

Welcome to our Learning Network Resource Spotlight

Human Trafficking: Innovative Responses Created By and For Youth and Indigenous Communities

Date & Time: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 | 1:00 - 2:30 PM ET

- All attendees are muted during the Resource Spotlight
- If you are experiencing issues, please type into the chat box.
- If you have a question for the speakers, please type into the Q&A box and we will spend a few mins near the end on Questions and Answers.
- There will be an evaluation link in the chat box at the end of the resource spotlight, please fill out the form as your feedback will guide our future ones.
- Once you complete the evaluation form, you will be directed to a website where you will be prompted to enter your full name and email address. A certificate of attendance will be generated and emailed to you.
- Presentation slides are available online, there will be a link in the chat box.
- The presentation recording will be posted on our website within the next few days:
http://www.vawlearningnetwork.ca/in-kh-webinars/upcoming_resource_spotlight/index.html

Western  Centre for Research & Education on
Violence Against Women & Children



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THIS LAND

Aura Freedom acknowledges that we are situated upon the traditional, unceded territories of the Huron-Wendat, Anishinabek Nation, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Today, the meeting place of "Tkaronto" -Toronto- is still the home to many Indigenous peoples from across Turtle Island.

We are thankful for the opportunity to work on this territory toward the eradication of gender-based violence, where Indigenous women and girls pay the highest price.

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A NOTE ON VALUING GRASSROOTS EXPERTISE AND CONTRIBUTIONS

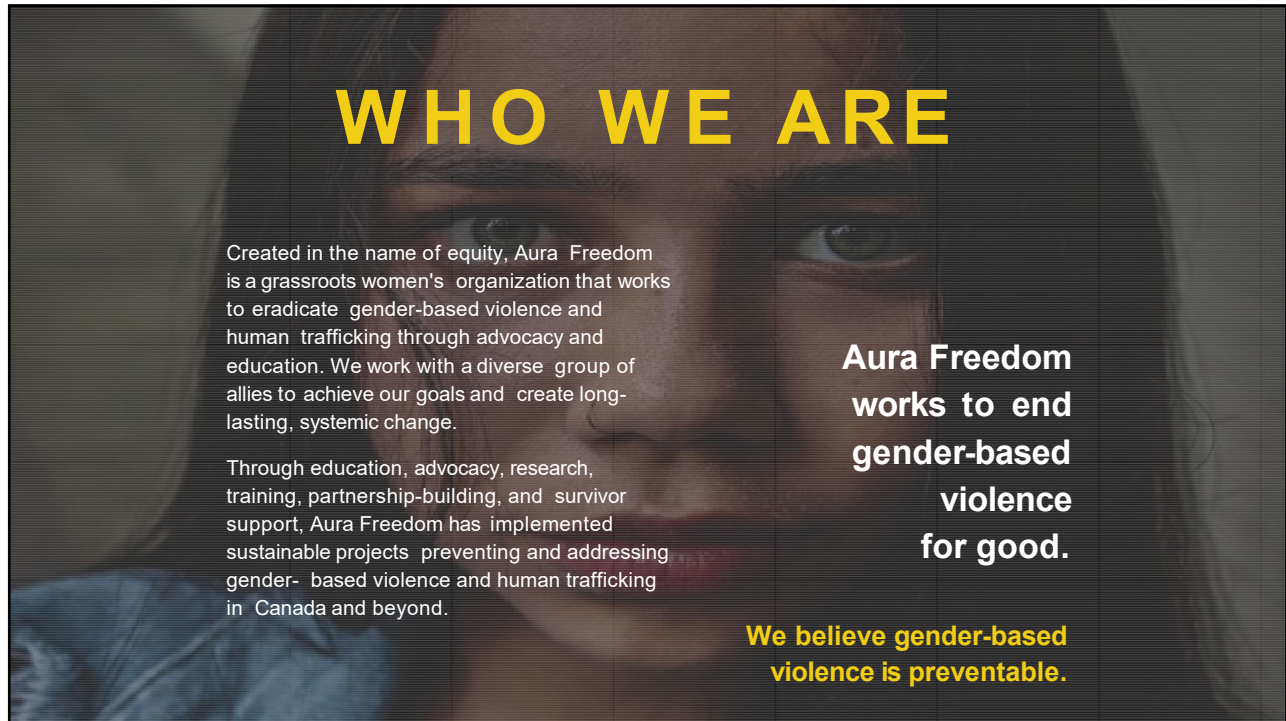
We believe the work of the grassroots GBV sector is as important and crucial as the work of academia and should be credited and recognized in the same manner.

If something we present to you today resonates with you and you think it would be valuable to your work, we invite you to use it and share with others. After all, sharing knowledge creates change. When incorporating and sharing our work, we ask that you kindly cite it. There is something to be said about honouring the emotional and intellectual labour that goes into grassroots gender-based violence work.

This is one way that we can begin to change the culture of struggling grassroots organizations who are overworked and under-compensated, but still showing up to do the work.

