



ENSLAVED + EXPLOITED

# THE UNDERGROUND WORLD OF **TRAFFICKING** HUMANS

**THE TRADE OF HUMAN BEINGS AS A COMMODITY IS SEEN AROUND THE WORLD AS ONE OF THE GREATEST HUMAN RIGHTS CHALLENGES OF THIS CENTURY. STILL, MOST DON'T REALIZE TRAFFICKING IN PEOPLE IS A PERVASIVE CRIMINAL ISSUE IN CANADA. OR RIGHT HERE IN NIAGARA.**

WRITTEN BY Tanya Hvilivitzky AND Carolyn Mullin

**O**n a March day in 1793, onlookers watched helplessly as a black slave girl named Chloe Cooley was tied up, forced by three men into a boat at Queenston and taken across the Niagara River, yelling and struggling much of the way. Once on the American side, she continued to fight as she was beaten and handed over to her new master.

Although Chloe was never seen again, she became both a symbol and a catalyst toward ultimately ridding the country of slavery.

The outraged witnesses reported what they had seen to Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe. A fervent abolitionist, Simcoe was able to use the incident to coax enough members of the House of Assembly, many of whom were themselves slave owners, to pass what would become the world's first anti-slavery law. And so, on July 9, 1793, in what is now Niagara-on-the-Lake, the importation of slaves was made illegal. While the legislation didn't free slaves living in Canada, it did set the stage for the beginnings of the Underground Railroad. Chloe's traumatic ordeal and bravery inspired change that would ultimately lead to the end of slavery in this country.

Or so it seemed. The shocking truth is that more than two centuries later, enslavement continues to flourish in this country and abroad, though today it thrives under different names. »

**O**n a cold November day in 2007, 17-year-old Eve summoned the courage to escape her captor and call police after two and a half years of sexual slavery. She led them to a motel room where her trafficker kept another girl, a 14-year-old, also as a sexual slave. Eve's bravery led to Canada's first ever human trafficking conviction—a 26-year-old Niagara Falls man.

Imani Nakpangi had brutally forced Eve, through beatings and threats against her and her family, into selling sex for up to 15 men a day, many of whom booked her services through Craigslist ads. In total, Nakpangi raked in more than \$425,000 from his sex slaves, allowing him to drive a luxury car and live comfortably in a large home in suburban Niagara Falls. He was sentenced to just three years in jail for trafficking Eve; factoring in his pre-trial custody credit, he spent less time in jail than he spent destroying one young girl's life. He was also convicted of living off the avails of prostitution, related to the younger girl, though she had resisted her rescue by police, insisting Nakpangi loved her.

An isolated case? Hardly.

"Many people think of human trafficking as something that only happens in Thailand, Nepal, India, places that are far away. It's hard to believe that it is happening in Canada and, for many of us, so close to home," says Shae Invidiata, founder of Free-Them, an anti-human trafficking advocacy group. "The Golden Horseshoe of Ontario is notorious for trafficking in Canada. [Southwestern] Ontario accounts for 75 per cent of all human trafficking cases in Canada; Niagara, Stoney Creek, Grimsby, Ancaster, and Hamilton are major hot spots."

## MODERN-DAY SLAVERY

Today more people are enslaved worldwide than at any time in history. According to Kevin Bales, author and president of Free the Slaves, there are an estimated 27 million people under some form of bondage or slavery, in just about every country in the world, including traditional chattel slavery, domestic servitude, forced labour, forced prostitution or involuntary marriage. Says Bales, "Slavery is not a horror safely consigned to the past; it continues to exist throughout the world, even in developed countries..."

At any one time the United Nations estimates 2.4 million individuals—mostly women and girls—are trafficked worldwide primarily for sexual exploitation and forced labour. Often referred to as the "modern-day slave trade," trafficking people nets close to \$32 billion every year—more than the profits of Google, Starbucks and Nike combined. It is the fastest growing and third most lucrative criminal activity in the world, after illegal drugs and arms trade.

Human trafficking involves the recruitment, transportation, and/or harbouring of unwilling people through the use of force, coercion or other means, for the purpose of exploiting them. In contrast, and often used interchangeably, human smuggling is the illegal facilitation, transportation, or procurement of a willing person across an international border.

According to the RCMP, Canada is considered a source, transit and destination country, with upward of 1,200 people trafficked to and through the country every year. Human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation has been mostly associated with organized prostitution, occurring discreetly indoors in motel rooms, residential brothels, body-rub parlours, escort agencies and exotic

dance clubs. Criminal networks and pimps control young victims physically, psychologically, financially or emotionally.

