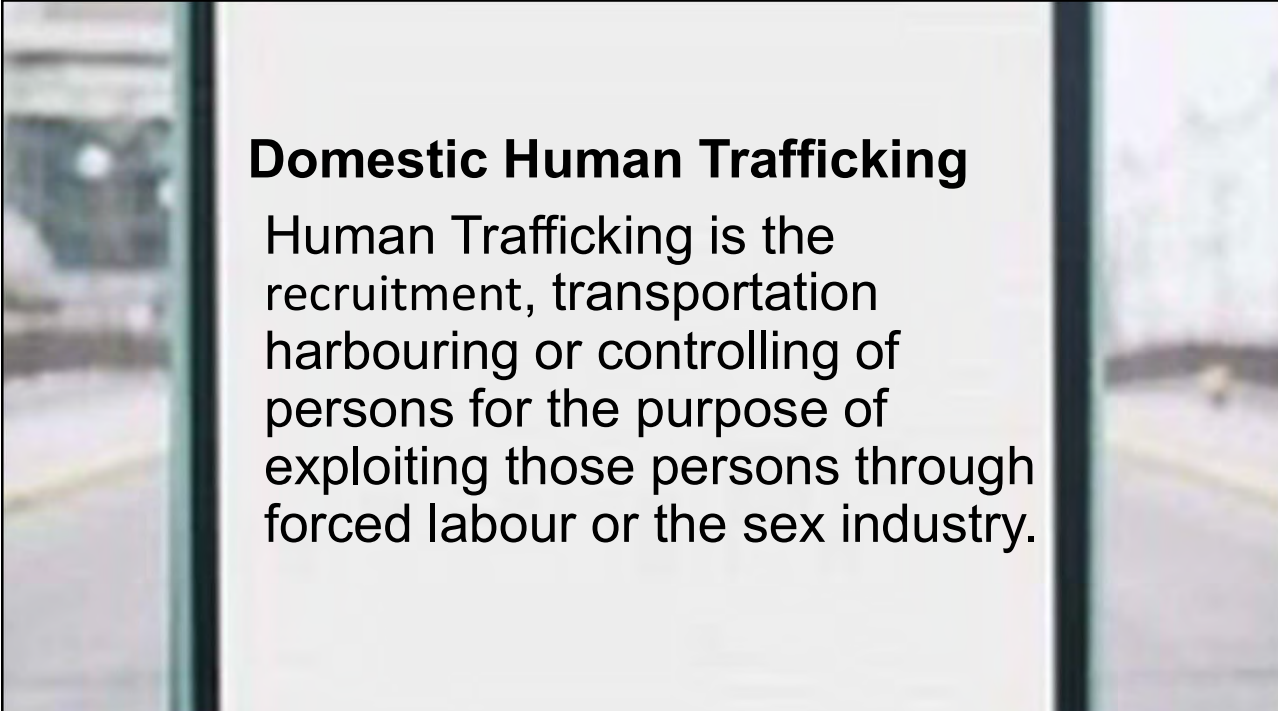
  
Domestic Human Trafficking  
**AWAKENING**

Supporting survivors with Intellectual Developmental Disabilities(IDD)



**Domestic Human Trafficking**

Human Trafficking is the recruitment, transportation harbouring or controlling of persons for the purpose of exploiting those persons through forced labour or the sex industry.

## **Any victim of Human Trafficking who is trafficked within Canada**

**Does not require the crossing of borders**

**Dynamics of the relationship not the distance travelled**

**Sex work includes personal choice or circumstance**

**When coerced into sex work, it becomes Human Trafficking**



## **Sex Trafficking**

Recruiting, transporting or holding victims for sexual exploitation

Exploitation of a person's vulnerabilities - people who may be separated from their families, desperate for money or shelter, survivors of abuse, etc.

Domestic Human trafficking is often hidden, and involves victims who may be unaware that they are being trafficked, in precarious or vulnerable situations, fearful or distrustful of authorities, fearful because they may be facing threats from the traffickers. This makes it difficult to detect and subject to underreporting to police.



## **Risk Factors – People with Intellectual Developmental Disabilities**

- Least able to recognize danger
- Lack power and least successful at recruiting assistance from more powerful protectors
- Least able to protect themselves
- Least able to obtain assistance within the Criminal Justice System

“Most reports and research, past and present, fail to mention **one of the most vulnerable groups** of individuals today, and that is **women with disabilities**. They tend to collapse their experiences into a single story.”(Dawn 2018)

In 2016, a US Study found that “Girls with intellectual Disabilities were at a higher risk of being exploited for sex trafficking and that there were complicating dynamics that make it even more difficult for victims to report. These included victims lack of awareness of exploitation and its’ endangerments, inability of the victims to self-identify and the relative ease at which the traffickers manipulated the girls”.  
(Joan A. Reid 2016-2017)

Persons with disabilities are almost **twice** as likely to be victims of violent crimes.

