



FAQs : FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

“The questions we don't ask are the reasons we can't change anything” ... Joan Chittister

1-Why is it said that slavery exists in Canada?

Both slavery and human trafficking are crimes based on maintaining a person in physical or psychological isolation/dependence in order to ‘use’ the person for profit ... nowadays either in labour trafficking, sex trafficking, pornography, forced prostitution, forced labour, illegal adoptions, forced matrimony, or the illicit sale of organs. Such abuse exists in Canada and increases yearly. Human trafficking is the slavery of this century.

2-Who are human traffickers?

They are unscrupulous people who prey upon the vulnerable to make money from the use of their bodies. Most, but not all traffickers, are men. Some work alone and others in national or international networks. Some are known to the victim (family members or ‘friends’).

3-What tactics do traffickers use to ‘capture’ victims?

Traffickers lure the innocent with lucrative job offers; but also by internet grooming; by kidnapping; by forming affective bonds and emotional dependence to gain the confidence of the potential victim; and by isolating the potential victim from their family support system.

4-What is internet grooming?

By hacking into the ‘victim’s’ social media site and posing as a potential friend/boyfriend, the trafficker uses various lies to gain



the confidence and affection of the 'victim' and manipulate them into cooperating in their own exploitation.

5-How can I protect myself and my family from traffickers?

The best protection is preventative education about human trafficking. Be suspicious of the 'too good to be true' and 'easy money' job offers; always be accompanied by a reliable friend or family member to any job interview (after checking out the 'business'). Let others know where you are. Do not accept strangers as friends on social media. Educate and accompany children. Supervise your child's internet and social media communications.

6-What is the hotline number in Canada?

1-833 900 1010 is the Canadian anti-trafficking hotline. They will immediately contact the anti-trafficking division of the local police to begin an investigation. Calls are anonymous. Or phone 911 and ask for the human trafficking division of the local police.

7-Who are the most likely people to be targeted as victims?

Anyone can be targeted, but the most likely are minority groups and/or people with poor self-esteem due to their experience of discrimination, childhood abuse, poverty, and/or emotional instability. People who look for 'easy money' can easily fall victim, as can unaccompanied children.

8-Is human trafficking on the increase?

Each year the number of human trafficking cases reported in Canada increases. There was a marked increase in on-line grooming and sextortion during the covid pandemic. The police admit that most cases go unreported and that the present statistics only indicate the 'tip of the iceberg'.



9-What accounts for the increase in trafficking in Canada?

Increased use of technology to both seduce/groom the victim and to use them in the pornography industry certainly plays a big role, as well as an increase world-wide in the number of people dedicated to exploiting the vulnerable both in labour fields and in sex trafficking.

10-What kinds of human trafficking are found in Canada?

Mostly trafficking for sex and for labour purposes. Forced matrimonies and illegal adoptions also occur.

11-Why are there so few convictions of traffickers?

It is difficult for rescued victims to denounce their traffickers because of real and perceived threats made against them and/or their families. A court case is a very traumatic experience for victims, forcing them to relive the experience, and many victims do not feel able to go through with it. (Recent legislation does not now require under-age victims to appear in court).

12-What is the Canadian Government doing to protect its citizens from human trafficking?

Section 118 of the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act prohibits knowingly organizing the coming into Canada of one or more persons by means of abduction, fraud, deception, or use or threat of force or coercion. The offence is punishable by a maximum penalty of life imprisonment and/or a fine of up to \$1 million. The National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking is supported by an investment of \$57.22 million over five years and \$10.28 million ongoing. The national HOTLINE is available 24 hours/day and action is taken on each anonymous call received.

13-What is the average age of victims of sex trafficking?

Most victims of sex trafficking are between 24 and 35, whereas for labour trafficking, they are between 24 and 40. Child victims



average in age between 8 and 12 yrs old. The preferred age of child victims continues to drop.

14-Why are children trafficked?

Children are trafficked for child prostitution networks, child pornography (sold on the 'dark web'), forced marriage, domestic slavery, forced labour in factories or agriculture, and for committing crimes (begging, theft, or moving drugs.)

15-What is meant by the 'dark web'?

The 'dark web' is that set of web pages on the World Wide Web that cannot be indexed by search engines, is not viewable in a standard Web browser, requires specific means (such as specialized software or network configuration) in order to access, and uses encryption to provide anonymity and privacy for users. It is used primarily for criminal purposes (pornography, sextortion...)

16-What is 'sextortion'?

Sextortion is a version of extortion using social media to seduce the victim and persuade him/her to post compromising photos of themselves. The trafficker then uses these photos to threaten the victim to send them to his/her family/friends unless they pay up. Many young people, tricked and humiliated by their own naivety decide to commit suicide rather than face their parents.

These photos can also be used by the trafficker for sale on pornography networks, or to persuade the victim to self-harm or even to commit suicide while on internet 'live' with their trafficker. The trafficker then sells the video to his contacts.

17-How can I know that a person is likely being trafficked?

The trafficked person tries to disguise her/his plight out of fear of reprisals. However, if a person appears dependent on another,



intimidated or controlled by another, it is possible that they are trapped in a trafficking situation. They may have bruises, or an 'ownership tattoo'. They may be without documents, and even seem to not know where they are.

18-What are the effects of human trafficking on the victim?

Over time trafficking victims show signs of Post Traumatic Stress: depression, eating disorders; challenges coping with daily life; controlling emotions and regulating behaviour; loss of interest in life or an inability to plan for the future; anger, aggression, mood changes; guilt/shame; distrust of others; sexual problems; physical injuries and scars are among the possible consequences of having been submitted to abusive and degrading treatment over time.

19-What is meant by labour trafficking? What is its cause?

Labour trafficking involves the recruitment, transportation, harbouring, or receipt of people through coercion, force or deception for the purpose of exploitation through labour. It can occur in any industry, including agriculture, domestic service, even in organized crime. Migrant workers and illegal immigrants are most often at higher risk.

20-What are the signs of labour trafficking?

The person may be 'employed' by someone who withholds their personal documents, makes threats of deportation, has to relocate with few details and no payment up front, has few or no personal possessions, and/or lives or works in unhealthy, unsafe conditions. The initial job offer does not correspond with the present reality. The workers may also suffer sexual abuse as well as physical or verbal abuse.



21-What are the laws protecting foreign migrant workers and others from labour trafficking?

Most foreign migrant workers come into Canada with a 'one year at a time' contract made between their Canadian employer and the Canadian government. If they complain of mistreatment or unjust wages, they could be blacklisted by their present employer. Although the law protects them from certain abuses, and many are rescued in police operations, they are not free to change employers without risking unemployment. Neither unemployment insurance nor health insurance are accessible for them.