Peel Institute on Violence Prevention

Human Trafficking in Canada, Ontario, and Peel

February 2018
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Introduction

“Human trafficking is a multi-dimensional phenomenon considered to be one of the most profitable crimes worldwide; organized crime syndicates and individual opportunists benefit from trafficking people for sexual exploitation and forced labour. The clandestine nature of human trafficking has made it hard to quantify. In Canada, victims of human trafficking have been Canadian citizens, permanent residents and foreign nationals.” (RCMP National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), 2012

Peel Institute on Violence Prevention (PIVP) is doing an extensive research study named: “A Survivor Centered Approach to Build Capacity to Address Human Trafficking in Peel” founded by the Ministry of Community and Social Services. The target population is women/girls exploited by sex trade. The aims of the project are:

1. To develop a standardized trauma screening tool reflective of human trafficking realities and experiences, adaptive across all sectors in order to implement consistent screening practices in Peel.

2. Build capacity of service providers through training and comprehensive evaluation process including impact evaluation in order to measure behavioural changes, such as changes in intake practices or data collection.

3. Utilize a health and wellbeing framework with a consumer informed, population basis, and community based survivor approach.

What is Human Trafficking?

Here are several definitions of Human Trafficking:

- “Human trafficking is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons by improper means (such as force, abduction, fraud, coercion, deception, repeated provision of a controlled substance) for an illegal purpose, including sexual exploitation or forced labour.”, Ontario Taking Steps to End Human Trafficking, Ministry of the Status of Women, 2016

- “Trafficking in persons involves the recruitment, transportation, harbouring and/or control of the movement of persons for the purpose of exploitation, typically for sexual exploitation or forced labour. Victims are required to provide (or offer to provide) their services or labour as a result of conduct that, in all the circumstances, could reasonably be expected to cause the victim to fear for their own safety — or for the safety of someone known to them — if they refuse to provide that service or labour. Victims suffer physical, sexual and/or emotional abuse and often live and work in horrific conditions.” A Handbook for Criminal Justice Practitioners on Trafficking in Persons, Federal/Provincial/Territorial Working Group on Trafficking in Persons, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada, 2015

- “Human trafficking involves the recruitment, transportation, harbouring and/or exercising control, direction or influence over the movements of a person in order to exploit that person, typically through sexual exploitation or forced labour. It is often described as a modern form of slavery”, Public Safety Canada, National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking: "What is Human Trafficking?, 2012

Royal Canadian Mounted Police demonstrated the difference between international human trafficking and domestic human trafficking.
“A distinction between international and domestic human trafficking is made by the RCMP for law enforcement purposes in order to determine the application of the appropriate piece of legislation as well as determine the jurisdictions based on law enforcement mandates.”

The RCMP defines these two concepts as follows:

- **International Human Trafficking**: “involves someone, who in the process of being trafficked, crosses an international border, regardless of the victim’s immigration status. The legality or illegality of border crossing in this case is irrelevant.”

- **Domestic Human Trafficking**: “is the phenomenon in which all stages of trafficking occur within Canada, regardless of the victim’s legal status. Vulnerable, economically challenged and socially dislocated sectors of the Canadian population represent a potential pool of domestic trafficking victims”, (RCMP National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), 2012

**Data Limitations**

Peel Institute on Violence Prevention has connected with the following government sites to access the official data in human trafficking in Peel:

1. Region of Peel, Peel Data Centre: we have been told there is no data have been collected regarding to human trafficking in Peel
2. Peel Police, we are still working for data to be released to the Institute
3. We are approaching Statistics Canada and Justice Canada to get the Peel data needed to the analysis for survivors and accusers demographics’ (see Appendix: Human trafficking data required
4. It is well known that the information in this issue is still underreported in Canada.
5. “The extent of this crime and the number of victims remains underreported, despite the number of human trafficking investigations handled by the courts, several of which resulted in convictions”, Domestic Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation in Canada October 2013, Royal Canadian Mounted Police’s (RCMP) Human Trafficking National Coordination Centre (HTNCC)

The statistics presented in the next section reflect the existing data in Peel, Ontario and Canada.
Human Trafficking Existing Data