However, victims of human trafficking are not only used in the sex trade. Many are subject to forced labour and could be hidden in plain sight; they may be the dishwasher in your neighbourhood restaurant, the nanny down the street, the migrant farm worker or the drywaller on a high-end housing job. Within this world of slavery, while the vast majority of victims are women and girls, men can also fall prey. Indeed, the largest proven human trafficking ring in Canadian history recently played out in a Hamilton courtroom. The case saw 19 Hungarian men trafficked into the Hamilton area on the pretence of finding well-paying, legal jobs. Instead, the men were coached to file refugee claims, locked in basements, fed little and forced to work at a construction site for seven days a week without pay. Several of the victims claim they were threatened and beaten. The kingpin, Ferenc Domotor, was handed the toughest-ever sentence for his crimes—nine years in prison. Domotor's wife and son also faced charges of human trafficking, fraud, conspiracy and being part of a criminal organization.

## OUR OWN BACKYARD

On a May afternoon in 2010, a 16-year-old girl cut a hole in a bathroom window screen and fled a Lundy's Lane motel where she had been kept and forced to work as a prostitute. For six days, the girl was forced to have sex with strangers and give her earnings to her captors, a 23-year-old woman from St. Catharines and her boyfriend.

**A**nd for every one of these stories that comes to light, there are dozens, maybe hundreds, more occurring under the radar of the news media and authorities. All too often, the young female victim is rescued only because she has been arrested for soliciting. But in these scenarios, the trafficker is not caught and simply moves on to recruit other victims.

Police say Niagara has been identified as an important and frequently used link in the human trafficking chain across Ontario. As a tourist destination, with 12 million people visiting Niagara annually and the region boasting more strip clubs per capita than Toronto, it's fertile ground. "Niagara is part of an established circuit between the East Coast, Montreal, the GTA and beyond," explains Niagara



## CAPTURED

Former Niagara Falls man Imani Nakpangi, 29, a convicted human trafficker who had been on the run from authorities, was captured on April 24 in Kingston. A Canada-wide warrant for breaching his parole was issued and police feared young girls were at risk of sexual slavery. In a landmark case, Nakpangi was sentenced to five years in prison in June 2008 after pleading guilty to human trafficking, living on the avails of juvenile prostitution and possession of counterfeit currency. He was paroled in February 2011, but within five months he had breached his release conditions and provincial police have been looking for him since.

Region Police Supt. Cliff Sexton. “It can involve escorts, massage parlours, adult entertainment parlours etc., but much of it is facilitated through the virtual world.”

In Niagara alone, there are listings on Backpage, Craigslist and other review boards selling girls to hundreds, if not thousands of men daily. “This is a supply and demand crime. If the demand is there, the supply will meet it,” says Sexton. “There are a significant number of ‘pimps’ operating in the Niagara region.”

Micro-brothels are set up in hotel and motel rooms as well as in apartments and luxury condominiums, explains UBC law professor and author Benjamin Perrin in his acclaimed book, *Invisible*

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- NRP Supt. Cliff Sexton

Chains: Canada’s Underground World of Human Trafficking. Their secret locations are disclosed to men who respond to advertisements for “escorts” or more explicit advertisements on Internet bulletin board websites and weekly newspapers.

Although many victims of human trafficking in Canada are recruited from overseas, statistics indicate that 75 to 80 per cent of the girls and women are Canadian born. Victims of domestic trafficking are typically forced by pimps into the sex trade; they are frequently moved intra-and inter-provincially with the aim of isolating them, impeding law enforcement and meeting the demand for “new faces” as sexual prey.

Police in Ontario confirm there is a veritable sex-trade route from Montreal into southern Ontario, including Niagara, as young Quebec women are recruited by street gangs there and brought across the provincial border. Two reporters from TVA, QMI’s francophone television wing in Quebec, recently travelled to several strip clubs in this province with a hidden camera. They were able to speak to a number of the girls, who told stories of street gangs gang-raping trafficked women into compliance and taking all their money. One of the dancers at a Niagara Falls club said that pimps who the girls consider as “their friend” bring most of the girls from Montreal to Ontario.

Driving the trade is the demand for commercial sexual exploitation. Criminal Intelligence Service Canada (CSIC) estimates domestic sex traffickers earn an average of \$280,000 annually from each victim under their control. A woman can be bought on the streets of Montreal for only \$2,000. And one victim will bring in between \$2,000 to \$5,000 a day for her owner.

