



What is Sex Trafficking?

Sex trafficking is the control and exploitation of a person for sexual services, usually through force, threats, and/or deception. Anyone can fall victim to sex trafficking, with the most at-risk groups being:

- **Women and girls (though boys and men are also targeted)**
- **Indigenous women and girls**
- **Children and youth who are:**
 - Homeless or precariously housed
 - LGBTQ2S
 - In the foster care system
 - Socially or physically isolated from peers, family, and/or their community
- **People with vulnerabilities related to:**
 - Precarious housing or homelessness
 - Substance abuse
 - Poverty
 - Physical or learning disability
 - Mental health issues
 - Domestic violence or sexual abuse
- **People working in industries known to be more sexually exploitative:**
 - Illicit massage parlours
 - Strip clubs
 - Bars and hostess clubs/lounges
 - Escort services
 - Fake modelling agencies
 - Pornography or webcamming

Why is this important?

By identifying the risks and phases of sex trafficking, you are one step closer to keeping your loved ones and community safe. If you suspect you or anyone you know may be in danger of sex trafficking, please call the Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-833-900-1010.

Call nationwide:

1.833.900.1010

24/7 | Toll Free | Confidential | 200+ Languages

The Phases of Sex Trafficking

Luring > Grooming > Isolation > Control & Exploitation

LURING

... Traffickers identify people who are vulnerable due to situational, emotional, and/or economic circumstances. Traffickers may find victims through social media, their connections/network, and by focusing on people and venues described in the “What is Sex Trafficking?” section. They will show sudden interest in the vulnerable person in an effort to get closer to them.

GROOMING

... Sex traffickers will identify a victim's emotional/material and economic needs and fulfill them. This may include gifts, attention, affection, drugs, alcohol or whatever they need to fill their target's needs. At this time, the trafficker will begin pushing boundaries and encouraging 'risky' sexual behaviours (e.g. explicit photos) of their victims. Victims will be introduced to new social venues and people associated with the trafficker.

ISOLATION

... The trafficker tries to cut off lines of communication to friends and family, becoming the victim's sole provider emotionally and financially, indebting her to him and cutting off other support systems that might get in the way of the trafficker's control.

CONTROL & EXPLOITATION

... Once isolated, sex traffickers often use violence, threats of violence (including against the victim's loved ones), manipulation of dependency, blackmail, and forced substance abuse to coerce their victim into providing sexual services. Initially, victims may be unaware that they are being manipulated and sexually exploited.