Canada

Government information

- Statistics Canada report: Trafficking in persons in Canada, 2014

    Rate of police-reported human trafficking violations nearly doubled between 2013 and 2014
    - In 2014, Canadian police services reported 206 violations of human trafficking in Canada, accounting for less than 1% of all police-reported incidents. Expressed as a rate, there was less than one police-reported violation of human trafficking for every 100,000 Canadians.
    - After a slight decrease between 2009 and 2010, the police-reported number and rate of human trafficking have continued to increase. Between 2013 and 2014, the rate of human trafficking violations almost doubled (0.33 per 100,000 population and 0.58 per 100,000 population, respectively). It is important to note that the increase in human trafficking violations may be influenced by improved methods of reporting, detecting and investigating these incidents (Public Safety Canada 2012).
Victims of police-reported human trafficking are mostly young and mainly women

Between 2009 and 2014, there were 396 victims of police-reported human trafficking. The vast majority of these victims were female (93%).

The flowing chart showed that 25.13% of these female victims were under the age of 18 years and 46.95% of them were between the ages of 18 to 25 years (almost 70% of the victims were under the age of 25 years), which reflect how the young girls have been targeted by the traffickers (tend to be men 83%).

**Human trafficking victims, by age group, 2009 to 2014**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group (years)</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 18</td>
<td>25.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 to 24</td>
<td>45.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 34</td>
<td>12.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 to 44</td>
<td>9.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 to 54</td>
<td>6.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 and over</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** The offences which comprise the category of human trafficking in the Uniform Crime Reporting Survey include: trafficking in persons (CCCA 279.01); trafficking in persons under 18 (CCCA 279.011); material benefit (CCCA 279.02); and, withholding or destroying documents (CCCA 279.03). In addition, it also includes an offence in the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act which targets cross-border trafficking. This analysis is based on data from the victim file of the Incident-based Uniform Crime Survey Trend Database (2009 to 2014) which represents 99% of police services in Canada. In order to support more detailed analysis on human trafficking victims, data have been pooled from 2009 to 2014. Unknowns are excluded from percent calculations.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Persons accused of human trafficking tend to be men

The majority of people accused of police-reported human trafficking between 2009 and 2014 were male. More specifically, police services identified 459 persons accused of human trafficking, 83% of whom were male. Persons accused of human trafficking were most commonly between the ages of 18 to 24 (41%) and 25 to 34 (36%)
Human Trafficking Offences in Canada

Although the extent of human trafficking (for the purposes of sexual exploitation or forced labour) is difficult to determine, the following available statistics (to August 2015) provide some context:

90 human trafficking-specific cases completed since 2005 with human trafficking-specific and/or related convictions, involving 208 victims and 117 accused who received convictions.

Approximately 180 human trafficking specific cases before the courts, involving approximately 285 accused and 275 victims.
Key Findings

Traffickers

- The majority of traffickers are male, Canadian citizens, between the ages of 19 and 32 years, and are of various ethnicities or races.

- Adult females and individuals under the age of 18 years (especially those who are female) are increasingly becoming involved as human traffickers for sexual exploitation.

- Female traffickers usually work with at least one male. This partnership is sometimes relationship-based.

- Traffickers who are under the age of 18 years commonly work in partnership with adults.

- In approximately 50 percent of specific cases of domestic human trafficking for sexual exploitation, traffickers are associated with street gangs. However, intelligence does not indicate that human trafficking is an organized street gang activity.

- The proportion of traffickers who work alone and those who work with other individuals is almost equal. Traffickers work with friends, trusted associates, family members, boyfriends/girlfriends, or other females involved in prostitution.

Victims

- Victims are female, Canadian citizens, between the ages of 14 and 22 years, and are typically Caucasian.

- Individuals are most susceptible to traffickers when they need financial support and/or gain, or they desire love and affection.

- Individuals who are under the age of 18 years or engaged in dancing in adult entertainment establishments and/or prostitution, are more vulnerable to recruitment by traffickers as well as their control tactics. However, anyone can become a victim of human trafficking.

- Approximately 50 percent of victims have not had previous experience dancing in adult entertainment establishments and/or prostitution.