### DISPELLING MYTHS, UNDERSTANDING CAUSES

Girls who fall victim to sex traffickers are not limited to runaways from poor backgrounds and broken homes, according to CSIC. The victims are as young as 12 years old and from middle-class families, often the daughters of lawyers, doctors and police offi-

cers. Traffickers have a range of tactics and locales to make contact, explains Perrin. “They patrol group homes and shelters for at-risk youth, and approach girls on their way home from school, at shopping malls, bus stations, or parks...” Traffickers also target victims through social networking sites such as Facebook—a site used by the vast majority of today’s teenage girls.

According to Perrin’s research, poverty, the desire for love, and the desire for money—in that order—are the three key vulnerabilities that permit domestic sex traffickers to recruit and control victims.

A 17-year-old Scarborough girl finds herself living in and out of shelters in downtown Toronto. Sitting in a coffee shop, a young man approaches her, strikes up a conversation. He tells her he knows of a way she can make some serious money. She needs money, and he knows it. Within weeks of these friendly conversations, she is being driven to Niagara Falls and starts working in a strip club or a massage parlour, but when she finishes her shift, she has to hand over all her earnings to this man, this pimp. The threat of a beating, or the threat of not having anywhere to go, keeps her quiet and obedient.

Within a few weeks, now with a new pimp and going by the name of “Sparkles,” she is prostituting herself on the streets. Only she isn’t really doing it for herself; she is being forced to go out night after night, being driven around by her trafficker, allowed to stop only once she has reached her nightly quota. She is being kept in a cold, bare attic, fed once a day, and then driven around at night. She has no ID and is not allowed to talk to anyone else.

**P**erhaps most perplexing for the general public is why these young women don’t simply walk away from the men who abuse them and take all their money. Most research concludes this is not the nature of pimping and sex trafficking. Rather, it is a complex relationship fuelled by domination and control that leaves many girls not self-identifying as victims.

“I’d be out in the middle of winter in a short skirt freezing my butt off until I’d made my money, and he’d just keep driving around until I’d made my money,” recalls Sparkles. “As soon as you get in the car they’d ask for the money right away and if you didn’t give it all and they found out, they’d beat you.”

If she’s not confined, she could fear for her safety or for her family, she could feel shame and guilt, have no identification, have a general distrust of police and feel there are no alternatives for her. Some girls may have a misplaced love for her pimp or even display symptoms associated with Stockholm Syndrome—a survival strategy for captives in which they begin to identify with their captors. Small acts of perceived kindness by the trafficker are magnified and a psychological shift takes hold.

Sparkles admits that at one time, fed up with the beatings and threats of violence, she called her first pimp rather than the police. That first pimp immediately came to the Falls to “rescue” her, but in reality she ended up back on the streets, until her arrest for solicitation stopped the cycle.

Traffickers use a combination of charisma and coercion to

control their victims and push them into prostitution. Many will use violent torture (some have reported sexual assault with a hot curling iron), rape, confinement, and threats to family as means of control. However, these physical assaults are often not as effective as the psychological methods, sometimes referred to as “seasoning” or “grooming”. Predators will manipulate inexperienced girls, who may lack self-esteem, with an initial period of false love and feigned affection. The recruiting tactic, called “love bombing” by street gangs, continues with showering of lavish gifts and girls are made to feel special and beautiful. After the victim believes he is her “boyfriend” she will be coerced into the sex trade to make money for their future together, all the while believing he loves her.

“The really sophisticated traffickers never get caught. They make a lot of money, and their victims are so psychologically controlled that they don’t even need to use physical violence,” explains Perrin.

Considered a “ghost crime,” sex trafficking is designed to remain unobtrusive; because it’s mainly indoors—motel rooms, escort agencies, massage parlours and strip clubs—the police have a hard time finding victims without proactive investigations. And since it’s rare for a victim to willingly testify against her pimp, manipulative entrepreneurs know it’s a low-risk way to make a lot of money.

