

# HUMAN TRAFFICKING



Native Women's  
Association of Canada

L'Association des  
femmes autochtones  
du Canada

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## BACKGROUND

- Indigenous women are overrepresented as victims of human trafficking: Indigenous women make up 4% of the Canadian female population but roughly 50% of trafficking victims.<sup>1</sup>
- This overrepresentation can be attributed to past and ongoing colonization, which has forced Indigenous women into precarious social and economic positions.
- Youth: 25% of all trafficked women are under 18.<sup>2</sup> In addition to being below the age of consent, youth experience increase rates of precarious housing and employment situations, especially they are in or transitioning out of the Child Welfare System.
- LGBTQ+ and Two-Spirited People: These communities face higher rates of trafficking and exploitation, as they experience a lack of supports and multiple forms of marginalization, sometimes from within their own communities.<sup>3</sup>

### Works Cited

1 Canadian Women's Foundation, "NO MORE" - Ending Sex-Trafficking (2014). [Available online.](#)

2 Statistics Canada, Trafficking in persons in Canada, 2014. (2016) [Available online.](#)

3 See Ayden Scheim et al. "Barriers to well-being for Aboriginal gender-diverse people: Results from the Trans PULSE Project in Ontario, Canada" *Ethnicity and Inequalities in Health and Social Care* (Vol. 6 No. 4, 2013). Other sources available.

4 Public Safety Canada, "National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking" (2012). [Available online.](#)



## DEFINING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

- Public Safety Canada defines Human Trafficking as *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.*<sup>4</sup>
- Human Trafficking, sexual exploitation, survival sex, and sex work are distinct experiences with a range of impacts that require targeted supports and policy responses.

## SUPPORTING SURVIVORS

- NWAC believes that all Indigenous women are valuable, mournable, and entitled to autonomy and support.
- Women impacted by the distinct experiences of human trafficking, survival sex, sexual exploitation, and sex work need to have stigma-free and equal access to appropriate programs and services.
- This includes justice services, health services (including reproductive justice, trans care, mental health care, STBBI/HIV testing and treatment, drug treatment, and basic preventative medicine), economic security, and housing.

**TO LEARN MORE, PLEASE CONTACT:**

**STRATEGIC POLICY UNIT**

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