- In recent years, individuals with relatively stable backgrounds are increasingly becoming victims of human trafficking.

- Victims who are trafficked by individuals under the age of 18 years are usually under 18 years old themselves.
Ontario

Government information

- **Ontario’s Strategy to End Human Trafficking, Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, 2016**
  - “Ontario is a major centre for human trafficking in Canada, accounting for roughly 65 percent of police-reported cases nationally.”

- Of Ontario’s reported cases of human trafficking, about 70 per cent are for the purposes of sexual exploitation. The majority of survivors are Canadian citizens or permanent residents.

- Individuals who are most vulnerable as targets for human trafficking include Indigenous people, young women, at-risk youth and youth in care, migrant workers, and persons with mental health and addiction issues.

- In many cases of trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation, trafficked persons may develop “trauma bonds” with their traffickers, and may not view themselves as victims. As such, human trafficking is believed to be a vastly underreported crime.

Non-Government Information

- **Human Trafficking in Canada on the rise, but experts warn statistics may be misleading, David McKie, your home for data journalism.**

According to crime statistics from the Statistics Canada CANSIM database, over half of the incidents of human trafficking in Canada since 2009 have occurred in Ontario. 106 cases are attributed to Ottawa, which has the second highest concentration of human trafficking offences outside of Toronto as of 2015. The concern is that reported cases in Ottawa have essentially doubled each year.
Region of Peel and Greater Toronto Area

Government information

Peel Institute on Violence prevention have connected with the following government sites to access the official data for the human trafficking in Peel Region (we couldn’t access any official data yet).

- Region of Peel, Peel Data Centre: we have been told that there is no data have been collected regarding the human trafficking in Peel
- Peel Police still waiting for data
- we are approaching Statistics Canada and Justice Canada to get the Region of Peel data needed to the analysis for survivors and accusers demographics (see Appendix: Human trafficking data required)

Non-government information

- Media source
-“The GTA is a hotbed of human trafficking, with 62.5 per cent of the court cases across the country originating here, according to Peel Regional Police”. Peel leading the way with human trafficking protocol, Brampton Guardian.

-“Since 2008, Peel Regional Police has laid over one hundred charges every year against individuals for human trafficking, child pornography and prostitution; In 2015, that number rose to over two hundred charges”. HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN PEEL, Brampton focus media, May, 2017

-“Peel Regional Police say 60 per cent of all reported human trafficking cases in Canada occur in the densely populated Greater Toronto Area.
More than 90 per cent of the victims of sex trafficking within Canada come from Canada, according to government statistics”

“In 2015, Peel police made 39 arrests and laid 244 charges related to sex trafficking. In the first half of 2016, according to their most recent statistics, they made 25 arrests and laid 149 charges. As recently as last week, Toronto police arrested two young men in connection with the trafficking of two teenage girls at Mississauga motels.” Anyone can be a victim’: Canadian high school girls being lured into sex trade, CBC News Toronto, Jan, 2017

- Canadian Women’s Foundation
"Of the 534 organizations that responded, 266 reported that they provided service and supports to trafficked and sexually exploited women and girls. These 266 organizations were found in every province and territory except Nunavut, with the majority located in Ontario (24%), BC (21%), Quebec (15%), Alberta (12%) and Manitoba (9%). They served large cities, small cities, towns and rural areas, including northern communities and those focused on resource development.

When these organizations were asked about the women and girls they had served in 2012, they collectively identified:
- 1,929 trafficked women.
- 943 trafficked girls.
• 4,708 girls and 14,457 women who were sexually exploited --exchanging sex or sexual acts for drugs, food, shelter, protection and other necessities of life, primarily through street level survival sex.

The organizations reported that most girls had been first trafficked at age 14, and the majority of trafficked and sexually exploited women were aged 18 – 25 years.