### IT’S HARD OUT HERE FOR A PIMP

*You know it’s hard out here for a pimp  
When he tryin to get this money for the rent  
For the Cadillacs and gas money spent  
Because a whole lot of bitches talkin shit*

*It’s Hard Out Here For A Pimp,*

written by Three 6 Mafia (Sony Records)

This rap number won for best original song for the film *Hustle & Flow* and was performed live at the 78th Academy Awards in 2006. A few years before, rapper 50 Cent released his song *P.I.M.P.*, which went platinum three times and reached the Top 10 in 18 countries. He was rewarded with a \$50-million sneaker deal with Reebok. In May 2010, the hip-hop artist Necro released a song called *Human Trafficking King* on his album *Die!* There are “Pimp of the Year” galas in several U.S. cities where sex-trade kingpins get awarded the distinction. And Canada is not immune: There are even some Canadian high schools that have allowed “Pimp and Ho” Halloween parties.

**P**imps, it would seem, have become counter-cultural icons, and mainstays of that part of hip-hop culture that embraces so-called gangsta’ rap. For evidence, look no further than amazon.com to find playbooks and videos from veteran pimps instructing new traffickers to ‘the Game,’ offering specific steps to control and manipulate victims. This constant dehumanizing of women has become mainstream.

“Part of the problem is that modern day media sources (especially music lyrics, music videos, television shows, etc.) often glamorize ‘the Game’ and the players involved. They make pimps look cool and successful and showcase the girls as stylish and sexy with fine clothes and money,” explains NRP’s Det.-Sgt. Craig Labaune, who is spearheading human trafficking training/awareness initiatives with local police and community groups.

“Parents need to understand the true characteristics of ‘the Game’ so they can have frank discussions with their kids and prepare them in advance to be able to recognize potential predators,” says Labaune. “Even just discussing how unrealistic those expectations can be is a good start. If we prepare our youth in advance to recognize the danger signs they will be less likely to become victims.”

### WHAT IS BEING DONE?

A number of police forces in Ontario, such as York Regional Police, Peel Regional Police and Toronto Police Service have made it a priority to aggressively investigate sex trafficking cases. Here, Niagara Regional Police used a recent \$146,000 provincial grant to provide training and education seminars about human trafficking to law enforcement, victim services and community organizations.

**T**he NRP has also created a poster outlining the signs of a human trafficking victim, along with contact information for assistance, to be placed in strip clubs, body-rub parlours and community service agencies across the region. Labaune has also spent time talking to high school students in a program aimed at making girls aware of luring techniques and the psychological games traffickers play.

“We have taken the approach of educating our community partners, because in many cases these potential victims will be opening up to someone in those lines of work quicker than they would to a police officer,” notes Labaune, adding many victims are conditioned by the trafficker not to trust the police.

What’s crucial, though, is the role of front-line police who proactively target these pimps; because the police and the community can’t help these victims if they aren’t identified, insists York Regional Police Detective Thai Truong, one of the country’s experts in human trafficking. He is often called upon by police forces throughout North America to train front-line officers.

Under Truong’s take-action approach, his vice team has laid 166 pimping-related charges and 14 human trafficking charges since 2009. In the same time, Peel Regional Police laid 47 pimping-related charges and 24 human trafficking charges, the most nationwide. In comparison, Niagara laid seven pimping-related and five human trafficking-related charges in the past five years.

While those numbers do get the attention of NRP acting chief Joe Matthews, he points to two challenges: the “transient” nature of Niagara’s population and limited resources for such complex, expensive investigations. “In Niagara our resources are stretched, maybe more so than other municipalities. We have policing challenges that don’t exist in other areas ... so it’s not always an apples to apples comparison,” he maintains.

“We know the problem exists in our area. What we don’t have a good handle on is whether we’re that much worse than anywhere else because you don’t always discover it until you actually take the enforcement action.”

Unquestionably, it is a complex and challenging crime to investigate, taking months to earn the trust of a known victim so she will testify. “To get the girls to trust you, you have to be passionate, patient and know what you’re doing in order to be successful,” explains Truong, who points to one case that took him 16 months to convince an abused woman to trust him enough to leave her

pimp.

Sexton tells of a large NRP operation against human trafficking a few years ago in which a significant amount of time and resources were invested by the morality unit: “At the end of the day, they had to take a plea to something else because we just could not present a witness who would say ‘I am a victim.’ There was frustration on our part because we had a dozen people working for up to three months, and in the end the girls were saying, ‘No, these are our boyfriends.’”

Labaune and Sexton are quick to add that while the pimp and prostitute relationship could arguably be about human trafficking—a man is trafficking a woman for sex, and taking the profits—under the eyes of the law it is much more difficult to make a human trafficking charge stick in these cases.

