



# Domestic Sex Trafficking of Youth

TRAUMA INFORMED PREVENTION  
AND INTERVENTION

SERVICE PROVIDER  
TRAINING

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# VSDR SERVICE PROVIDER TRAINING

## OUR ORGANIZATION

Victim Services of Durham Region (VSDR) provides crisis response, intervention and prevention services immediately following a crime or sudden tragedy. Our services are free and confidential. On-site or over the phone, our flexible Crisis Intervention Counsellors, and Volunteer Responders, are well trained to handle crises. VSDR is a registered charity founded in 1997. We are on call 24/7 to respond to police requests for victim assistance.

## VSDR: A NATIONAL LEADER IN HUMAN TRAFFICKING RESPONSE

Our programs empower youth and service providers with psycho-education through interactive workshops on human trafficking. Our workshops help youth and service providers recognize risk factors and early red flags, to prevent youth from being trafficked.

How Victim Services of Durham Region can help: Our workshops answer the common questions: How does this happen in Canada? Why don't victims just leave? We also provide youth and service providers with psycho-education on human trafficking vital to preventing and responding to this epidemic in the GTA.

## AGENDA

- Self Reflection
- Definitions
- Stages of exploitation
- Psychology of a trafficker
- Risk and vulnerability factors
- Gender-Based Violence
- Warning signs
- Trauma and the brain
- Treatment model

## OBJECTIVES

01

Explore personal feelings and values about sex work and human trafficking and discover how this affects how we work with victims/survivors

03

Know how to engage with youth/young adults who are victims or at risk using trauma-based interventions to support victims/survivors of domestic sex trafficking

02

Examine the stages of commercial sexual exploitation

04

Identify risk and vulnerability factors as well as sex trafficking warning signs/indicators



# Cycle of Commercial Sexual Exploitation

Kalish & Lagios, 2013

## Luring

- Assessing the right person
- Testing their vulnerabilities and boundaries
- Determining whether that person is looking for what they are selling
- Testing the waters to see if that person is open to engaging in courting
- Collecting as much information as possible about them
- Making them feel special

## Grooming & Gaming

### Honeymoon Stage

- She feels like she is in love
- She has found her dream man who will make her dreams come true
- He promises her a family, home, etc
- He takes her out shopping, to get her hair and nails done, etc
- He makes her feel like a princess
- They may engage in physical intimacy
- He continues collecting personal information about her dreams, hopes, family, what she loves and cares about most
- He might introduce her to illicit drugs under the guise of loosening up, having fun

## Coercion & Manipulation

- He starts sending mixed messages
- Confuses her by withdrawing
- Uses information gained against her
- Reduces communication, compliments
- Makes her believe he is mad at her
- Toys with her emotions and behaving erratically to cause her to question how he feels about her
- She tries to please him in any way she can to get back in his good books and have him love her
- He begins asking her to do things sexually that she might not be comfortable with, desensitizing her to these actions
- Has sex with her and then does something for her (takes her shopping, gives her money, etc.) to make sex have a price
- Draws on her drug addiction (if relevant) to make her have sex for drugs or money, and makes her feel indebted to him

## Exploitation

- He has broken down her self-esteem
- Threatens her and her loved ones based on information collected previously
- Makes her feel indebted to him
- Suggests that she owes him financially
- Leads her to believe that he needs help financially
- She is at the point where she feels obligated to contribute in some way
- Emotional, mental and physical abuse – intimidation and control
- Confinement and isolation from family, friends, etc.

