





## Know the signs of sex trafficking / sexual exploitation:

Most cases of human trafficking in Ontario and Canada involve sexual exploitation. Indigenous girls and women are at higher risk of this form of violence, although it can also happen to boys and men. Youth who are 2SLGBTQ+ may also be vulnerable.

The average age of recruitment into sex trafficking is 13 years old. People are targeted based on vulnerabilities like low self-esteem, bullying, discrimination, poverty, abuse, isolation and other social or family issues. Substance abuse, mental health issues, disability and homelessness can also put people at risk.

Traffickers often start off seeming like a friend, boyfriend or protector. They earn the person's trust and then manipulate and exploit them, keeping the person isolated from people who really care about them, so they become dependent on the trafficker. This makes it hard for the person to leave or ask for help.

- New things they can't afford to buy, such as phones, clothing or jewellery
- New tattoos or branding
- Someone else controls their living situation, who their friends are or what they're allowed to say in public
- A sudden disinterest in school or work
- Bruises, cuts or cigarette burns
- Secrecy, silence and/or isolation from people who really care about them (friends, family, youth workers, etc.)



“Feminine Doesn’t Mean Prey”  
Mique Michelle - Franco-Ontarian Métis Artist