Suggested citation for this webinar: *Aura Freedom. (2021). Aura Freedom's Human Trafficking Peer Prevention Project. Fourth Edition. Presented in Toronto.*

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WHO WE ARE

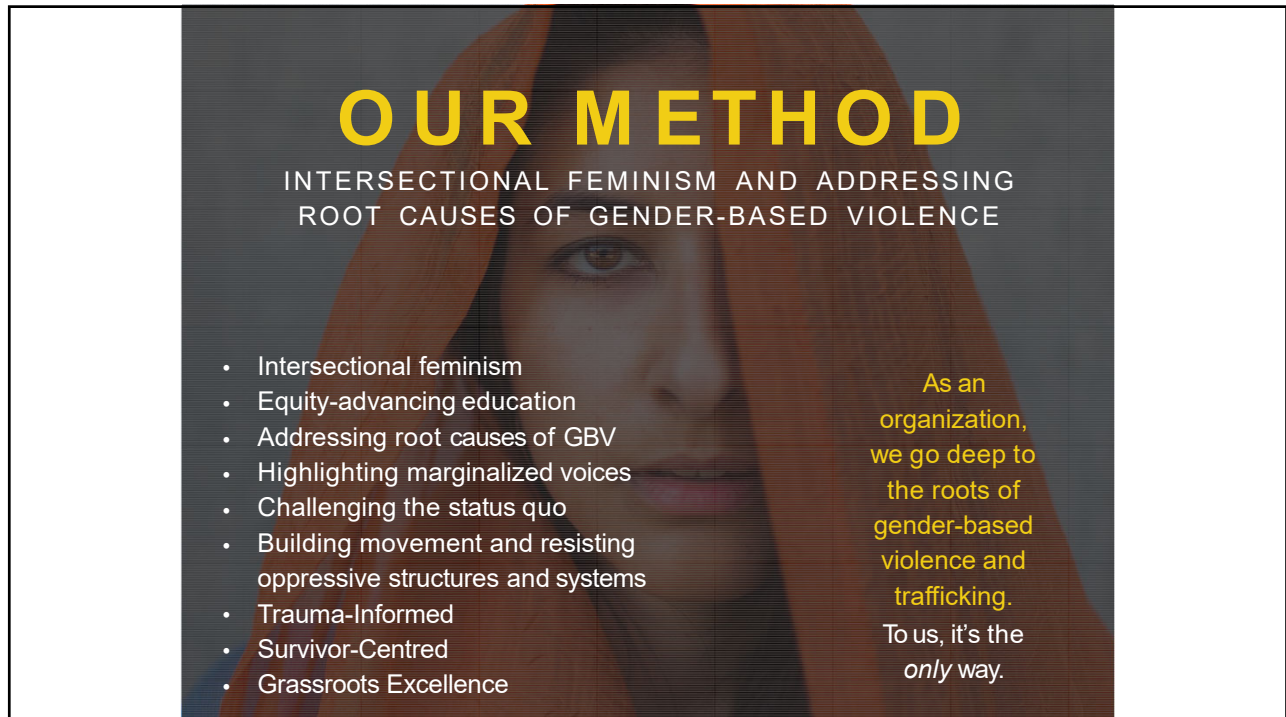
Created in the name of equity, Aura Freedom is a grassroots women's organization that works to eradicate gender-based violence and human trafficking through advocacy and education. We work with a diverse group of allies to achieve our goals and create long-lasting, systemic change.

Through education, advocacy, research, training, partnership-building, and survivor support, Aura Freedom has implemented sustainable projects preventing and addressing gender-based violence and human trafficking in Canada and beyond.

Aura Freedom works to end gender-based violence for good.

We believe gender-based violence is preventable.

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OUR METHOD

INTERSECTIONAL FEMINISM AND ADDRESSING ROOT CAUSES OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

- Intersectional feminism
- Equity-advancing education
- Addressing root causes of GBV
- Highlighting marginalized voices
- Challenging the status quo
- Building movement and resisting oppressive structures and systems
- Trauma-Informed
- Survivor-Centred
- Grassroots Excellence

As an organization, we go deep to the roots of gender-based violence and trafficking. To us, it's the only way.

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CONSIDERATIONS

- Human trafficking is indeed a crime, but more importantly, it is a human rights abuse.
- We recognize that human trafficking does not only happen in the sex industry, but in the service industry, farming industry, in domestic labour, and more. Forced/child marriage, forced crime and organ trafficking are other forms of trafficking. Aura Freedom's focus is on human trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation (also known as sex trafficking). This includes **exploitation** in sex work, massage parlours, exotic dancing, escort services, pornography, and more.
- Sex trafficking and sexual exploitation are forms of gender-based violence.
- It is important to note that Aura Freedom meets survivors where they are, recognizing their diverse backgrounds, stories, and choices. We are survivor-centred, trauma-informed and fuelled by compassion. We refute the patriarchal 'victim narrative' that has a limited view of what trafficked persons look like.
- Human rights are guaranteed to everyone - regardless of gender, race, ability, religion, class or how someone chooses to make a living - including sexwork.
- It is important to distinguish between consensual sex work by adults and exploitation. Sex trafficking is not a choice - it is abuse, coercion, manipulation, and recognized as a form of slavery.
- **Anyone under the age of 18 cannot legally consent to sex work in Canada.**

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THE WAY AURA FREEDOM ADDRESSES HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Human trafficking is the manifestation of inequity.

Exploitation, like gender-based violence, *thrives* in conditions of inequity.

Aura Freedom views human trafficking as a human rights abuse and focuses on addressing the issue of sexual exploitation by combining both a human rights approach and an upstream public health approach in its core activities. ***Anti-trafficking work that is not addressing inequities of gender, race, socio-economic status and more, simply won't be effective.***

Aura Freedom's counter-trafficking work aims to advance equity. It stresses the importance of empowering youth to make safe and healthy decisions in their lives and reach out for community support when they need it. We do not engage in 'rescue industry' activities. We seek to end human trafficking by dismantling oppressive structures - anything else will not have any long term effect.

There is no quick fix to human trafficking. We need to **zoom out** and unpack societal power imbalances and inequities if we are really going to end it. This will take a while.

