

# NORTHEASTERN ONTARIO RESEARCH ALLIANCE ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING

## News:

In the November of 2018 NORAHT held two sessions of our *Human Trafficking Conference: Survival, Healing and Support*. One conference was held in Timmins and the second was held in Sudbury. The purpose of these conferences was to share our research findings on human trafficking in northeastern Ontario to date and to further collect data from people with lived experience and service providers about the gaps and services in our region. In September, NORAHT co-hosted a conference in Sault Ste. Marie along with the PACT Grandmothers and Hope Alliance.

Dr. Rosemary Nagy, NORAHT Co-director, presented a talk entitled “Responding to Human Trafficking: Complexities and Challenges” at Western University in London, ON in December.

For more information & updates visit: NORAHT’s website: <https://noraht.nipissingu.ca/>

Email us: [noraht@nipissingu.ca](mailto:noraht@nipissingu.ca)  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CanadaNORAHT/>



The Northeastern Ontario Research Alliance on Human Trafficking (NORAHT) is a partnership between Amelia Rising Sexual Assault Centre of Nipissing, the Union of Ontario Indians: Anishinabek Nation, the AIDS Committee of North Bay and Area and Nipissing University that formed in 2013 to examine human trafficking and sexual exploitation in northeastern Ontario specifically. The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada generously supports this research. We acknowledge Nipissing First Nation, on whose traditional territory we are located.

## *Education - Social Media Literacy for Youth -Among the Concerns Raised by Conference Attendees*

Attendees at all three conferences raised concerns about lack of education and community awareness about human trafficking and sexual exploitation. In particular, attendees identified a need for age-appropriate media literacy education for youth and educators. Attendees raised concerns that social media and other forms of technology are used as mechanisms for luring youth into human trafficking and sexual exploitation. One attendee was aware of an 11 year-old girl who had sent photographs of herself to another person. Another attendee reported that youth are being paid to send photographs of themselves. This might begin as requests to send photographs of their feet and can escalate to requests to send sexually explicit photographs which are then used to exploit youth.

**Do you or a family member have lived experience in human trafficking or the sex trade?**

**If yes, we invite you to participate in a research interview or focus group.**

The purpose of the interview/focus group is to discuss indicators and experiences of human trafficking and what services need to be available to persons who are being trafficked.

As a research participant, you can choose either the interview or focus group format to share your experiences and insights, whichever you are most comfortable with. The individual interview will take approximately 1 hour at a date and time of your choosing (telephone, Skype, or in person). If enough people are interested in having a focus group, it will take approximately 2 hours, with snacks and parking/bus fare provided. All interview and focus group participants will receive a \$40 honorarium for their time.

**For more information and/or to participate in our research please contact Dr. Rosemary Nagy or Brenda Quenneville, MSW, RSW at 705-474-3450 ext. 4156 or at [rnagy@nipissingu.ca](mailto:rnagy@nipissingu.ca) or [brendaq.msw.rsw@gmail.com](mailto:brendaq.msw.rsw@gmail.com).**

This phenomenon is referred to as “sexting.” Sexting means the sharing of sexually explicit photographs or messages through the internet — social media (Facebook, Instagram) or email — or through text messaging. Further research is required to determine the connection between sexting and being luring into human trafficking or sexual exploitation. However, research has demonstrated that youth do engage activities online and via text messaging that can lead to harm, thus supporting attendees’ calls for media literacy education. A study released in 2018, in which 800 young people age 16-20 took part, indicated that 4 out of 10 had sent a sext at some point in their lives and that 2 out of 3 had received a sext. Notably, this research advocates approaches to education that do not reinforce victim-blaming ideologies. For more information see: <http://mediasmarts.ca/sites/mediasmarts/files/publication-report/full/sharing-of-sexts.pdf>. For resources on teaching youth media literacy visit Media Smarts Canada’s Centre for Digital and Media Literacy: <http://mediasmarts.ca/research-policy>. See also: The Canadian Centre for Child Protection <https://protectchildren.ca/en/> and <http://kids.org/> for age appropriate resources.

*Harm Reduction and Trauma Informed Approaches Necessary to Address the Human Trafficking*

Survivors, frontline workers and researchers agree that harm reduction and trauma informed approaches are necessary to address human trafficking and sexual exploitation. Simply put, harm reduction means using person-centric strategies that aim to cause no further harm. This means taking into account the unique needs and circumstances of each individual while, also, being attentive to the social, cultural and political dimensions that play a role in human trafficking and sexual exploitation. Trauma informed practices recognize that people may experience trauma in multifaceted and intersections ways and, therefore, aim to treat the whole person. Trauma informed practices aim to avoid retraumatizing people. For these reasons, survivors and frontline workers advocate for wrap-around services that address the complexities of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. Further, survivors indicate that resources need to extend beyond addressing the needs of persons in crisis because healing is a lifelong need. For more information: <https://thunderbirdpf.org/first-nations-mental-wellness-continuum-framework/>.