What Is Sexual Exploitation and Sex Trafficking and How Can I Stay Safe Online?

Time Required: 1.5 hr

Learning Objectives:

- Making students aware of sex trafficking in Ontario and associated online risks
- Providing concrete ways in which students can protect themselves from being targeted by sex traffickers in online spaces.
- Creating an outlet for advocacy against sex trafficking to prevent and end this crime.
- Speaking the language of life … "recognizing that life is an unearned gift and that a person entrusted with life does not own it but that one is called to protect and cherish it."

Notes for Educators

There are many myths surrounding sexual exploitation and sex trafficking. You will need to gauge the level of knowledge/awareness of your students and decide if you need to spend more time on certain areas of the lesson than others.

Review the Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Sex Trafficking: Online Safety Tips - for educators to become more familiar with online safety strategies. Further to this, it is imperative that you as an educator take some time to learn about this important issue so as to present facts to students and limit sharing opinions on the matter. In order to support your own learning, you may wish to reach out to a member of your school board's professional support services such as a Social Worker and/or Child and Youth Worker. Consider-team teaching this lesson with them, if they have a level of familiarity with the content.

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Families are an important part of the child's learning. We strongly recommend connecting with families prior to this teaching. This allows for open conversations and perhaps this might offer parents the opportunity to support this learning by having important conversations at home.

Content Warning:

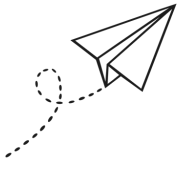
- For many students this might be their **first time** discussing sexual exploitaiton and sex trafficking
- Remind students that they'll be discussing a difficult topic and assure them that number one priority throughout the sessions is **their well-being**.
- Remind students that **support is available**. They can either access school support (social workers, councillors, etc.) or Canada wide resources.
- Students should be informed about the presentation content and **given the option to not participate in the lesson**
- **Create a class agreement:** Ask students to share what considerations should be kept in mind to make everyone feel safe (e.g. being respectful towards everyone's opinions and using respectful language, not joking about sensitive topics, being mindful of how much space we take throughout the session)
- Complete this slide with **school supports** (social workers, counsellors, etc.) available for survivors and/or those who want to make any disclosures, nationwide resources and online information (such as the wrprevent.ca website) can also be made available to students

Creating a class agreement:

It is essential to create a class climate suitable for the seriousness of the topic. Ask students to share what considerations should be kept in mind to make everyone feel safe (e.g. being respectful towards everyone's opinions and using respectful language, not joking about sensitive topics, being mindful of how much space we take throughout the session, etc.)

Materials:

- Projector and access to the internet
- Video and/or article featuring survivors of sex trafficking in Ontario
- Access to student computers OR if computer access is limited, white paper, markers, pencil crayons Photocopies of "Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Sex Trafficking: Online Safety Tips" handout
- Jamboard- if using google platform in online format
- Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Sex Trafficking: Online Safety Tips - For educators



Reflection:
Write or post the following for students to reflect on prior to the lesson. Give students about 5 minutes to jot down ideas.

We understand that life is an unearned gift and that a person entrusted with life does not own it but that one is called to protect and cherish it. What actions can you take to protect and cherish your own life? (Answer, prove, extend)

Activity One

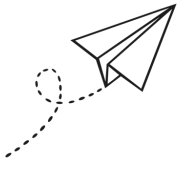
This is a whole class activity where students can share their thoughts via their mic or chat box (if online). Begin by explaining to students that you will be discussing the topic of Sexual Exploitation and sex trafficking in Ontario with the purpose of dispelling common myths about this crime. You will also be discussing ways children and teens can stay safe from sex traffickers online.

- Ask students to reflect on the following questions, and write down their answers. Emphasize that the purpose of this activity is to explore what they already know/think they know about sex trafficking. It's also important to help students understand that it is okay not to have the "right answers".

    1. What is sexual exploitation and sex trafficking? **(When making powerpoint- ensure that this answer is understood prior to sending students to answer B,C,D)**
    2. Where does it happen?
    3. Who is at risk of being targeted for child sexual exploitation and sex trafficking?
    4. Who can be a perpetrator?