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We often hear:
"Anyone can be trafficked."

And yes, that is true. We have worked with survivors from many different communities.

However, there are communities that are more at risk of exploitation and have historically been targeted.

If we don't recognize this, we do more harm than good. Intersectionality matters.

Our main focus is on the root causes of human trafficking and the importance of equity

- **Gender inequality, patriarchy and rape culture** and their contribution to the sexual exploitation of women and girls. **The hyper-sexualization of women and girls** in the media and how unhealthy body image and unrealistic beauty standards are contributing to the problem of gender-based violence.
- **Systemic racism, colonialism, ableism, homophobia, xenophobia** and communities who have been oppressed and pushed to the fringes of society, including Indigenous, Black and POC youth, newcomer youth, and youth who identify as LGBTQ2S+.
- **Poverty**, which is linked to inequalities and the marginalization of communities.
- **Systemic inequities and gaps in social services** including foster care and housing.

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IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT CRIME.

Human trafficking is highly underreported due to its hidden nature. Many of the survivors Aura Freedom has worked with have and never will report their trafficker to police for fear of retribution and due to a mistrust of authorities, and many of our partners have indicated similar patterns. We must acknowledge this to address trafficking holistically.

If we focus on crime, we will also focus on the many 'crimes' that survivors are forced to commit or coerced into committing by their traffickers (carrying guns, carrying drugs, credit card fraud, etc.)

"The Non-Punishment Principle was established due to the rising recognition that trafficked persons were being punished for their involvement in unlawful activities committed in the context of their status as trafficking victims. **The 2002 Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking of the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights** recognized this issue and outlined that such victims must be provided with protection over punishment for their unlawful acts in direct consequence of their trafficking."

Talija Končar - Research & Policy Analyst - Aura Freedom

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HOW THE PEER PREVENTION PROJECT STARTED

Since 2014, Aura Freedom has provided human trafficking awareness and prevention workshops to youth and service providers across Toronto and other parts of Ontario. We have also consulted at the municipal, provincial and federal levels of government for HT policies and strategies and contributed to national research. Our work has created change, empowered youth and given HT survivors access to services.

Yet, we often asked ourselves: "How can we make the program even more powerful? How could we empower marginalized youth even more?"

In October 2018, with support from the City of Toronto, we officially launched the **Human Trafficking Peer Prevention Project**. In 2019, we scaled up and expanded this project, adding new team members and community partners.

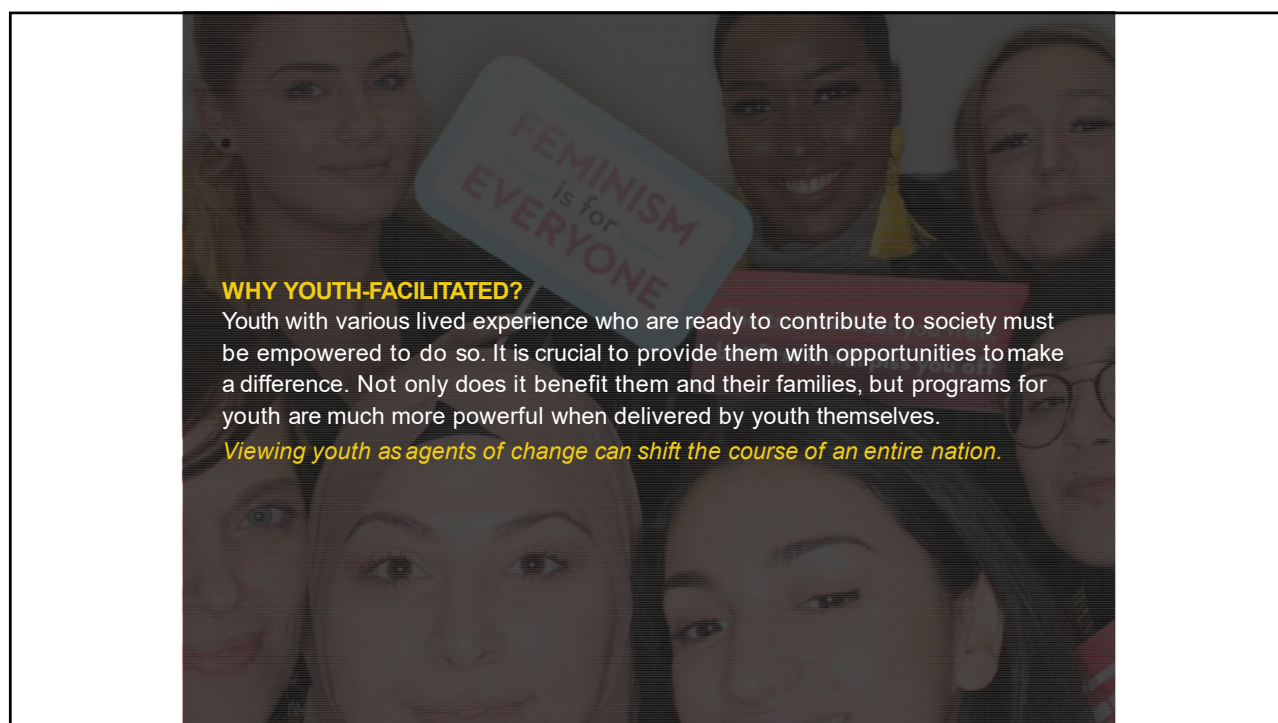
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AURA FREEDOM'S PEER PREVENTION PROJECT:

- Brings awareness to and prevents human trafficking and sexual exploitation through presentations **for youth, by youth**
- Presentations take place in schools, homeless shelters, group homes, libraries, and other community spaces across Toronto/GTA/Ontario.
- Provides support and access to services for survivors of sexual exploitation in TO/ON.
- Peer Prevention Project also provides frontline training workshops for service providers, frontline workers, and more.

