[http://www.sagepub.com/ballantinestudy/articles/Chapter09\\_Article01.pdf](http://www.sagepub.com/ballantinestudy/articles/Chapter09_Article01.pdf)>

United Nation Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime ("Palermo Protocol").

<<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/pdf/protocoltraffic.pdf>>

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