## Recruiting

- He says you're his top girl
- He says you have graduated
- He needs your help "teaching other girls"
- Makes you feel powerful and important
- You get to see less "clients"
- You get to reclaim some power and control
- You're told to befriend vulnerable girls
- Show them how great your life is and they could have it too

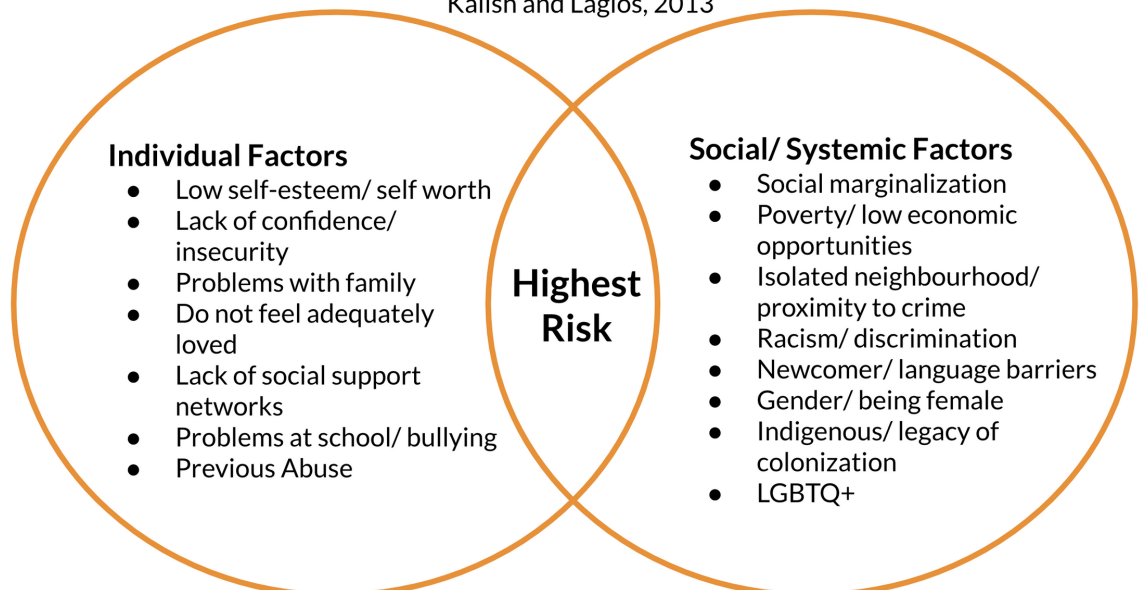


# WARNING SIGNS

- Language/vocabulary pertaining to trafficking
- Excessive primping
- Frequent relocation
- Neglecting healthcare needs
- Not in control on their own money – always owing people money
- Seems disoriented or isolated from the outside world, withdrawing from friends
- Secretive, very protective of privacy
- Signs of controlling or abusive relationship
- Always accompanied by someone who seems controlling
- Unexplained money: clothes, hair, jewelry
- No identification; documents taken away
- 2 phones or changing phone numbers often
- Signs of branding
- Exhibits behaviours including hyper-vigilance or paranoia