Persons with cognitive disabilities are **30%** more likely to be victims of violent crimes.

People with intellectual, cognitive or developmental disabilities are **7 times higher risk** of becoming victims of sexual crimes.

(sobsey,D.(1994) –Violence and Abuse in the Lives of People with Disabilities)

## Increased Vulnerabilities due to:

Isolation-Segregation-Controlled  
 Friendlessness  
 Poverty – Lack of Economic Independence  
 Dependence on others for long-term care  
 Communication Challenges  
 The internet  
 Lack of SEX education  
 Social Prejudice



## Isolation-Segregation-Controlled Friendlessness

Living alone – few social ties

Living with family or residential setting may experience limited contact with others.

Desire for “social connections” may contribute to victim being **influenced by a potential “friend.”**

During recruitment process, trafficker will often pose as a boyfriend or girlfriend to create an emotional attachment. (Nagy, 2018)

The trafficker can recruit a “girlfriend” with an intellectual disability by preying on a desire to have a lasting relationship.

Desensitized to touch due to isolation and level of touching that they have been exposed to in intimate care and medical procedures.

Due to lack of training and/or living situations, unaware of their right to object or reject sexual touching.

May not know that society condemns such predatory activity and has the tools to redress the wrong

## Poverty – Lack of Economic Independence

Studies have shown that people with intellectual disabilities are a significantly higher risk of living in poverty due to lack of employment opportunities. (Emerson, 2007)

Ontario Disability Support Program 2021 per month is \$1169 for basic needs and shelter- (\$14,028 per year) which is far below the considered low income for a single person living in Canada (\$22,133)

One of the first steps of the recruiting process is that the trafficker would “take care of the girls, giving the girls small amount of cash...” (Reid, 2018)

Victims become economically dependent on their trafficker

## Dependence on others for long-term care

Individuals with intellectual Disabilities become dependent on support staff, medical professionals and others to meet their social, emotional and health care needs. They may have normalized an unequal power dynamic in these relationships that normalizes the relationship with the trafficker, even if the trafficker is abusive.

Statistically, people with an intellectual disability are victimized by people they know which includes care providers, acquaintances, neighbours and family members. (Perrault, 2009).



## Communication Challenges

Difficulty with speech/communication

Difficulty expressing their needs

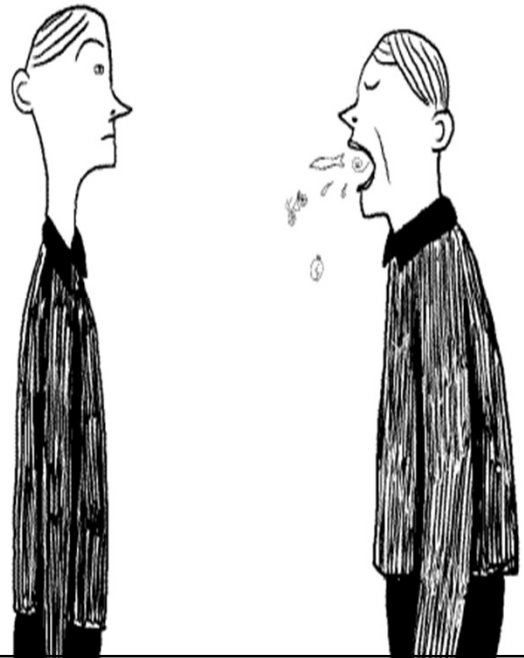
Difficulty putting words to what they are experiencing

Difficulty being misunderstood or being heard

Affects ability to get help and report abuse

Trafficker maybe their interpreter

Their level of intellectual disability is not an indication of their capacity to communicate



## The Internet

“THE INTERNET IS  
CHANGING THE WAY SEX  
IS SOLD, LEADING TO  
FRESH MODELS OF SEX  
EXPLOITATION “

*(Gavin Shuker MP Chair, All - Party Parliamentary  
Group on Prostitution and the Global Sex Trade 2019)*



## Lack of SEX Education

A major factor in the vulnerability of victims.

Are not consistently provided with comprehensive health education that would include discussions about sex trafficking, exploitation, relationship violence and how to safely access help and resources.

The general population must be made aware of the groups that are most at risk for Human Trafficking.



## Social Prejudice

May not be believed by family, friends, support workers or members of the public, if victim reports abuse.

Suffers from feelings of shame and self-blame.

Victims are often marginalized and viewed as not credible due to their disability by the police upon reporting.

Attitudinal perceptions amongst the police and judiciary about the victims' capabilities.

A lack of appropriate support and advocacy in terms of reporting the abuse.

Low rate of prosecution of offenders.

When convictions occur, sentences for crimes against people with disabilities are lighter, particularly sexual offences.

(US Department of Justice, Office of Violence Against Women-Webinar, July, 2019)