For the creation of this project, Aura Freedom recruited, trained and mentored youth who identify as female and have various lived experience (including human trafficking) that enhanced their ability to communicate to youth and identify those in need of support.

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THE TRAINING CURRICULUM

Before facilitating a single presentation, over the course of 5 months, the youth team completed a rich training curriculum in a wide variety of topics including anti-oppression, gender, trauma, public speaking skills, LGBTQ2S+ awareness and many more. They were paid for all training attended and provided with lunch and transit expenses.

This curriculum was developed in collaboration with HT survivors and key stakeholders in Toronto through a large consultation held by Aura Freedom.

We invited survivors of GBV/HT, Indigenous educators, teachers, feminist groups, crisis centres, LGBTQ2S organizations, police, City of Toronto staff, and frontline health/social workers.

20+ Training sessions provided to each youth team member!

"The training is the best part of the program!" - Youth team member

100% Youth team members felt the training was relevant and up-to-date and prepared them for their roles. **This is important.**

100% Youth team members thought the training added to their professional development for future job opportunities.

Training is ongoing. Capacity building is our sustainability.

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FULLY EQUIPPED

- A double-sided postcard is given as a take-away for participants of the awareness presentations. The postcard features various info, from human trafficking and harmful gender norms, to healthy relationships and where to get help, including the National Human Trafficking Helpline. *This postcard was completely created and designed by the youth team with the direction and support of Aura Freedom's core members and a graphic designer.*
- A community resource list for human trafficking support services available in Toronto was also carefully created by the youth team, with the assistance and guidance from Find Help/211, using only the most recent organization information. The list is emailed to all frontline staff after each awareness presentation.

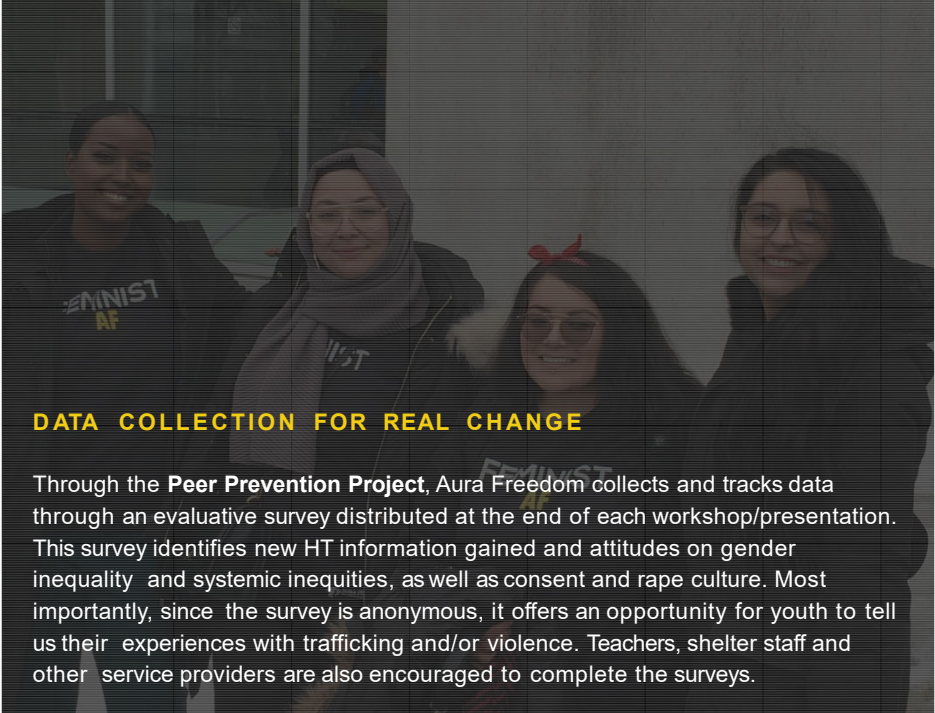


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COMPASSIONATE, TRAUMA-INFORMED SUPPORT.

- Disclosures to our staff of sexual exploitation/gender-based violence from youth is common after Aura Freedom's presentations. Due to the powerful nature of the awareness and the unique safe space we create with youth, we often have disclosures of exploitation and violence from young participants and are able to provide them with immediate counselling and timely access to the appropriate services.
- Each presentation (both virtual and in-person) is supported by the presence of a trained counsellor who is knowledgeable in HT and works through an intersectional, trauma informed lens. We have a long-standing partnership with the **Toronto Rape Crisis Centre (TRCC/MWAR)** for this crucial feature of our Peer Prevention Project.
- Counsellors are also available for debriefing and counselling for staff after disclosures or other difficult events.