- Have students answer questions 2,3 and 4. After some time, encourage students to share their answers with the class. **This can all be done via whiteboard if using an online format**
- Once all answers have been discussed, have students watch the following youtube video: Sex Trafficking: What is it?
- Handout exit ticket

Provide the students with the following answers to the questions. As you share the answers with students, let them know that there will be an exit ticket at the end of the



lesson to check for understanding and also an opportunity for them to share questions they may have.

1. What is sex trafficking? Child sexual exploitation and Sex Trafficking refers to situations where youth (under the age of 18) are forced to exchange sexual acts or images for material items such as food, shelter, drugs, clothing and/or non-material items such as protection, love, and belonging through the use of power, control and manipulation. Child sexual exploitation includes all child pornography offences, age of consent offences as well as prostitution under the age of 18.[1]

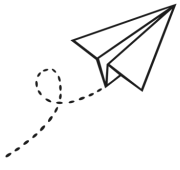
2. Where does it happen? Sex-trafficking is a growing problem in Canada and has been steadily on the rise since 2010. Between 2009 and 2016, 2/3 of all reported sex-trafficking crimes in Canada occurred in Ontario. Sex trafficking can happen anywhere. In school, online, at malls, concerts, hotels, private residences.

3. Who is at risk of becoming a victim? Most sex trafficking victims are women and girls under the age of 25. While anyone is at risk of being victimized, Indigenous women and girls, members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community and other marginalized groups often have risk factors that make them more vulnerable. Risk factors include familial discord, poverty, neglect and abuse, substance abuse, a lack of a sense of belonging and low self-esteem.

4. Who can be a perpetrator? Although we know most sex-traffickers tend to be young males, we also know sextraffickers can be anyone regardless of their gender. Peers, relatives, friends, domestic partners, gang members, internet predators, etc. It is important to note that women and girls can also act as recruiters and groomers for a trafficker who is controlling and exploiting them. Make sure to challenge any problematic stereotypes students might bring up as an answer to this question.

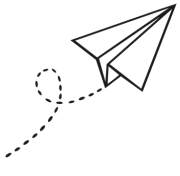
Based on the discussion and their learning from today, have students complete the attached exit ticket which can also be easily reproduced online (Survey Monkey or Google Form) to check for understanding.

[1] Children of the Street Society, Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking of Children and Youth in Canada: A Prevention and Early Intervention Toolkit for Parents, p.4.



EXIT TICKET

What is sex trafficking?
Where does it happen?
Who is at risk of being targeted for child sexual exploitation and sex trafficking?
Who can be a perpetrator?
What questions remain?



Activity Two

In order to emphasize the fact that anyone can become a victim of sexual exploitation and sex trafficking, show a video or read an article featuring a survivor's story. The YouTube video "What is Sex Trafficking?" from the youtube channel RealRhonelle created by Rhonelle Bruder.

As students watch, place the questions below on the board so that they are aware of the discussion points for after the video.
As a class, have students reflect on the video:

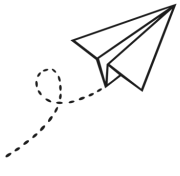
- What about it surprised them?
- Have they heard similar stories before?
- What risk factors can make people vulnerable to sex traffickers?

The second half of this activity focuses on online safety. Begin by asking students why sex traffickers might prefer the internet to approach their victims. The discussion should focus on how youth tend to be less cautious online and thus an easier target for traffickers.

Ask students to help you create a list on the board of all of the online spaces where students might encounter a sex trafficker. Some answers may include:

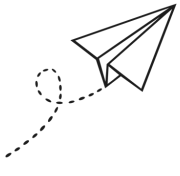
- Instagram
- Snapchat
- YouTube
- TikTok
- Facebook
- Dating/ "find friends" apps
- Online gaming chat/other message boards/apps

Hand out the student copy of "Preventing Sexual exploitation and Sex Trafficking: Online Safety Tips". Have students work individually to complete 2 of the tips and to consider another that is not included on the list. Students will become "experts" in their areas of focus and will then be able to share their ideas back to the larger group. (i.e. One set of students can focus on "Disable geotagging on your phone" and "Set strict privacy settings on social media" as well as their own tip, which they can fill in using the blank boxes below, Another set of students can work on "Think before you



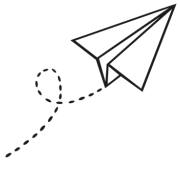
post" and "Use generic usernames" as well as their own tip, etc...) Once students have had the opportunity to work on their assigned questions individually, come back as a larger group to discuss all of the tips, making sure that students have the opportunity to complete the form in its entirety.

