

# SEX TRAFFICKING PREVENTION GUIDEBOOK FOR CAREGIVERS

2024-2025





# SEX TRAFFICKING

## WHAT IS SEX TRAFFICKING?

Human trafficking is a hidden crime and involves the recruitment, transportation, harbouring and/or exercising control, direction or influence over the movements of a person in order to exploit that person, typically through sexual exploitation or forced labour. Sex trafficking is a form of human trafficking; it takes place when a person is forced, tricked or manipulated into doing sexual acts for money- and the person or people who coerced them into doing those sexual acts are the ones controlling the money. Someone can be sex trafficked anywhere someone might be doing sex work of their own free will. This includes prostitution, brothels, escort agencies, strip clubs, online camming, mail order brides and sex tourism to name a few.

**ANTI-SEX TRAFFICKING AWARENESS  
VIDEO FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS**



**ANTI-SEX TRAFFICKING INTERVIEW  
WITH THE PARENT OF A SURVIVOR VIDEO  
FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS**



**STUDENT PERSONAL DEVICES AND  
ONLINE SAFETY- PARENT VIDEO**



# POTENTIAL WARNING SIGNS OF SEX TRAFFICKING

Warning Signs may vary based on circumstance and may include some or all of the following:

- The victim is often with a person who speaks for them or will not leave
- The victim moves frequently, is unhoused, or “visiting” the area
- The victim is not in control of, or has no identification
- The victim or trafficker's story is vague
- The victim may appear to owe a debt
- The victim has signs of multiple sexual partners
- The victim is evasive or afraid to answer personal questions
- The victim or trafficker may be using substances
- The victim has a lack of support systems, including no family or friends
- The victim has signs of ownership, such as tattoos/branding
- The victim appears to be exhausted and/or hungry
- The victim has a history of physical or sexual assault, which may be a risk factor
- The victim or trafficker is falling asleep in class due to a lack of sleep
- The victim or trafficker may be wearing inappropriate clothing for venue or weather
- The victim or trafficker are using language/vocabulary pertaining to trafficking
- The victim or trafficker are frequently relocating
- The victim's healthcare needs are being neglected
- The victim is not in control on their own money, or may appear to always be owing people money
- The victim may seem disoriented or isolated from the outside world, withdrawing from friends
- The victim or trafficker may be secretive and very protective of privacy
- The victim or trafficker may have unexplained money, which may be reflected in their clothes, hair, or jewelry
- The victim or trafficker may have 2 phones or change phone numbers often
- The victim or trafficker may exhibit behaviours including hyper-vigilance or paranoia
- The victim or trafficker may be using hotel pens or have a lot of hotel receipts

If you see any warning signs, reach out to your school administrator and/or call the Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-833-900-1010

# HOW DO I TALK TO MY KIDS ABOUT SEX TRAFFICKING?



## EXPLAIN TRAFFICKING & WARNING SIGNS

Youth are more protected when they know what sex trafficking is. Children need to understand what sex trafficking is and recognize the warning signs.

## TEACH YOUTH TO TRUST THEIR INSTINCTS

Teach youth to trust their instincts both for themselves and friends. If something doesn't feel right, it probably isn't.

## EXPLAIN HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS & CONSENT

A study found that survivors felt that not knowing the characteristics of a healthy relationship and consent made them vulnerable to trafficking. Talk with your children about consent, safety, setting boundaries and the signs of a healthy relationship.

## CREATE A SAFETY PLAN

A safety plan helps empower young people with tools they can use to protect themselves- including identifying safe adults and practicing online safety.

## ENCOURAGE YOUTH TO REACH OUT FOR HELP

Let children know sex trafficking is not their fault and it's okay to ask for help. Let youth know they can come to you or any other safe adults if they need help.



GEQUITY

Adapted from: Covenant House

THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

# AGE-SPECIFIC RESOURCES FOR CONVERSATIONS ABOUT SEX TRAFFICKING

## AGES 2-6

Children between ages 2 and 6 are usually not ready for explicit conversations about sex trafficking. Parents and caregivers can begin helping children develop an understanding of their own inherent worth and the value of every human life by teaching them: fairness and equity; respect and care for our bodies; our rights to personal space; gender roles and stereotypes; and consent for non-sexual topics such as borrowing items, or receiving hugs.

