



### IN THIS ISSUE

## SEXUAL SLAVERY: The Shocking World of Human Trafficking

Duration: 19:39

Human trafficking is big business in Canada, with girls, some as young as 12, coerced into sexual slavery. Ninety percent of the victims come from within Canada. They are controlled by pimps who may initially pose as their boyfriends, showering them with attention and gifts. Then they are threatened, beaten, held captive and even branded. The problem has become so big that police departments across the country are now devoting resources to fight human trafficking. CBC reporter Ioanna Roumeliotis joined undercover investigators as they try to help young women out of the sex trade.

**WARNING:** This story contains mature subject matter. Viewer discretion is advised.

### Related Curio.ca content

- Human Trafficking of Inuit Women and Girls (CBC Radio – The Current)
- Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (collection)
- Sex Traffic (feature film)
- Too Young to Lose (Fifth Estate)

### Related CBC.ca articles

- Hidden Crimes – [www.cbc.ca/news2/interactives/sh/Z9xYpkTjVq/human-trafficking-canadian-girls/](http://www.cbc.ca/news2/interactives/sh/Z9xYpkTjVq/human-trafficking-canadian-girls/)
- KNOCK AT THE DOOR: Inside a human trafficking investigation – [www.cbc.ca/1.4471417](http://www.cbc.ca/1.4471417)

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### SEXUAL SLAVERY: The Shocking World of Human Trafficking

## Video Review

### Before Viewing

Human trafficking occurs when a person recruits, transports, transfers, receives, holds, conceals or harbours another person for the purposes of exploitation (i.e. labour or sex). Through coercion and manipulation these people control others in order to exploit them for profit.

What do you know about human trafficking? Have you ever heard of this nefarious crime? Share your knowledge with a partner in class before viewing the video.

### Viewing

1. What percentage of young women drawn into human trafficking come from within Canada's borders?
2. What tactics do police officers use to try to catch human traffickers?
3. What is "branding"?
4. a) How do the perpetrators of human trafficking avoid revealing their whereabouts to potential clients? What methods do they use?  
b) Why are they so cautious?  
c) Why are human traffickers considered to be very dangerous?
5. a) What did the undercover officer discover when he entered the Toronto hotel room of a victim of human trafficking?  
b) How do the officers establish whether or not the young woman is being trafficked?
6. Why do police officers often fail to get people to admit that they are being trafficked?
7. How many cases were the Toronto Police Service investigating when the documentary was filmed?
8. What percentage of human trafficking victims in Toronto are under the age of 16? What is the youngest age of a victim encountered by Toronto police?
9. Where do human traffickers do their recruiting? How quickly can some traffickers lure a recruit?
10. a) Why did Karly think she hit the jackpot when she met the people who would eventually become her human traffickers?  
b) How quickly did they turn against Karly? What did they do to take control of her?  
c) How did Karly escape the people who were trafficking her?  
d) What is Karly doing now?
11. According to Detective-Sergeant Nunzio Tramontozzi, human trafficking is about two things. What are those two things?



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12. How much money can a pimp make off a girl in a year?
13. How many arrests have been made by Toronto's human trafficking unit?
14. How did police officers facilitate the arrest of a man willing to have sex with a minor?
15. Why have reported cases of human trafficking spiked in recent years?

- Talk to your children about strangers.
- Educate your children about healthy relationships.

What do you think of these tactics? Do they go too far? Which tactics do you think are most effective? Which tactics do you think give parents too much power over their children? If you were a parent, which tactics would you use?

### After Viewing

The police encourage parents to utilize the following tactics to make sure their children safely avoid recruitment by sex traffickers and other degenerate individuals looking to manipulate innocent people.



### Tips for Parents

- Monitor your child's social media and internet use.
- Stay current with apps and social sites your children are using.
- Have conversations with your child about school.
- Know your children's friends (not nicknames only).
- Know where your children are.