While Ontario has been a haven for human traffickers, it has also been criticized for its lack of co-ordinated services for trafficked victims. Last April, the Attorney General finally created a 15-member Human Trafficking Advisory Committee made up of police services representatives, victim service providers, survivors and experts. It also launched a 24/7-crisis hotline to provide help for victims, additional support for emergency services and community agencies and new specialized human trafficking crown attorneys to help build strong cases to prosecute offenders.

**A**s for Canada, Perrin calls the country’s track record in combating human trafficking pitiful. Until 2005, the Criminal Code had no offence of human trafficking, and worse, by the time Nakpangi became the first to be convicted of human trafficking in Canada, in 2008, more than 20,000 traffickers had been convicted worldwide. In 2009, Canada secured only five human trafficking convictions. As perspective, Belgium obtained 223 convictions in 2007. As of January 2012, the RCMP reports that 19 human traffickers have been convicted and nine for human trafficking-related offences.

Sentences given to the handful of pimps convicted of human trafficking have been so inadequate that Perrin helped draft amendments to the Criminal Code to enact stiffer penalties for child trafficking. Bill C-268 was introduced to Parliament by Winnipeg Conservative MP Joy Smith, a leading Canadian activist in the fight against human trafficking, and was adopted in 2010. It established a minimum sentence of five years for convicted child traffickers.

While Canada has instituted some measures such as a National Trafficking Co-ordination Centre staffed with RCMP officers, Temporary Residence Permits for victims of human trafficking and other amendments included in the government’s new Omnibus Crime bill, there remains a critical need for a national strategy to combat this crime, say experts. Police complain that until a unified approach is found, investigating criminal networks found to operate from province to province is a challenge.

In 2007, Smith’s motion calling on the government to adopt a comprehensive anti-trafficking strategy was unanimously passed in the House of Commons. Smith then released her own proposal for a national action plan to government in 2010, called Connecting the Dots. In the 2011 election platform the Conservatives promised to implement a national action plan to combat human trafficking, which would include \$5 million a year for victim services,

**IS THIS YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW?**

Is this the job that you came to Canada to do or the job that was promised to you?  
Is there anyone controlling your freedom of movement?  
Is there anyone withholding your passport or travel documents and denying you access to them?  
Is anyone forcing you to perform sex acts on the premises or anywhere else?  
Is anyone taking a portion of your earned money?

If you can answer yes to any of these questions you may be a victim of Human Trafficking. This is a serious criminal offence in Canada that will not be tolerated by police or our judicial system.

If this is your situation please contact your local police service at any of the numbers listed below.

**ARE YOU A VICTIM OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING?**

RCMP 911  
1-800-387-2225  
1-800-387-2225  
1-800-387-2225

As part of a recent provincial grant, the Niagara Regional Police created a poster with victims in mind; providing potential life saving information in 11 different languages. It will be placed in strip clubs, body-rub parlours and community service agencies across the region.

prevention and awareness. Still nothing to date, however Smith told *Niagara Magazine* the national action plan is currently being “developed through consultation with stakeholders.”

### LANDMARK RULING

To the dismay of most anti-human-trafficking activists, on March 26 the Ontario Court of Appeal ruled to strike down the ban on brothels and living off the avails of prostitution. Communicating for the purposes of prostitution will remain illegal. The landmark ruling came after Ontario Superior Court Judge Susan Himel in 2010 agreed with three sex trade workers who argued the country’s current laws prevented them from taking safety precautions or working indoors. The ban will take effect in one year to allow the government an opportunity to amend the Criminal Code. »

The province’s highest court also amended pimping provisions in the Criminal Code, so only those who “exploit” prostitutes will be prosecuted. However, calling pimps “bodyguards” or drivers doesn’t mean women and girls won’t be exploited, experts assert.

“I’ve never ever come across a pimp-prostitute relationship where

there wasn't exploitation," argues Truong. "At the end of the day, if you're being exploited you have a pimp. Oftentimes the victims don't recognize the relationship because it masks itself as a domestic relationship between boyfriend and girlfriend."

Incredibly, in their ruling, the appellate judges acknowledged that human trafficking and child exploitation may "tragically increase through the operation of brothels". They also noted testimony from police officers that the brothel provisions in the Criminal Code are critical in human trafficking investigations.

"Prostitution fuels human trafficking," insists Invidiata, who led a group of protesters recently at Queen's Park. "Legalizing prostitution and living off the avails, you're giving pimps the legal authority to exploit women and children in Canada."