When asked details about the trafficked or sexually exploited women and girls they served, the organizations estimated:

• 51% of trafficked girls were or had been involved with the child welfare system.
• 50% of trafficked girls and 51% of trafficked women were Indigenous.
• 17% of girls and 42% of trafficked women were women of colour

“NO MORE” Ending Sex-Trafficking In Canada, Report of the National Task Force on Sex Trafficking of Women and Girls in Canada, commissioned by the Canadian Women’s Foundation, Fall 2014

Indigenous People

Government information

“Human trafficking is believed to be a vastly underreported crime. Individuals who are most vulnerable as targets for human trafficking include Indigenous people, young women, at-risk youth, youth in care, migrant workers, and persons with mental health and addiction issues. Ontario is a major centre for human trafficking in Canada, accounting for roughly 65 per cent of police-reported cases nationally”. Strategy to End Human Trafficking - Overview of Initiatives, Ministry of the Status of Women, June 30, 2016.

“As part of the Government's efforts, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) conducted Canada's first Human Trafficking Threat Assessment, which reviewed cases and intelligence between 2005 and 2009 to determine the extent of this crime in 2010. The Threat Assessment confirmed that vulnerable, economically challenged and socially dislocated sectors of the Canadian population represent a potential pool of trafficking victims.” Public Safety Canada, National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking: "What is Human Trafficking?" 2012

“In 2012, the federal government introduced a National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking. However, it fails to provide distinct measures to address Indigenous women’s vulnerability to trafficking. Also, recent changes to Canadian prostitution laws may have negative impacts on more vulnerable Indigenous women.” Interim Report, Our Women and Girls are Sacred, 2017

Non-government information

- Media source

“Canada's indigenous population is very small -- just 4% of the population -- yet more than 50% of all sex trafficking victims in Canada are indigenous. The reasons are complicated and varied but are ultimately rooted in a legacy of poverty, racism and abuse”. Canada's stolen daughters: Sex traffickers target indigenous Canadians, CNN, February 23, 2017.
Non-governmental organizations source  

**Ontario Native Women’s Association (ONWA)**  
The majority of information on sex trafficking comes from fragmented information from charges and convictions under the Criminal Code of Canada, interviews with front line service providers, and anecdotal evidence. One of the few studies to explicitly address Indigenous women and sex trafficking was done by Kampouris and Boyer in 2014. Their interviews with front-line staff who work with trafficked women across Canada uncovered shockingly high numbers of trafficked Indigenous women. Based on the responses from participants, they concluded that there are “at least 2,400 fairly recent cases of suspected human trafficking where the victim is an Aboriginal woman or girl”, Ontario Native Women's Association (ONWA) Report, Sex Trafficking of Indigenous Women in Ontario, February 2016.

“To provide further federal context, as of January 2015, there have been 85 human trafficking specific cases where convictions were secured. Of those 85 cases, 151 individuals were convicted of human trafficking specific and related offenses, such as forcible confinement and sexual assault (RCMP, 2015). The majority of trafficking victims in Canada are Aboriginal, and most are young “


**Covenant House Toronto, Canada’s largest homeless youth agency**  
Many Canadians believe that sex trafficking is strictly an international issue. In fact, most trafficking cases in Canada are domestic, and a recent report showed 63% of those trafficked in Ontario were Canadian citizens.

Often described as a modern form of slavery, trafficking is the control and use of threats or violence to exploit another for financial gain. Sex trafficking throughout Canada is a growing public issue. Homeless youth are among the most vulnerable to exploitation; however unsuspecting girls are also ensnared online, in malls and in school yards. The majority of sex trafficking victims in our country are young Canadian girls. The average age is estimated to be 17.

**The victims**

Trafficking victims can come from any neighbourhood. The ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds of the girls are varied. Research in Ontario has shown that 90 percent of victims are female and that 42 percent were first trafficked before the age of 18. Major risk factors include mental health issues, body image issues, learning disabilities, social isolation, child abuse experience and poverty. New immigrants, LGBTQ+ youth, and most particularly, aboriginal girls are over-represented among victims. If there is a common theme among victims, it is that they are usually youth who struggle with low self-esteem. SEX TRAFFICKING, Covenant House Toronto, Canada’s largest homeless youth agency.
Appendix: Human trafficking data required

I. Definitions
- Definition of human trafficking of data collected
- Definition of the victims of human trafficking
- Level of the data collected (domestic, international)