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## THE STORY

### Minds On

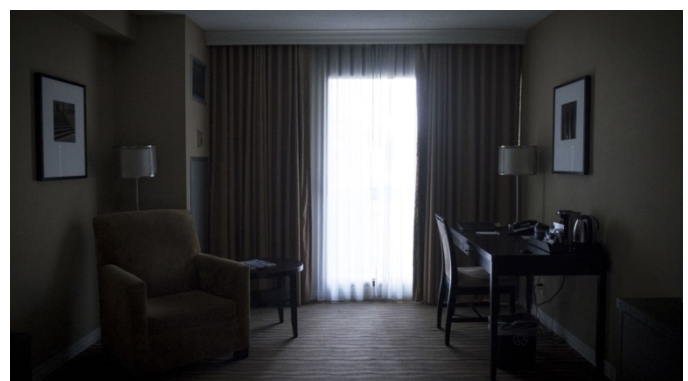
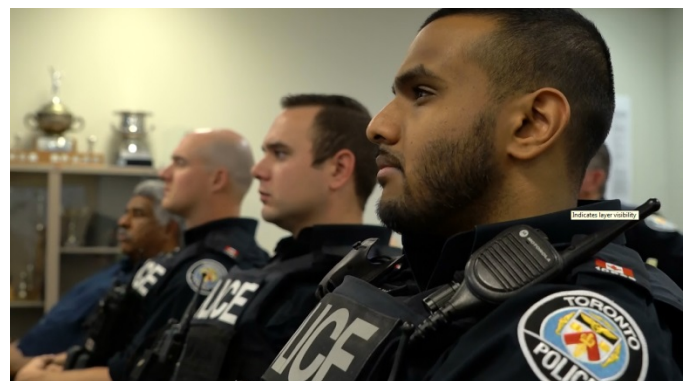
The most common form of human trafficking in Canada is sex trafficking. Often people confuse sex trafficking with prostitution, but advocates of people trapped in “the game” (you’ll read more about “the game” below) say a clear distinction needs to be recognized. Prostitution involves an offer and agreement to provide a sexual act for something of value (like money). A victim of sex trafficking – “the game” – is forced to provide sex for money by means of coercion, deception and the threat of violence or harm. They often see little or none of the money.

Why do you think advocates for sex trafficking victims are so passionate about educating people regarding the distinction between sex trafficking and prostitution?

### The very embodiment of evil

There was a time when the idea of human trafficking garnered images of people being kidnapped overseas, smuggled into a foreign country and being forced into labour far away from family, friends and the place they once called home. That image has changed as human trafficking – perhaps the very embodiment of evil – has taken on a more “local” shape in countries like Canada.

Pictures (top to bottom): Nunzio Tramontozzi, Detective Sergeant, Officer in Charge of the Human Trafficking Enforcement Team, Toronto Police Service; CBC journalist Ioanna Roumeliotis interviews former trafficking victim Karly; front-line officers receive training; many people don't realize human trafficking is happening in plain sight, in local hotels.





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#### The shocking statistics

First, a look at the shocking statistics surrounding human trafficking. This is what is known today (and what nobody really wants to admit):

- Of the nearly 400 cases of human trafficking being monitored by the RCMP in Canada (a number that many experts say only scratches the surface of human trafficking activity in our nation), 94 per cent of recruits come from within Canada.
- The overwhelming majority of human trafficking cases in Canada involve sex trafficking.
- 60 per cent of human trafficking in Canada occurs in the Greater Toronto Area
- Young Aboriginal women are a common target group for sex traffickers.
- 25 per cent of human trafficking victims are under 18 years of age, while nearly 50 per cent are between the ages of 18 and 24.
- A little over six per cent of human trafficking perpetrators are under the age of 18, while 40 per cent are between the ages of 18 and 24.
- A sex trafficking victim can be used to generate between \$150 000 and \$350 000 per year. Since most traffickers/pimps run a "stable" of victims, this can be a very lucrative cash enterprise.

#### "The game"

Human trafficking's largest component in Canada, sex trafficking, has morphed into a deplorable underground economy involving enslaved sex workers. It is all part of what experts call "the game." Far removed from the old idea of kidnapped foreigners smuggled to new countries to a life of forced servitude, "the game" is a world of exploitation and manipulation that draws a recruit away from their families and into the world of sex trafficking.

Here's how it works: a sex trafficker (a pimp or a person already entrapped in "the game") targets a recruit — often at a mall, a party, an amusement park, a bus or train station, a school or through social media. The trafficker then grooms the recruit by showering them with praise, gifts and "love." Once they have the attention and loyalty of their victim, the coercion begins: they convince the recruit to take part in sex acts with strangers, they introduce them to hard drugs, they take compromising photos of the victim to maintain their control of them and for use in online advertising of sexual services. The traffickers also take over the victim's social media accounts and, in some cases, they tattoo their recruit to indicate that they belong to the recruiter/pimp (a tactic called "branding"). Eventually the recruit is so isolated, brainwashed and defeated that they fall completely under the control of the trafficker.

The International Labour Organization claims that global sex trafficking nets perpetrators over \$100 billion (USD) per year.





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#### An insidious enterprise

At face value, it seems unbelievable that someone could be convinced to take part in such an insidious enterprise, but that is where one needs to remember that coercion is the primary means of controlling the victim. They are physically, emotionally and psychologically under the control of the trafficker. According to Carly Kalish, a therapist who has worked with over 50 trafficking survivors, "They make you feel special, they learn about you, they listen to you... They gain information about you to eventually use against you." In some cases, traffickers will lend the recruit or their family money for anything from tuition to a mortgage payment. Then, to get out of "the game," the victim has to pay back the debt through sex work for the trafficker.