MP Smith agrees, adding that while many hold Amsterdam as a beacon in the legalization of prostitution, few realize that officials have shut down vast sections of its red-light district due to infiltration by organized crime, pimps and human traffickers.

**P**errin applauds Sweden's pioneering approach from 1999: the country has made it a crime to purchase sex while removing punishment for those who are sold for sex. Referred to as the Nordic model, it "recognizes that there is an undeniable link between human trafficking for sexual exploitation and prostitution." Evidence of this is the number of women being sold for sex in Sweden dropped by 40 per cent over a four-year period.

"Ultimately, it is impossible to look at an industry as dangerous as the sex trade and not conclude that the vast majority are being exploited," insists Michelle Brock founder of the Hope For The Sold.

Those women who voluntarily make a living selling sex "have the luxury of walking down to a radio station or a courtroom to make their voice heard. The rest do not," insists Brock. "I've heard too many stories from women in the trade, both those who were trafficked and those who entered willingly, to believe that the majority of women in the trade are there—and stay there—by choice."

While some experts acknowledge there are a small group of independent "sex workers", many work for escort agencies or out of their homes, studies have found 85 to 95 per cent of them want out but see no options to leave. And Statistics Canada has found that "most women find prostitution in their early to mid teens and go on to lead lives with exploitation, violence, substance abuse and disease."

In the end, everyone can agree that prostitution is in itself an extremely dangerous arena.

Police in Niagara still have open case files on the murders of five young women in the region since 1995, all linked by their involvement in high-risk lifestyles, including the sex trade and exotic dancing. The bodies of all five were dumped outdoors in Niagara.

Whether they were killed by pimps may never be known.

Just as Chloe Cooley's disappearance from Queenston two centuries ago, their cases remain unsolved. NM

## ANTI-TRAFFICKING 101

- Prevention education is an important first step for parents to arm teen girls against recruiting techniques used by sex traffickers. Pimps use charm to manipulate their victims, beginning with an initial period of false love, a process called grooming. This period often includes elaborate promises of a better life, fast money, and future luxuries; many traffickers claim to be a music producer/rapper and glamorize the lifestyle. Some pose as model photographers and talent scouts.
- In addition to recruiting techniques, learn the locales commonly used to initiate contact: schools, shopping malls, bus stops, shelters, parking lots, parks and playgrounds. Traffickers also pop up on Internet chat rooms and social media networks.
- Limit your child's exposure to "pimp and ho culture" and porn, through MTV, radio, television, and video games. Teen girls are taught to believe it's ok for them to be labeled a "ho", and boys are taught the abuse of young women and forced prostitution is cool.
- To learn more, visit [www.rescueeachild.com](http://www.rescueeachild.com) or [www.polarisproject.com](http://www.polarisproject.com).

## WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- 1. Raise Awareness/Speak Up:** Commit to doing something to address the problem. Share what you've learned so far; host an awareness event with your friends, work associates, church group or service club to tell them about human trafficking (HT). Raise the issue of HT in letters to the editor, at political debates, in the classroom, and at town hall meetings.
- 2. Call For Change:** Email, call or write a letter to your municipal, provincial and federal politicians asking what they're doing to address the problem of HT.
- 3. Help The Heroes:** Support organizations that help survivors by volunteering your time, language abilities, or professional skills. Donate money, clothes, or equipment to them.
- 4. Let Your Dollars Talk:** Buy fair trade products where possible.
- 5. Be a Woman Against Human Trafficking:** Talk to your husband, boyfriend, partner or male friends and family members about the realities of women and girls exploited in the sex industry.
- 6. Be a Man Against Human Trafficking:** Don't pay for sex or go to places where commercial sex acts take place, either in Canada or when travelling abroad.
- 7. Report It:** Be aware of the warnings signs of human trafficking in the community, at work, and when travelling. Report suspicious activity to Crime Stoppers of Niagara by calling 1-800-222-8477 or to the local police at 905-688-4111.

*Excerpts from Invisible Chains: Canada's Underground World of Human Trafficking by Benjamin Perrin.*

If you are a victim or know someone who is, you can contact Victim Services Niagara (VSN) crisis line at 905-682-2626. Volunteers with VSN are trained and prepared to assist victims of human trafficking. Crisis Responders are available 24/7 to provide confidential, emotional and practical assistance to victims of crime and tragedy. For a list of how to recognize the signs/indicators of domestic sex trafficking, and for a list of NGOs/helpful websites, visit [www.niagaramag.ca](http://www.niagaramag.ca)