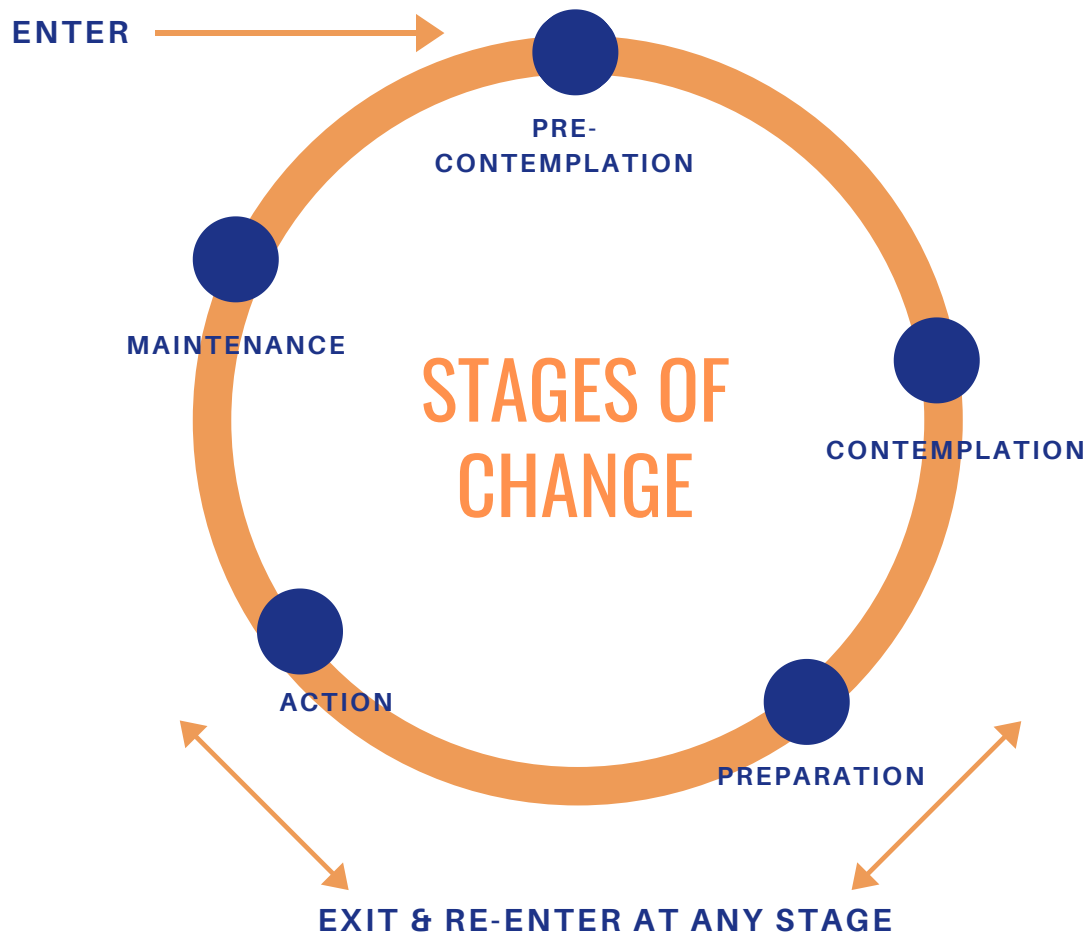
# RISK & VULNERABILITY FACTORS

Kalish and Lagios, 2013





# STAGES OF CHANGE AS INTERVENTIONS



## PRE-CONTEMPLATION

How to continue safely

## ACTION

Process their narrative/attachment/historical trauma. Planning their preferred change

## CONTEMPLATION

Explore pros/cons, what needs are being met?

## MAINTENANCE

Process temptations returning and strengths of leaving. Reconnection with trusted support system and goal planning

## PREPARATION

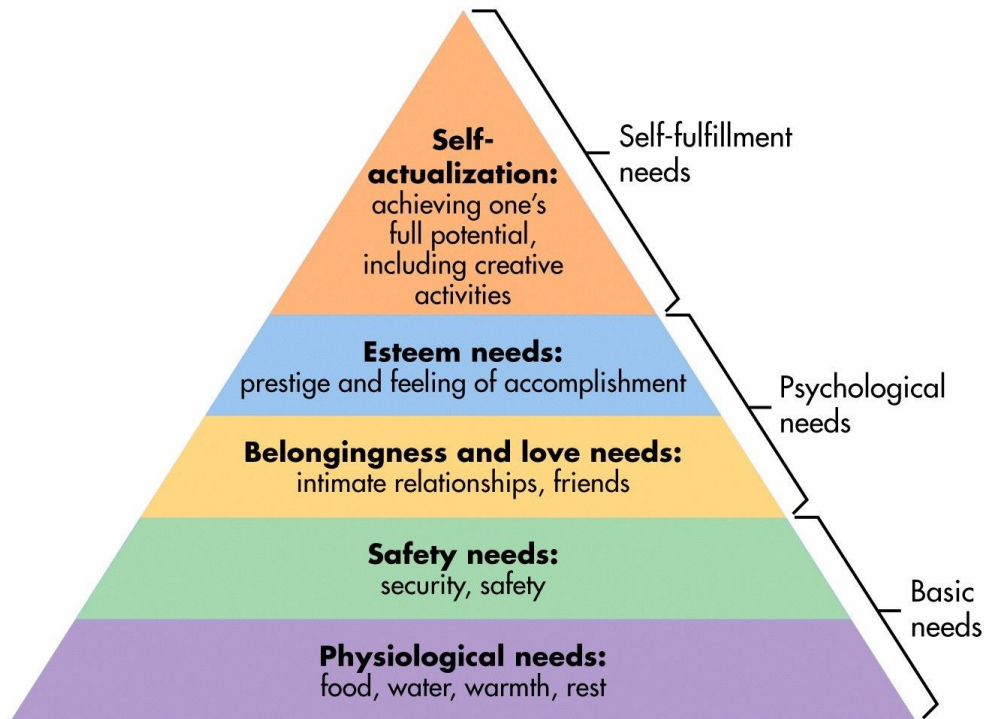
Psycho-education re: cycle of exploitation