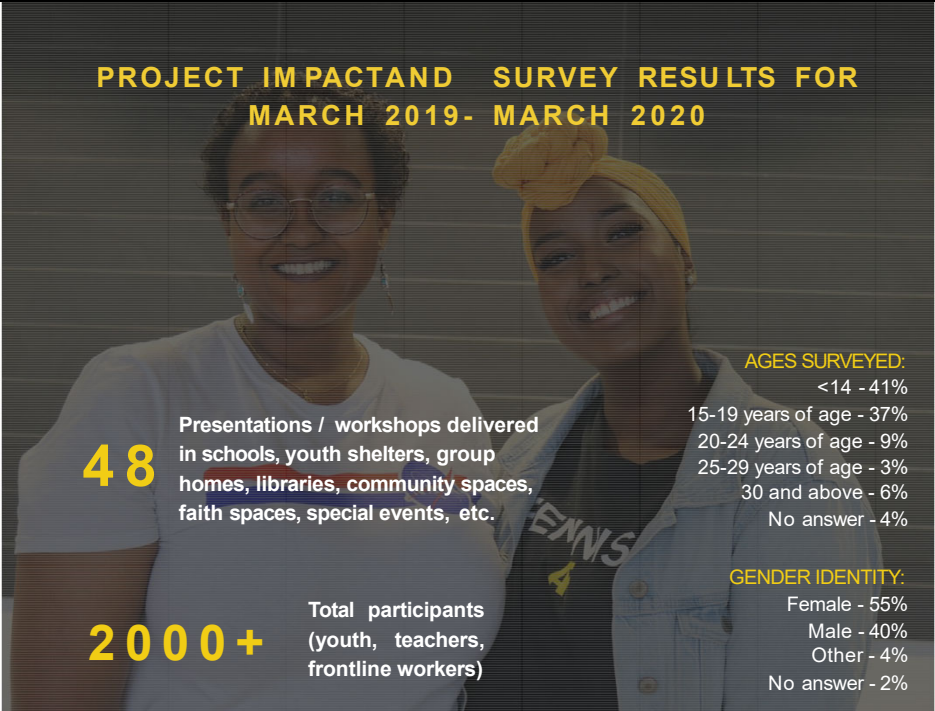
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DATA COLLECTION FOR REAL CHANGE

Through the **Peer Prevention Project**, Aura Freedom collects and tracks data through an evaluative survey distributed at the end of each workshop/presentation. This survey identifies new HT information gained and attitudes on gender inequality and systemic inequities, as well as consent and rape culture. Most importantly, since the survey is anonymous, it offers an opportunity for youth to tell us their experiences with trafficking and/or violence. Teachers, shelter staff and other service providers are also encouraged to complete the surveys.

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PROJECT IMPACT AND SURVEY RESULTS FOR MARCH 2019- MARCH 2020

48 Presentations / workshops delivered in schools, youth shelters, group homes, libraries, community spaces, faith spaces, special events, etc.

2000+ Total participants (youth, teachers, frontline workers)

AGES SURVEYED:

- <14 - 41%
- 15-19 years of age - 37%
- 20-24 years of age - 9%
- 25-29 years of age - 3%
- 30 and above - 6%
- No answer - 4%

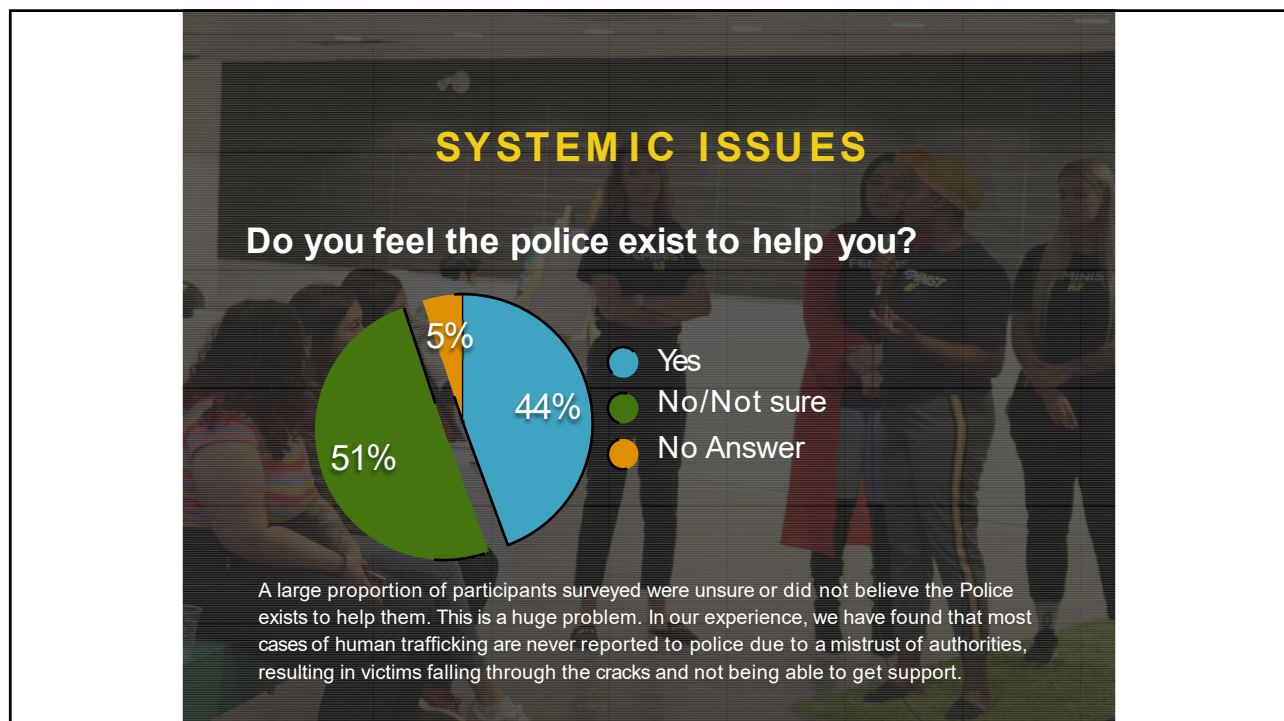
GENDER IDENTITY:

- Female - 55%
- Male - 40%
- Other - 4%
- No answer - 2%

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PREVENTION PROGRAMS WORK.