II. The demographics data:
   A- Peel Level
   1- Number of incidents of human trafficking (cases) in Peel (2009 to 2017)
   2- Human trafficking victims in Peel by age for the most recent years (2009 to 2017)
   3- Human trafficking victims in Peel by ethnic origins (2009 to 2017)
   4- Human trafficking victims in Peel by legal citizenship status (2009 to 2017)
   6- Police-reported human trafficking violations in Peel (2009 to 2017)
   7- Persons accused of human trafficking in Peel by age (2009 to 2017)
   8- Persons accused of human trafficking in Peel by gender (2009 to 2017)
   9- Persons accused of human trafficking in Peel by ethnic origins (2009 to 2017)
  10- Persons accused of human trafficking in Peel by legal citizenship status (2009 to 2017)
  11- Persons accused of human trafficking in Peel by types of human trafficking (2009 to 2017)
  12- Relationship between the Human trafficking victims and accused, Peel (2009 to 2017)

   B- Ontario Level
   1- Number of incidents of human trafficking (cases) in Ontario (2009 to 2017)
   2- Human trafficking victims in Ontario by age for the most recent years (2009 to 2017)
   3- Human trafficking victims in Ontario by ethnic origins (2009 to 2017)
   4- Human trafficking victims in Ontario by legal citizenship status (2009 to 2017)
   6- Police-reported human trafficking violations in Ontario (2009 to 2017)
   7- Persons accused of human trafficking in Ontario by age (2009 to 2017)
   8- Persons accused of human trafficking in Ontario by gender (2009 to 2017)
   9- Persons accused of human trafficking in Ontario by ethnic origins (2009 to 2017)
  10- Persons accused of human trafficking in Ontario by legal citizenship status (2009 to 2017)
  11- Persons accused of human trafficking in Ontario by types of human trafficking (2009 to 2017)
  12- Relationship between the Human trafficking victims and accused, Ontario (2009 to 2017)

   C- Canada Level
   1- Number of incidents of human trafficking (cases) in Canada (2009 to 2017)
   2- Human trafficking victims in Canada by age in (2015 to 2017)*
   3- Human trafficking victims in Canada by ethnic origins (2009 to 2017)
   4- Human trafficking victims in Canada by legal citizenship status (2009 to 2017)
   6- Police-reported human trafficking violations in Canada (2015 to 2017)*
   7- Persons accused of human trafficking in Canada by age (2015 to 2017)
      Persons accused of human trafficking in Canada by age (2015 to 2017)
   8- Persons accused of human trafficking in Canada by gender (2009 to 2017)
   9- Persons accused of human trafficking in Canada by legal citizenship status (2009 to 2017)
  10- Persons accused of human trafficking in Canada by types of human trafficking (2009 to 2017)
  11- Relationship between the Human trafficking victims and accused, Canada (2009 to 2017)
Resources and Links

- RCMP National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), 2012

- Ontario Taking Steps to End Human Trafficking, Ministry of the Status of Women, 2016


- Statistics Canada report: Trafficking in persons in Canada, 2014


- Royal Canadian Mounted Police’s (RCMP) Human Trafficking National Coordination Centre (HTNCC), Domestic Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation in Canada October 2013

- Ontario’s Strategy to End Human Trafficking, Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, 2016

- Human Trafficking in Canada on the rise, but experts warn statistics may be misleading, David Mckie, your home for data journalism.

- Peel leading the way with human trafficking protocol, Brampton guardian.

- Human Trafficking in Peel, Brampton focus media, May, 2017
  https://www.bramptonfocus.ca/human-trafficking-peel/

- Anyone can be a victim’: Canadian high school girls being lured into sex trade, CBC News Toronto, Jan, 2017
  https://www.google.ca/amp/www.cbc.ca/amp/1.3956214

- Interim Report, Our Women and Girls are Sacred, 2017


- Report of the National Task Force on Sex Trafficking of Women and Girls in Canada, commissioned by the Canadian Women’s Foundation, Fall 2014

- SEX TRAFFICKING, Covenant House Toronto, Canada’s largest homeless youth agency.
  http://www.covenanthousestoronto.ca/homeless-youth/Sex-Trafficking