#### Hard to rescue victims

One other point needs to be made in this discussion about sex trafficking in particular: it is very hard to rescue victims from the game. Why? Because many victims are terrified of running from or turning against their pimps for fear of repercussions against themselves or their families. However, and this is even more common, some victims become so attached and dependent on their traffickers that they experience something called "Stockholm syndrome." This happens when a captive believes their captor is their protector and the victim will go to almost any lengths to protect the trafficker. It is almost as if their loyalty knows no bounds. This accounts for the reason why so few charges are laid against human traffickers in Canada. Often these criminals are charged

with other offences related to drugs or assault in an effort to get them out of "the game."

#### Bringing an end to "the game"

For its part, Canadian authorities have taken aim at bringing an end to "the game." However, money and resources need to be combined with education so that people know how to recognize the signs of human trafficking. Until a concerted effort is made to get people to understand the significance of Canada's human trafficking problem, "the game" will continue to claim more and more victims.

#### To Consider

1. Why is human trafficking the very embodiment of evil?
2. Which of the statistics do you find most alarming? Why?
3. How easy is it for a trafficker to lure a person into "the game"?
4. Why are the authorities having such a hard time bringing an end to "the game"?

By some estimates over 40 million people worldwide are victims of human trafficking.





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#### FACT SHEET

In an effort to raise awareness of the prevalence of human trafficking, Peel Regional Police developed an education campaign for the public. Here is some of what they had to say:

Police deal with two types of human trafficking:

- **Labour**
- **Prostitution** (also known as “the game”), where people between the ages of 13 and 21 are coerced into the sex trade. “The game” is an extremely lucrative money making enterprise. Recruitment of sex trade workers involves either violence or grooming. Someone who uses violence to get someone to comply is called a Gorilla Pimp. Someone who grooms a recruit until they have them under their power (which can often be accomplished in a matter of days) is known as a Finesse Pimp.

#### Recruitment and grooming

According to the police, recruitment can happen to anyone at any time. Traffickers approach people at shopping malls, clubs, parties, airports, train or bus stations, on social media, at schools and in youth shelters. Once a potential victim is identified, the trafficker begins the process of grooming. They do this by building trust with the young person, showering them with compliments and buying them expensive gifts like jewelry. They might even tell the young person that they “love them” and vow loyalty and friendship that the victim finds believable.

Eventually, the trafficker’s affection is used to convince the young person to turn to prostitution in order to pay back the trafficker for their “love” or for the gifts they have been given. At this point, the victim is convinced that they need the trafficker/pimp and a process of isolation begins. The isolation stage involves separation from the victim’s family and friends. This marks the point when the trafficker has control of their victim. They will often take over the victim’s mobile phone, listening in on personal calls and reading their text messages. They will remove the young person from social media. The victim lives in constant fear that if they don’t comply with the trafficker’s wishes, they will become the target of their pimp’s rage. Besides living with a constant fear of violence, victims also experience intense shame for the acts they are compelled to take part in and will blame themselves for the predicament they fear they have brought on themselves. Once a victim is rescued from “the game,” the greatest challenge is to restore the victim’s mental health and demonstrate to them that they were targeted, recruited, deceived and manipulated by a diabolical person or criminal enterprise.

#### Signs that may indicate human trafficking

The young person:

- Isolates themselves from family and friends.
- Becomes secretive
- Exhibits mood swings or a significant change in attitude
- Starts associating with a new circle of friends
- Has more than one cell phone



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- Changes their style of dress
- Comes home later than usual or leaves the house in the middle of the night
- Begins binge eating
- Possesses hotel room keys
- Carries condoms or sexual aids
- Has new tattoos (tattoos are used by pimps to display ownership in a process known as "branding")
- Has unexplained bruises/cuts
- Possesses expensive items with no known source of income
- Becomes overly protective of a new "boyfriend" or "girlfriend" (this may be a sign of stockholm syndrome, when a victim becomes almost obsessively attached to their trafficker)

While these indicators demonstrate potential warning signs of sex trafficking, they may or may not suggest that the young person has been (a) employed in the sex trade or (b) is a victim of sex trafficking. The indicators are simply a sign that attention needs to be paid to confirm that the young person is not in any danger.

#### Health issues associated with sex trafficking victims

- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Pelvic pain, rectal trauma, urinary difficulties
- Pregnancy
- Infertility
- Malnutrition

- Substance abuse
- Post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, paranoia, disorientation, phobias

#### The Criminal Code of Canada definition of human trafficking

##### Trafficking In Persons - Section 279.01:

(1) Every person who recruits, transports, transfers, receives, holds, conceals or harbours a person, or exercises control, direction or influence over the movements of a person, for the purpose of exploiting them or facilitating their exploitation is guilty of an indictable offence and liable.

(a) to imprisonment for life if they kidnap, commit an aggravated assault or aggravated sexual assault against, or cause death to, the victim during the commission of the offence, or

(b) Imprisonment for a term of not more than fourteen years in any other case.

(2) Consent - No consent to the activity that forms the subject-matter of a charge under subsection (1) is valid.

#### Reflection Questions

1. How vulnerable are young people to recruitment by sex traffickers?
2. What can a young person do to protect themselves from sex traffickers?







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