79% After attending Aura Freedom's presentation, 79% of participants said they would take action against human trafficking (get informed, speak up, challenge social norms, practice internet safety, etc.).

88% After attending Aura Freedom's presentation, 85% of participants agreed that awareness makes a difference.

Why does Aura Freedom focus on gender equality and anti-oppression?

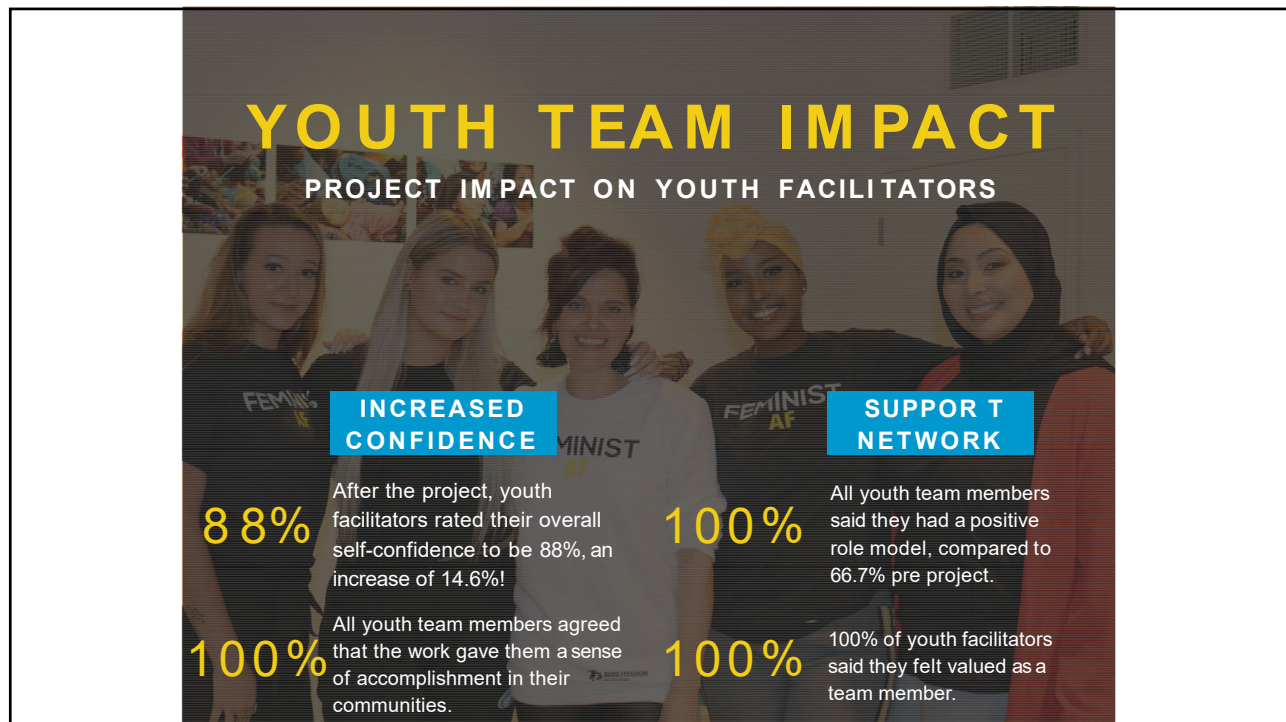
Why do we focus on empowering marginalized groups with knowledge and support?

Quite simply, because it works. Education and knowledge dissemination works. *Prevention programs work.*

Lifting young people up by accepting them for who they are and telling them their worth is empowering.

And, it's very hard to traffic an empowered person.

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CHALLENGES

- Lack of understanding of HT and the urgency required to implement this type of workshop in schools (this is slowly changing)
- COVID-19 - how we pivoted, limitations of facilitating workshops online and what that meant for disclosures and survivor support
- Precarious funding/project-based funding which is not sustainable

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Part 2: How does sex trafficking happen?

- Luring & Grooming
- Fear
- Trauma Bonds
- The Control - "Why don't they just leave?"
- Fear
- Trauma Bonds
- Intimate Partners
- Unpacking Stigma

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Part 3: Why does sex trafficking happen?

- Risk Factors
- Root Causes
- Targeted Communities

After exploring different risk factors, we take a deeper dive into communities that are specifically targeted, linking them to different root causes of human trafficking, including gender inequality, systemic racism, colonialism, ableism, homo/transphobia, capitalism and more.

See next slide for a brief overview of this part of our workshop/program)

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	<p>GIRLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Gender inequality, gender roles, patriarchy, misogyny, rape culture, etc. -Girls of colour, migrant girls, girls in foster care, girls living with disabilities and more. <p><i>During this segment of the workshop/program, we engage youth and frontline workers and dive deep into targeted communities and systemic inequities. This is Aura Freedom's specialty, our passion, and the Peer Prevention Project's unique offering to the counter-trafficking community in Canada and beyond.</i></p>	<p>INDIGENOUS YOUTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Colonialism, systemic racism, residential 'schools', genocide, foster care system, etc. -This segment of the workshop is often presented by Indigenous guest speakers/collaborators 	
	<p>LGBTQ2S+ YOUTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Systemic oppression, homo/transphobia, etc. 	<p>BLACK YOUTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Systemic racism, hyper-sexualization, legacy of slavery, over-policing, foster care system, etc. 	