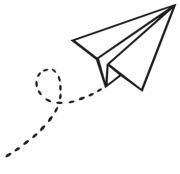
Wrap-up: This discussion, based on a Poll, serves as a 'wrap-up'' activity to engage students as you close this activity (see interactive tools guide for additional support)



Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation: Online Safety Tips

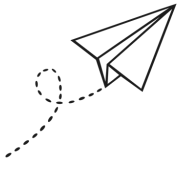
Online Safety Tip	**How does this tip promote my online safety?**
Disable geotagging on your phone	
Set strict privacy settings on social media	
Think before you post	
Use generic usernames	
Message/chat with people you know in person	
Watch out for overly friendly or complimentary followers/comments	
Always let your friends and family know when and where you are meeting new people App suggestion: Find My Friends	





Preventing Sex Trafficking: Online Safety Tips

Online Safety Tip	Explanation
Disable geotagging on your phone	Geo-tagging attaches geographical locations to posts, allowing followers to see exactly where the person was when they made the post. Sex traffickers may use this information to locate victims. They may also use this information as a way to initiate conversation/create a false familiarity with victims. For example, the sex trafficker may claim that they saw the poster at the geo-tagged location and that they looked beautiful
Set strict privacy settings on social media	Only allow your friends/followers to view your pictures and posts. Only accept friends/followers that you know in person.
Think before you post	Victims can be lured because they have shared personal experiences or images like bullying at school, struggles with poor body image or conflicts at home. In addition, encourage students to be careful not to include identifying information in your posts, including phone numbers, where they live/work, etc.
Use generic usernames	Make sure your username does not reveal personal information about yourself (e.g. your full name or birthday)
Message/chat with people you know in person	Keep messages private and with people you know. If you are messaging with someone new, do not reveal any personal information about yourself (first and last name, birthday, where you live, etc.).
Watch out for overly friendly or complimentary followers/comments	Online sex traffickers often try to establish friendships/relationships with their victims. Be wary of anyone you don't know who is commenting in an overly friendly or loving way.
Always let your friends and family know when and	There are different apps that youth can use to share their live location with their friends and family



where you are meeting new people App suggestion: Find My Friends	members to let them know where they are and that they are safe. Find My Friends is available for IOS and Android Devices for free .

Activity Three

Help students to understand that part of learning involves action and activism. Start by sharing with students that activism and action means that once we learn, we speak up when we see injustices and when we understand that harmful and hurtful things are happening in the world around us.

Explain to students that this learning is to hopefully prevent this from happening to other people. Now that we have learned, we need to act. Let students know that our actions can take many forms and today we will be creating a media text that can be shared with others.

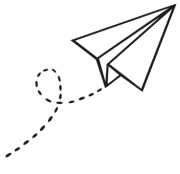
Indenpendently, have students create a media text (infographic, poster, video, song performance, etc.) that educates other children and teens on how to stay safe online from sex-traffickers. The media texts should include specific safety tips. Students who are interested in finding out more about community resources can research and include their information in their media texts. These resources can be extremely helpful for children and teens to access if they or someone else they know becomes a victim of sex-trafficking.

Students may elect to use platforms such as:

- Google Apps for Education - (Drawings, Slides - SlidesMania or Slides Carnival)
- Adobe Spark
- Chrome Music Lab (if they choose to care their own song)
- Prezi
- Powtoon

Wrap-up

Conclude by having students share their media texts with others. This can be done as a whole class or perhaps a gallery walk or in small group sharing.



Extension

Have students connect with one of the community partners to see what they might do beyond this learning within the community. Students can also create announcements and/or display their media texts throughout the school to bring awareness to other classrooms and students.