## AGES 7-12

At this age, youth have more world experience, abstract thinking skills, and the ability to better express themselves. They are also more likely to be exposed to upsetting, violent, or inappropriate news and online content. Allowances and ideas around work can be used as opportunities to teach youth about fair wages and trafficking. Provide a safe place to discuss these things and affirm them for coming to you with questions.

## AGES 13-18

Adolescents are better prepared to discuss complex issues but may be less willing to open up to a parent or caregiver, especially about sensitive topics. Broach the subject anyway, knowing that the information you share may keep your children safe and make them advocates for healthy relationships and fair labor practices. As they begin dating, teach youth about the importance of consent, and that their bodies are not commodities to be used by others for pleasure or money. At this age, youth may begin working or have friends who are. Teach them financial literacy (such as reading a paycheck, creating a weekly budget, and saving and giving money), which can help them avoid financial issues in the future. It's also important to address what you don't know and work with them to reach out for support.



# LANGUAGE YOUTH CAN USE FOR GETTING HELP

Watch out for language youth may use to seek help, such as:

- "I'm being made to do things I'm not comfortable with and that I don't consent to."
- "I feel like I don't have any control."
- "I feel like I don't have a choice."
- "My gut doesn't feel right."
- "I feel disrespected."
- "I feel powerless."



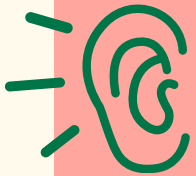
## QUESTIONS FOR CAREGIVERS TO ASK

- Are you being forced to do something you don't want to do?
- Could you leave if you wanted to?
- Do you get to have control over who you spend time with?
- Has anyone threatened you?
- Are you doing this because you were promised something in return?
- What are you doing to earn that money?
- What does "work" look like? How many hours do you work in a day?
- Who makes important decisions (like what you wear, who you spend time with)?

# PARENT GUIDE FOR CONVERSATIONS ON SEX TRAFFICKING WITH YOUTH

## LET YOUR CHILD KNOW...

### IF YOU HEAR THINGS LIKE...



"Don't tell anyone"

"It's our secret"

"You owe me"

"I need you to do something just this once, for our future together"

### IF YOU FEEL...

Powerless

Disrespected

That you don't have a choice

That you don't have any control

Like you're being made to do things you're not comfortable with

That you don't have other options



### IT'S A RED FLAG IF YOU NOTICE SOMEONE YOU CONSIDER A FRIEND IS:



Isolating you from family, friends and support systems

Buying you a lot of expensive things

Pushing your boundaries

Encouraging you to skip school, try drugs or alcohol, miss curfew, etc.

Making promises of a better life

Encouraging you to be secretive about them and your whereabouts

**TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS, SOMETHING MIGHT BE GOING ON. REACH OUT TO A SAFE ADULT OR THE SCHOOL FOR SUPPORT.**

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



**SAVIS OF HALTON  
PROVIDES FREE,  
CONFIDENTIAL, AND  
NON-JUDGMENTAL  
24 HOUR SUPPORT  
TO ALL SURVIVORS  
OF VIOLENCE**

**IF YOU NEED  
SUPPORT,  
REACH OUT TO  
YOUR SCHOOL  
BOARD**

**THE CANADIAN  
HUMAN TRAFFICKING  
HOTLINE AT  
1-833-900-1010**

**ONLINE SAFETY  
EDUCATIONAL  
GAMES FOR YOUTH  
FROM  
MEDIASMARTS.CA**

**LIKELY STORY: ONLINE  
EDUCATIONAL GAME  
FOR GRADES 7-12  
FOCUSED ON SEX  
TRAFFICKING,  
HEALTHY  
RELATIONSHIPS, AND  
ONLINE SAFETY**

**OPHEA ONLINE  
SAFETY  
RESOURCES FOR  
CHILDREN IN  
GRADES 4-8**

**IT'S A BIG DEAL: AN  
ONLINE ACTIVITY  
BOOK FOR STUDENTS  
GRADES 9-12  
FOCUSED ON  
HEALTHY  
RELATIONSHIPS AND  
BOUNDARIES**

**IF YOU ARE BEING  
THREATENED OR  
INTIMIDATED, IT IS  
IMPORTANT TO  
IMMEDIATELY INVOLVE  
A SAFE ADULT IN YOUR  
LIFE, CONTACT POLICE,  
OR REPORT TO  
CYBERTIP.CA**

**IF SOMEONE HAS  
BEEN IMPACTED BY  
SELF/PEER  
EXPLOITATION, VISIT  
NEEDHELPNOW.CA  
FOR MORE  
INFORMATION**