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	<p>Part 4: Empowerment Principles and Protective Factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consent • Healthy Relationships • Consent within relationships • Internet Safety • Reading the Signs/ Indicators • Empathy & Shifting Perspectives • Recognition of survivor agency 	
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Additional topics covered in our frontline training for service providers

- Trauma-informed approaches
- Receiving human trafficking disclosures with compassion
- Challenges & barriers in identifying HT survivors or for them to reach out
- Safety planning for HT survivors
- Case studies
- Unpacking bias
- Stigma
- Role playing
- Self care in this work
- Empathy & shifting perspectives
- Recognition of survivor agency

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To all the frontline workers, educators and service providers on this webinar working to end gender-based violence:
*If you haven't been told lately, please know that you are valuable, you are important, and your work saves lives.
 We stand in solidarity with you all.*

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Indigenous Anti-Human Trafficking

Collin Graham



Ontario Native Women's Association

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Trigger Warning

Some of this information may be triggering or hard to hear for some individuals if anyone here is having emotional response please know that there are support people here with us today. I would like to encourage you to reach out to supports and or resource people in you area.

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“Survivor” not “victim”

- The terms “victim” and “survivor” are used to describe those who experienced human trafficking. ONWA generally prefers the term “survivor” because it conveys the strength and resilience of those who survive this experience; it accords survivors the place of knowledge and expertise they earned; and it’s the term most survivors we work with have requested we use. However, we respect the voices of women who describe themselves as victims.

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Colonialism + Violence

- The disruption, due to the 'new comers', within our traditional communities has brought inflicted violence, in many forms, upon Indigenous women.
- Forms of violence are: MMIWG, Human trafficking, Domestic Violence, Physical, Mental and Sexual abuse
- Influenced by factors: poverty, gender, race, class,



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Contemporary Sex Trafficking

Presents in many forms

- Familial-based trafficking which is driven by poverty and can be intergenerational. Familial-based trafficking may include the exchange of food, shelter, or money for sexual acts amongst family members. (38)
- Organized or gang-facilitated trafficking which involves street-level sex work, underground brothels, escort services and exotic dancing. (39)
- Substance-dependency-driven trafficking which involves engaging in the sex trade in order to feed a chemical dependency that can result in human trafficking relationships. (40)
- Economically-driven trafficking associated with sex work directed to serve oil and mining business developments or international events.

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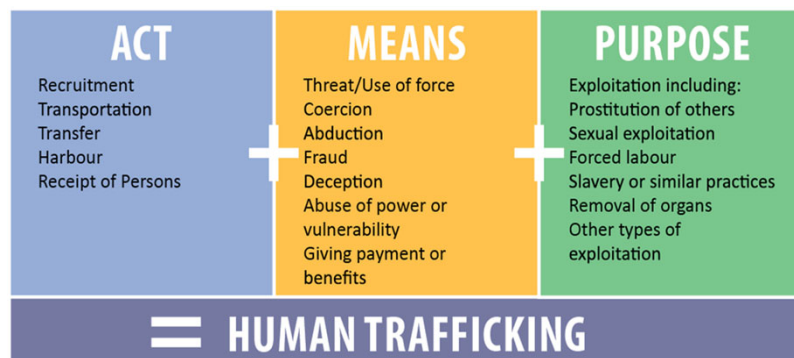
The Situation

- Indigenous women, girls, and young men form a disproportionate number of those sexually exploited in Canada through human trafficking
- Physical, emotional, psychological violence, and financial vulnerability create an environment of constant fear
- Violence against Indigenous women and girls contributes to the normalization of violence and teaches young women to accept this as part of their lives

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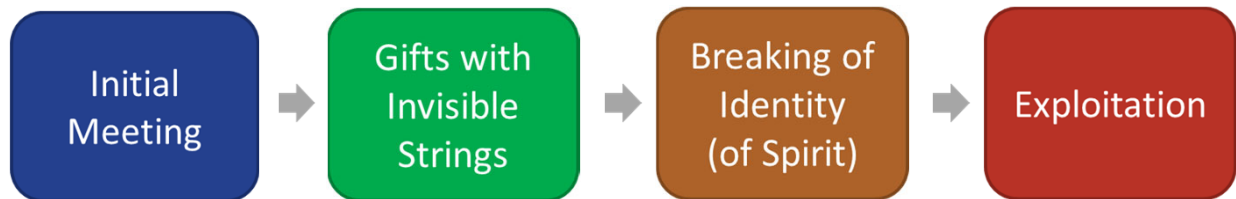
Exploitation and Trafficking

- Exploitation means taking advantage of someone for one's own gain
- The Act, the Means, and the Purpose must all be present for it to be called Trafficking



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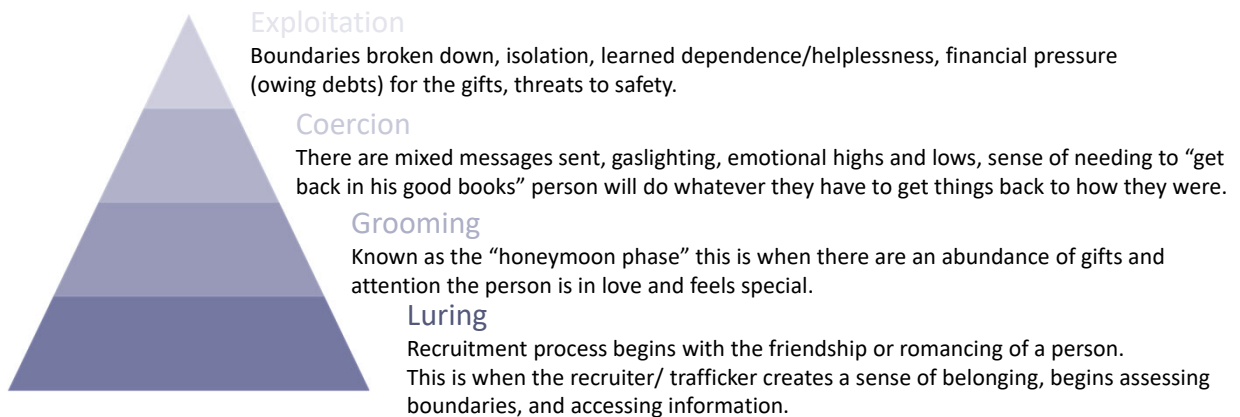
Grooming Vulnerable Populations for Exploitation



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The Culture of Human Trafficking

Often, people that have been trafficked or are still entrenched do not identify their experience to exploitation, and they may not know that what is happening is illegal.