# TRAUMA-INFORMED INTERVENTION

## WHAT IS TRAUMA?

- Perceived as life-threatening; significantly compromising our sense of safety and beyond our ability to stop it
- Disrupts our world view/understanding of the world as safe, and/or predictable
- Disrupts cognitive and emotional regulation and/or functioning; forces changes in the ways in which we cope
- Trauma should be considered within historical, social, political and cultural contexts.
- Trauma can be experienced at the individual and collective level
- Trauma can have significant impacts on how we parent, and thus can impact future generations



## TRAUMA & THE BRAIN



The brain develops in a sequential manner from the bottom up and from right hemisphere to left hemisphere



While some degree of stress may be beneficial to the brain, trauma creates an ongoing threat that has profound influence on the developing brain and development in general



It is important to recognize that the brain is at its most plastic during its first three years of development

# Tips for Working With Trafficked Persons



## ENGAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

- Listen
- Use open-ended questions
- Do not identify the client as “victim”
- Don’t assume anything
- Be sensitive to asking too much too soon
- Try to spread talks over several sessions
- Be non-judgmental (watch facial expression and exclamation)
- Encourage own agency (when you’re ready, can I help you., etc..)
- Self designed safety plans: do you have anyone who you could call if you were in trouble? Are those numbers programmed into your phone?

## KEY QUESTIONS TO KEEP IN MIND

- Are you being forced to do something you don’t want to do?
- Could you leave if you wanted to?
- Do you get to have control over who you spend time with?
- Has anyone threatened you?
- Are you doing this because you were promised something in return?
- Do you get to keep the money?
- How many hours do you work a day?
- Who decides where you sleep, eat, wear?



# HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Sex trafficking, when you are forced or tricked by a boyfriend, friend, or family member (pimp) into the sex trade.

## SIGNS THAT YOU MIGHT BE TRAFFICKED:

- You said “yes” initially, but now feel like you can’t leave
- You don’t get ALL the money, someone else ‘holds’ it
- You are told the sex trade is going to make your dreams come true
- You feel ashamed
- You feel like there is no one you can turn to
- Someone else is making decisions for you
- You are being hurt emotionally, physically, sexually
- You feel afraid for your safety if you tried to leave



It's not your fault.  
You have done nothing wrong. You are not alone.  
There is a way out. We can help you.

Victim Services of Durham Region can support you confidentially  
(separate from the police) **(905) 721-4226**.

If you want to talk to the specialized unit of Durham Region Police Services,  
call **905-579-1520 ext. 5600**





## WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

"Knowledgeable presenters and excellent supporting anecdotes. First hand accounts from [survivor] especially useful/informative."

"Though long and heavy, I never at any moment felt bored or lost my attention."

"The information provided was very valuable; I learned so much from your work and am now able to be more effective at my job."



## CONTACT US

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