

## **Fight Sex Trafficking**

### **National Human Trafficking Awareness Day, February 22, 2025**

Humiliation; Abuse; Violence; Terrifying Threats; Separation from Family and Friends! It's not what a young person signs up for but it's what happens when young girls and boys are trafficked into the world's commercial sex trade. It's the human tragedy behind human trafficking and it's happening in our homes, our schools and our Dufferin-Caledon community.

Five years ago, the Rotary Club of Orangeville and Compass Community Church formed a volunteer-driven group called CryNot (Compass Rotary Youth – No Trafficking) to raise awareness and promote education about the threat of human trafficking in our area. Bob Burnside who initially spearheaded CryNot suggests that "The first thing in addressing human trafficking is to realize that it exists, its origins and symptoms and the devastating results."

We know that young people in Dufferin-Caledon are being lured into sex trafficking through manipulation by predators, promises of love, affection and gifts, provision of drugs and alcohol, threats and violence. Community and victim service groups and law enforcement professionals are here for us regarding the risks, signs and prevention of this sinister crime. Their support places a human face on what is a billion-dollar business based on the coercion of vulnerable youth.

During the pandemic, exploitation has moved online making it easier for predators to contact and groom at-risk youth, some as young as 12 or 13 years old. Police inform us that there are over 6,000 unique advertisements for sex services every day in the digital realm and many are related to sex trafficking. The whole scope of the tragedy is frankly shocking.

The prevention of sex trafficking requires a total community effort. If you suspect someone is being trafficked or you need help, contact the following:

Call 911 to report a crime

Caledon-Dufferin Victim Services 905-951-3838

Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline 1-833-900-1010

Go to [CryNot.ca](http://CryNot.ca) for valuable resources or to request a Human Trafficking Awareness Presentation

The crime of sexual exploitation is likened to modern day slavery. As one of our CryNot members says, "Being trafficked has been described as "hell on earth." By creating awareness CryNot hopes to spare young people in our community from falling victim to predators."