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Ontario's Strategy To End Human Trafficking

- Ontario's strategy commits to a four-part action plan that includes a diverse range of perspectives from survivors, front-line community agencies, police and public safety representatives, and Indigenous organizations.

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ONWA's Approach

- ONWA recognizes that there is a need for transitional supports and housing for trafficking survivors to support our Indigenous community, in their efforts escape and begin the healing process.
- Indigenous women must be supported through wholistic, cultural grounded programming and or services.
- It is extremely important that these services be delivered by Indigenous organizations and with the input of Indigenous women with lived experience

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Continuum ONWA

- The Liaison Program is intended to support Indigenous communities in providing survivor focused and localized responses to human trafficking. The overall objectives of the Initiative are:
 - 1. Building Agency, Community and Survivor Capacity
 - 2. Work with existing front-line services that address the
 - complex needs of survivors
 - 3. Support Indigenous-specific prevention and awareness

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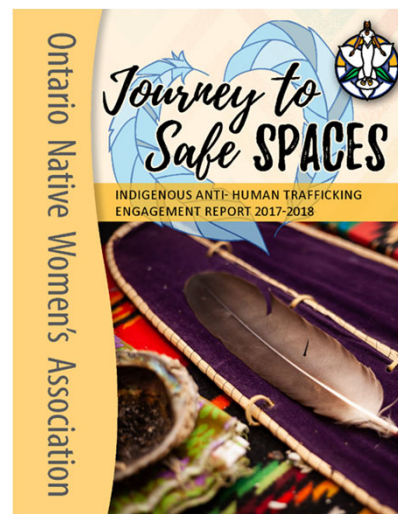
What is Journey to Safe Spaces?

Survivor and community led report

Funded in collaboration with the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services and Minister Responsible for Women's Issues

Pathway for new collaborative and integrated working relationships in Ontario

<https://www.onwa.ca/learning-resources-ht>



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Key Accomplishment of the Project

- Survivor engagement
- Survivor supports
- Community education & engagement
- Indigenous women-specific programming
- Interagency outreach & collaboration
- IAHTL interagency table
- Interagency strategies & action plans
- Training & education from local agencies, businesses & the public

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Grandmother Earth Dress

- One of the educational resources ONWA created during the initiative was the Grandmother Earth Dress. There are 365 jingles sewn onto the Grandmother Earth Dress that represent violence Indigenous women endure every day of the year. The Grandmother Earth Dress is a symbolic visual representation that brings awareness of the ongoing systemic and structural violence directed at Indigenous women. The idea was to create a Red Dress regalia in the form of a jingle dress—a sacred item of healing and honouring—for families and communities to commemorate their loved ones. Families can visualize their loved ones in beautiful traditional regalia.
- Normally, the colour red is not part of the Journey Ceremony. However, this specific dress was born out of vision and ceremony. Elders, Healers, and Knowledge Keepers provided direction on how to feast and conduct ceremony. They also named the Grandmother Earth Dress which came from the Southern direction. The Grandmother Earth Dress honours mothers, daughters, aunts, sisters, grandmothers, nieces, and cousins in a good way.
- ONWA would like to offer special acknowledgments to staff members Collin Graham and Lindsay Tyance, and to Rita Tyance for her help with the beadwork.



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What We Heard from Survivors

- Safety
- Gaps within Services
- Need for Specific Support Services
- Culture
- Housing
- Issues on Reserves
- Prevention

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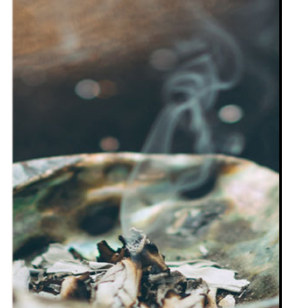
What We Heard from Community Members & Service Providers

- Services
- Changes in mainstream services
- Program & system models
- Learning, training & knowledge sharing
- Legal & policy issues
- Prevention

*"Bring back
our people
THROUGH CULTURE,*

*accept them
WHERE THEY ARE AT,*

*and DO NOT BE
JUDGMENTAL."*



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Recommendations

- A cultural and gender based trauma-informed approach
- Prevention
- Survivor's safety
- Supports for survivors
- Transition to different life
- Agency training & collaboration
- Policy & system reform

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#safeSPACES

Journey to Safe **SPACES**

- Survivor-centered
- Prevention through education
- Access to safe & respectful spaces
- Core supports
- Evidence-based
- Streamlined supports

ONWA Native Women's Association

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"We are isolated by our trauma and then we get isolated when we start our healing."

"It really helps to see other people in that situation, that you don't feel alone anymore. You're not the only one struggling."

"I think it's important to teach women at a young age what good love is. We need to teach both our daughters and our sons."

*"The girl need experiential support. They need us veterans. **THEY NEED US SURVIVORS.**"*

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Questions?



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Ontario Native Women's Association